

Manager's Update

raleighnc.gov



Issue 2025-34

August 29, 2025

IN THIS ISSUE

GoRaleigh Transit Assistance Pass

Solid Waste Service - Return to Normal Operating Schedule

Pickleball Expansion Across the City

Weekly Digest of Special Events

Council Follow Up Items

Hospitality Fund Competitive Project Awards (Council Member Patton)

INFORMATION:

City Offices Closed in Observance of Labor Day

Please note City administrative offices will be **closed** on **Monday, September 1** in observance of the **Labor Day** holiday.

Regular Council Meeting Tuesday, September 2 - Afternoon and Evening Sessions

Reminder that Council will meet next **Tuesday** in regularly scheduled sessions at **1:00 P.M.** and **7:00 P.M.** The agenda for the meeting was published on Thursday:

<https://pub-raleighnc.escribemeetings.com/>

Please note there will be a **Closed Session** immediately following the afternoon session of the Council meeting.

Reminder: If there is an item you would like to have pulled from the consent agenda for discussion, please send an e-mail mayorstaff@raleighnc.gov by 11 A.M. on the day of the meeting.

GoRaleigh Transit Assistance Pass

Staff Resource: David Walker, Transportation, 996-3942, david.walker@raleighnc.gov

As Council may recall, the GoRaleigh fixed-route service returned to fare collections in October 2024. With the return to fare collection, GoRaleigh also implemented the Transit Assistance Pass (TAP). The TAP program provides free rides for income qualified passengers on both GoRaleigh and GoTriangle buses. Adults between the ages of 19-64 who qualify for Medicaid or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)/Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) benefits, or have a household income below \$35,000 per year, can join the TAP program.

The program is geared towards ensuring the City's public transit system remains accessible and equitable for all. Raleigh's focus on growing ridership and promoting programs like the TAP have resulted in significant milestones, described below:

GoRaleigh Fixed-Route Service

- **GoRaleigh Transit Assistance Pass (TAP):** Over 18,500 riders have enrolled to date.

Currently, more than 18,500 riders on the fixed-route service are active TAP program participants. From October 1, 2024, through July 1, 2025, approximately 54 percent of all GoRaleigh trips were TAP riders. This equates to over 3,300,000 trips, showing the success of the TAP program. All TAP fares are being reimbursed through the Wake Transit Plan. Prior to the suspension of fares in 2020, GoRaleigh provided approximately 32 percent of trips as fare free through various programs. The TAP program has provided more riders with equitable access to transit.

GoRaleigh Access Service:

- **GoRaleigh Access Transit Assistance Pass (TAP):** Over 1,400 Access riders have enrolled to date.

GoRaleigh Access returned to fare collections in January 2025; the TAP is also available for GoRaleigh Access/ADA program riders.

Currently, more than 1,400 Access riders are active TAP program participants. From January 1, 2025, through July 1, 2025, approximately 59 percent of all Access trips were TAP riders.

Transit staff have worked directly with the Raleigh Commission for Persons with Disabilities to help craft and communicate messaging regarding the return to fares and the TAP program. The GoRaleigh Access program released weekly recorded calls to all Access clients that have not registered for the TAP program to ensure that anyone who is eligible gets registered when they perform a trip booking. Those not eligible for the TAP program may be eligible for a free fare under other programs, such as senior eligibility or agency sponsored services. The Access TAP program and senior fare free eligibility are reimbursable and supported by the Wake Transit Plan and funding made available through the Federal Transit Administration's Section 5310 Program for Seniors and Persons with Disabilities.

Other free programs include the Youth GoPass for those 13 – 18 yrs old. The City has issued over 2,600 Youth GoPasses. Also, seniors 65+ years old ride for free with a senior ID and just over 2,400 senior IDs have been issued.

(No attachment)

Solid Waste Service - Return to Normal Operating Schedule

Staff Resource: Gregory Jenkins II, Solid Waste Services, 996-3475, gregory.jenkins@raleighnc.gov

Solid Waste Services (SWS) collects garbage, recycling, and yard waste from over 127,000 households in Raleigh. Garbage is collected weekly, while recycling and yard waste are collected bi-weekly.

As extreme temperatures begin to subside and the heat index stabilizes, the summer “Beat the Heat” schedule will officially be coming to an end.

Starting September 2, Solid Waste Services (SWS) garbage, recycling, and yard waste collection will return to normal staggered operating hours.

The department will continue to follow the Extreme Temperature Guidelines and monitor weather conditions for any temporary schedule changes. Additionally, the SWS safety team, in collaboration with SWS managers, will monitor temperatures and equip employees with water and personal protective equipment.

Residents should continue to place their carts out the night before and can receive regular updates through the Raleigh Reuse App.

If a customer has any questions about their services, they should get in touch with Solid Waste Services at 919-996-3245 or customercare@raleighnc.gov.

(No attachment)

Pickleball Expansion Across the City

Staff Resource: Ken Hisler, Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources 996-4823 kenneth.hisler@raleighnc.gov

Since 2012, Raleigh Parks has engaged with the pickleball community. What started out as trend sport, being played at one location, has grown to include two dedicated six (6) court, outdoor facilities at Method Road Park and North Hills Park, eight (8) “blended line” locations where the courts accommodate other recreation uses, the most rotatable at Baileywick Park, and as many as twelve (12) indoor locations hosting play on a regular basis. To learn more, go to [Raleigh Parks Pickleball](#). Evaluating the City’s response over the past decade, staff have attempted to provide the supply to meet the demand. That was an uphill climb before the pandemic. Since then, growth in racquet sports, both tennis and pickleball has been significant.

The challenge for Raleigh Parks, and agencies across the country, pickleball remains as one of the fastest growing sports in the United States. According to the 2024 report produced by the Sports & Fitness Industry Association (SFIA)—the “[State of Pickleball: Participation & Infrastructure Report](#)”. Approximately 19.8 million people participated in pickleball in the United States in 2024. This is a 45.8% increase in participants compared to 2023 and 311% increase in participation since 2021. Pickleball is a cross-generational sport. In 2023, players aged 25-34 comprised the largest age bracket. One interesting statistic: an additional one million kids (under the age of 18) joined the sport in 2023 alone. According to the APP, the average player age is just under 35. Gender wise, participants represent 59% male and 41% female.

With more than 100 dedicated outdoor tennis courts and only 12 dedicated outdoor pickleball courts, the popularity of pickleball represents a dilemma (see graphic included with the *Update* materials). Understanding the Raleigh community embraces both activities, over the past year the department has been evaluating opportunities to address the need for more pickleball courts. One of the

most cost and time effective means to accomplish this goal is through the conversion of existing court facilities.

When considering potential conversion locations, there are several variables to include:

- **Program Use** - Raleigh Parks league and program use
- **Community Use** – working with facility staff to learn about the volume of “walk-up” use
- **6+ court facilities** are avoided. 6 courts are the minimum number to support team use required to host matches. The City supports numerous schools and universities across Raleigh.
- **USTA guidelines** – there cannot be “blended lines” on courts that have USTA sanctioned play.
- Do we have locations where **both racquet sports can be accommodated?**
- **Geographic location** – where are there gaps
- **Activation and benefit to the park** – pickleball is an activity that is intergenerational and reaches a broader section of the community than tennis. Pickleball players are at the park all the time. Activity breeds activity and supports keeping negative influences away from the park.
- **Cost** – converting an existing space is significantly less expensive than new construction

Applying the evaluation tools in search of opportunities to add to the inventory of outdoor pickleball courts resulted in two opportunities:

At Carolina Pines, where there are three tennis courts, staff employed a different “blended line.” Rather than simply adding pickleball lines to an existing tennis court, resulting in one (1) new court, staff discovered a different approach that could allow us to create two courts overlayed on a single tennis court. Since a pickleball court is smaller than a tennis court, using a portable net we can establish a court on either side of the tennis net. Taking this approach on two of the three courts, a ninth “blended line” facility with four (4) courts was added. Staff are evaluating this application over the fall to determine if a full conversion is warranted.

A second opportunity that was revealed was the significantly underutilized tennis courts at Sanderford Road Park. Another three (3) court tennis facility revealed the lowest use of any courts in the inventory. Applying program use data with input from the staff that manage the park saw the opportunity to activate this area of the park. The result is the introduction of the largest, public, pickleball space in Raleigh! The ten (10) court facility, that practically doubles inventory, will officially open to the public on August 30. It didn’t take long for the word to get out as Parks are already hosting a pickleball league. The opening on the 30th will focus on providing instruction to beginners, sharing the sport with the local community, and welcoming the larger pickleball community to this wonderful new opportunity.

Public engagement to communicate these efforts included: signage at the courts, parks and in the centers, and engagement from staff on inquiries from the public, which was limited at Sanderford Road. Sanderford Road engagement also included project information on the website. Specific to Carolina Pines engagement included sharing with the Southwest CAC on two different occasions.

Looking forward, staff are eager to add another six (6) court facility at Green Road Park. The new courts are included the park improvements funded by the 2022 bond referendum. Construction should begin later this year and wrap up in the 1st quarter of 2027.

(Attachment)

Weekly Digest of Special Events

Staff Resource: Sarah Heinsohn, Office of Special Events, 996-2200, sarah.heinsohn@raleighnc.gov

Included with the *Update* materials is the special events digest for the upcoming week.

(Attachment)

Council Member Follow Up Items

Follow up from the August 19 Council Meeting

Hospitality Fund Competitive Project Awards (Council Member Patton)

Staff Resource: Evan Raleigh, 996-4656, evan.raleigh@raleighnc.gov

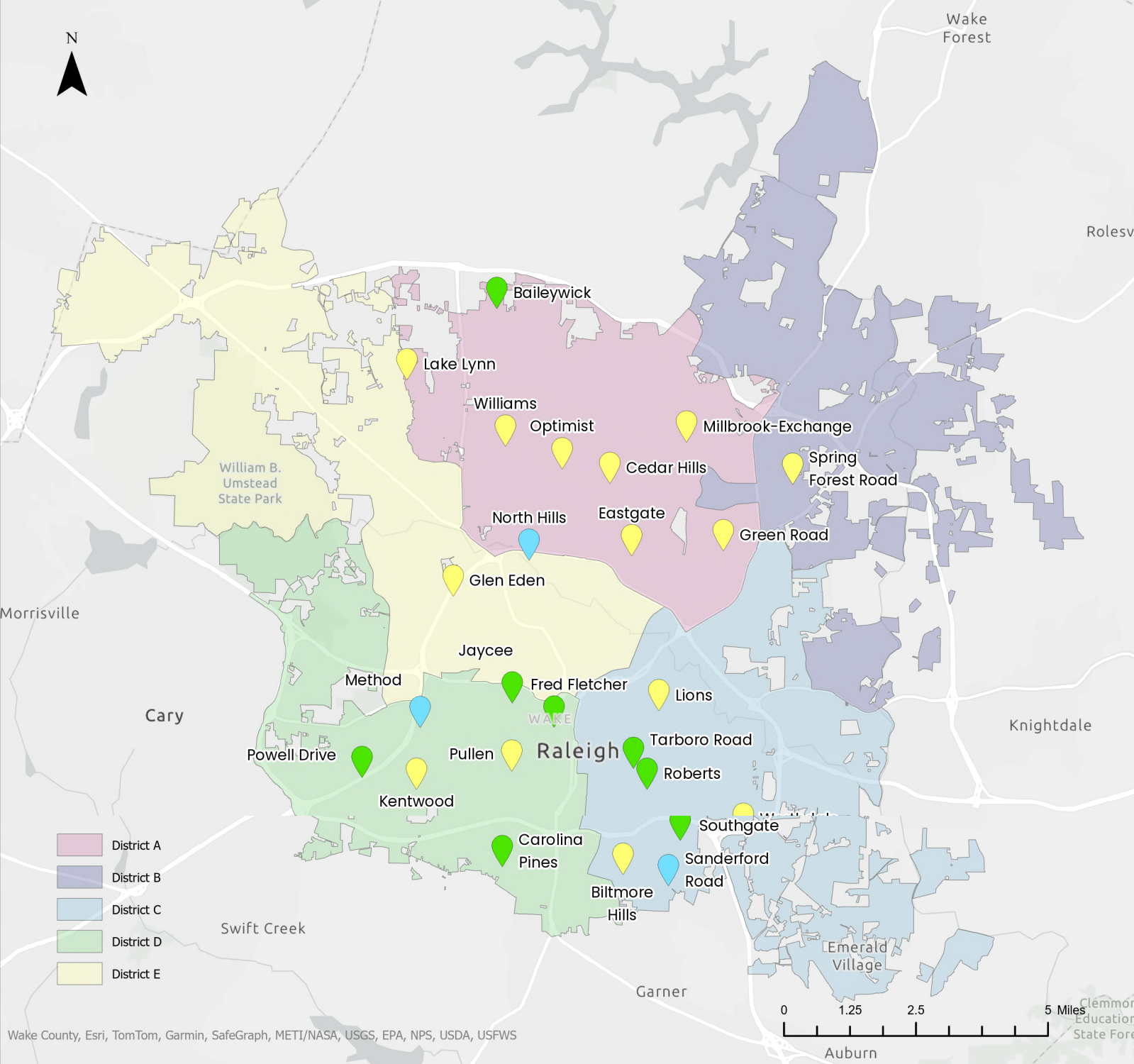
During the meeting, staff was requested to provide historical information related to the Raleigh/Wake County Hospitality Fund's competitive process and to share information on projects that have previously received funding through the process. The competitive process was established in 2013 and, since that time, more than \$20 million in funding has been awarded to projects in this category. The table below lists the projects that have received funding since the establishment of the competitive process:

Wake County Hospitality Taxes				
FUNDED Competitive Project Awards: 2013-2025				
Project Location	Awardee	Year*	Award**	Project
Apex	Town of Apex	2017, 2022	\$ 2,300,000	Pleasant Park Phases I and II
Cary	Town of Cary	2016	\$ 1,067,150	Enhancements for WakeMed Soccer Park and Cary Tennis Park
Cary	Town of Cary	2017	\$ 400,000	WakeMed Soccer Park Lighting System Improvements
Cary	Triangle Aquatic Center	2017	\$ 1,250,000	Triangle Aquatic Center
Fuquay-Varina	Town of Fuquay-Varina	2016	\$ 500,000	Fleming Loop Park
Garner	Town of Garner	2022	\$ 2,000,000	Yeargan Park
Holly Springs	Town of Holly Springs	2013	\$ 1,000,000	North Main Athletic Complex (Ting Park)
Holly Springs	Town of Holly Springs	2022	\$ 2,300,000	Cass Holt Rd. Recreation Facility (Eagles Landing Park)
Knightdale	Town of Knightdale	2017	\$ 1,000,000	Wake Stone Athletic Park
Morrisville	Ammons Building Corporation	2013	\$ 3,000,000	Wake Competition Center
Morrisville	Town of Morrisville	2016	\$ 258,000	Church Street Park Cricket Field Lights
Raleigh	Marbles	2016	\$ 100,000	Marbles Play-Stallation
Raleigh	Marbles	2022	\$ 600,000	Future of Play Expansion
Raleigh	NC State University	2013	\$ 650,000	Gregg Museum of Art & Design
Raleigh	NC Museum of Art Foundation	2016	\$ 1,050,000	NC Museum of Art Park Expansion
Raleigh	Friends of the NC Museum of Natural Sciences	2017	\$ 500,000	Dueling Dinosaurs Exhibit
Wake Forest	Town of Wake Forest	2016	\$ 344,935	Renaissance Centre
Wendell	Town of Wendell	2022	\$ 1,800,000	Athletic Field Complex
18 Total Projects Funded Since the Start of Competitive Funding Cycles			\$ 20,120,085	
*Year Funding Process Opened				
**Interlocal Funds Awarded (Not Total Project Budget)				

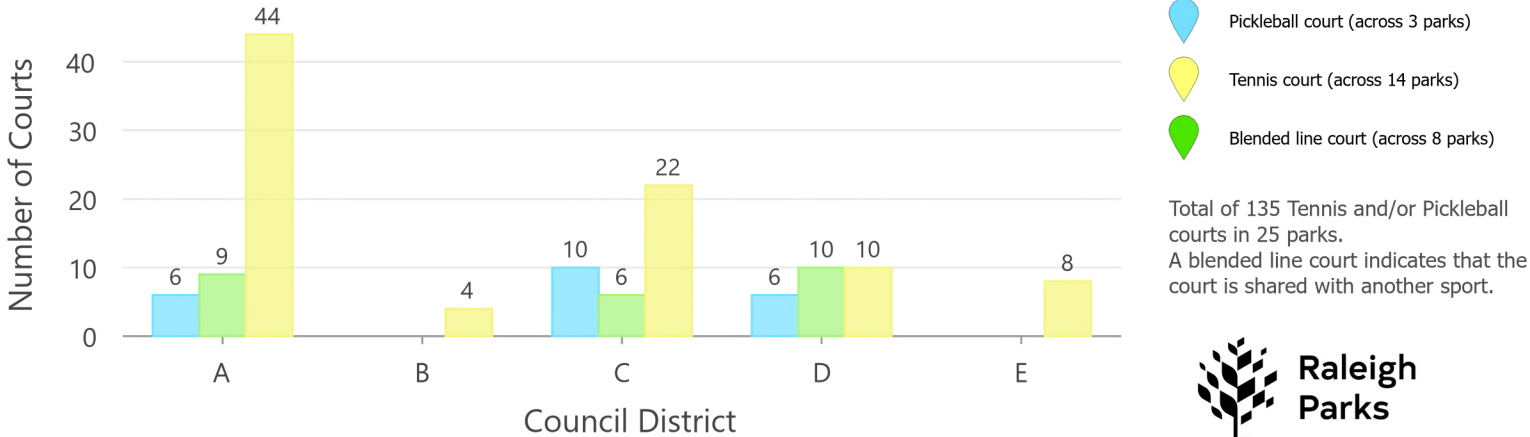
As part of the 21st Amendment in 2019, a Medium Competitive Capital Projects Fund was established and committed a total of \$46.6 million to support a competitive award process for projects in this category. Medium Capital Projects were defined as those with a total capital value of more than \$20 million. The Medium Competitive Capital Projects process was cancelled as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the 22nd Amendment eliminated the funding previously allocated to the Fund. The 23rd

Amendment set aside \$23.5 million to be competitively awarded to projects throughout Wake County that impact sports, arts, culture, and convention-related activities and encourage visitor spending. This competitive process will launch in September with final award decisions anticipated to be made by the City Council and Board of Commissioners in early 2026.

(No attachment)



Outdoor Tennis and Pickleball Courts by Council District



Weekly Events Digest

Friday, August 29 – Thursday, September 4

City of Raleigh Office of Special Events
specialevents@raleighnc.gov | 919-996-2200 | raleighnc.gov/special-events-office

Permitted Special Events

[African American Cultural Festival of Raleigh & Wake County](#)

Fayetteville Street District

Saturday, August 30 & Sunday, August 31

Event Times: 11:00am - 10:00pm on 8-30-25; 10:00am - 9:00pm on 8-31-25

Associated Road Closures: Fayetteville Street between Davie Street and the south end of City Plaza will be closed from 6:00pm on 8-29-25 until 3:00am on 9-1-25. Martin Street between Fayetteville Street and S. Wilmington Street will be closed from 10:00pm on 8-29-25 until 3:00am on 9-1-25. The following roads will be closed from 3:00am on 8-30-25 until 11:45pm on 8-31-25:

- Fayetteville Street between Morgan Street and Davie Street
- Davie Street between S. Salisbury Street and S. Wilmington Street
- Martin Street between Fayetteville Street and S. Salisbury Street
- Hargett Street between S. Salisbury Street and S. Wilmington Street

[End of Summer Block Party](#)

Gipson Play Plaza at Dix Park

Saturday, August 30

Event Time: 1:00pm - 11:00pm

Associated Road Closures: The following roads will be closed, and Harvey Hill will be used from 9:00am until 12:00am:

- Cranmer Drive between Palmer Drive and Umstead Drive
- Middleton Drive between Umstead Drive and Palmer Drive
- Black Drive between Middleton Drive and Palmer Drive

[Hopscotch Music Festival](#)

Fayetteville Street District & Moore Square

Thursday, September 4 - Saturday, September 6

Event Times: 4:00pm - 11:00pm on 9-4-25 & 9-5-25; 2:30pm - 11:00pm on 9-6-25

Associated Road Closures: Fayetteville Street between Davie Street and the south end of City Plaza will be closed, and Market Plaza will be used from 2:00pm on 9-3-25 until 3:00am on 9-7-25. Martin Street between S. Salisbury Street and Fayetteville Street will be closed from 10:00am on 9-4-25 until 3:00am on 9-7-25.

Other Upcoming Events

[Orchestra Noir](#)

Friday, August 29

Memorial Auditorium

[Sanderford Road Pickleball Grand Opening](#)

Saturday, August 30

Sanderford Road Park

[Averly Morillo](#)

Saturday, August 30

Memorial Auditorium

Caamp

Saturday, August 30
Red Hat Amphitheater

Disney Descendants/Zombies

Sunday, August 31
Lenovo Center

Chevelle with Asking Alexandria & Dead Poet Society

Wednesday, September 3
Red Hat Amphitheater

Jessie Murph

Thursday, September 4
Red Hat Amphitheater

The Wheels on the Bus

Through Sunday, September 7
Raleigh Little Theatre

Public Resources

Event Feedback Form: Tell us what you think about Raleigh events! We welcome feedback and encourage you to provide comments or concerns about any events regulated by the Office of Special Events. We will use this helpful information in future planning.

Road Closure & Road Race Map: A resource providing current information on street closures in Raleigh.

Online Events Calendar: View all currently scheduled events that impact city streets, public plazas, and Dix Park.