

2024 Grounds Division Annual Report



Appleton Grounds 2024 Annual Report

Created by Greg Hoekstra
Grounds Manager

The Grounds Division started 2024 with three staff openings. A Grounds Technician retired, and the position was filled with an existing Grounds Coordinator. One Grounds Coordinator retired, and another went to a different job. Three new Grounds Coordinators were hired. All are working out very well. Enough seasonal employees were found for the 2024 season, although there was not an excessive number of candidates to pick from.

Substantial projects in 2024 included the repaving of the Peabody Park roadway and the Highview Trail from Brookshire Dr. to Mead St. The completion of Phase 1 at Lundgaard Park, which included walkways, courts, and a playground. New playgrounds were also installed at Green Meadows and Highview Parks. Lutz Park had work done to the entrance to the fishing pier, new lighting, and a trail added the length of the park.

Other improvements included repairs to fencing at ball diamonds, MSB, and the Wastewater Plant. Court crack repairs at Peabody, Colony Oaks and Erb tennis. Parking lots were stripped, and some areas were mud jacked. A bed was replanted on the south side of the Police Department. The directional signs in Memorial Park were updated. Staff installed a fitness station at Erb Park, this puts a fitness station in each community park.

Vandalism was less this year; homelessness is still an issue. Mostly messiness but finding them sleeping in the bathrooms or under the pavilion in the morning is still an issue. They can be slow to leave, and the sites need to be cleaned for rentals. Many employees are not comfortable with these encounters. The Police help when needed, but waiting for them to arrive can hamper getting things done.



2024 Grounds Annual Report

Contracted Projects

Playgrounds

- Lundgaard Playground – New installation
- Green Meadows Playground – Replacement of playground, edging and mulch.
- Highview Playground – Replacement of playground and mulch. Addition of perimeter sidewalk.

Hardscapes

- Peabody Roadway – Old roadway replaced through park. Sidewalk added.
- Highview Trail – Asphalt replaced between Brookshire and Mead.



- Lower Telulah Trail – Low spot was holding water was repaired. Contractor needs to come back in the spring because site still puddles.
- Diamonds 6 and 7 had new dugout slabs and walkways poured.
- Several sunken sidewalk sites were repaired by Mudjacking.

Sport Courts

- Peabody Basketball – Cracks filled and painted.

- Colony Oaks Basketball– Cracks filled and painted.
- Erb Tennis - Surface repairs and painting.

Fencing

- Hoover - small diamond had line fence and backstop repair.
- Telulah– Baseball diamond line fence and backstop repair.
- MSB– The main security gate was replaced due to cracking in the frame of the original.
- Field 1, Memorial Park – Outfield fence and backstop repair after a car damage.
- Fire Station 6– Heaved training area gate posts replaced.
- Miracle League Diamond – Outfield fence fabric replaced. Line fabric replaced after surfacing repairs.

Landscape

- Police Department - Bed on south side of building was planted.

Striping

- Lots at Memorial, Alicia, Vulcan Heritage, Telulah, and Scheig Center were restriped.
- Colony Oaks tennis had lines freshened up.

Signage

- The directional signs through Memorial Park were updated.

Contracted Services

- P&C Portables – Supplied/serviced portable toilets for 2024.
- B&V Maintenance – Contracted to mow South Point Commerce Park and Northeast Business Park.
- TrueGreen – Herbicide application at Fire Stations, Lake Park, and College Ave.
- ASR Property Services – Snow removal at the Police Station.

Operation Projects

Erb North Tennis - Court was opened up and drain tile was installed.

Police Impound Area – Fencing was repaired, fence posts and fabric were pounded back down.

Universal Playground – Surface repairs were made.

Jones Park ramp railing – Car damaged railing was replaced.

Playgrounds – Staff removed the existing playground, excavated the site, and placed mulch and perimeter timbers at Green Meadows and Highview Parks.

Telulah Kayak Kiosk – Staff excavated, formed and poured a concrete slab for the installation of a kayak kiosk.

Erb Park Fitness Station – Staff excavated, formed, poured a slab, and installed a fitness station at Erb Park.



Park and Recreation Shop – Another material bin was added.

Memorial Park Field 6 and 7 – Staff removed existing dugouts for contractor to pour new slabs and walks.

Wastewater Plant – Staff has made perimeter fencing repairs and removed brush, branches, and vines from fence.

Memorial Ball Diamonds – Erosion socks were purchased to install around the infield perimeter of Fields 1-4. This will reduce the amount of ball diamond mix that is washed off the diamonds during heavy rains.

Scheig Prairie – Staff burned the prairie this fall.

Reid Sled Hill – Staff installed a section of chain link fence along the ravine woods to keep sledders from hitting trees.

Planters rebuilt at the Scheig center.

Annual Responsibilities

- Daily cleaning of 31 parks, pavilions, and rest rooms.
- Mowed 424 acres of turf.
- Maintained 13.25 miles of trails.

- Snow removal for Fire Stations, Wastewater, park lots, sidewalks, trails, water towers, and lift stations.
- Maintained ice rinks at Pierce, Erb, Highview, and Jones Parks.
- Graffiti/vandalism removal and repair.
- Park benches and tables were repaired and refurbished.
- Low branches that interfere with mowing removed.
- Landscape beds mulched, weeded, and cleaned up.
- Invasive plants removed or treated.
- North side parks and all sports fields were treated for broadleaf weeds and fertilized.
- Areas we are responsible for snow removal were staked.
- Hockey dasher boards were set up at Jones and Pierce Parks.
- Rinks were flooded and maintained for a short time.
- Cross country ski trails were groomed at Reid Golf Course and Appleton Memorial Park.
- Fire Department, Wastewater, and park lots plowed for snow. Trails and sidewalk routes cleared of snow.
- Soccer, tennis, and pickleball nets installed in the spring and removed in the fall.
- Sport courts inspected, maintained, and kept free of debris.
- Park shade sails installed in the spring and removed in the fall.
- The ADA kayak launches at Lutz and Telulah Parks are installed in the spring and removed in the fall.
- The bases from 17 ball diamonds are installed in the spring, removed in the fall, and cleaned up/repared over the winter.
- 17 ball diamonds dragged and maintained for Little League, Recreation, Adult League, and weekend tournaments.
- Preventative maintenance and repairs were performed on the powered security gates at MSB, Wastewater, Water, PD, and Valley Transit.
- Recreation programming equipment was delivered and returned as needed throughout the year.
- Picnic tables were delivered and returned for various internal and external events.
- 29 playgrounds inspected monthly, and repairs made.
- Playgrounds top dressed with mulch.
- Mulch, topsoil, and rock salt delivered to the Fire Stations when requested.
- Sports fields and high use areas were aerated.
- Soil samples taken and tested.
- Snowplow damage repaired.
- Maintained archery range and targets.
- Treated medians, roundabouts and other hard surface cracks with herbicide.
- Maintain irrigation at Erb Pool and Memorial Park diamonds.
- Remove and dispose of homeless encampments.
- Maintain the flags at College and Memorial, Veteran's Park, and by the "Doughboy".

Special Events

The Grounds Division works with many special event organizers to make their event successful for

residents and visitors.

- Sky Dance
- African Heritage, Inc.
- Jaycees
- ADI
- YMCA
- Soul Burner
- Art in the Park
- Irish fest
- Octoberfest
- Special Olympics

Grounds Division Collaborative and Volunteer Projects

- The Friends of the Scheig Center Gardens continued relationship for labor and expertise in maintaining the gardens.
- Coordinated workdays with the various Adopt a Park groups.
- Coordinated with school groups, and scouting troops to pick up litter, sticks, trail clean up and Eagle Scout projects.
- Continued sharing of equipment with the Department of Public Works.

Training

- Grounds Technician recertified as a Certified Playground Safety Inspector.
- Grounds Staff received First Aid and CPR training.
- Grounds Staff received chain saw and tree felling training.
- Grounds staff received a refresher with a payloader for winter salt loading.
- Three staff attended a workshop on Woody Invasive control.
- Two Grounds Staff attended “Salt Wise” training on the proper application of road salt.
- LEARN Training