

Mall/Concourse Monthly Report May 2012

Cooperation is the word of the month at Mall/Concourse. Whether between city agencies, with private contractors, or between sections of the Parks Division itself, cooperation is really what allows things to get done downtown. We're grateful for all our partners, both public and private.

May is the month when downtown activities seem to explode – after a quiet winter and early spring, suddenly we have big events every weekend. In addition to the events held wholly in the downtown area, we also have many runs and walks which begin around the Square. This often entails street closures, bus detours, delivery of equipment, and Police Department staffing, and it is truly a city-wide effort to ensure that the events run efficiently. Unfortunately again this year we have the challenge of construction on the Capitol Loop, but temporary solutions are constantly being worked out. We do look forward to the new and improved street surface.

Ride the Drive was held the first Sunday in June. This was, as always, a great example of coordination and cooperation. Dane County even gets involved with this event, as they loan us their Showmobile.

Much of our summertime focus is on the care and oversight of plants. The first flowers of spring, the pansies in the planter tubs, are still doing well. Their watering is another cooperative effort with little help from the rain this spring, and they've seen very little vandalism compared to past years. The pansies will be replaced by summer annuals in late June - planted by Olbrich Staff, tended by Parks interns, and watered by contractors and Mall/Concourse staff. Unfortunately there will be no hanging flower baskets this summer, as the funding for this addition has run out.

Also doing well are the new ornamental plantings in the State Street and Capitol Square beds. We were afraid that they would be promptly trampled, but so far people seem to be respecting the plants. Thanks to Jeff Epping for planning, ordering, and laying out these plants. They were then planted by Doug Duran of Lone Oak Enterprises. Mall/Concourse and Facilities Maintenance programs and maintains the irrigation system, and Doug continues to be otherwise responsible for the care of these plants.

We look forward to many events in the remainder of June, including the continuing Farmer's Market, Safety Saturday, the patriotic Flag Day ceremony and performance of the Capitol City Band, and the first installment of Concerts on the Square.