



Staff Report

March 2, 2026 Council Workshop Meeting

2025 Hometown Holidays Debrief and 2026 Parks & Recreation Special Events Preview

Presenters: Chris Witkowski, Parks & Recreation Director, & Jacquie Hill, Parks & Recreation Coordinator

Time Estimate: 15 minutes

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BACKGROUND: City of Camas Parks & Recreation has a long history of hosting special events, some dating to over 30 years. Hometown Holidays, hosted every first Friday in December, is the largest of the events and regularly sees attendance of over 3,000 people. Other events of long-standing tradition round out the year with festivities occurring in all four seasons. Despite past successes, the department is on a path of continuous improvement and is expanding and diversifying its event portfolio.

SUMMARY: Hometown Holidays was held on December 5, 2025 and continued its tradition of community holiday spirit. Though many of the traditional event features were maintained, a few new additions were provided, including:

- Sensory Friendly Santa Experience
- Live Reindeer
- Candy Cane Lane

Event metrics showed that 2025 had the highest post-pandemic attendance. Specifics include:

- 4,500 total attendees
- 3,200 attended the tree lighting
- 43% came from outside Camas
- 800+ visited Santa's tent
- 850+ utilized the event shuttle
- Average length of stay per participant was 75 minutes

Financially, Hometown Holidays has the highest expense of any departmental event but also the largest sponsorship intake. In 2025, financials were:

- Total Cost: \$51,306
- Sponsorship: \$6,500
- Grants: \$1,750
- Revenue: \$800

- Net Cost: \$42,256

To offer the community year-round activities, Camas Parks & Recreation will continue to provide traditional favorites in 2026, such as Concerts and Movies in the Park, as well as rebranded – yet fan favorite – events such as Camtown Arts & Music Festival (formerly Camtown Youth Festival), SpringFest (formerly Egg Scramble – but yes, Egg Scramble still exists!), and Boo Bash Carnival (formerly Pumpkin Party). New events include Zombie Dash, Leadbetter Walk & Roll, and...drumroll...Crown Park Grand Opening!

BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY: All Camas Parks & Recreation events are free to the public and offer a diversity of activities. With the new and reimagined events, a broader range of community members can participate. Focus has been placed on more recreational opportunities through the Zombie Dash and Leadbetter Walk & Roll.

The 2022 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan identifies the need to continue legacy events while also creating and partnering on new diverse events.

STRATEGIC PLAN: These events align with the strategic goal of Vibrant Community Amenities. They offer community connections and enhance quality of life for citizens.

POTENTIAL CHALLENGES: Adding additional events while maintaining traditional activities can put a strain on resources, particularly budget and personnel. However, sponsorship revenue is increasing to offset budget impacts and the department has a roster of seasonal staff to assist with events.

BUDGET IMPACT: The department has developed a Special Events Sponsorship Package to increase sponsorship revenue. No additional funding is requested through this update.

RECOMMENDATION: This is for Council's information only.