



**ST. JOSEPH SPORTS COMMISSION & JUNIOR LEAGUE OF ST. JOSEPH SET TO HOST
4th ANNUAL ST. JOSEPH MARATHON
PRESENTED BY GRAY MANUFACTURING
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2026**

For Immediate Release: Tuesday, September 12, 2026
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With the calendar reaching the fall months, participants of all ages and skill levels are preparing for an annual tradition as the St. Joseph Sports Commission in conjunction with the Junior League of St. Joseph are set to host the 4th Annual St. Joseph Marathon presented by Gray Manufacturing on Saturday, September 26.

While formally called a marathon, in addition to the full 26.2 mile race, the event also features a half marathon (13.1 miles), 10K race (6.2 miles), 5K race (3.1 miles) and a five-person marathon relay team event that incorporates the full route. The full marathon, half marathon and relay portion of the event begin at 7 AM while the 5K and 10K portions begin at 7:30 AM.

“Hard to believe this our fourth annual race in which this event is starting to become an annual tradition year after year for many” said St. Joseph Sports Commission & Race Director Brett Esely said. “When we started this concept back in the spring of 2022, I think we thought it had a chance to a popular event on the race calendar but had no idea of the growth factor, I’m pleased to report that we have enjoyed record registration this year and will welcome nearly 700 runners to the starting line this Saturday!”

The tourism factor with running events is significant all over the country and will be felt here in St. Joseph as well. Currently there are runners signed up from 20 states to include: Alabama, Arizona, California, Colorado, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Texas and Virginia to name a few with the estimated economic impact of the event being \$205,000.

“We continue to receive lots of positive feedback and testimonials from our participants year after year,” Esely said. “We have focused heavily on the hospitality aspect, providing ample volunteers in which the buy in from all involved has been humbling and noticed by our runners out on the route on race day.”

Civic Center Park located behind City Hall will once again serve as headquarters for the event which will feature pre and post-race activities for participants along with their families, friends and spectators who attend the day’s events with the start/finish line being located on Francis Street. The Post Race Chill Out presented by Hy-Vee (which is open to the public) will feature live music, food, drink and assorted vendors. Popular country cover band Rob Milligan and the Fatt Rascals will perform postrace.

The out and back race route incorporates just over 14 unique city miles much of which showcases our cities history, landmarks and the beauty of our historic parkway system

stretching from Francis Street, 4th Street, Corby Parkway, Northwest Parkway, Northeast Parkway, Ashland Avenue, Noyes Boulevard, Parkway A and Southwest Parkway which will be completely closed during the duration of the race and controlled/monitored by uniformed officers from the St. Joseph Police Department and Buchanan County Sheriff's Office along with more than 300 volunteers representing various entities in the community.

Several crossing streets will remain open during the duration of the event. While additional intersections may be passable, below are suggested crossings along the race route:

Mile 1 & 26: North 4th Street & Faraon St.
Mile 2 & 26: North 4th Street & Auguste St.
Mile 4 & 5: Northwest Parkway & Ferndale
Mile 7: Ashland Ave. & Gene Field Rd.
Mile 8: Ashland Ave. & Oakland
Mile 8: North Noyes Blvd. & Frederick Ave.
Mile 9, 20, 21: Noyes Blvd. & Faraon St.
Mile 9, 20, 21: Noyes Blvd. & Jules St.
Mile 9, 20, 21: Noyes Blvd. & Messanie St.
Mile 10 & 19: Noyes Blvd. & Mitchell Ave.
Mile 10 & 19: SW Parkway & Duncan St.
Mile 11 & 18: SW Parkway & S. 28th St.
Mile 12 & 18: SW Parkway & 22nd St.
Mile 13 & 17: SW Parkway & 11th St.
Mile 14 & 15: SW Parkway & Mansfield Rd.
Mile 22: Corby Parkway & Ashland Ave. (way in only)
Mile 22: NE Parkway & Cornell Ave. (way in only)
Mile 23 & 24: NE Parkway & Indian Trail (way in only)

Estimated end times for the respective races are as follows:

5K Race: 9:55 AM
10K Race: 10:03 AM
Half Marathon: 11:33 AM
Full Marathon & Relay: 12:45 PM

Route management of the race will conclude at 1 PM in which streets along the route will gradually reopen normally as the last runners pass through the respective areas. A complete timing chart and route maps may be found on the race website at stjomosports.com/marathon.

"This route, while challenging in spots for participants, has a lot of strengths. Not only will it be beautiful on an early fall morning, but is also very manageable as other than a few instances, if residents need to travel around the route during the time of the race, they will be able to do so under mostly normal circumstances," Esely mentioned. "We will continue communication in these areas in various ways up until race day and greatly appreciate the flexibility and patience of all involved."

Participants may sign up for all distances of the race through September 25 at stjomosports.com/marathon. Registration will not be allowed on race day. Those interested in volunteering for the race may also sign up at the race website. Opportunities include: route management, assisting at aid stations or in Civic Center Park on race day.

“There are a number of moving parts with an event like this, we are extremely grateful for the many entities that have bought in to making this event a success including our co-host the Junior League, our title sponsor Gray Manufacturing, along with multiple departments from the City of St. Joseph, Buchanan County, medical personnel from multiple entities, law enforcement, our supporting sponsors and countless volunteers who are extremely giving of their time,” Esely stated.

The St. Joseph Sports Commission is a division of the St. Joseph Convention & Visitors Bureau.