



CITY OF COLUMBIA HEIGHTS ANNUAL REPORT

2020

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COLUMBIA HEIGHTS
REDISCOVER THE HEIGHTS

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OVERVIEW

In 2020 ...

...more than 11,380 residents in Columbia Heights voted in the general election, about 89% of the City's total registered voters, roughly 10% higher than the state average. Amáda Márquez Simula won the mayoral race, while Connie Buesgens (incumbent) and Kay "Kt" Jacobs were the top-two vote-getters for the two at-large City Council seats.

...the deputy director of the League of Minnesota Cities presented the Columbia Heights City Council with the League's 2020 Sustainable City Award this fall. The Sustainable City Award is given each year by the LMC to a single city that has implemented a project, program, or initiative that helps the city achieve its sustainability goals through implementation of one or more of the GreenStep Cities' 29 best practices. Columbia Heights received the award, along with a check for \$1,000, for its curbside organics program expansion.

...Fire Chief Charlie Thompson, who took over as chief in 2019, was named 2020 Employee of the Year for his work on and foresight regarding the City's COVID-19 preparation and response.

...City offices closed for about a month in April due to state emergency orders regarding the COVID-19 pandemic. City staff developed an emergency response plan and most employees returned to work in May, with staff meeting weekly to review safety procedures and keep track of the state infection numbers. Zoom became a primary tool for conducting meetings remotely online.

...the 2020 Outstanding Citizen Award went to active community member Patricia Sowada, who won the award posthumously. Pat "represented community spirit at its finest," wrote Becky Loader, former library director, in her 2020 Outstanding Citizen of the Year nomination form. Loader was one of four who submitted a posthumous Outstanding Citizen nomination for Pat, who sadly died this October at the age of 77. Representatives from her family accepted the award plaque from Mayor Donna Schmitt this fall.

...the annual Truck or Treat event was re-imagined as a drive-through event this year. We estimate about 500 cars and 1000 people came through to see City trucks, police cars, fire trucks, snowplows,



national guard trucks, and a number of other vehicles on display, showing off their lights.

...we counted roughly 150 attendees at the City's first Movie in the Park event in McKenna Park this fall. Folks gathered in social-distanced groups to watch the family friendly flick Abominable. We hope to host more movies in the park starting next summer. Stay tuned!

... the City of Columbia Heights sold the land it owned at Central and 40th to the City's development partner Alatus. Alatus hired Doran Construction to build a mixed-use development project that includes 266 apartments, a café space, and a new city hall at 3989 Central Ave. Construction began in November shortly after the old bank building on the lot was demolished.

It's expected to take approximately 20 months to complete.

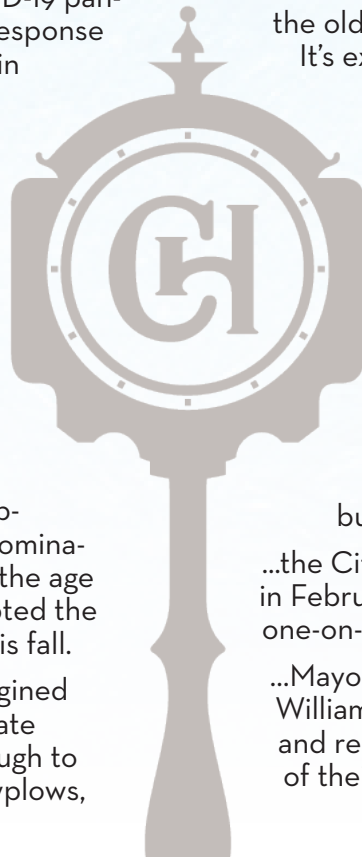
...the City developed a 2021 100th Anniversary Commemorative Calendar using images of Columbia Heights selected from a group of 65 photos submitted as part of our 2020 calendar contest.

...Shop With a Cop saw a record-breaking year for donations. The \$12,000 raised went straight to area families in need; 31 families took part in the program, and 102 children received gifts.

Families were also provided with money to buy clothing and food.

...the City held its second annual City Services Expo in February to provide a chance for residents to meet one-on-one with City staff and ask questions.

...Mayor Donna Schmitt and Councilmember Bobbie Williams attended their final council meeting Dec 14 and received commemorative plaques in recognition of their many years of service.



Below represents just a snapshot of Columbia Heights' 2020 year in images. Find many more photos throughout this report.



...the City launched a new emergency alert system CodeRED to help get critical information directly to residents in the fastest way possible.

...the Economic Development Authority, in partnership with the CHPD, continued its Façade Improvement Grant Program.

...the City won the Silver Award in photography from the MN Association of Government Communicators for its photo series of the Columbia Heights Fire Department's live-burn training.

...with help from a grant from the DNR, Public Works crews completed reconstruction and crucial improvements on the Silver Lake Boat Landing.

...for the second year, the Columbia Heights Police Department accompanied outreach workers from the nonprofit organization Guild as they met with homeless individuals in the City in an effort to connect people experiencing homelessness with housing and other resources.

...Columbia Heights division heads, chiefs, police and fire staff, and other City employees took part in intensive emergency management training this summer to help better prepare the City for handling major emergencies and disasters safely and efficiently. The BowMac Critical Incident Management training culminated with a simulated critical incident event using a model city.

...the Columbia Heights Police Department, in partnership with local organizations, hosted a school drive-through supply distribution & supply donation drive in August.

...the self-response rate for the 2020 Census was 75.1 percent in Columbia Heights, well above the 69 percent national average, and beating the City's 2010 response rate by several percentage points.

...the CHPD continued to reach out to area students,

walkers, bikers, and drivers alike in their ongoing focus on education and community outreach to promote safer public transportation, sidewalks, bus stops, and increased driver safety.

...we received 368 homemade facemasks during a mask donation drive near the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. The masks were delivered to local congregate care facilities short on personal protective equipment.

...Public Works staff planted about 200 trees in Columbia Heights this fall. The trees were made up of 15 types of species, which will help increase the diversity of trees in Columbia Heights and cut down on the impact of invasive species, such as Emerald Ash Borer.

...the Columbia Heights Firefighter's Association (Employee Association) planted a garden at the Public Safety building this summer, and donated the produce to SACA.

...Columbia Heights Team CH-ili won first place (the 2020 Golden Chili Pot) at the annual Chili Cook-Off fundraiser for the Lee Carlson Center for Mental Health and Well-Being early this year. Fire Chief Charlie Thompson, City Manager Kelli Bourgeois, and Police Captain Erik Johnston were all members of Team CH-ili present at the event.

...during the state COVID lockdown, Columbia Heights firefighters, while practicing social distancing, visited several homes of kids and elders who had their birthday parties canceled due to COVID to wish them "happy birthday" and deliver balloons and goodie bags.



2020 Recognitions

Outstanding Citizen

Pat Sowada Named 2020 Outstanding Citizen

Sowada Received Four Nominations, Won Award Posthumously

If you've ever attended a Coffee With a Cop gathering or a library fundraiser, or a Sister Cities meeting, or any number of volunteer events within the City, you've probably rubbed elbows with Patricia Ann Sowada.

"Pat represented community spirit at its finest," wrote Becky Loader, former library director, in her Outstanding Citizen nomination form.

Pat, who died Oct 2 at the age of 77, spent decades actively involved in the community. She received four posthumous nominations for 2020 Outstanding Citizen Award this fall. The nominations were submitted by Renee Dougherty, Columbia Heights Library Director, Catherine Vesley, Library Board Chair, Dolores Strand, Sister Cities Committee Co-Chair, and Loader.

Pat was appointed to the Columbia Heights Library Board in June of 1989. She was a member at-large from 1989-94, vice chair from 1995-2008, and vice chair again from April 2019 on. She was chair of the board from 2009 to 2019.

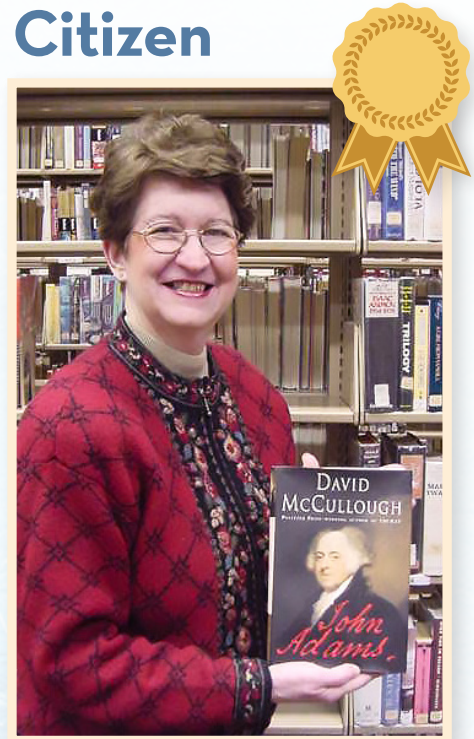
"She was a good listener, a vocal advocate for literacy, and a believer in the power of libraries to build literacy in learners of all ages," wrote Dougherty in her nomination submission. "She carefully considered citizen suggestions, consulted

staff for advice, and always sought to negotiate a middle way amidst conflicting opinions. Her response was always, 'Yes! How can we get this done?'"

Pat was also the membership chairperson for the Columbia Heights Sister Cities Committee. Over the years, Pat made a point to attend as many City events as she could. She almost never missed a monthly Coffee With a Cop gathering. She helped out annually at the Library Foundation's Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser. She once worked as a clerk at the City's Top Valu Liquor. And she used to be an elementary school teacher at Highland Elementary.

We don't have room to list all the many ways Pat was involved, but here are a few more highlights as listed in her nomination forms: Pat crocheted and knitted hats and robes for U of M children's cancer patients. She taught elementary school kids how to knit in after-school hours. She coordinated the exchange of greeting cards with Highland and Lomianki students for 20 years. She was an active member of Immaculate Conception parish and active with Holy Cross Church in North Prairie as music director and organist. She donated pumpkins every year to the Fire Safety Open House. She helped with Heights garden beautification. She decorated and rode on the Library's 90th anniversary parade float. And so much more.

The Outstanding Citizen Award recognizes residents who have selflessly contributed their time and effort to helping people, the environment, and the City community, particularly those who have not otherwise been publicly recognized. Pat was named 2020 Outstanding Citizen with approval from Mayor Donna Schmitt. The City is accepting nominations for 2021.



Top: Pat with the Columbia Heights Library Board, 2019. Bottom left: Pat at a Coffee With a Cop event at the Columbia Heights VFW. Bottom right: Pat with Renee Dougherty and Karen Olson at the 2019 Library Foundation Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser.

2020 Recognitions

Employee of the Year

2020 Employee of the Year Award Goes to Fire Chief Thompson

Thirty-six years ago, the City Council approved the Employee of the Year Award as a method of rewarding employees seen by their peers and supervisors as deserving of special recognition for their accomplishments and contributions to the City of Columbia Heights. In 2020, Fire Chief Charlie Thompson became the 41th employee to receive the honor.

The year was like no other, but it proved particularly challenging for emergency workers and first-responders. Thompson, in his role as Emergency Manager, assembled the City's COVID-19 Emergency Preparedness Plan to keep the City's employees and residents well informed of the ongoing developments and ever-changing CDC data and recommendations. He and his Public Safety colleagues worked with other City departments to address the local impacts of the unfolding pandemic in a comprehensive and efficient manner while keeping the public educated on proper health and safety protocols. This on top of managing the already demanding day-to-day duties of Fire Chief, a position he filled just months before the pandemic hit.

The coworker who nominated Thompson described him as having incredible foresight. In the early stages of the pandemic, for example, before it was clear how serious things might get, Thompson made sure that Columbia Heights had enough personal protective equipment (PPE) for first-responders and other staff by securing a reserve of PPE gear that helped get the City through the national PPE shortage. Additionally, after Gov. Tim Walz asked residents to make and donate face masks to their local fire departments,

Thompson helped coordinate a face mask collection effort in April that resulted in 368 mask donations. He then arranged delivery of the masks to local congregate care facilities short on PPE.

But 2020 wasn't all hardship. Thompson also contributed to the City by offering up his very own chili recipe, which helped the Columbia Heights' Team CH-ili win first place at the annual Chili Cook-off fund raiser for the Lee Carlson Center for Mental Health and Well-Being.

The Employee of the Year nomination review committee is composed of former

Employee of the Year recipients who are still employed by the City. When a

person is selected as Employee of the Year, their name and year of

award is engraved on a large plaque displayed in the Council Chambers. They receive a congratulatory letter, a day off of their choosing (with pay), an article and picture in the City Newsletter, a month-long announcement on the electronic bulletin board outside City Hall, and a featured role in the annual Jamboree parade. On rare occasions, more than one employee is selected in a given year.

On an annual basis, all Columbia Heights employees have the opportunity to nominate themselves or another employee(s) for the award based on three criteria: Public Relations, Consistency of Performance, and Significant Accomplishments.

We congratulate Chief Charlie Thompson for meeting these criteria and being an asset, not just to the Fire Department, but to the community, to our entire workplace, and our lives.



Above: Team Columbia Heights wins the Golden Pot award at the Lee Carlson Center Chili Cook-off fundraiser. From left to right: City Manager Kelli Bourgeois, Chief Thompson, chili judge Shari Mukherjee, and Cpt. Erik Johnston. Below: Thompson gives an acceptance speech at the December City Council meeting after learning he was named Employee of the Year.





ADMINISTRATION

Introduction

The Administration Department is responsible for daily administration of the City, the annual budget, supervision of City departments, human resource functions, the City Code, communications, special projects/events, cable television administration, boards and commissions, City election coordination, event planning, and City Clerk functions.

The City Manager is the Chief Administrative Officer for the City and is appointed by the City Council. The City Manager is responsible for the daily administration of the City, including:

- Appointing and advising division heads
- Enforcing ordinances and council directives
- Preparing the annual budget for council review
- Supervising City Clerk, HR Manager, Communications Coordinator, and all City departments as determined by the City Charter
- Final approval of personnel decisions

The Administration office has six full-time positions: City Manager, Human Resources Manager, City Clerk, Communications Coordinator, Communications and Events Specialist, and Adminis-



trative Assistant-HR.

The City Clerk is the appointed City Council Secretary and is responsible for the preparation, execution, and archiving of all City Council documents as prescribed by the City Charter, City Code, and State law. Elections are also administered by the City Clerk, and 2020 was a big election year, with residents deciding the mayor, two councilmembers, and United States President.

Human Resources provides comprehensive services and support to the City of Columbia

Heights departments and its employees. This year, the HR department had to navigate these responsibilities during a global pandemic and an office shut down in April.

The communications and events staff focus on community engagement through newsletters, website updates, City events, cable, and social media platforms, and assist staff internally with communications related projects. The Events and Communications Specialist position was recently created to support these efforts and help plan the City's centennial year in 2021.

Administration Department Staff

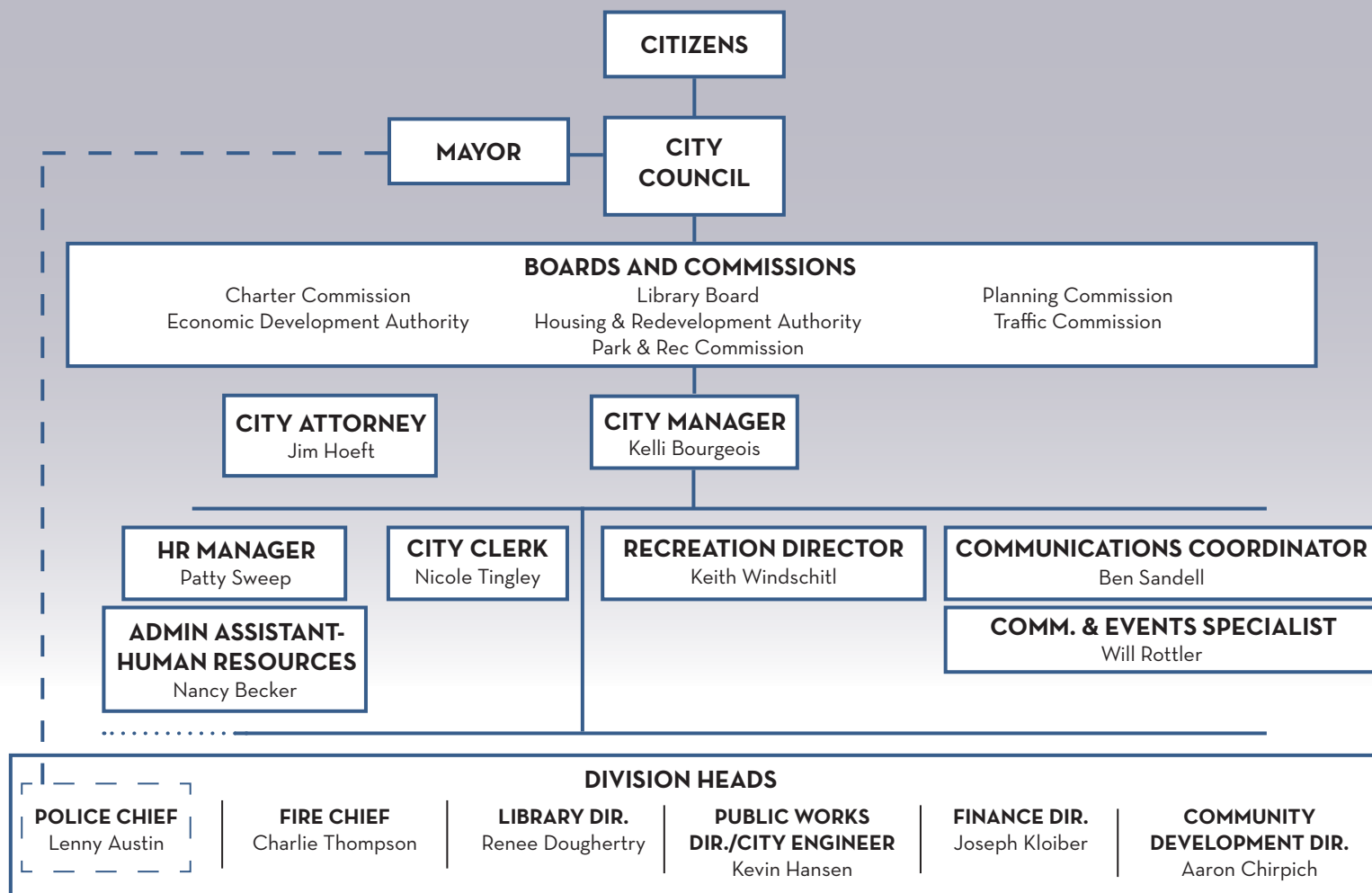
Name	Title	Start Date	End Date
Kelli Bourgeois	City Manager Assistant City Manager/HR Director	Jan 2, 2019, as City Manager July 10, 2014 as HR Director	---- Dec. 31, 2018
Patricia Sweep	HR Manager	July 15, 2019	----
Ben Sandell	Communications Coordinator	April 23, 2018	----
Nicole Tingley	City Clerk	June 17, 2019	----
Nancy Becker	Admin. Assistant for HR	Sept 1, 2015	----
Will Rottler	Communications & Events Specialist	March 16, 2020	----
Adam Davis	Cable Intern	Oct 23, 2000	----



2020 full-time administration employees pose for the holiday Ugly Sweater Contest. From left to right: Human Resources Manager Patty Sweep, City Manager Kelli Bourgeois, City Clerk Nicole Tingley, Admin/HR Assistant Nancy Better, Communications and Events Specialist Will Rottler, and Communications Coordinator Ben Sandell.



ADMINISTRATION



2020 Charter Commission

Steve Smith, President

Matt Abel, Vice President

Bill Hugo, Secretary

Tom Kaiser, Commissioner

Carolyn Laine, Commissioner

Joe Schluender, Commissioner

Kathy Ahlers, Commissioner

Frost Simula, Commissioner

Ramona Anderson, Commissioner

Gregory Sloat, Commissioner

Tyler Eubank, Commissioner

Susan Wiseman, Commissioner

Ben Harris, Commissioner

Rob Fiorendino, Commissioner

Kt. Jacobs, Commissioner

2020 City Council

Donna Schmitt, Mayor

Robert Williams

Connie Buesgens,

Nick Novitsky

John Murzyn Jr.

Sister Cities Committee Co-Chairs

Gloria Bergstrom

Dolores Puente Strand

Human Resources Report

New Hires

Once again, the City experienced several personnel changes this year. Overall, in 2020, the City hired 18 full-time employees (of which 8 were on a promotional basis), 13 part-time employees (of which 2 were on a promotional basis), 8 paid-on-call firefighters, and numerous seasonal and temporary positions.

Years of Service Awards

The following employees were recognized for their years of service:

- **5 Years:** Brianna Belanger (Library), Rosa Boda (Library), Jeri Caron (Fire), Ibrahim Farah (Police), Mohammed Farah (Police), James Green (Public Works), Jessica Kemp (Finance), Benjamin Lund (Public Works), John Murzyn Jr. (Council), David Quady (Public Works)
- **10 Years:** Katie Bixler (Liquor), Renee Dougherty (Library), Kathy Huber (Liquor), Justin Pletcher (Police), Brian Polski (Fire), Steve Saunders (Liquor), William Shutte (Fire), Richard St. Clair (Custodial), Michelle Wermerskirchen (Library)

- **15 Years:** Jason Piehn (Police), Deanna Saefke (Recreation), Sue Sartwell (Finance)
- **20 Years:** Diana Arne (Liquor), Paula Haynus (Finance), Greg Sinn (Police)
- **25 Years:** Lenny Austin (Police), Kelly Fetzer (Public Works), Dan O'Brien (Fire)
- **30 Years:** Shelley Hanson (Community Development)
- **35 Years:** Karen Olson (Police)

Labor Contracts

All six collective bargaining agreements expire Dec 31, 2021. The City began new contract negotiations with all six units in the fall of 2021.

Grievances

No union grievances were filed in 2020.

Furloughs

There were no furloughs in 2020.

Mayor Schmitt and Councilmember Williams Bid Farewell

Mayor Donna Schmitt and Councilmember Bobby Williams held their last official Columbia Heights City Council meeting Dec 14, after 10 years and 20 years of public service on the Council, respectively. They both received commemorative plaques honoring their time with the City. Their last official day as councilmember and mayor was Jan 3, 2021.



Councilmember Nick Novitsky presents Mayor Donna Schmitt with a farewell plaque at her last meeting as mayor.



Mayor Donna Schmitt presents Councilmember Bobby Williams with a farewell plaque at his last meeting as a council member.

City Clerk Report

City Council

The City Council met for a total of 57 meetings in 2020. In 2020, there were 22 regular City Council meetings held, 8 regular work sessions, 7 special work sessions, 1 emergency City Council meeting, and 19 special meetings, which included 1 rescheduled regular City Council meeting, 2 election canvases, 5 public improvement hearings, 6 special assessment levy hearings, and 5 other special meetings. The special work sessions included 4 for board and commission interviews. Council members as of 2020: Donna Schmitt (mayor), Connie Buesgens, John Murzyn Jr., Nick Novitsky, and Bobby Williams.

Ordinances and Resolutions

During 2020, five ordinances were proposed and approved. Of the 117 resolutions requested, 114 were approved, two were removed, and one was tabled for 2021. Rental License Revocation Resolutions accounted for six of the requested resolutions with 4 being approved and two being removed.

Mayoral Declaration

The Mayor declared a local emergency on Fri, March 20, 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This was extended by the City Council through Resolution 2020-39 on March 23, 2020.

Mayoral Proclamations

Mayor Donna Schmitt issued 7 proclamations in 2020 on the following topics:

- March 10, Tibet Day
- April 19-25, National Library Week
- May 10-16, Police Week
- May 17-23, National Public Works Week
- September 17-23, Constitution Week
- October: Domestic Violence Awareness Month
- October: Polish American Heritage Month

Charter Commission

The Columbia Heights City Charter determines the procedures of City government in accordance with state statutes and the MN Constitution. The Charter enables the City to be a self-governing City under the municipal home rule provisions of the Constitution. Under the Charter, the City has adopted the council-manager form of government. Charter commissioners in 2020 were: Steve Smith, Patrick McVary, Rob Fiorendino, Kathy Ahlers, Carolyn Laine, Joe Schluender, Tom Kaiser, Gregory K. Sloat, Kt Jacobs, Ramona Anderson, Frost Simula, Bill Hugo, Matt Abel, Susan Wiseman, and Tyler Eubank.

Elections: 2020 Was an Unprecedented Year for Elections

More than 11,380 residents in Columbia Heights voted in the general election, about 89% of the City's total registered voters, roughly 10% higher than the state average. Amáda Márquez Simula won the mayoral race, while Connie Buesgens (incumbent) and Kay "Kt" Jacobs were the top-two vote-getters for the two at-large City Council seats. In the presidential primary, 3,670 ballots were cast by residents, and 4,725 ballots were cast in the State/City Council primary.

The 2020 election year was unprecedented. With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic after the Presidential Nomination Primary, election administration and logistics saw many changes. First, the polling places were changed for Precincts 6 and 8 for the State Primary and State General elections. This change was made in response of the State Statute passed in 2020 that enacted "schools must be only used as a polling place when no other public or private location is reasonably available for use as a polling place." Additionally, City staff wanted to provide more space for each precinct as before the 2020 State Primary Election precincts

4 and 6 shared a polling place at Highland Elementary and precincts 7 and 8 shared a polling place at Valleyview Elementary. Precinct 6 moved to the Hylander Center and Precinct 8 moved to ChristLife Church. This change is planned to be permanent.

The City Clerk worked with the Fire and Public Works Departments to change the physical layouts of the polling places to account for social distancing. Additionally, the polling places required extra equipment and supplies including additional tables and Plexiglas to provide physical barriers between election judges and voters, disinfectant supplies including hand sanitizer and surface cleaners, personal protection equipment, and pens for each voter.

The election year started off with the Presidential Primary Nomination election held on March 3. This was the first presidential nomination primary held since 1992 and the first binding presidential nomination primary since 1956. The State Primary Election was Aug 11. And the General Election was Nov 3.

Communications and Outreach

Cable and Recording

Franchise and PEG (Public, Educational, and Governmental) fees received by Columbia Heights from Comcast totaled about \$175,000. The City continues to work with Tightrape Media to schedule and stream cable channel content. In 2020, the City contracted with the video recording company Swagit to record and categorize all City Council meetings. As a Covid-19 precaution, communications staff also set up the Council Chambers to broadcast meetings via the remote meeting platform Zoom to allow residents to participate in the meetings remotely. The City records every City Council meeting and every Planning Commission meeting. Council meetings, informational videos, and bulletins are streamed on local cable channels 16 and 19, and on the City's website.

Newsletter and Recreation Brochure

The City Newsletter was mailed to every household four times in 2020: spring, summer, winter, and fall. Each season, the 12-page document, which is attached to the Recreation Brochure, is mailed to roughly 9,700 households in Columbia Heights, with 3,000 additional copies distributed to the area schools. The City contracted with Lindsey Fuhrman of PixelPoint Design to provide graphic design support. The City continues to contract with mailing company Do-Good to ensure all newsletters reach their intended audience. Nystrom continues to be the print source for the newsletter.

Social Media

The City maintains many social media accounts, including a Youtube channel, a police Instagram and Twitter

account, and Facebook accounts for the Police Department, Fire Department, Library, Top Valu Liquor, and City as a whole. In 2020, the City's Facebook page doubled its followers between the end of 2019 and beginning of 2021, to 2,000 followers. The City continued to contract with the firm ArchiveSocial to keep track of all posts and comments made on the City's social media pages. The City also launched Survey Monkey, and Nextdoor accounts in 2020 to improve interactivity with residents.

Website and Graphic Design

The City continues to contract with Revize to host the City's website and PixelPoint Design to assist with graphic design projects.

Communications and Events Specialist

The City created the new position of Communications and Events Specialist in 2020. Will Rottler started in the position in March of 2020.

Communications Awards

Communications staff produced a City calendar in 2020 for 2021, the first product of its kind created by the City. It went on sale at the end of 2020, and received the top award in the Multi-Page Publication Category from the Minnesota Association of Government Communicators. See page 15 for more info.

The City received a Silver Award in 2020 from MAGC for its photography series of a 2019 CH Fire Department live-burn training event.



City Calendar Created, Photo Contest Held

2021



YESTERDAY & Today

Columbia Heights, MN, 100th Anniversary
Commemorative Calendar

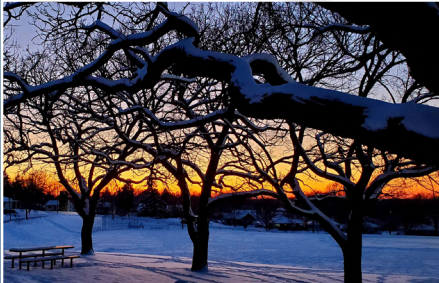


Photo by Todd Kewatt



Photo by Leah Mahoney



Photo by Marie & Keith Photography

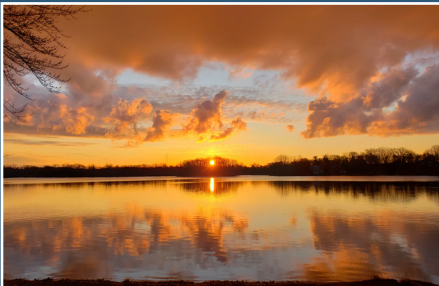


Photo by Susan Plettner



Photo by Matt Markham



Photo by Dave Rudolph



Photo by Mackenzie Krzmarzick



Photo by Steven Nodgaard



Photo by Leah Mahoney



Photo by Steven Nodgaard

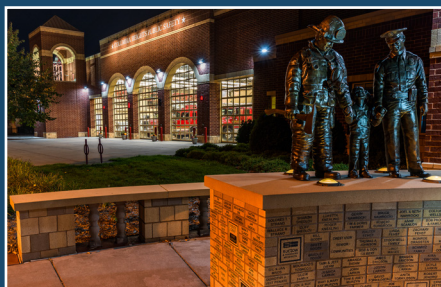


Photo by Steven Nodgaard



Photo by City of Columbia Heights Staff

The City held its first citywide photo contest to collect images for its first City calendar, which went on sale in December of 2020. Thank you to our photo judges: Margo Ashmore, publisher of the Northeastern Newspaper (mynortheastern.com); Paige Kieffer, reporter with Life Newspaper (hometownsource.com); Wendy Maybury, professional photographer (luxarmory.com); Linda Maylish, Columbia Heights art teacher; Craig VanDerSchaegen, professional photographer (craigvanders.com); and Dennis Zerwas Jr, professional photographer (dzpics.com). This Calendar also included historical photos stretching back 100 years. Proceeds for this calendar went to fund 100th anniversary events, activities, and celebrations.

Events

New Events and Communications Specialist

The City Council approved the creation of an events and communications specialist to work with the Communications Coordinator to organize City events, plan the City's 2021 100th anniversary schedule, and help out with day-to-day communications needs. This is the second position within the City focused specifically on citywide communications and outreach. Jodi Griffin was the first to fill this position. Two 100th Anniversary Event Planning committees were created, one made up of City staff and the other of community stakeholders.

Community Events Canceled

We were sad to report that many City events would not move forward due to COVID-19 precautions. The annual Columbia Heights Community Picnic, the Citywide Garage Sale, the Lions Jamboree, including the fireworks and parade, the City Services Expo, National Night Out, Coffee With a Cop, the Canadian Pacific Holiday Train, Heights Pride, and Cheers for Beers were all canceled in 2020. Truck or Treat was still held in a revised format.

Truck or Treat Boo Drive-Thru

Due to Covid-19, Truck or Treat was changed to be a drive-thru event in 2020. We estimate about 500 cars and 1000 people drove through the Huset Park setup to see City trucks, police cars, fire trucks, snowplows, national guard trucks, and a number of other vehicles on display and showing off their lights. The CH Ath-

letic Boosters sold a hot dog, chips, & drink basket and Hopper's sold mini donuts at the start of the route. Community Grounds had set up a display along the route. The Lions donated money for candy and gifts. HeightsNEXT set up Halloween decorations. And the Kiwanis provided volunteers. The Police, Fire, Recreation, Public Works, and Administration City departments coordinated the event.

Movie in the Park

The City held its first Movie in the Park event at McKenna Park Sept 18. We counted roughly 150 attendees. Each group of attendees had their own socially distant viewing section. The CH Athletic Boosters and Northeast Bank donated goodies, and many other volunteers helped run the event alongside City staff.



The City played the family film Abominable at its first Movie in the Park event Sept 18 in McKenna Park. Curbside Productions provided the screen.



Roughly 500 cars lined up to go through our Truck or Treat Boo Drive-Thru event in 2020. The event was held as a drive-thru rather than a walk-up event due to COVID-19 precautions. The route started outside City Hall on Mill Street and wound through Huset Park on Johnson Street.

How a Pandemic Effected City Programs, Events, and Services in 2020

We first heard about COVID-19 in late 2019. The first case appeared in the United States on Jan 20, 2020. An Anoka County resident tested positive for the novel coronavirus on March 10. To help protect our customers and employees, the City of Columbia Heights closed the majority of its public-facing services effective March 17 through June 1, 2020, namely the Top Valu Liquor stores, the Columbia Heights Library, recreation programs, and the Highlander Center. Most facilities reopened by June 8. Most City employees worked remotely during the month of April, 2020, but returned to the office in May.

The Fire and Police departments still responded to calls, though with some limitations on what they responded to in order protect the health of the first-responders. The Fire Chief, Police Chief and City Manager collaborated on a Citywide safety plan. Social distancing and masking signs were placed in all buildings and parks.

The annual Columbia Heights Community Picnic, the Citywide Garage Sale, the Lions Jamboree, including the fireworks and parade, and National Night Out, were all canceled. Wading pools and the Huset Park splash pad also closed for the summer. Truck or Treat continued in a limited capacity, and the City was able to host its first Movie in the Park event in McKenna Park Sept 18.

The Fire Department held a facemask donation event April 25.

We received 368 masks, which were then delivered to local congregate care living facilities for their employees and residents. The statewide homemade mask donation drive was due to an overall shortage of personal protective equipment in the first months of the pandemic.

Covid-19 proved a particular challenge for the 2020 election season. Amid the pandemic, the City held three elections: the presidential primary, the state primary, and the General Election. The City Clerk worked with safety officials to prepare the voting areas for social distancing and other precautions. Many more voters opted to vote absentee than previous years. The increase in dropping off ballots led to many more ballots being processed by the City instead of going to Anoka County Elections directly. There was also a large turnover in election judges. Many election judges did not feel comfortable serving during the COVID-19 pandemic. Furthermore, the number of election judges had to be increased



This social distancing sign was placed in all City parks. It was one of many Covid-19 precaution signs posted throughout the City.

to account for additional cleaning, more curbside voting, and voter safety guidance. Despite the challenges, voter turnout in Columbia Heights was 1.7% higher at 88.97% than the last presidential election in 2016.

Staff found ways to reach out to residents despite the social distancing precautions. For example, the Columbia Heights Fire Department visited homes of kids and elders who had their birthdays canceled due to the pandemic. Firefighters delivered balloons and goodie bags to their homes and wished them a happy birthday. And City Council meetings and election forums were made interactive through Zoom remote meeting technology and better Internet streaming.



Columbia Heights firefighters, while practicing social distancing, visited homes of kids and elders who had their birthday parties canceled due to COVID to wish them "happy birthday" and deliver balloons and goodie bags.



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Introduction

Through community engagement, the Community Development Division strives to better understand the values of the community—both business and residential—and reflect those values in its programs, projects, policies and development standards implemented throughout the year.

Throughout 2020, the Community Development Division Continued implementing the strategic plan adopted by the City Council in 2017. The strategic plan outlined the City Council's vision for the City by 2040, but also the necessary goals and objectives required in achieving that vision. Through aggressive eco-

nom ic development and incentive programs, careful and articulate municipal planning, and appropriate regulatory control over permits and licenses, the Community Development Division ensures alignment to the vision of the City as guided by our Comprehensive Plan.

The Community Development Division is charged with the overall land use planning and development activity within the City, specifically with the implementation, administration, and enforcement of the City zoning code and respective state building codes, but also coordination of economic development activities that both directly and indirectly act as catalysts



for improving the overall quality of life, business vitality, and economic performance of the City.

The Community Development Division performs the following four core functions of the City:

- Planning and Zoning – Long range planning and zoning administration and enforcement, development plan review, historic preservation, and corridor enhancement review.
- Economic Development Department—Business and workforce development, neighborhood stabilization, acquisition and redevelopment.

- Housing Department—Audit duties associated with the HRA’s former ownership of Parkview Villa.
- Building Safety Department—Building, mechanical, and plumbing permitting and inspections, code compliance and enforcement, as well as business licensing.

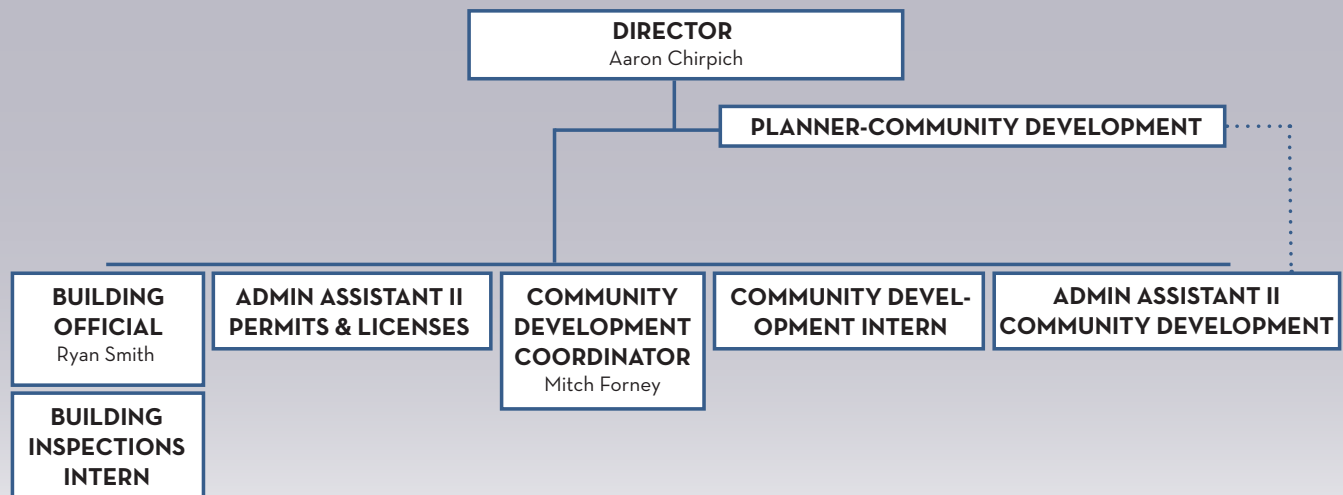
Each core function plays a fundamental role in achieving the City’s vision of ensuring and fostering a safe community; diverse, welcoming “small-town” feel; economic strength; excellent housing and neighborhoods; affordability; and strong infrastructure and public services.

Community Development Staff

Name	Title	Start Date	End Date
Aaron Chirpich	Community Development Director	April 2, 2019	----
Elizabeth Hammond	City Planner	Aug, 2013	Nov 30, 2020
Mitchell Forney	Community Dev. Coordinator	June 6, 2019	----
Ryan Smith	Building Official	Feb, 2019	----
Shelley Hanson	Admin. Assistant	May, 2001	Feb 5, 2021
Christy Bennett	Admin Assistant II	Dec 18, 2019	Nov 23, 2020



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



Planning and Zoning

About the Commission

The purpose of the Planning and Zoning Department is to promote the health, safety, and welfare of the community through administration of the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinances. Department staff works closely with the Planning Commission regarding Land Use Applications, Site Plan Reviews, and amending Zoning Ordinances as needed in the City of Columbia Heights.

The seven members on the Planning Commission are appointed by the City Council to serve in an advisory role concerning land use and zoning items. In 2020, the Planning Commissioners included: Rob Fiorendino, Chair, Eric Sahnaw, Vice Chair, Tom Kaiser, Secretary/Treasurer, Stan Hoium, Mike Novitsky, Adam Schill, Marlaine Szurek, and Mark Vargas. John Murzyn Jr. served as Council liaison to the Planning Commission and Elizabeth Hammond served as its staff liaison.

2020 Planning Commission Highlights

1. Reviewed a Conditional Use Permit for a Brew Pub (Rail Werks Brewing Depot) to be located at 4001 Central Avenue NE
2. Reviewed a Conditional Use Permit for an arcade (Starcade, LLC) to be located at 4001 Central Avenue NE
3. Completed a Site Plan Review and reviewed a Preliminary and Final Plat for an assisted living facility at 3850 Jefferson Street NE
4. Reviewed a Text Amendment relating to Wall Height Limits for Accessory Structures (Ordinance No. 1661)
5. Completed an Interim Use Permit for a Temporary

Fireworks Sales Tent at 4005 Central Avenue NE

6. Reviewed Easement Vacations, Preliminary and Final Plats, and Planned Unit Development for the new Mixed Use/City Hall Project at 3989 Central Avenue NE
7. Reviewed a Conditional Use Permit and Fence Height Variance for Prodeo Academy, a K-8 educational facility located at 4141 University Avenue NE
8. Reviewed the Proposed Acquisition of 4441 Central Avenue NE and Determined Comprehensive Plan Conformity
9. Reviewed the Proposed Sale of 3989 Central Avenue NE, 3889 Central Avenue NE, 950 40th Avenue NE, and 961 Gould Avenue NE and Determined Comprehensive Plan Conformity
10. Reviewed and Denied Appeal Request of City Council Approval of Resolution No. 2020-54 for 683 39th Avenue NE
11. Reviewed a Variance for Side Yard Setback and Minimum Width Standards for 1329 41st Avenue NE
12. Reviewed a Conditional Use Permit for a Wireless Communications Tower and Fencing at 3939 Central Avenue NE

Other Duties

The Planning and Zoning Division also facilitates management and enforcement of the City's Zoning Code. This includes monitoring and correcting zoning violations throughout the City. It also involves administration of the City's Sign Code, including the issuance and review of all Sign Permit applications in the City. Additionally, the City Planner works with residents who face issues associated with FEMA and/or floodplain overlay districts.



Economic Development Authority

2020 Changes and Members

The Economic Development Department is charged with promoting economic development, redevelopment, housing and neighborhood stabilization in Columbia Heights.

The Economic Development Department is responsible for coordination of the EDA. EDA members include the City Council and two appointed members. In 2020, members included: Marlaine Szurek (President), John Murzyn Jr. (Vice President), Connie Buesgens (Treasurer), Robert Williams, Nick Novitsky, Donna Schmitt, and Gerry Herringer. The EDA considers the following goals when making its decisions:

1. Enhance the City's image and enhance community pride by actively promoting the many positive aspects of Columbia Heights.
2. Actively celebrate success in the community through press releases, website publications and other means.
3. Focus on reinvestment for Central Avenue that will contribute to long-term community stability through an increased tax base and business vitality.
4. Establish and manage a comprehensive housing program that will help increase values, manage and reduce the number of single family rental properties, generate a wider range of price point options and encourage reinvestment.
5. Continue to invest and reinvest in City infrastructure as a means to promote growth and shape the community.
6. Sustain and reinvest in residential neighborhoods.
7. Implement the goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan.

Facade Improvement Grant Program

In a collaborative effort with the Police Department and the City, the EDA administered the Façade Improvement Grant Program for a third year in 2020. The purpose of this grant program is to encourage businesses and commercial property owners within commercial corridors to revitalize, rehabilitate, and restore exterior store fronts, but also for the CHPD to provide monitored surveillance along Central Avenue NE in an effort to reduce crime, as well as increase business vitality and economic performance of businesses. The grant program is setup to reimburse businesses or commercial property owners for eligible improvements up to 50% of the total project cost; for a maximum reimbursement of \$5,000. Moreover, if determined by the Police Department that an exterior surveillance system is warranted, the EDA would install surveillance equipment to monitor adjacent businesses and properties, as well as parks and open spaces and City rights-of-way.

Due to the economic impacts of the pandemic, interest in the program was limited in 2020. In total, the EDA received one grant application during the year. This program leveraged approximately \$5,000 in private reinvestment and paid out \$5,000 in public funds in 2020.



Building, Mechanical, Plumbing Permits

Building Safety Department

The Building Safety Department ensures the health, safety, and welfare of the citizens and visitors of Columbia Heights through reviewing both residential and commercial construction plans and inspecting new construction to ensure compliance with State Building and Construction codes. The Building Safety Department is also responsible for issuing and monitoring business licenses. The Building Official serves as department manager for this core functional area.

Building Inspection Data

Approximately 1,672 inspections were conducted.

Permits Issued

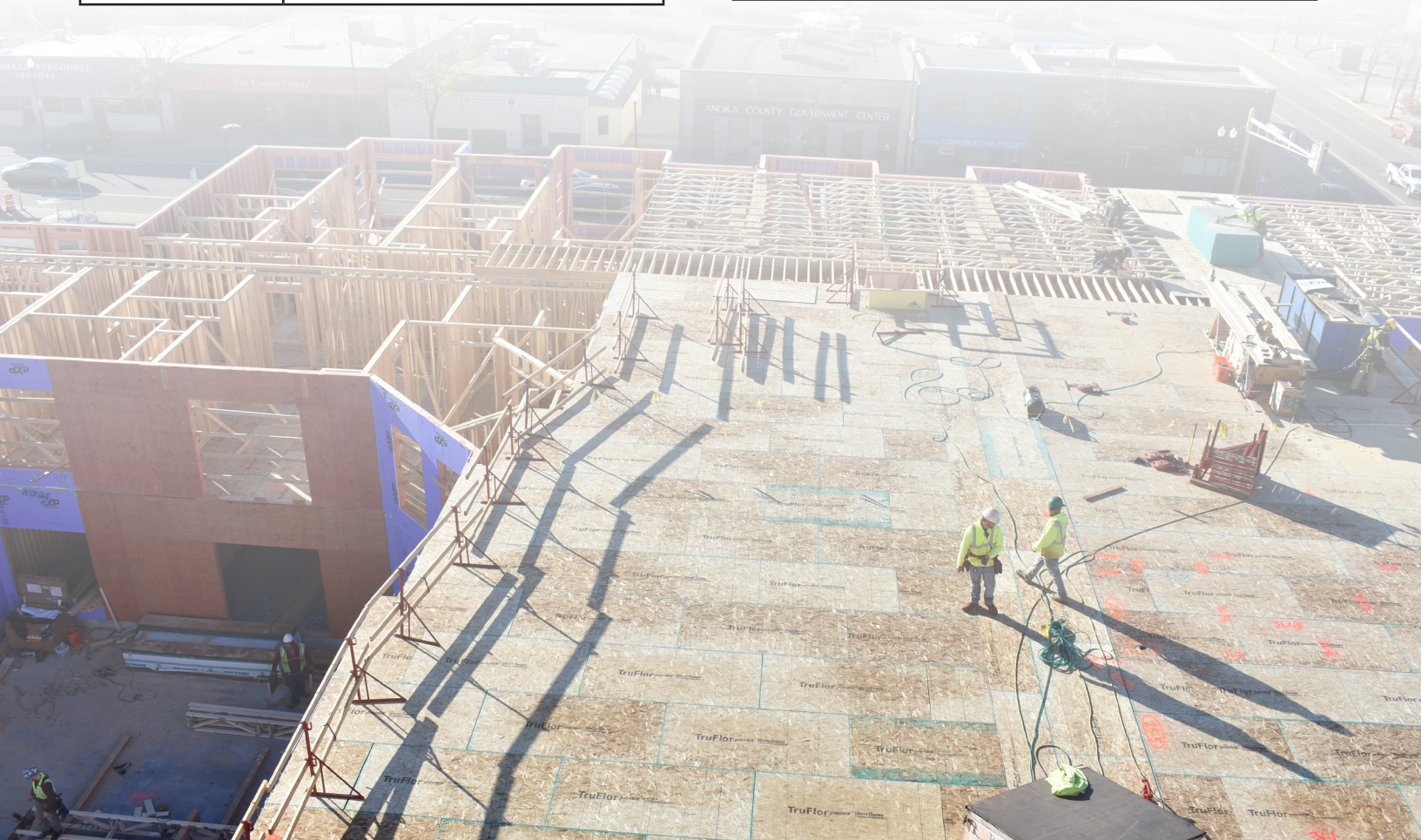
There were 1,139 building permits issued. Large construction projects included Prodeo Academy and the multi-family/mixed use/city hall development at 3989 Central Ave NE.

Permits Issued 2015-2020 *Building, Mechanical, Plumbing*

2015	2,076
2016	1,458
2017	1,434
2018	1,108
2019	1,125
2020	1,139

Permit Valuations *Building, Mechanical, Plumbing*

2015	\$25,476,137
2016	\$35,252,845
2017	\$36,189,715
2018	\$9,095,404
2019	\$14,753,109
2020	\$27,470,181



Housing and Business

Housing Department

The original purpose of the Housing Department was to coordinate the HRA, and oversee the operation and management of a U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) supported multifamily rental housing facility known as Parkview Villa North and South. On September 28th, 2015, the HRA officially sold Parkview Villa North and South to Aeon, a non-profit housing organization in Minnesota, for \$7,470,000. The agreed upon purchase price was structured for Aeon to pay \$885,000 at time of closing and \$6,585,000 on or before December 31, 2047. The deferred portion of the purchase price was by means of a Promissory Note, dated Sept 25, 2015, and amended on Aug 2, 2017.

Since Parkview Villa North and South were the last two properties owned by the HRA, the HRA adopted amended operational bylaws in 2016 to no longer hold regularly scheduled meetings. However, because of ongoing audit and reporting requirements mandated by HUD and the outstanding Promissory Note with the sale of Parkview Villa North and South, the HRA is required to remain an entity even though it no longer owns or operates any property.

The HRA is currently comprised of five members, which include the five City Council Members. In 2019, HRA Commissioners included John Murzyn, Jr. (Chair), Connie Buesgens (Vice Chair), Donna Schmitt (Treasurer), Robert Williams and Nick Novitsky. HRA meetings are no longer regularly scheduled, and are only held if necessary.

HRA staff continues to oversee the necessary reporting and auditing requirements set by HUD for Parkview Villa North and South.

Small Business Relief Grant Program

In response to the economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, the City utilized Cares Act funding that was received from the Federal Government to create the Small Business Relief Grant program. This program provided grants of up to \$20,000 to small businesses that experienced losses related to government mandated shutdowns and general pandemic related business stress. In total, 16 grants were awarded to local businesses totaling \$275,000.

Business Licensing

License Type	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Beer/Liquor	20	21	20	18	18
Contractor	271	252	247	238	235
Other	57	63	60	80	54
Total	348	336	329	336	307

2020 Commission Rosters

Economic Development Authority

Marlaine Szurek, President
Donna Schmitt, Vice President
Robert Williams, Treasurer
Connie Buesgens, Commissioner
Nick Novitsky, Commissioner
John Murzyn Jr., Commissioner
Gerry Herringer, Commissioner

Housing and Redevelopment Authority

John Murzyn Jr. Chair
Connie Buesgens, Vice Chair
Donna Schmitt, Treasurer
Robert Williams, Commissioner
Nick Novitsky, Commissioner

Planning Commission

Rob Fiorendino, Chair
Eric Sahnaw, Vice Chair
Stan Hoium, Treasurer
Adam Schill, Commissioner
Michael Novitsky, Commissioner
Tom Kaiser, Commissioner
Marlaine Szurek, Commissioner
Mark Vargas, Commissioner

City Hall, Apartment Complex Mixed-Use Development at Central and 40th Moved Forward After Bank Building Razed

In fall, 2020, the City of Columbia Heights sold the land it owned at Central and 40th to the City's development partner Alatus. Alatus hired Doran Construction to build a mixed-use development project that includes 266 apartments, a café space, and a new City Hall at 3989 Central Ave. Construction began in November shortly after the old bank building on the lot was demolished. It's expected to take approximately 20 months to complete.

Initial construction work will be focused on excavation, utilities, and foundation preparation. Pile driving is expected to take 3-4 weeks. As the project progresses, the City plans to share additional updates.

More Details and Background

The Columbia Heights City Council voted 5-0 in September, 2019, to authorize the establishment of a new, 20,000 square-foot City Hall as part of a vertical mixed-use development at 3989 Central Ave.

The City Hall will be owned by the City, like a condo, though it will be part of a larger private development. The City has partnered with the Leo A Daly LLC architecture firm to help design the facility.

Locating a new City Hall within the Alatus development has the potential to save the City more than \$6 million when compared to the preferred stand-alone option that had been considered near Murzyn Hall on Huset Park West. City officials conducted a public hearing detailing the two sites in the fall of 2019.

Plans to build a new City Hall have been brewing for several years. The condition of the existing building is such that necessary renovations were expected to cost upwards of \$6-8 million over the next decade.

For preliminary site plans, cost-comparisons, condition reports, and further details, visit www.columbia-heightsmn.gov/newcityhall



Above: Artist rendering of the new 3989 mixed-use development. Below left: Demolition of the old bank building. Below right: Ribbon cutting on new construction site, Nov 12.



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FINANCE

Introduction

The Finance Department is tasked with administering all the financial activities of the City. It also oversees the City's information systems and liquor store operations.

The Finance Division, under the direction of the Finance Director, consists of three departments, each with its own manager:

- The Finance Department provides accounting, financial reporting, budgeting, and treasury services for all functions of the City. This includes the customer billing functions for the City's water, sewer, and refuse services.
- The Information Systems Department provides information technology services for most functions of the City. Depending on the particular technology, the level of service by this department ranges from coordinating with outside vendors to implementing and maintaining systems and projects entirely

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in-house. Example systems include the City's computer network, its telephone system, video security, mobile device management, et cetera.

- The Liquor Department operates three retail liquor stores located within the City of Columbia Heights. Under MN statute, the primary purpose of municipal liquor stores is to control the distribution of alcohol for public

safety purposes. Municipal liquor stores can also generate income for the community, reducing the amount of property taxes otherwise required for City functions. The City's three-store operation has provided funds for City infrastructure and equipment, and for community policing activities such as D.A.R.E. that reduce the potential negative impacts of alcohol.

Finance Staff

Name	Title	Start Date	End Date
Joseph Kloiber	Finance Director	June 21, 2004	----
Jackie Zillmer	Assistant Finance Director	June 6, 2011	----
Mitchell Christensen	Payroll and Financial Analyst Accountant	Oct 5, 2020	----
Stacey House	Payroll Accountant	April 14, 2010	Sept 29, 2020
LeAnn Ottney	Accounting Coordinator	Feb 20, 2002	Sept 29, 2020
Jill Haley	Accounting Clerk II-Utility	Sept 17, 2012	----
Deborah Steffen	Accounting Clerk I-Utility	Oct 22, 1990	----
Heather Schirmer	Accounting Clerk I	Nov 22, 2018	----
Sue Sartwell	Budget Coordinator	Oct 17, 2005	----
Jess Kemp	Accounting Clerk II	Sept 3, 2015	----
Paula Haynus	Receptionist/Cashier (PT)	Sept 17, 2012	----
Aleksandr Chernin	Information Systems Director	Sept 7, 1999	----
Jeff Hanson	Assistant IS Director	Oct 16, 2007	----
Steve Silverdahl	IS Technician	Sept 19, 2011	----
Jason Schulz	Liquor Operations Manager	May 10, 2017	----



FINANCE

DIRECTOR
Joseph Kloiber

ASSISTANT FINANCE DIRECTOR
Jackie Zillmer

INFORMATION SYSTEMS DIRECTOR
Aleksandr Chernin

LIQUOR OPERATIONS MANAGER
Jason Schulz

ASSISTANT I.S. DIRECTOR
Jeff Hansen

ASSISTANT STORE MANAGER (4)

I.S. TECHNICIAN
Steve Silverdahl

FULL-TIME STORE SUPERVISOR (2)
PART-TIME STORE SUPERVISOR (4)

FULL-TIME RETAIL CLERK
PART-TIME RETAIL CLERK (30)

PAYROLL & FINANCE ANALYST
Mitchell Christensen

BUDGET COORDINATOR
Sue Sartwell

ACCOUNTING CLERK II-FINANCE
Jess Kemp

ACCOUNTING CLERK II-UTILITY
Jill Haley

ACCOUNTING CLERK I-FINANCE
Heather Schirmer

ACCOUNTING CLERK I-UTILITY
Debbie Steffen

RECEPTIONIST/CASHIER
Paula Haynus



Finance In 2020

Adjustments

The Finance department underwent several adjustments in 2020 in response to the Coronavirus pandemic. Everyday operations evolved with each stage of the pandemic. Procedures were amended to limit the contact between staff and the need handle documents multiple times.

In addition to these operational adjustments, the department had the following changes:

- Following the December 2019 ERP software demos, two vendors underwent additional due diligence testing as finalists for the new financial, human resources, and utility billing software. The final selection and implementation will occur in 2021. To replace the outdated existing financial, payroll, and utility billing software with a modern enterprise resource planning system (ERP), staff began working with a technology consultant to create a request for information (RFI) from ERP vendors. After the RFI was completed, the five responding vendors provided demonstrations of their software and pricing proposals. Following further review in 2021, staff will present their final recommendation for an ERP vendor to the City Council.
- In 2020, the City updated the purchasing policy. The most significant changes to the policy are; pre-approval by purchase order or by other methods are not required for items under \$3,000; division heads can authorize items under \$3,000; Division heads can delegate purchasing authority of up to \$3,000 to department heads or other subordinates.

ACFR Award

In 2020, the City's 2019 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR) received the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting from the Government Finance Officers Association. This certificate is the highest form of recognition in govern-

mental accounting and financial reporting, representing a significant accomplishment by a governmental unit and its management. The City's most recent ACFRs are available on the City's website.

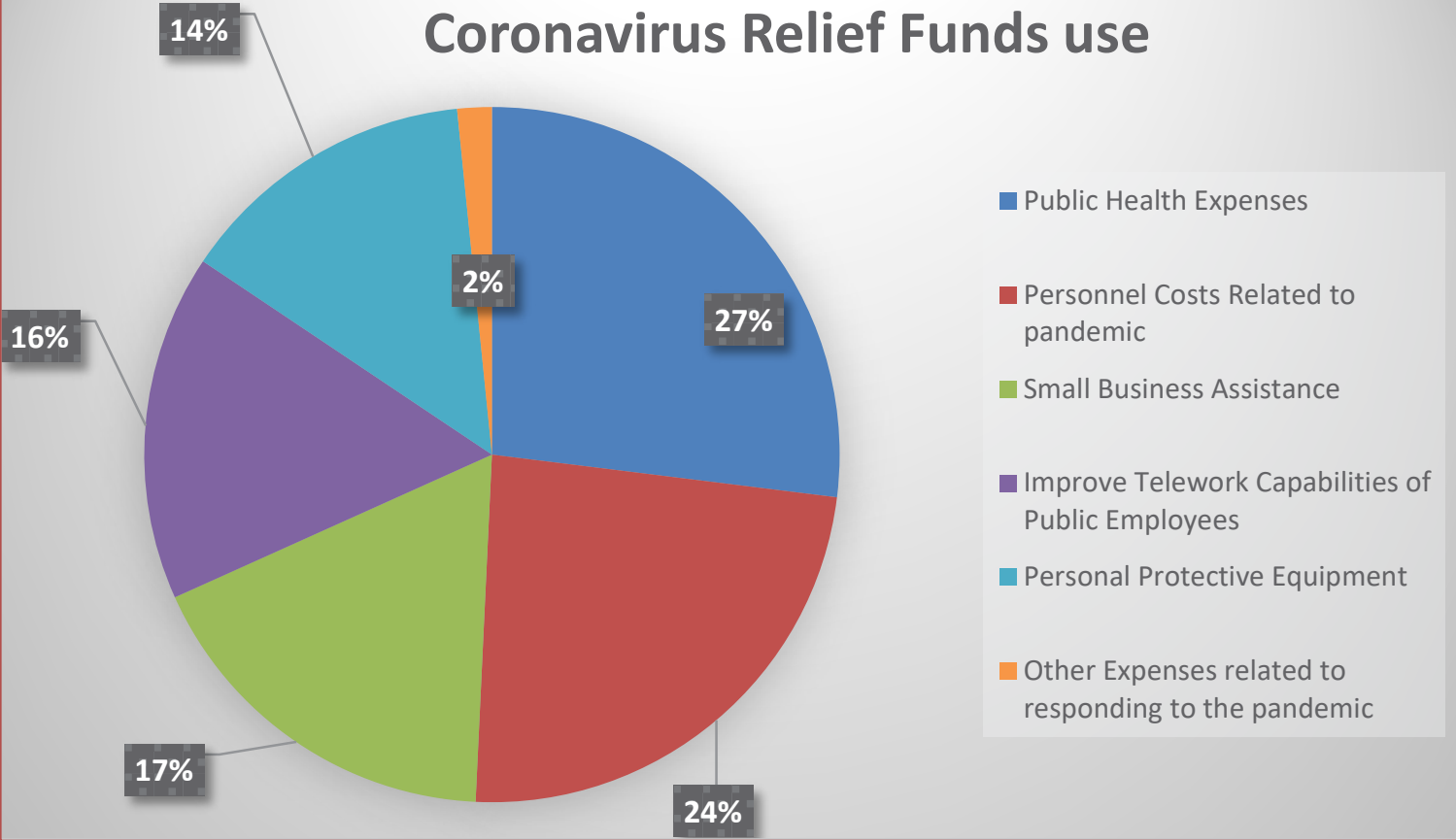
COVID Relief Funds

March 2020, the City received \$1,570,091 in federal Coronavirus Relief Funds (CRF). This award funded necessary expenditures that were incurred due to the public health emergency with respect to Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), not included in the 2020 adopted budget, purchased from March 1 to November 15, 2020. These funds were used for:

- Public Health Expense - these were public safety measures undertaken in response to COVID-19 including, disinfection of public areas, building and other modifications to allow for social distancing.
- Personnel Costs Related to the pandemic - employees whose services were substantially dedicated to mitigating or responding to the COVID-19 public health emergency and wages for employees that were displaced due to building closures.
- Small Business Assistance - grants to small businesses to reimburse the cost of business interruption caused by required closure.
- Improve Telework Capabilities of Public Employees - to ensure compliance with COVID-19 public health precautions that included upgrading IS infrastructure and purchase of devices to allow for remote work.
- Personal Protective Equipment - acquisition and distribution of medical and protective supplies, including sanitizing products and personal protective equipment, for personnel connected to COVID-19 public health emergency.
- Other Expenses related to pandemic response - administrative expense to provide small business grants, communication efforts between staff and residents.

Finance In 2020

Coronavirus Relief Funds use

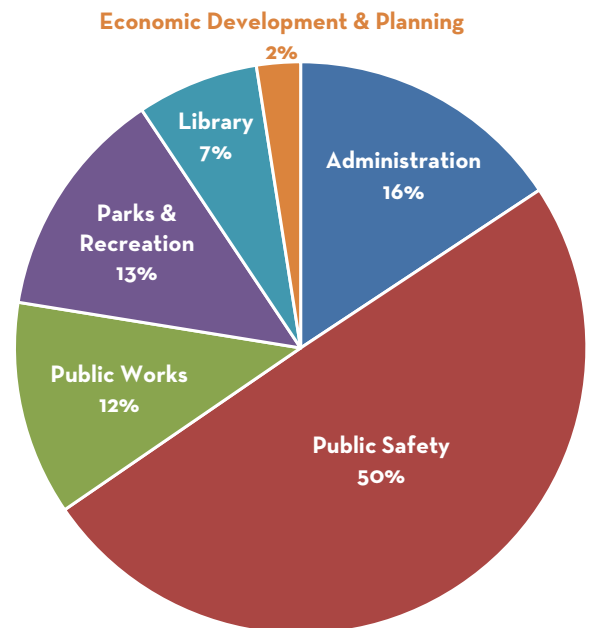


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Proposed 2021 Budget, Share of Property Tax

The proposed 2021 City budget was made available for review online at www.columbiaheightsmn.gov/budget in December. This budget was used by Anoka County to prepare the Notice of Proposed Property Taxes mailed to each property owner in November. Opportunity to comment on this budget continued through the final public meeting for it Dec 14, 7 pm, at Columbia Heights City Hall. The property tax increase proposed by the 2021 budget provides for inflation on existing services, plus the recommendations from a 2019 independent study to add one additional community service officer and one additional police officer over existing staff levels. For 2021, the tax subsidy provided by the Metro Area Fiscal Disparities program was reduced by 4.1% under that program's distribution formula in state law. A reduction in this subsidy increases the share of the total City taxes paid by local property owners. These factors combine to an average increase of 7.9% in the proposed City property taxes paid by local property owners in 2021.

Proposed Use of Property Taxes in the 2021 City Budget



Information Systems

Achievements and Activities

- Supported remote work for City employees during COVID-19 pandemic by providing secure remote access, configuring devices for videoconferencing, and deploying multiple mobile devices (laptops and tablets). Upgraded or replaced virtual Windows Servers.
- Implemented mobile device management solution for laptops and tablets.
- Worked with the vendors and Library staff to replace automatic material handler and self-check computers, as well as software used by staff and patrons.
- Worked with the vendors and other City departments to upgrade Public Safety Center network, Emergency Operations Center equipment, and to add another EOC at the Library.
- Worked with the vendor to upgrade email system.
- Worked with the vendor to upgrade document management system.
- Worked with the vendors and Liquor staff to prepare for point-of-sale system replacement.
- Updated multiple servers, workstations, and applications.
- Implemented additional security measures to protect City Information System.

Statistics

- More than 200 computer users at 9 locations.
- Almost 270 desktop PCs, virtual PCs, and portable computers.
- More than 270 phones with 570 phone numbers and voicemail boxes; over 7,000 hours call time.
- 80 physical and virtual servers and data storage systems.
- More than 20 network segments.
- More than 40 printers, copiers, scanners.
- Almost 250 network devices and components of video security, physical access control systems, and building automation systems.
- 20 databases.
- Laserfiche document imaging system with more than 460,000 documents (3.9 million pages).
- More than 900 Help Desk tickets resolved.



Liquor

Stores See Sales Decrease in 2020

In 2020, overall sales decreased by 15% for the operation, with one of the three stores outperforming the previous year. Top Valu #1 showed an increase of 2%. Whereas Top Valu #2 was down 23% and Top Valu #3 was down 54%, respectively. Staff attributes the decline to extended closures, particularly at stores #2 and #3, due to COVID-19 and civil unrest. Staffing was also a major challenge throughout the year and the operation often times had to close one or more stores due to lack of available staff to safely operate the stores.

Despite closures due to COVID-19 and civil unrest, the liquor operations continued to maintain customers and reach new ones through online marketing campaigns, social media and local print ads. Consumer shopping habits shifted dramatically, seeing them make fewer trips while purchasing more per trip. Industry out of stocks, supply chain issues and material shortages proved to be a challenge throughout the year, causing key items to be frequently out of stock in the stores. New products were consistently introduced to keep shelves full and the selection fresh for consumers. Special events and tastings were canceled for the majority of the year.

With the temporary reduction in profits from the liquor operation in 2020, the city council deferred until 2021 the annual contributions from the liquor fund of \$50,000 to the City's infrastructure fund and \$10,000 to the City's community-policing programs, such as D.A.R.E and Business Watch. In 2020, the liquor fund did fund an allocable share of City administrative overhead and saw continued growth in the City's equity investment in the store properties.

Store Renovation

In 2019, the City began a process of updating and rebranding the store located at 5225 University Avenue NE from "Heights Liquor" to be "Top Valu #3". In 2020, the city council continued this process by awarding a contract to replace the roof and add prefinished exterior sheet metal to this store, and by also authorizing staff to seek bids for significant interior and exterior updates to the remaining public areas of this store. Construction for both portions of this project is scheduled for 2021.



Top Valu #1:

4950 Central Ave

Top Valu #2:

2105 37th Ave NE

Top Valu #3:

5225 University Ave NE

— TOP VALU —
LIQUOR



COLUMBIA HEIGHTS - FIRE DEPARTMENT

FIRE

Introduction

This report illustrates the Fire Department's continuing commitment to the residents, visitors, and businesses within our community. Much has changed in the 115-year history of the Fire Department, but what hasn't changed is the commitment of our men and women to serve others. The outstanding accomplishments of our Training, Public Education, Property Maintenance, Emergency Management, Logistics, and Administrative divisions exemplify our department's core values of Integrity, Pride, Honor, Excellence and Duty.

To say that 2020 was an interesting year would be an understatement. A significant achievement in 2020 was the hiring of two new full-time Firefighter/Inspector positions to support the Property Maintenance Division.

The inspectors are tasked with local ordinance, rental, and fire code enforcement. As firefighters, they are also responsible for responding to calls for service as needed. Emergency calls for service have been steadily increasing over the past 10 years. This upward trajectory of emergency medical services (EMS) calls within our system dictated a necessary change to the approach to incidents. In February, we adjusted our EMS response model to respond to only priority medical incidents. The change in response has reduced the number of incidents to which the department responds while allowing us to serve the community in other ways.

The onset of the COVID-19 Pandemic in the first few months of the year challenged the city and our depart-



ment. The fire department holds the responsibilities of Emergency Management for the city. This included review and revision of emergency plans for pandemic, ordering of personal protective equipment and supplies for city employees and regular meeting with the City Manager and Police Chief to prepare for and mitigate the impact of the pandemic on city operations.

Columbia Heights, being a first ring suburb of Minneapolis, faced numerous emergency management challenges posed by the civil unrest in Minneapolis following the death of George Floyd. Critical thinking, creative problem solving, and a strategic thought process helped our city proactively plan for the protection of the City.

2021 will continue to challenge our department and the resources allocated as the pandemic and civil unrest continue. However, we will remain vigilant while continuing to build public safety resilience within our community.

Our dedication to responsive quality emergency services while ensuring our members are cared for is priority one for me as your Fire Chief. Regardless of the challenges that we may face, each member of the CHFD is committed to supporting the community in an innovative and fiscally responsible manner.

Fire Department Full-Time Members

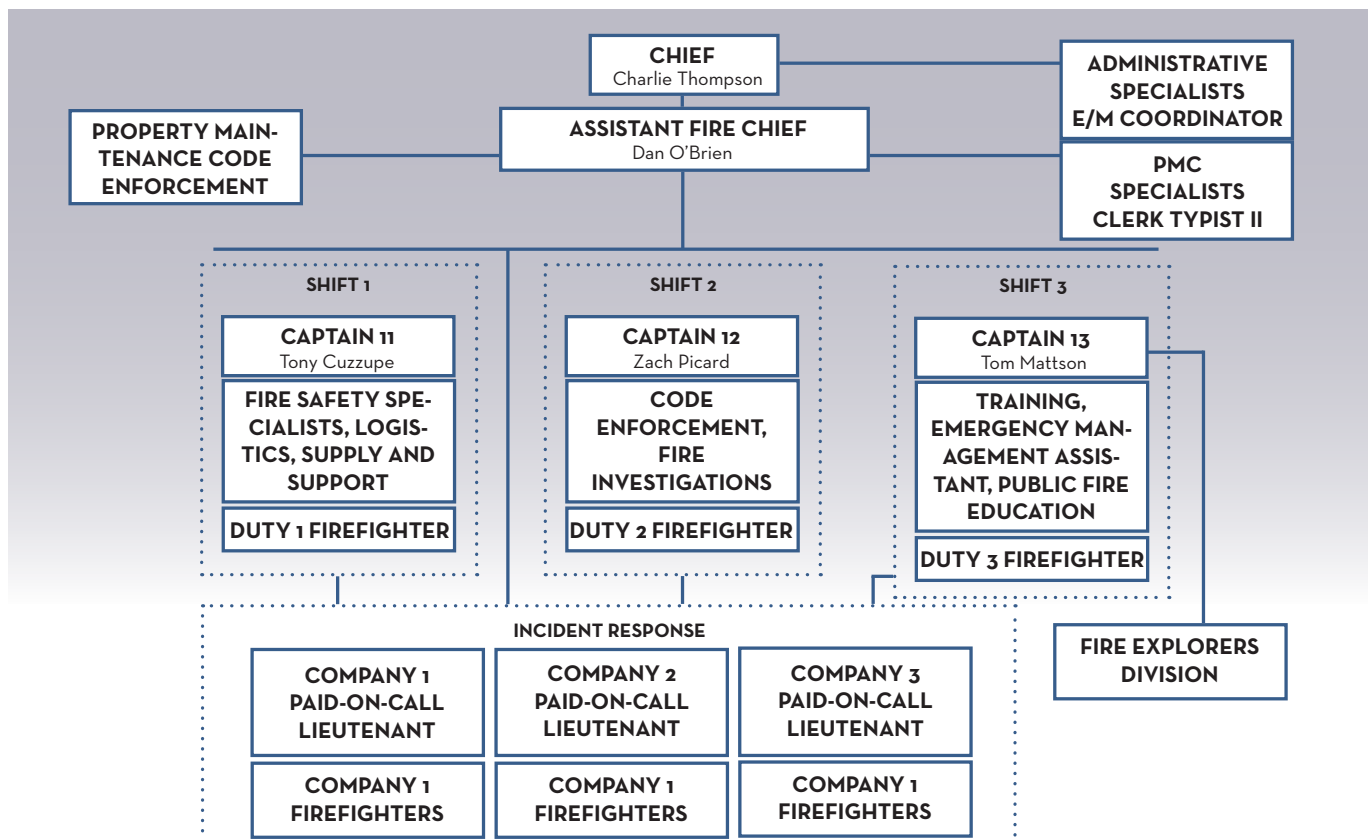
Name	Title	Start Date	End Date
Charlie Thompson	Fire Chief	Aug 19, 2019	----
Daniel O'Brien	Assistant Fire Chief	Nov 30, 2019	----
Thomas Mattson	Captain	Jan 1, 1999	----
Anthony Cuzzupe	Captain	July 1, 2003	----
Zachery Picard	Captain	Jan 1, 2014	----
Grant Dickinson	Full Time Firefighter	March 1, 2016	----
John Flanders	Full Time Firefighter	Sept 1, 2014	----
Kyle Hall	Full Time Firefighter	Feb 2, 2020	----
Emily Kosman	Full Time Firefighter	May 1, 2011	----
Michael Pyka	Full Time Firefighter	March 1, 2016	----
Kristen Peterson	Fire Admin. Assistant	Feb 24, 2020	----
Jeri Caron	Fire Clerk	June 1, 2015	----

Paid On-Call Lieutenants

Name	Title	Start Date	End Date
Christopher Allen		Nov 23, 2020	----
Kate McKay		Nov 23, 2020	----
Cory Mattson		Sept 1, 2009	Sept 9, 2020
Brian Polski		May 1, 2010	----

Paid On-Call Firefighters

Name	Start and End Dates	Name	Start and End Dates
Lisa Boatman	March 1, 2016----	Bryan Schachtele	Sept 1, 2014----
John Flanders	Sept 1, 2014----	Brianna Shuipis	Sept 22, 2020----
Jacob Gillespie	May 1, 2011----	William Shutte	March 1, 2010----
Anahi Ordonez	April 1, 2019----	Brian Sibri	July 1, 2019----
Elizabeth Orellana	Sept 22, 2020----	Charles Struzyk	Jan 1, 2013----
Cody Oveson	May 1, 2019----	Alyssa Super	Sept 22, 2020----
Jennifer Pena	March 1, 2016----	Greg White	April 1, 2019----
Matthew Reynolds	Sept 22, 2020----	Adam Zimmerman	March 1, 2016 Sept 8, 2020
Rod Quinn	Sept 22, 2020----		



2020 Incident Statistics

2,154 Total Incidents
0.7% Increase from 2018

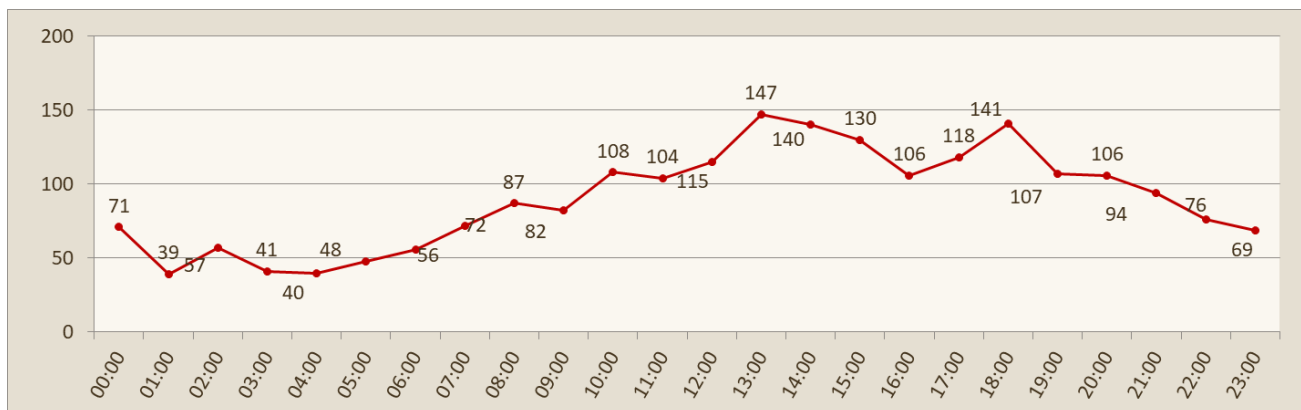
623 Fire Incidents

1,531 Medical & Rescue

2020 FIRE AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL CALLS BY MONTH

Situation	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
100 Series Fire	5	3	6	11	7	3	11	11	6	7	4	5	79
200 Series Overpressure Rupture/Explosion/Overheat (no fire)	1	1		1	1								4
300 Series Rescue/Emergency Medical Service Incident	172	171	110	94	96	100	99	104	110	81	115	110	1,362
400 Series Hazardous Condition (no fire)	6	4	2	6	8	4	12	18	7	10	3	3	83
500 Series Service Call	17	16	14	22	17	20	27	24	32	21	22	20	252
600 Series Good Intent Call	29	29	27	22	23	26	17	22	17	20	24	17	273
700 Series False Alarm/False Call	8	6	4	10	14	11	13	8	9	7	4	4	98
800 Series Severe Weather/Natural Disaster				3									3
Grand Total	238	230	163	169	166	164	179	187	181	146	172	159	2,154

2020 FIRE AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL CALLS BY TIME OF DAY



2020 Incident Statistics Cont.

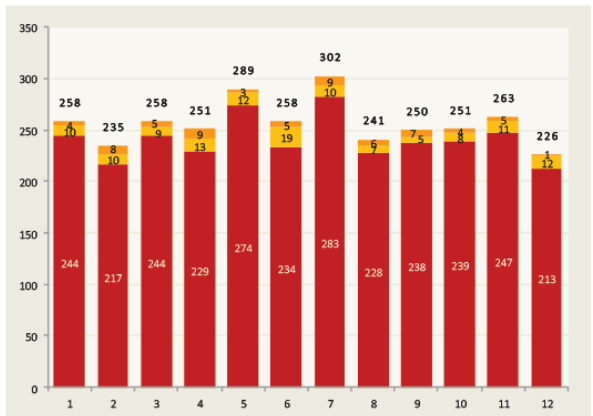
2020 Type of Alarms by Month

Still Alarms are handled by on-duty personnel without calling for additional help.

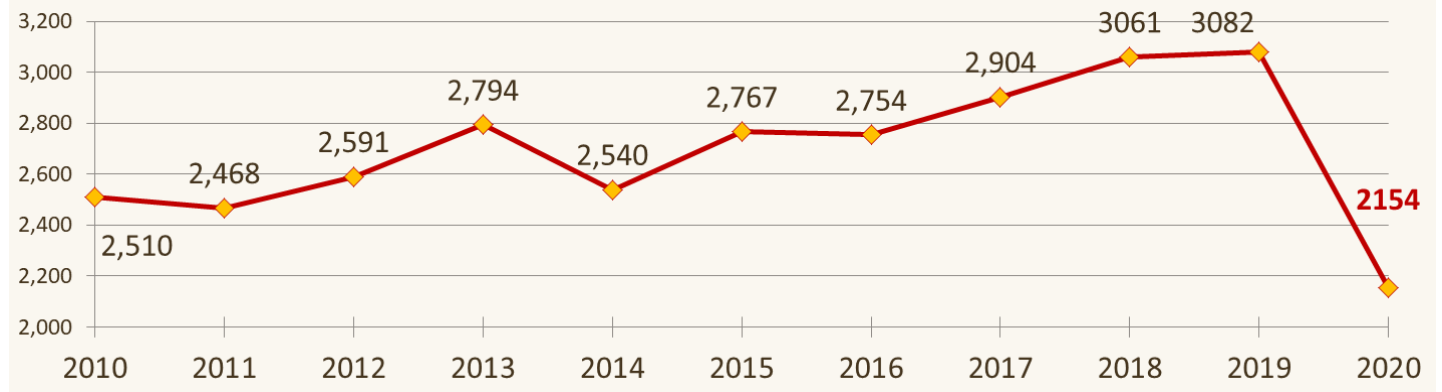
Company Alarms are handled by call-back of available off-duty paid personnel and approximately one half of the available Paid-on-Call membership.

General Alarms are used when the situation calls for the services of all available members.

Month	Still Alarm	Company Alarm	General Alarm	Total
Jan	244	10	4	258
Feb	217	10	8	235
Mar	244	9	5	258
Apr	229	13	9	251
May	274	12	3	289
Jun	234	19	5	258
Jul	283	10	9	302
Aug	228	7	6	241
Sep	238	5	7	250
Oct	239	8	4	251
Nov	247	11	5	263
Dec	213	12	1	226
Total	2890	126	66	3082



10-Year Comparison of Total Incidents



Busiest Month
January

Busiest Day of Week
Friday

Busiest Time of Day
1-2 pm

Incidents by Shift



Top 20 Properties for Service

Address				# of Calls for Service
1	Parkview Villa Apartments	146-Unit Apartment Building	965 40th Ave NE	104
2	The Legends of Columbia Heights	191-Unit Senior Apartments	3700 Huset Pkwy NE	76
3	Crest View Lutheran Home	122-Bed Nursing Home	4444 Reservoir Blvd NE	53
4	Northeast Seniors Housing	85-Unit Apartment Building	3850 Stinson Blvd NE	51
5	New Perspective Senior Living	92-Unit Assisted Living/Memory Care	3801 Hart Blvd NE	38
6	Crest View on 42nd	50-Unit Assisted Living/Memory Care	900 42nd Ave NE	35
7	MedExpress	Urgent Care Clinic	4880 Central Ave NE, Hilltop	31
8	Winthrop Court Apartments	24-Unit Apartment Building	4630 Central Ave NE, Hilltop	28
9	Royce Place Assisted Living	50-Unit Assisted Living/Memory Care	1515 44th Ave NE	27
10	Hart Lake Apartments	75-Unit Senior Apartments	3839 Hart Blvd NE	26
11	Columbia Village	40-Unit Senior Apartments	1675 44th Ave NE	24
12	Crest View Boulevard Apartments	74-Unit Senior Apartments	4458 Reservoir Blvd NE	18
13	Grand Central Flats Apartments	60-Unit Apartment Building	4729 Grand Ave NE	16
14	Jeff, Bobby & Steve's Autoworld	Service/Gas Station	3701 Central Ave NE	11
15	Hillcrest Apartments	Apartments	4730 Central Ave NE, Hilltop	11
16	Wang Apartment Rentals	20-Unit Apartment Building	1440 47th Ave NE	11
17	Single Family Residence		4500 Block of Central Ave NE, Hilltop	10
18	Starlite Motel	Motel	4720 Central Ave NE, Hilltop	10
19	Grand Central Flats Apartments	88-Unit Apartment Building	1069 Grandview Ct NE	10
20	Group Home		4600 Block Johnson St NE	10

Classification of Alarms

Fire		Injury/Laceration/Bleeding		False alarm/call, misc.	
Canceled en route: Fire	37	Lift Assist	24	Flammable liquid spill	1
Cooking fire	22	Medical Alarm (accidental)	1	Gas leak (natural gas or LPG)	10
Fire, misc.	4	Medical Incident	80	Hazmat investigation	23
Grass/Brush/Vegetation fire	4	Motor Vehicle Accident	4	Heat from short circuit (wiring)	1
No Incident Found: Fire	25	No Incident Found: Medical	38	Lift Assist	148
Structure fire	29	Other Cardiac Problem	5	Lightning strike (no fire)	3
Trash fire	5	Overdose/Poisoning	23	Lock-out	1
Trash/Dumpster fire	4	Pain	46	Malicious, mischievous false call	3
Vehicle fire	11	Pneumonia	1	No Incident Found: Medical	3
Rescue/Medical		Possible Narcotics	2	Overheated motor	2
Abdominal/Flank Pain	27	Pregnancy/OB/Childbirth	24	Overpressure/steam rupture	1
Allergic Reaction/Anaphylaxis	21	Rescue or EMS standby	9	Person in distress, misc.	1
Assault	19	Rescue/Extrication, misc.	63	Police matter	13
Assist Invalid	2	Seizure	67	Power line down	20
Attempted Suicide	5	Stabbing	1	Public service	7
Back Pain - Non Traumatic	8	Stalled elevator rescue	2	Refrigeration leak	1
Behavioral Emergency	33	Substance/Drug Abuse	3	Ring or jewelry removal	1
Blood Pressure Issue	1	Syncope/Fainting	31	Rupture/explosion	1
Breathing Problem	237	Unconscious/Down	46	Smoke detector malfunction	7
Burns	1	Vehicle accident with injuries	22	Smoke detector set off, no fire	13
Canceled en route: Medical	117	Vehicle accident, no injuries	28	Smoke or odor removal	1
Cardiac Arrest	19	Vehicle/pedestrian accident	9	Smoke scare, odor of smoke	16
Chest Pain - Cardiac	101	Weakness	44	Sprinkler activation, no fire	2
Choking/Airway Obstruction	16	Service Calls		Steam/gas mistaken for smoke	2
Cold Emergency/Hypothermia	3	Alarm system activation, no fire	28	System malfunction, other	2
CVA/Stroke/TIA	49	Alarm system malfunction	8	Threat to burn	2
Diabetic Problem	31	Alarm malicious false alarm	14	Unauthorized/Illegal burning	55
Dizziness	1	Animal rescue	1	Vehicle accident, general cleanup	1
DK/ETOH Ingestion	29	Arcing/shorted electrical equip.	20	Water or steam leak	10
DOA	17	Assist other government agency	8	Water problem, other	1
Drowning/Submersion	1	Authorized controlled burning	6		
Electrical Shock	1	Breakdown of light ballast	1		
EMS call, pt not transported	1	Canceled en route: Fire	3		
Epistaxis/Nose Bleed	5	Canceled en route: Medical	2		
Extricate victim(s) from vehicle	3	Carbon monoxide incident	12		
Fall	81	Chemical hazard (no spill or leak)	1		
Flu Symptoms	68	CO detector malfunction	15		
G.I. Bleed	4	CO detector activation, no CO	3		
Gunshot	2	Cover assignment/standby	3		
Headache	7	Electrical equipment problem	11		
Heat Emergency/Hyperthermia	1	Heat, scorching, no ignition	2		
Heroin Overdose	21	Extinguishing system activation	1		



Fire Incidents With Property Loss

Date	Call #	Address	Property Use	Cause of Fire	Pre-Incident Property Value	Property Loss	Property Saved
Building fire							
2/24	20-0428	4912 Jefferson St NE	1 or 2 family dwelling	Unintentional	\$180,000	\$50,000	\$130,000
3/21	20-0574	4730 Central Ave NE #3	Multifamily dwellings	Unintentional	\$2,122,200	\$100,000	\$2,022,200
4/20	20-0732	1201 42 1/2 Ave NE	1 or 2 family dwelling	Unintentional	\$300,000	\$300,000	\$0
4/22	20-0750	5243 7th St NE	1 or 2 family dwelling	Unintentional	\$161,000	\$30,000	\$131,000
5/10	20-0855	734 Sullivan Way NE	1 or 2 family dwelling	Unintentional	\$1,000,000	\$250,000	\$750,000
5/19	20-0910	4022 Benjamin Pl NE	1 or 2 family dwelling	Unintentional	\$250,000	\$10,000	\$240,000
6/6	20-0992	4550 Central Ave NE #1127	1 or 2 family dwelling	Unintentional	\$50,000	\$5,000	\$45,000
7/4	20-1151	1132 45th Ave NE	1 or 2 family dwelling	Unintentional	\$182,000	\$30,000	\$152,000
8/3	20-1330	3709 2 1/2 St NE	1 or 2 family dwelling	Unintentional	\$160,000	\$20,000	\$140,000
8/15	20-1412	3840 Jackson St NE	1 or 2 family dwelling	Undetermined*	\$141,000	\$30,000	\$111,000
8/21	20-1448	3925 3rd St NE #5	Multifamily dwellings	Unintentional	\$883,000	\$100,000	\$783,000
8/27	20-1473	4044 Jefferson St NE	1 or 2 family dwelling	Undetermined*	\$90,000	\$46,000	\$44,000
9/11	20-1556	1266 Circle Terrace Blvd NE	1 or 2 family dwelling	Unintentional	\$245,000	\$35,000	\$210,000
9/17	20-1598	4500 Reservoir Blvd NE	Water utility	Unintentional	\$30,000,000	\$10,000	\$29,990,000
10/20	20-1758	4408 3rd St NE	1 or 2 family dwelling	Unintentional	\$275,000	\$45,000	\$230,000
11/23	20-1964	900 42nd Ave NE	24 hr. care nursing home	Unintentional	\$1,500,000	\$2,000	\$1,498,000
12/16	20-2079	4654 Tyler St NE #5	Multifamily dwellings	Unintentional	\$800,000	\$7,500	\$792,500
Outside equipment fire							
9/4	20-1516	4251 Arthur St NE	1 or 2 family dwelling	Other	\$500	\$500	\$0
10/30	20-1817	5055 Madison St NE	1 or 2 family dwelling	Unintentional	\$399	\$399	\$0
Passenger vehicle fire							
1/1	20-0015	1426 Parkview Ln NE	Street/road/driveway	Unintentional	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$0
1/10	20-0086	3932 Ulysses St NE	Street/road/driveway	Unintentional	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$0
1/26	20-0188	4636 Pierce St NE	Street/road/driveway	Undetermined*	\$3,900	\$3,900	\$0
4/20	20-0732	1201 42 1/2 Ave NE	Street/road/driveway	Exposure	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$0
4/28	20-0788	4900 Tyler St NE	Street/road/driveway	Unintentional	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$0
5/27	20-0945	4027 Central Ave NE	Parking Lot	Unintentional	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$0
6/6	20-0994	1107 42nd Ave NE	Street/road/driveway	Unintentional	\$13,000	\$500	\$12,500
7/11	20-1195	1266 Circle Terrace Blvd NE	Street/road/driveway	Intentional	\$13,000	\$13,000	\$0
7/15	20-1222	4427 Main St NE	Street/road/driveway	Undetermined*	\$5,000	\$300	\$4,700
8/28	20-1479	4849 Central Ave NE	Parking Lot	Unintentional	\$4,500	\$2,500	\$2,000
9/12	20-1565	4310 3rd St NE	Street/road/driveway	Unintentional	\$10,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
Estimated totals for 2020					\$38,403,499	\$1,110,599	\$37,292,900

*An Undetermined cause for a fire indicates that the incident is being investigated but has insufficient information to determine cause at the time of the report.

In 2020 there were 6 Civilian Casualty Injuries and 3 Firefighter Casualty Injuries

	Date	Call #	Address	Incident Type	Primary Symptom	Severity
Civilian	3/21	20-0574	4730 Central Ave NE #3	Building fire	Smoke inhalation	Minor
Civilian	3/21	20-0574	4730 Central Ave NE #3	Building fire	Burns only; thermal	Minor
Civilian	4/20	20-0732	1201 42 1/2 Ave NE	Building fire	Smoke inhalation	Minor
Civilian	4/20	20-0732	1201 42 1/2 Ave NE	Building fire	Smoke inhalation	Minor
Civilian	5/10	20-0855	734 Sullivan Way NE	Building fire	Smoke inhalation	Death
Civilian	9/11	20-1556	1266 Circle Terrace Blvd NE	Building fire	Smoke inhalation	Moderate
Firefighter	4/20	20-0732	1201 42 1/2 Ave NE	Building fire	Pain only	First aid only
Firefighter	5/10	20-0855	734 Sullivan Way NE	Building fire	Fracture	Moderate*
Firefighter	7/4	20-1151	1132 45th Ave NE	Building fire	Smoke inhalation	First aid only

Mutual Aid Report

Mutual aid is an agreement between fire departments to assist each other when called for emergencies by responding with available staffing and apparatus. The Columbia Heights Fire Department works closely with surrounding departments and has an “automatic” mutual aid agreement with the cities of Fridley and St. Anthony to be dispatched simultaneously for fires during the weekday hours when staffing is at its lowest.

2020 MUTUAL AID RECEIVED

Date	Call #	Address	Incident Type	Aid Type	Department
1/14	20-0105	4645 Taylor St NE	Structure Fire	Automatic aid received	Fridley Fire Department
2/24	20-0428	4912 Jefferson St NE	Structure Fire	Automatic aid received	Fridley Fire Department
3/21	20-0574	4730 Central Ave NE #3	Structure Fire	Automatic aid received	Fridley Fire Department
3/30	20-0623	4200 Quincy St NE	Oven Fire	Automatic aid received	Fridley Fire Department
4/2	20-0637	3728 Pierce St NE	Structure Fire	Automatic aid received	Fridley Fire Department
4/14	20-0706	4326 Madison St NE	Structure Fire	Automatic aid received	Fridley Fire Department
4/20	20-0732	1201 42 1/2 Ave NE	Structure Fire	Automatic aid received	Fridley Fire Department St. Anthony Fire Department
4/22	20-0750	5243 7th St NE	Structure Fire	Mutual aid received	Fridley Fire Department St. Anthony Fire Department
4/28	20-0786	1302 Circle Terrace Blvd NE	Structure Fire	Mutual aid received	St. Anthony Fire Department
5/10	20-0855	734 Sullivan Way NE	Structure Fire	Automatic aid received	Fridley Fire Department
5/10	20-0856	44th Ave NE	PI Accident	Mutual aid received	Fridley Fire Department
5/19	20-0906	4101 Washington St NE	Gas Leak/Odor Inside	Mutual aid received	St. Anthony Fire Department Fridley Fire Department
5/19	20-0907	4456 Van Buren St NE	Structure Fire	Automatic aid received	St. Anthony Fire Department
5/19	20-0910	4022 Benjamin Pl NE	Structure Fire	Automatic aid received	St. Anthony Fire Department
6/6	20-0992	4550 Central Ave NE #1127	Structure Fire	Automatic aid received	Fridley Fire Department
7/4	20-1151	1132 45th Ave NE	Structure Fire	Mutual aid received	St. Anthony Fire Department
7/13	20-1211	4635 Central Ave NE	Medical-Breathing-NOT	Mutual aid received	Fridley Fire Department
8/1	20-1310	4001 University Ave NE	Structure Fire	Automatic aid received	Fridley Fire Department
8/3	20-1330	3709 2 1/2 St NE	Structure Fire	Automatic aid received	Fridley Fire Department
8/6	20-1353	4240 6th St NE	Powerlines	Automatic aid received	Fridley Fire Department
8/14	20-1398	4751 6th St NE	Structure Fire	Automatic aid received	Fridley Fire Department
8/15	20-1412	3840 Jackson St NE	Structure Fire	Automatic aid received	Fridley Fire Department
8/21	20-1448	3925 3rd St NE #5	Structure Fire	Automatic aid received	Fridley Fire Department
8/27	20-1473	4044 Jefferson St NE	Structure Fire	Mutual aid received	Fridley Fire Department
9/4	20-1516	4233 Arthur St NE	Powerlines	Mutual aid received	Fridley Fire Department
9/11	20-1556	1266 Circle Terrace Blvd NE	Structure Fire	Automatic aid received	Fridley Fire Department
10/10	20-1718	4207 2nd St NE	Structure Fire	Automatic aid received	Fridley Fire Department
10/20	20-1758	4408 3rd St NE	Structure Fire	Mutual aid received	Fridley Fire Department St. Anthony Fire Department

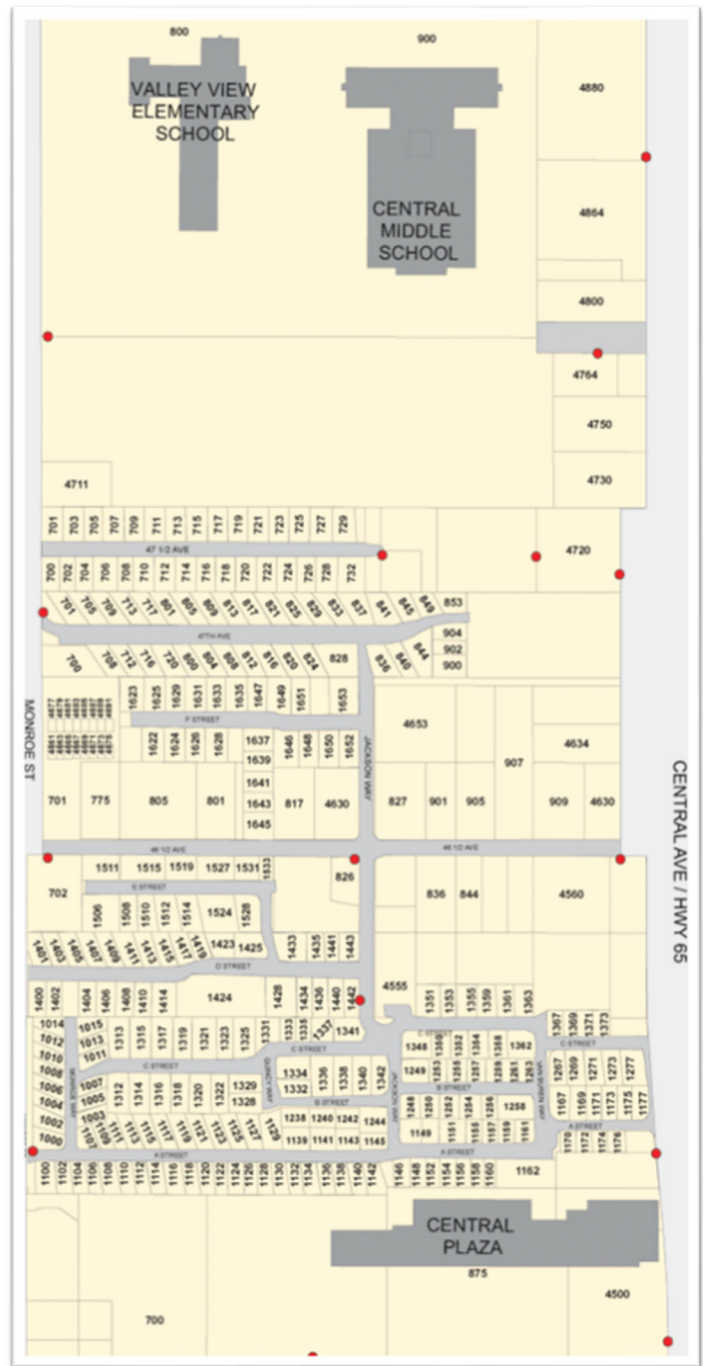
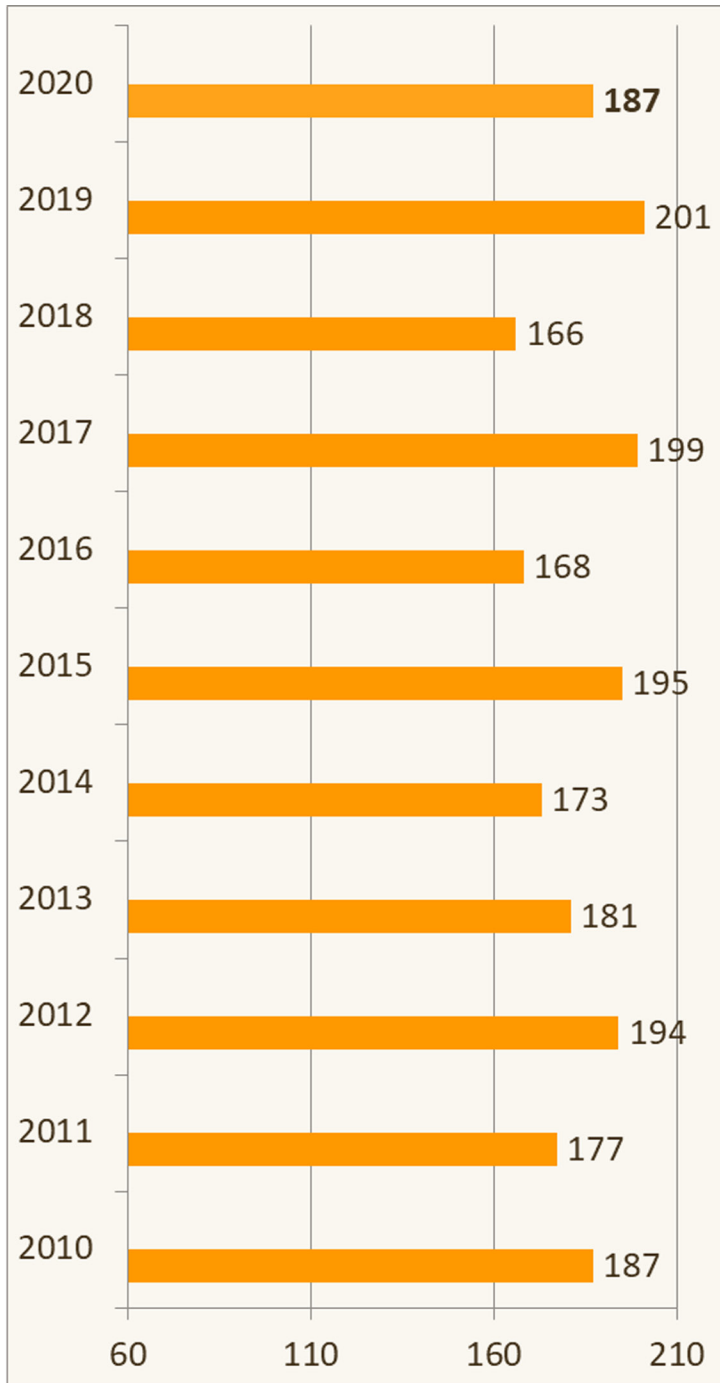
2020 MUTUAL AID GIVEN

Date	Call #	Address	Incident Type	Aid Type	Department
2/18	20-0373	12432 Energy Dr SE	Fire Mutual Aid	Mutual aid given	Becker Fire Department
2/25	20-0433	5400 Main St NE	Structure Fire	Mutual aid given	Fridley Fire Department
3/6	20-0504	634 Janesville St NE	Structure Fire	Automatic aid given	Fridley Fire Department
3/8	20-0517	556 54th Ave NE	Structure Fire	Mutual aid given	Fridley Fire Department
4/4	20-0652	2551 38th Ave NE	Fire Mutual Aid	Automatic aid given	St. Anthony Fire Department
4/22	20-0747	1257 Onondaga St NE	Structure Fire	Automatic aid given	Fridley Fire Department
5/8	20-0840	0 47th Ave NE	Grass Fire	Mutual aid given	Fridley Fire Department
5/12	20-0862	255 Rice Creek Blvd NE	Structure Fire	Automatic aid given	Fridley Fire Department
7/10	20-1189	5205 Central Ave NE	PI Accident	Mutual aid given	Fridley Fire Department
7/16	20-1225	2924 Rankin Rd	Fire Mutual Aid	Mutual aid given	St. Anthony Fire Department
7/18	20-1234	7580 Alden Way NE	Structure Fire	Mutual aid given	Fridley Fire Department
7/21	20-1254	6455 5th St NE	Structure Fire	Automatic aid given	Fridley Fire Department
8/6	20-1354	1430 Kerry Cir NE	Structure Fire	Automatic aid given	Fridley Fire Department
8/28	20-1481	4856 3rd St NE	Structure Fire	Automatic aid given	Fridley Fire Department
9/20	20-1618	6131 Starlite Blvd NE	Structure Fire	Automatic aid given	Fridley Fire Department
10/29	20-1808	6301 Monroe St NE	Structure Fire	Automatic aid given	Fridley Fire Department
11/2	20-1837	0 73rd Ave NE	Structure Fire	Automatic aid given	Fridley Fire Department
11/5	20-1854	2852 Anthony Ln	Fire Mutual Aid	Mutual aid given	St. Anthony Fire Department
12/11	20-2056	5614 4th St NE	Structure Fire	Automatic aid given	Fridley Fire Department

Hilltop Agreement

The Columbia Heights Fire Department has an agreement to provide full fire suppression, emergency medical services, and fire inspection services for the City of Hilltop. A three-year Joint Agreement and Contract was signed in 2019, which covers the years 2019-2021.

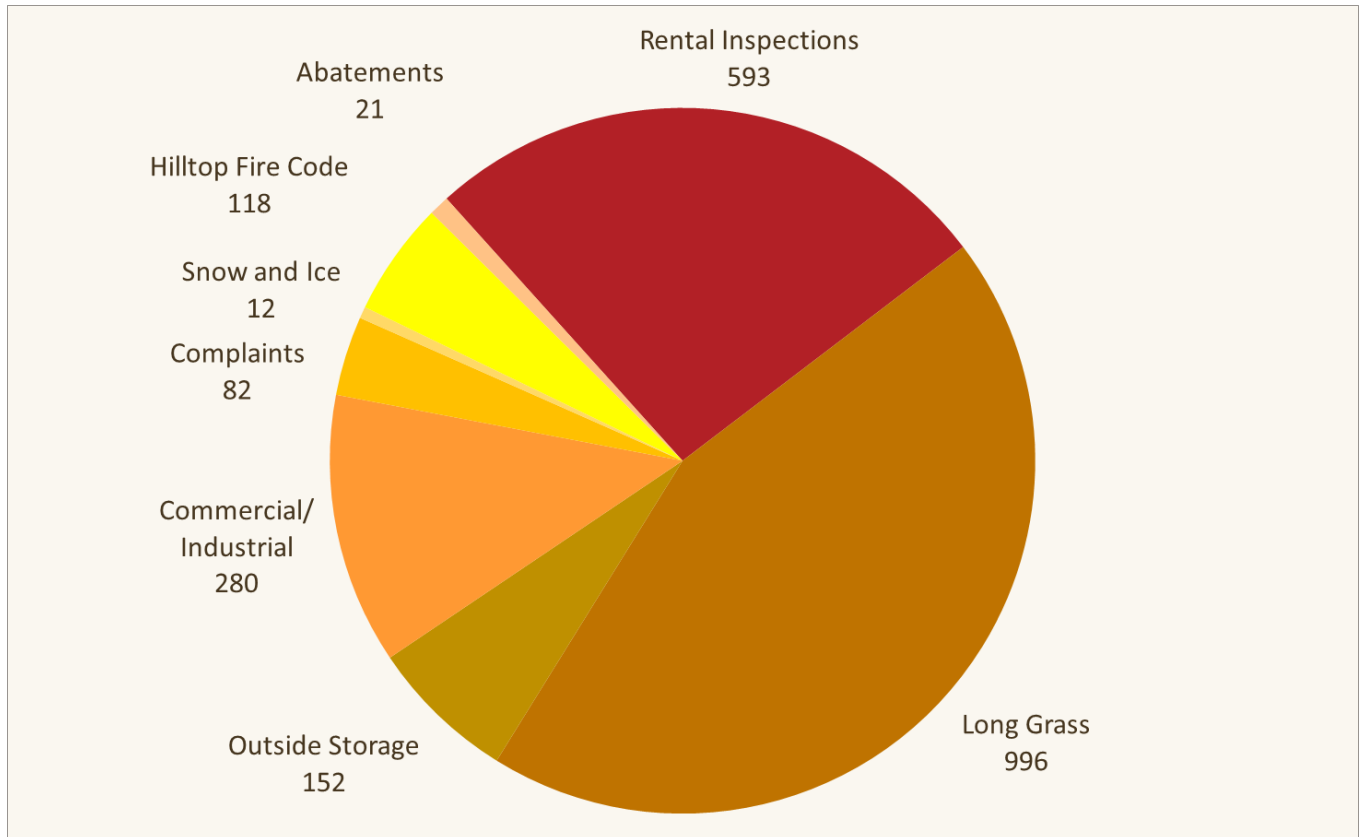
A 11-Year comparison of the number of calls to the City of Hilltop is reflected in the chart below:



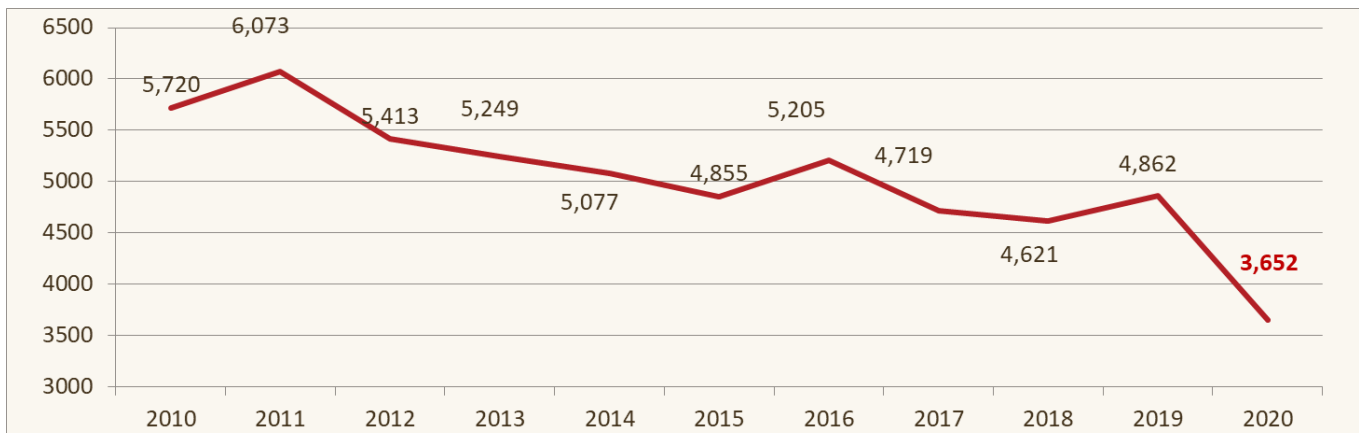
Inspections

The Fire Department Inspection Program is supervised by the Assistant Fire Chief and involves the eight full time firefighters as inspectors. All inspectors are cross trained for both fire and property maintenance inspections, allowing for flexibility in scheduling.

The fire department conducted a total of 4,862 inspection, license, and inspection-related data entry activities during 2019. This report summarizes inspections which are broken into categories including commercial/industrial inspections, rental property inspections, single-family home inspections, and other actions performed by the inspection office.



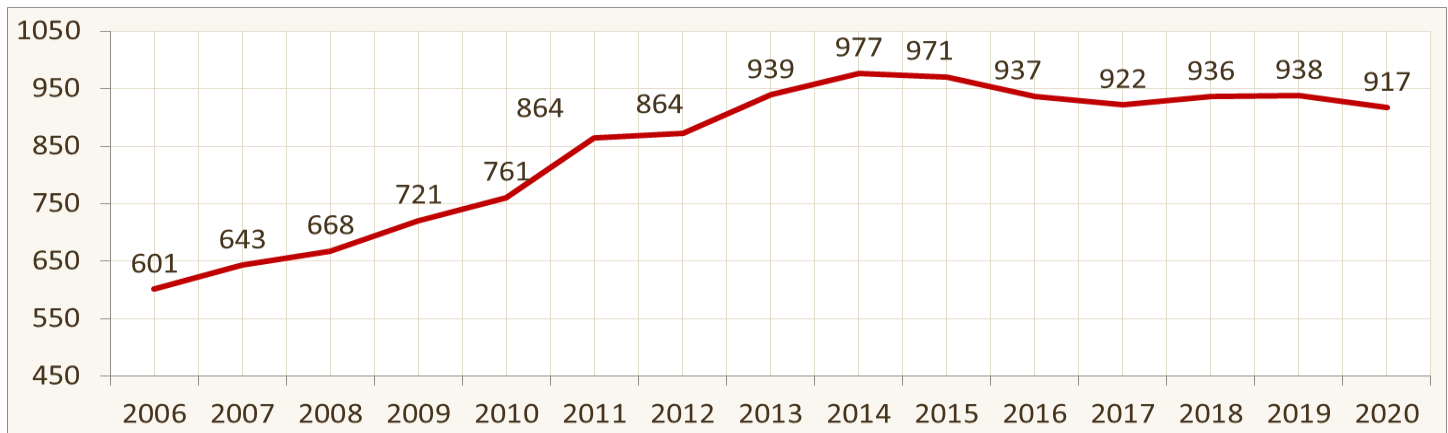
TOTAL INSPECTIONS BY YEAR



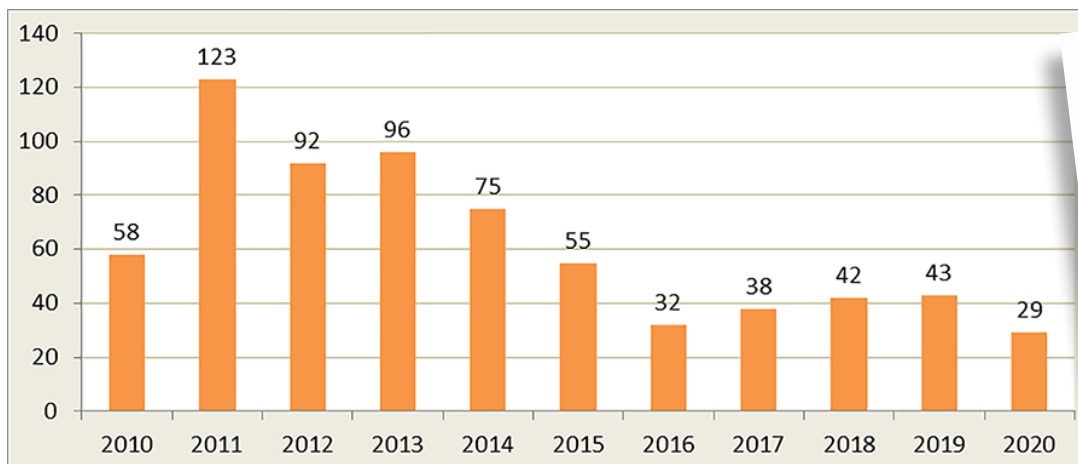
Rental Licenses

The overall number of rental properties in the city has stabilized following the sharp increase after the recession. In 2020, the inspection department issued 29 new rental licenses, however there is little change in the overall total number of rental properties due to an offset of rental properties converting back to single family residences and no longer requiring a license. Property exteriors and common areas are inspected on an annual basis and interior inspections of rental properties are performed bi-annually. Complaints on properties are investigated in a timely manner.

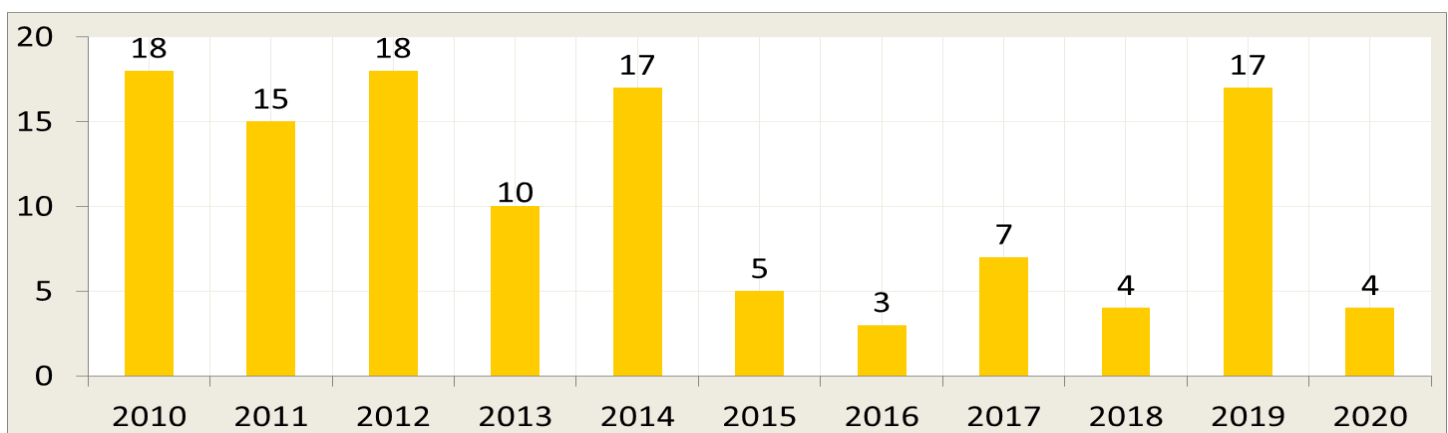
TOTAL RENTAL LICENSES BY YEAR



NEW RENTAL LICENSES BY YEAR



RENTAL LICENSE REVOCATIONS BY YEAR



Other Activities



The Columbia Heights Firefighter's Association (Employee Association) recently planted a garden at the Public Safety building. When harvested, the produce was donated to SACA. The idea came about after Assistant Fire Chief Dan O'Brien planted some seeds at home and he didn't have enough space for all the plants. After talking with members of the fire department and the City, the Columbia Heights Firefighter's Association could plant the garden and then donate the produce to SACA.

"I think SACA is a great organization," O'Brien said. "They've been around here a long time and it's nice to [donate the produce]."

The garden includes broccoli, cucumbers, peppers, tomatoes, and zucchini.



Shari from MasterChef awards
The 2020 Golden Chili Pot to
Columbia Heights

Fire Chief Charlie Thompson provided the winning chili recipe in 2020.

Team Columbia Heights won the Golden Pot award at the Lee Carlson Center Chili Cook-off fundraiser in early 2020. Pictured on left, from left to right: City Manager Kelli Bourgeois, Chief Thompson, chili judge Shari Mukherjee, and Cpt. Erik Johnston. Right: Thompson holds the lid for Johnston to scoop out a serving of chili for a participant.





LIBRARY

Introduction

Before the pandemic, the Library started 2020 with new mission and vision statements and grand plans for the year ahead. Librarians, supervisors, and full-time staff were trained so that the Library could be a 2020 Census Questionnaire Assistance Center (QAC) when the Census website went live in mid-March. The Library also hosted an employment recruitment event to share information about employment opportunities with the Census.

Numerous live programs and classes were offered for children and adults in January, February and early March with details highlighted in reports from the adult and youth services librarians. Then COVID-19 upended everything. The library building was closed to the public from March 17 through June 13, 2020. Staff continued to provide phone and email reference during the closure. Curbside pick-up of holds was made available to patrons starting April 13, 2020, and continues in 2021. Over 1,300 curbside deliveries were made. During building closure, the WIFI signal was strengthened to extend outside into the parking area. Two out-

door picnic tables were added to allow patrons to access the WIFI using their own laptops. Anoka County Library, the library's eBook platform and content provider, added additional eBooks and eAudiobooks to the digital collection available to Columbia Heights patrons.

Many library programs went virtual in a live or pre-recorded format. This included youth and adult cultural, educational, and literacy programs such as story times, conversation circles, classes, and book clubs. The adult and youth services librarians created monthly self-directed craft and activity kits for adults and youth. A limited number of live and/or self-directed outdoor programs for children and adults were held, including story strolls, poems in parks, a bike fixit clinic, and cultural and STEM discovery classes in City parks. Facebook postings increased to promote communication during building closure and afterward. Limited numbers of people were allowed back into the building from June 15 through July 3, to gain access to computers by appointment.



The building was reopened to the public at limited capacity for limited hours on July 6, 2020, and remained open throughout the remainder of the year. Prior to reopening, the building was fitted with Plexiglas barriers at service desks, sanitizer dispensers, carpet and wall signage encouraging distancing, ionization equipment to kill viruses passing through the HVAC system, and a standalone HEPA air filter in the staff workroom. A detailed COVID preparedness plan was created and all staff were trained in its protocols, including masking, distancing, enhanced cleaning, and attendance prohibitions. The number of computers available for public use was reduced to insure distancing between people. Due to their diligence in following the pandemic reopening preparedness plan while continuing to serve the public, no library staff members contracted the COVID-19 virus.

To assist remote learners, staff executed a memorandum of understanding with the school district to provide virtual library cards for students enrolled in the middle school, Columbia

Academy, for the 2020-21 school year. E-cards provided access to eBooks and online resources including encyclopedias, live homework help, and other learning databases and applications during a school year encompassing a variety of in-person and remote learning scenarios.

Due to the pandemic restrictions and the temporary building closure, traditional measures of library service look very different in 2020 when compared to the previous year. Total public services hours were approximately 54% of the previous year's (1,450 compared to 2,681). Visits were greatly reduced too; 50,380 people visited in 2020 compared to 118,650 in 2019. Use of computers was also down; 18,527 computer sessions occurred compared to 46,390 during the previous year. However, items borrowed from the library remained strong; 103,774 items were circulated in 2020 compared to 137,978 in 2019.

Library Staff

Name	Title	Start Date	End Date
Renee Dougherty	Library Director	April 1, 2013	----
Cortni O'Brien	Adult Services Librarian	July, 10, 2017	----
Brianna Belanger	Youth Services Librarian	Oct 19, 2015	----
Nick Olberding	Clerk Typist II -- Adult	July 5, 2016	----
Kelly J. Olson	Clerk Typist II -- Children's	June 1, 1992	----
Winnifred Coyne	Clerk	Jan 26, 2015	----
Alexandre Adrian	Library Supervisor	Aug 31, 2020	----
Elaine Dietz-Mamaril	Library Supervisor	Nov 15, 1993	July 10, 2020
Katherine Estall	Library Supervisor	Aug 31, 2020	----
Al Mamaril	Library Supervisor	Oct 8, 2007	----
Barbara J. Kon-druck	Library Supervisor	July 9, 2018	July 31, 2020
Farrah Briest	Library Aide	June 24, 2019	----
Maria Fink	Library Page	Dec 5, 2016	----
Alison Marzolf	Library Page	Aug 1, 2007	----

Library Staff Continued

Name	Title	Start Date	End Date
Rachel Meyers	Library Page	May 1, 2008	----
Yuliana Moroch-Calderon	Library Page	Feb 2, 2020	----
Samuel Rinne	Library Page	April 29, 2019	----
Karen Yaeger	Library Page	Jan 11, 2016	----
Tammie Yin Powell	Library Page	Dec 5, 2016	----
Rosa Boda	Library Page (substitute)	March 2, 2015	----
Gianna Ritzko	Library Page (substitute)	Jan 17, 2012	----
Michelle Wermerskirchen	Library Page (substitute)	June 23, 2010	----

LIBRARY BOARD

Catherine Vesley, Chair
 Patricia Sowada, Vice Chair
 Tricia Conway, Secretary
 Christopher Polley
 Teresa Eisenbise
 Nick Novitsky, Council Liaison

FOUNDATION BOARD

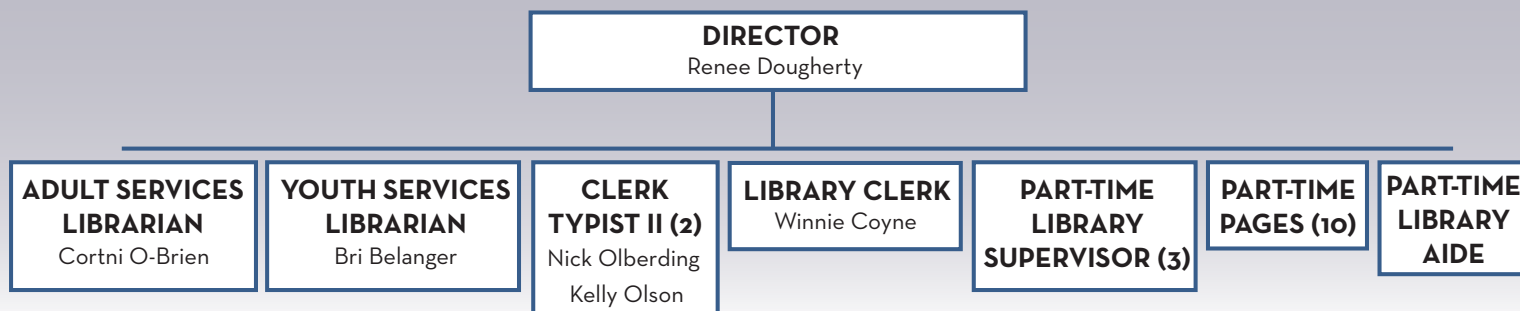
Marlaine Szurek, President
 Bruce Magnuson, Vice-President
 Kit Burgoyne, Secretary
 Sharon Shedlov, Treasurer
 David Larson
 Terry Nightingale
 Jane Polley

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

Robert Odden, President
 Pat Lynch, Secretary
 Betty Robbins, Treasurer



LIBRARY



General Updates

Upgrades to Library Technology

- Windows 10 upgrade to the automated materials handler at the drive-up book return.
- Windows 10 upgrades to all public computers.
- Software and security updates to enable library administrative staff to work remotely.
- Comprise Technologies was selected to supply Anoka County and Columbia Heights public computer management and web reservation, print management, and revenue recapture software.
- All staff virtual desktops were replaced with standalone computers.

Repairs to Library Facility

- Coolant leaks in the two air handling units were repaired.
- A graffiti-damaged restroom mirror was replaced.
- A large broken exterior window was replaced.
- An ionization unit was added to the HVAC system to kill airborne bacteria and viruses.
- Audiovisual equipment was enhanced or added to enable the library community room to function as a backup emergency operations center for the city.

Changes to Library Board and Staff

- Two new Library Pages, Katherine Estall and Yuliana Morocho-Calderon were hired.
- Library Supervisor Elaine Dietz-Mamaril retired after twenty-seven years of service.
- Library Supervisor Barb Kondrick resigned.
- Two new Library Supervisors, Alexandre Adrian and Katherine Estall were hired.
- Long-time Library Board member Patricia Sowada passed away unexpectedly. The City named Pat as the 2020 Citizen of the Year.

Awards and Recognitions

- Friend of the League award from the League of Women Voters of Anoka, Blaine and Coon Rapids Area to Adult Services Librarian Cortni O'Brien
- 2020 Census Community Partnership and Engagement Program recognition



Youth Services Highlights

Mural Project

A few years ago the Library hosted a Trash Can Mural camp in partnership with Rebecca Krueger, a local artist who received a grant from the Mississippi Watershed Management Organization to paint trash cans that were placed throughout the city. The Library hosted a 3-day camp where youth learned about environmental stewardship and painted the murals on the trash cans. The camp was very successful and many participants expressed interest in doing something similar in future. The youth services librarian and Rebecca planned a mural camp to engaged teens in designing, planning, and painting a library mural. A two-week long, in-person camp was planned for 15 youth during summer but COVID restrictions required a virtual format. Unfortunately, there were too few registrants to offer the camp. In fall, we tried again with a hybrid approach. Five teens come to the library over 2 days during MEA break to complete 10 of the 30 tiles needed for the mural. Because many tiles remained incomplete, the artist and librarian coordinated take-home kits for patrons of any age to complete. What started as a youth leadership opportunity morphed into a multi-generational community-building experience. The mural, inspired by a Maya Angelou quote, hangs in the teen area.



"We all should know that diversity makes for a rich tapestry, and we must understand that all the threads of the tapestry are equal in value no matter what their color." Maya Angelou

Pivot to Virtual Programming

In March of 2020, the library drastically changed program delivery due to COVID 19 capacity limits and safety protocols. All live, in-person programs were canceled. In April, pre-recorded storytime videos on Facebook were premiered at the regularly-scheduled time so that families could stay safe at home while continuing to engage in their storytime routine. The youth services librarian learned many new skills for making successful and literacy-rich storytimes, as well as recording and editing video, in order to make the experience worthwhile for parents and toddlers.

All other live youth programs were offered through Zoom. Most success occurred with kit-based programs in which participants pick up the necessary supplies in advance and then joined a Zoom class online. Programs that followed this format in 2020 included Tween Book Club, Zombie Apocalypse, Engineering Camp, and a Manga Workshop.

Also altered was the summer nutrition program. Seven days of lunches were provided for hungry youth via curbside pickups by parents.

In addition to virtual programming, grab and go activity kits were offered each month from September through December. The waitlists for each kit indicated that they were positively received by families looking for educational and engaging activities for children during stay-at-home orders. In-person outdoor programming in the fall was successful with families starved for connection and community. These programs included stroller storytimes, Native Pride Dancers, strolls featuring storybooks displayed in city parks, and live birds of prey and naturalists from the Raptor Center.



Family Discovery Saturday featuring Native Pride Dancers

Adult Services Highlights

Program Highlights

In January, the library hosted Christine Hofer, a KonMari certified decluttering expert. Forty-eight attendees learned about the KonMari method, founded by bestselling author Marie Kondo. In February, the Mississippi Watershed Management Organization presented an informational “Fight Snow and Ice, Pollution Free” program.

Several in person programs were abruptly canceled due to the March shut down. The library transitioned to online programming in the spring, offering Meditation programs, Medicare information, and an online local trivia challenge, which has garnered 247 responses, to date. Library board member Steve Smith offered our first Facebook Live program, “Organizing Your Important Documents.”

For the first time, adults were invited to participate in the library’s summer reading program. Participants completed virtual challenges and book reviews.

When the library re-opened its doors in July, the Friends of the Library planned a series of displays in the glass display case, celebrating the 100th anniversary of Columbia Heights. Each month has featured games, books, toys and memorabilia representing each decade in Columbia Heights’ history.

September brought the opportunity to host an outdoor program at the library’s bike fix-it station. Our regular team of bike hobbyists masked up and volunteered their time to repair and tune, as well as teach community members how to care for their bicycles. Thirteen bikes were repaired at the September clinic.

The library hosted creative opportunities throughout the year, pivoting to “Take and Make” crafts for adults, beginning in September. Popular take home kits included watercolor greeting cards and cross-stitch snowflakes. Legacy Amendment programs were offered virtually via Zoom. Participants registered in advance, picked up a kit with all of the required materials, and enjoyed virtual instruction from ArtStart and Artistry. Legacy programs included Fused Glass Suncatchers and Pop-out Cardmaking.

Adult Language Learners

The library offered two primary programs for English Language learners: Buddy Up and Read and Conversation Circles. Both programs went on hiatus in March. The Metro-North Adult Basic Education Center continues to offer ESL conversation support online; library patrons seeking ESL support are referred to the ABE center.

Reading Programs

Winter Reads, a Metropolitan Library Service Agency (MELSA) sponsored adult reading program held throughout January and February, encouraged adult readers to write and share short book reviews. Participants’ names were entered into weekly prize drawings, and two grand prize winners were announced in March.

The library’s Adult Book Club went on hiatus in March and transitioned online in the fall. The club began meeting via Zoom in September.

The library collaborated with the Recreation department to offer “Poems in the Park.” Large signboards featuring nature-inspired poems were placed throughout city parks in the fall and winter. City residents were encouraged to explore a park and ponder a classic poem in a safe, socially distanced manner.

In celebration of the City’s Centennial Celebration, the library collaborated with the communications department to offer a virtual discussion of “Columbia Heights: Bootstrap Town,” by Irene Parsons. Eight adults participated, including the author’s daughter! Library volunteer and voiceover artist Stella Schaffer recorded an audiobook version of the book, made available on the City website.

Community Partnerships

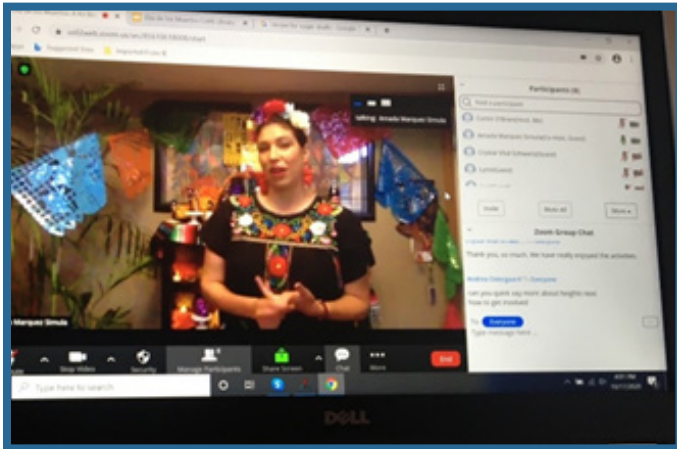
The library partnered with the League of Women Voters Anoka-Blaine-Coon Rapids in March to offer the “League of Women Voters 1920-2020” display in the glass display case and surrounding area. We received a “Friends of the League” award from the League on Oct. 12 for “providing generous spaces for the traveling League of Women Voters exhibit, hospitality, and many related civic engagement activities.”

The library partnered with the community-building non-profit group HeightsNEXT to host an online craft and history Día de los Muertos celebration in October.

Outreach

The library’s At-Home Delivery service offered a lifeline to homebound residents throughout the year. Residents who were not able to come to the library due to age or health issues received At-Home Delivery service. The service was offered curbside for some residents when it was safe to do so. A Hart Lake Apartment resident said “I don’t know how I would have managed during the lockdown without the book delivery program.”

2020 Programs in Images



Top left: Dia de los Muertos, in partnership with HeightsNEXT. Above: needlecraft drop-in class and macrame class for adults. Left: Bike Fix-It Clinic outside the library. Bottom: Poems in the Park and StoryStrolls.



The Library partnered with the Recreation Department to provide story strolls and Poems in the Parks to promote literacy and learning while families explore City parks.

2020 Public Service Data

Collection

Print Materials (books and magazines)	44,480
Audio Materials (Music and Books on CD)	4,048
Video Materials	4,244
Other Physical Materials	13
Donated Items Added to the Collection	145
Total Collection Items	52,785

Circulation

Physical Items	90,225
EBooks	9,930
EAudiobooks	3,619
Total Circulation	103,774

Programs at the Library

In-Person Adult Programs	41
In-Person Youth Programs	40
In-Person Teen Programs	7
Live Virtual Children Programs	8
Live Virtual Adult Programs	13

Reference Questions

Reference Questions	10,413
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Public Service Data Cont.

Public Internet Use

Users	12,200
Computer Sessions	18,527
Minutes Used	500,688
Wi-Fi Sessions	20,083
Website Visits	18,970
Views of Recorded Program Content	547

Volunteer Hours

Adults and Teens	304
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Total Visitors and Users

Total Visitors at the Library in 2020	50,380
At-Home Patrons (materials delivered)	43
Institutional Borrowers (businesses, churches, schools, etc.)	16
Active Borrowers	19,406
Curbside Pick-ups	1,367

Additional Services

Interlibrary Loans for Items Unavailable at Local Libraries	430
Items Supplied for Statewide Interlibrary Loans	419

Room Use By Public

Total hours of room use by public	968
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POLICE

Introduction

The year 2020 was filled with challenges. The COVID-19 pandemic forced the CHPD to make significant changes, especially in the early stages of the pandemic. The department's close partnership with the Columbia Heights Fire Department and Anoka County Public Health helped keep operational planning on track.

Community policing, a key component to the department's philosophy, was hampered by the pandemic. But progress was made when police partnered with SACA and assisted with deliveries in the community. Regular community

meetings were able to continue with the use of online platforms.

The killing of George Floyd by Minneapolis Police Officer Derek Chauvin occurred on May 25, 2020. CHPD officers responded quickly to assist the Minneapolis Police Department during the civil unrest that followed, and took additional steps to protect the City of Columbia Heights. A county-wide curfew was put into effect for a short period of time. The CHPD reached out to community stakeholders for help, asking them to take extra precautions and



to report any suspicious activity in their neighborhoods. Because of the community's help, the City only had some minor incidents related to the civil unrest in Minneapolis.

Police-community relations worldwide suffered severe damage due to the killing of George Floyd. Officers at the CHPD were visibly shaken with what had taken place. The department continues to take steps internally, with training and policies, to provide the best service to the citizens as possible. It is part of this department's culture, as well as mandated by policy,

to hold the highest regard for the dignity and liberty of all persons. The police are appreciative of the City Council and City Manager, who have made it a priority to allow for quality training. Because of this, CHPD has been training officers for several years in de-escalation, bias awareness, and crisis intervention to ensure duties are performed with the least amount of force needed.

The CHPD is at its best in partnership with the larger community. The community's support and involvement is never taken for granted.

Police Department Staff Roster

Name	Title	Start Date	End Date
Lenny Austin	Chief of Police	Feb 2, 1995	----
Erik Johnston	Sergeant/Captain	Aug 31, 1998	----
Matthew Markham	Sergeant/Captain	Aug 31, 1998	----
Ted Fischer	Sergeant	Oct 30, 1992	----
Justin Pletcher	Sergeant	May 24, 2010	----
Erik Hanson	Police Officer/Sergeant	Feb 5, 2007	----
Timothy Noll	Investigator/Sergeant	April 1, 1985 Promoted Nov 30, 2019	----
Paul Bonesteel	Drug Task Force	Sept 8, 1994	----
Matthew Aish	Police Officer	Aug 30, 1999	Jan 30, 2020
Gregory Sinn	Police Officer	June 5, 2000	----
Jason Piehn	High School Liaison	April 4, 2005	----
Joseph Pikala	Police Officer	Aug 12, 2008	----
William Monberg	Community Policing Coord.	Oct 13, 2008	----
Jacob Hilden	Police Officer/Investigator	May 14, 2013	----
Mohammed Farah	Police Officer	Jan 13, 2015	----
Tabitha Wood	Investigator	Sept 14, 2015	----
Ibrahim Farah	Middle School Liaison	April 27, 2016	----

Police Staff Roster Continued

Name	Title	Start Date	End Date
Jacquelyn Urbaniak	Investigator	Nov 28, 2016	----
Darry Jones	Police Officer	Feb 2, 2017	----
Troy Vaughn	Police Officer	Feb 2, 2017	Nov 8, 2020
Jamie Mittelstaedt	Police Officer	May 21, 2018	----
Thomas Hall	Police Officer	Aug 30, 2018	----
Mitch Weisser	Police Officer	Jan 14, 2019	----
Avery Harris	PT CSO Police Officer	Feb 28, 2018 Promoted March 20, 2019	March 4, 2020
Nate Bursch	Police Officer	Aug 12, 2019	Nov 17, 2020
Guy Juran	Police Officer	Feb 10, 2020	----
Alex Barrot	CSO Police Officer	Feb 28, 2018 Promoted March 20, 2019	----
Steve Wagner	Police Officer	Aug 10, 2020	----
Shelby Tombers	CSO Police Officer	Feb 19, 1986 Promoted Oct 12, 2020	----
Karen Olson	Office Supervisor	Feb 19, 1986	----
Jessica Racchini	Lead Records Tech	Sept 16, 2019	----
Ramon Gomez	Records Technician	Nov 4, 2013	----
Becky Romanik	Records Technician	March 14, 2018	----

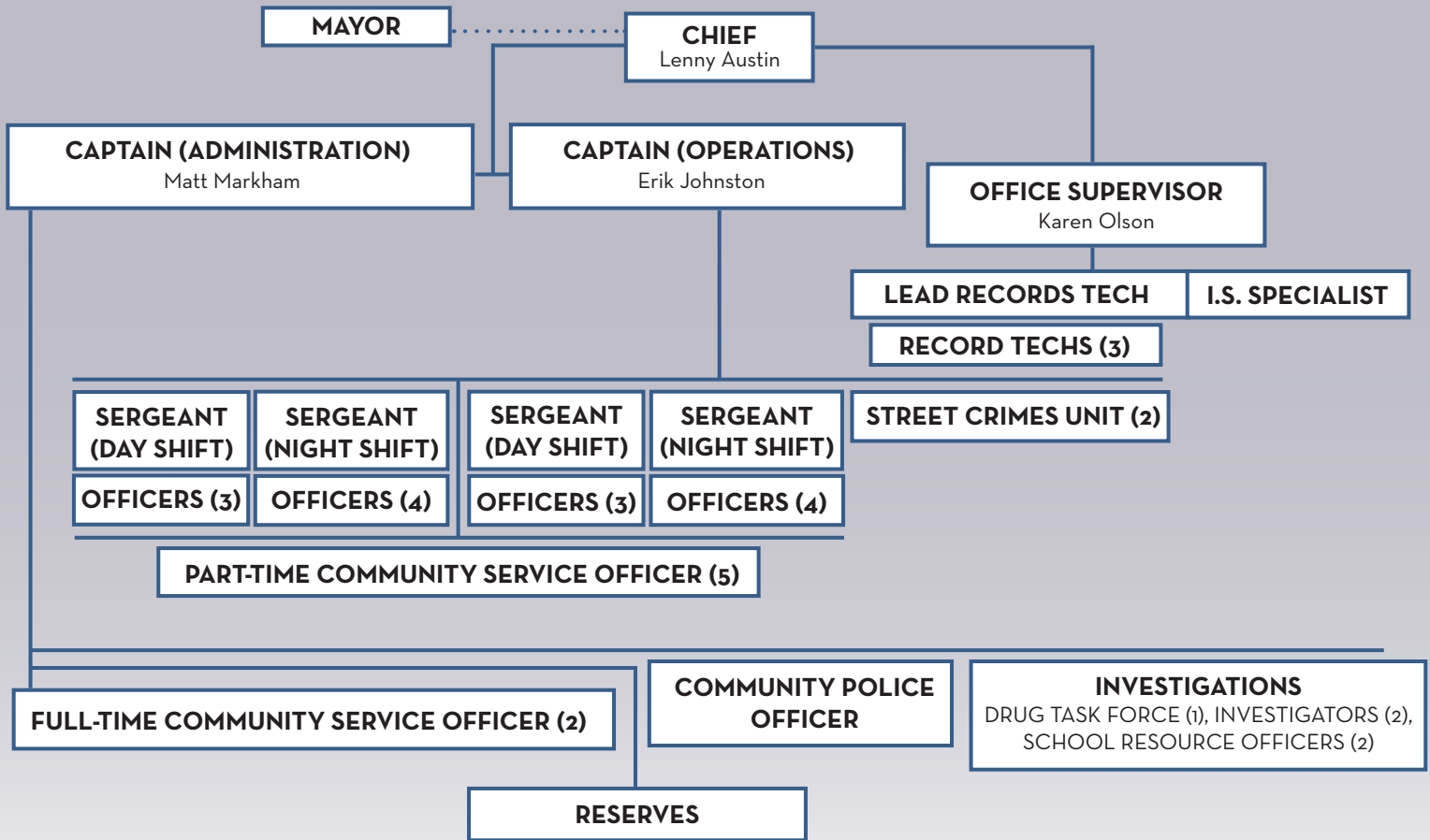
Police Staff Roster Continued

Name	Title	Start Date	End Date
Jennifer Parra	Records Technician	Oct 13, 2020	----
Nick Fedor	Information Systems Specialist	Sept 18, 2018	----
Jerry Wellman	Community Service Officer	Jan 25, 2006	Oct 2, 2020
Tony Miller	PT Community Service Officer	Oct 26, 2016	----
Robert Tombers	PT Community Service Officer	Aug 30, 2018	----
Kelvin Yang	PT Community Service Officer	Aug 12, 2019	----
Luke Troyak	PT Community Service Officer	Nov 20, 2019	----
Eli Haddorff	PT Community Service Officer	Dec 14, 2020	----





POLICE



Department Employee 2020 Awards and Recognitions

On Oct 6, Chief Austin presented several members of the CHPD with awards for their accomplishments during 2020. All in attendance at the short gathering were socially distanced and wearing masks, except for when they had their photo taken.

I.S. Specialist Nick Fedor was recognized with an “Above and Beyond” award for responding to the scene of a homicide in the middle of the night to assist officers in procuring video evidence they needed for their investigation.

Officer Greg Sinn received an “Above and Beyond” award for his kindness toward those in need, including instances of using his own funds to purchase food for those who are hungry and begging for money.

Record Tech Becky Romanik received an “Innovation”

award for her inventive suggestion to streamline tasks while increasing access to information by changing the way that information is processed.

Officer Tommy Hall received an “Award of Merit” for his work related to a homicide where he protected the scene, helped review video, and provided information that led to the identification of a suspect vehicle, which in turn helped to identify the suspect.

Officer Jackie Urbaniak received an “Award of Merit” for her outstanding work in the Investigations Unit during the very busy summer months.

Officers Tommy Hall, Jake Hilden and Nate Bursch all received an “Award of Merit” for their work in detecting a business burglary and locating and arresting the suspect.

Pandemic Planning and Civil Unrest

The worldwide pandemic and local civil unrest created additional challenges for the Columbia Heights Police Department in 2020.

Police leadership worked closely with Fire Chief Thompson, who serves as the City’s Emergency Management Director, to develop and implement a response to the pandemic. This involved monitoring the spread of the virus and identifying methods to keep both staff and the community safe. Sourcing of supplies, updating technology and creating alternate staffing and safety plans were all part of the City response to the pandemic.

In addition, the City closely monitored the civil unrest that was occurring in Minneapolis and neighboring cities starting in late May. Businesses in Columbia Heights and Hilltop were the target of looting and damage to property attempts, and additional proactive patrol was needed to ensure the safety of local businesses and residents.



All members of the CHPD work to support and protect an individual’s right to 1st Amendment protests and speech. At the same time, officers worked to protect the community from those that attempted to take advantage of the situation for personal gain, or were engaging in criminal activity. Many lessons were learned from police responses last year, and we continually strive to improve our response to these types of events.

CHPD Works With Nonprofit to Improve Homelessness Outreach

Recently, the Columbia Heights Police Department accompanied outreach workers from the nonprofit organization Guild as they met with homeless individuals in the City. Guild seeks to connect those experiencing homelessness with housing and other resources. They’re

working in Columbia Heights as part of their contract through Anoka County Social Services.

The CHPD has been partnering with Guild for approximately two years. The partnership will continue as the City continues to see increasing homelessness.

“When Guild staff rode with us they were brought to locations where officers have been having homeless contact and made some contacts in the early morning hours when homeless individuals were still in their sleeping spots for the night,” said Cpt. Matt Markham. “Not making police the first face of government assistance works in everyone’s favor. Guild staff work to get homeless individuals housing.”

If you or someone you know is experiencing homelessness, Anoka County has resources available. Check their website at: <https://www.anokacounty.us/2129/Housing-and-Homeless-Programs>, or refer to the info box below for other resources.

Homelessness Assistance Resources

- Anoka County Housing Help Desk, 763-324-1490
- Alexandra House Domestic Violence Shelter, 763-780-2330
- Anoka County Housing Resource Line, 763-324-1215
- Family Promise-Family Shelter, 763-568-7365
- Outreach for Homeless with Disabilities, 763-324-1420
- Metro Shelter Hotline, 888-234-1329
- MN Homeless Veteran Registry, 888-546-5838
- Stepping Stone Emergency Housing Single Adult Shelter, 763-323-7006
- Homeless Youth Service Network: <https://ysnmn.org/#/home>
- Housing Benefits 101: <https://mn.hb101.org/>

CHPD Puts Focus On Pedestrian Safety Initiative

The Columbia Heights Police Department continued its efforts for pedestrian and driver safety along Central Avenue in 2020 with the Pedestrian Safety Initiative. The primary focus of this initiative is education in order to improve the safety of the pedestrians, motorists and bicyclists along Central Avenue.

Officers recorded informational videos that can be found on the CHPD Facebook page and department website. In 2021 you will continue to see CHPD officers meeting with pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists along Central Avenue to make our streets safer for everyone who uses them. The CHPD will also continue to partner with the Anoka County Sheriff's Office and the Minnesota Dept of Transportation (MnDOT) as it works to find creative and effective solutions to pedestrian safety. For more information about the Pedestrian Safety Initiative, please visit www.chpd.com.



Search and Rescue Drones Deployed at Public Safety

The Columbia Heights Police Department has begun its operation on a UAS (Drone) program for Public Safety.

CHPD began researching how unmanned aerial vehicles (otherwise known as drones) could best serve our community during 2019's Strategic Plan, and in 2020 it all came to fruition.

The City purchased two drones in 2020 as part of a Public Safety drone program in conjunction with the Fire Department. The Police Department will be operating under the recent legislative changes that outline the use for drones by law enforcement.

These unmanned aerial vehicles will allow for various types of public support, such as search and rescue missions for lost children and adults, building and land surveys after extinguishing fires, and utility maintenance, just to name a few. In order to comply with all State and Federal guidelines, all UAS pilots must pass a rigorous written exam and train with the drones on a regular basis.

Community Oriented Policing

Like many organizations, the Columbia Heights Police Department was significantly impacted by the COVID pandemic in 2020 and it affected the way in which we were able to interact with the community. 2020 saw the pandemic related reduction in our in-person meetings, and an increase in virtual interactions and communications. It was a learning experience for all of us as we found news ways to communicate and stay in touch.

Landlord Outreach

CHPD views our partnership with landlords as an integral part of creating a safe and enjoyable community. The police department has regular interaction with our rental community. The police department was able to hold our first quarterly meeting ahead of the pandemic restrictions in 2020 before switching to virtual outreach to our group of over 800 landlords.

Business Watch

The police department continues to partner with our business and retail community in the form of our Business Watch program. Members of the police department visit many of our business locations throughout the year to check-in and work on crime prevention partnerships.

Neighborhood Watch

The Neighborhood Watch program connects neighborhood leaders with the police department to assist with communication and reporting suspicious activity. The police department provides training for the over 170 block leaders that comprise the neighborhood watch. No one knows a neighborhood better than the people who live there, and we view this program as a vital partnership in keeping communities safe. Interactions with the neighborhood watch group were mostly electronic and virtual in 2020.

National Night Out

Normally held on the first Tuesday in August each year, the popular National Night Out program was canceled in 2020. This is one of our favorite outreach programs, and we're looking forward to 2021 when we can gather again for this event.

Coffee With a Cop

CHPD's monthly "Coffee with a Cop" was active until March of 2020 and then was placed on hold. The program is a great opportunity to talk to community members in a less formal setting and has been a popular activity.

Chili Cook Off

The Police Department participated in a city team for the Annual Lee Carlson Chili Cook-Off. The team took top honors with a recipe from Fire Chief Thompson. It was a great event that supports important mental health outreach in our community.

Citizen Academy

The police department conducts an annual citizen academy in which we share the inner-workings of the police department with community members. Topics range from Use of Force to Drug Enforcement to Community Policing. The academy provides a greater shared understanding of how police work functions. The pandemic placed the program on hold in 2020, and we plan for it to return as soon as we can safely gather.

Community Events

In addition to the other programs outlined above, the police department participates in numerous community interactions throughout the year. Officers guest speak at classes for the Adult Basic Education Center as well as local Community Education events. We stopped by St. Tim's drive through dinner to help hand out meals in September and visited with attendees of Columbia Heights Movies in the Park event.



City Manager Kelli Bourgeois, Fire Chief Charlie Thompson, Shari from MasterChef, and Police Cpt. Erik Johnston pose with their winning trophy at the annual Lee Carlson Center Chili Cook-Off event held in February 2020.

Strategic Plan

Since 2009, the CHPD has operated under a Strategic Plan that outlines goals and objectives in support of its overall mission of creating a safe community. Each December, officers, civilian employees, and supervisors review the previous year's Strategic Plan and provided input in developing the update. The Department also solicited input from community partners including Neighborhood Watch groups and other residents, members of the Multi-Cultural Advisory Committee, representatives of the School District, businesses, and other City departments in order to assure that the plan is responsive to what the community expects from its Police Department. Some priorities included: a fully operational Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (drone) program, officer wellness, recruitment/retention, improved community outreach, and many other programs and initiatives designed to best serve our community. Visit www.chpolice.com to view the full plan.

Problem Oriented Policing

2020 brought several hurdles to Problem Oriented Policing with staffing challenges and the COVID pandemic. However, the CHPD continues to use creativity and hard work to address the issues affecting Columbia Heights and its residents. One of the programs started was the Central Avenue Pedestrian Initiative, which used both education and positive contacts to teach and enforce better pedestrian safety skills to walkers, bikers, and drivers. The CHPD also partnered with Anoka County Social Services to provide extra outreach and housing services to those affected by homelessness during this very difficult year. Many people without homes found more significant and consistent shelter because of this partnership, and we look forward to continuing this partnership into 2021. The Central Avenue Façade Improvement program also continued in 2020, allowing for more cameras to be placed at businesses along Central Avenue, which in turn gives us opportunities to partner with many of our local businesses and community stakeholders as we work together to ensure community safety for everyone. Every year brings new challenges, but even in challenging times the CHPD continues to rely on our community relationships, flexibility, and creativity.

Partnership Projects

Lee Carlson Center

In 2020, we continued our partnership with the Lee Carlson Center. The focus of this partnership is to connect people in need of services with the best organizations able to provide them. Columbia Heights police officers responding to calls in the community will identify and refer situations which could potentially benefit from being connected to additional services. With the individual's permission, they will receive a follow up visit under the Community Outreach Program (COP) as soon as the next business day. This follow up visit will include a Columbia Heights police officer and a trained intake specialist from the Lee Carlson Center who will work together to connect those individuals with needed services.

using the fire bays in order to assure safe social distancing. These events were popular and proved very timely with the increased medical needs last year.

Truck Or Treat

The Truck or Treat event has become a city-wide activity in its third year of operation. Social Distancing requirements created some additional challenges this year so Police, Fire, Recreation, Administration and Public Works all collaborated to convert the Truck or Treat event into a drive-through activity. Several hundred participants drove a route lined with vehicles and costumes, and it was a great opportunity to hold a community event in a challenging time.

Red Cross Blood Drive

The police department partnered with the Red Cross to organize and host two successful blood drives at the public safety building. The first was in the training room Feb 26. The second blood drive was held at the request of the Red Cross, who cited the urgent need for blood. We were able to accommodate that request on May 19 by

SACA

The police partnered multiple times with the SACA Food Shelf and assisted with food deliveries in the community. SACA was also involved in the annual school supply give-away event in the Murzyn Hall parking lot.

Youth Outreach

As with most department initiatives, the past areas of youth outreach were severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Although there were hurdles, the CHPD were still able to connect with the City's youth in some meaningful ways. From Jan 1 through March 11, the department was able to host 1,693 kids at the Cops and Kids Open Gym Program. That was on pace to reach over 8,000 kids in 2020. Staff looks forward to starting this highly-successful program back up as soon as possible in 2021.

The CHPD was also able to host its second-annual "Cooking with the Cops" competition on March 5, 2020, partnering with the girls Varsity and JV basketball teams this year, and looking forward to continuing the annual tradition in 2021.

The 4th grade DARE program taught by Officers Jason Piehn, Ibrahim Farah, and Mo Farah kicked off in all three elementary schools, but unfortunately had to be canceled prior to the completion of the lessons.

Some other areas that were started or scheduled, but cancelled due to the pandemic, were the bi-annual

Opiates and Alcohol programs with the 10th grade health classes, anti-bullying reading program with the K-2 classes, Big Brothers Big Sisters, bike rodeo, bike giveaways, Pizza with the Cops, Cuts with the Cops, and the Teen Academy.

When school shut down in mid-March, the CHPD had to consider the health and welfare of the City's youth, as well as staff, but that didn't stop the department altogether from finding some unique ways to stay connected. It hosted a drive-up backpack giveaway just prior to the start of the 2020-2021 school year, and Officer Jason Piehn connected with the health classes via Zoom to check in with students and let them know we are still here and ready for the day we can all connect in person again. The department also used social media platforms to put out health and safety educational videos to keep people connected.

Although 2020 was difficult for all, police officers and staff at CHPD continued to set the standard for youth engagement in law enforcement, and look forward to continuing this tradition in 2021.

Shop-With-A-Cop Receives Record-Breaking Donations

Shop with a Cop, led by the Columbia Heights Police Association, saw a record-breaking year for donations in 2020. Through the support of the Columbia Heights community, the program raised more than \$12,000 in its 11th year.

Throughout December, a Columbia Heights officer (or two) takes parents to the Fridley Target to shop for holiday gifts.

"Every dime we get for Shop with a Cop goes directly to the families," said Sgt. Justin Pletcher.

The record-breaking \$12,000 raised went straight to area families. In 2020, 31 families took part in the program, and 102 children received gifts. Families were also provided with money to buy clothing and food. With the impact of COVID on the economy, families have been struggling to provide even basic necessities, let alone holiday gifts, said Sarah Palacios, who took part in the program this year.

"People are really struggling right now with COVID," Palacios said. "I wasn't going to be able to get my kids anything. It is really great to know that I can get them

something without them knowing the difference."

None of this would be possible without the support of the community.

"This program doesn't exist without community members donating," Pletcher said "I was worried this year because of COVID. Are businesses struggling? Do people have money? But they outdid themselves."

"There are a lot of good people out there," Palacios added.



Other Programs and Activities

Multi-Cultural Advisory Committee

The Columbia Heights Multi-Cultural Advisory Committee, commonly referred to as the MAC, continued to meet on a bi-monthly basis throughout 2020. While in-person meetings were not possible, meetings were held virtually, which provided both challenges and opportunities. In fact, the success of the virtual MAC meetings led to the CHPD's first ever Virtual Public Forum in early 2021. With the civil unrest and pandemic, 2020 really gave credence to the importance of the MAC and what an open dialogue between passionate community volunteers and the police department can accomplish.

The MAC allows for transparency and the sharing of accurate information during a time where misinformation can be troublesome. Some of the topics discussed over the last year were: the George Floyd/Derek Chauvin incident, peaceful protests vs. riots, the CHPD pedestrian safety initiative, COVID-19 response, homelessness, domestic violence, and any significant incidents that occurred in Columbia Heights over the last year.

If you are interested in joining the MAC, please contact Officer Bill Monberg at bmonberg@columbiaheightsmn.gov.

Wellness

With the ongoing civil unrest and pandemic affecting everyone in some way, perhaps there was no better time than 2020 for the CHPD to really focus on the mental health of its officers and staff. The year 2020 marked the first year where the CHPD sent every officer to a mental health check-in. Mental wellness is as important as physical wellness, and the CHPD will continue to find creative and innovative ways to serve the needs of its staff.

Training

Having a highly trained and well equipped police force continues as a core strategy for the Columbia Heights Police Department. It continues efforts to provide officers with the tools to help safely resolve conflicts

through de-escalation and tactics. Officers are attending the POST Board mandated training on Conflict Management and Mediation, Crisis Intervention and Recognizing and Valuing Community Diversity. The Columbia Heights Police Department goes above and beyond the state requirements for these trainings.

In 2020, the police department brought in instructors from BOWMAC to provide critical incident and Emergency Operations Center training. Police and fire supervisors, City leaders and community partners all participated in several days of training which included exercise designed to simulate a critical event. The training was well received and helps prepare city leaders and community partners to work as an effective team to manage crisis events.



Police Reserves

The CHPD Reserve Unit is a volunteer organization composed of members of the Columbia Heights community. These members support the police department and the Columbia Heights-Hilltop community through a variety of tasks that include patrol, transports and participating at special events. Reserve members receive specialized training related to their areas of responsibility.

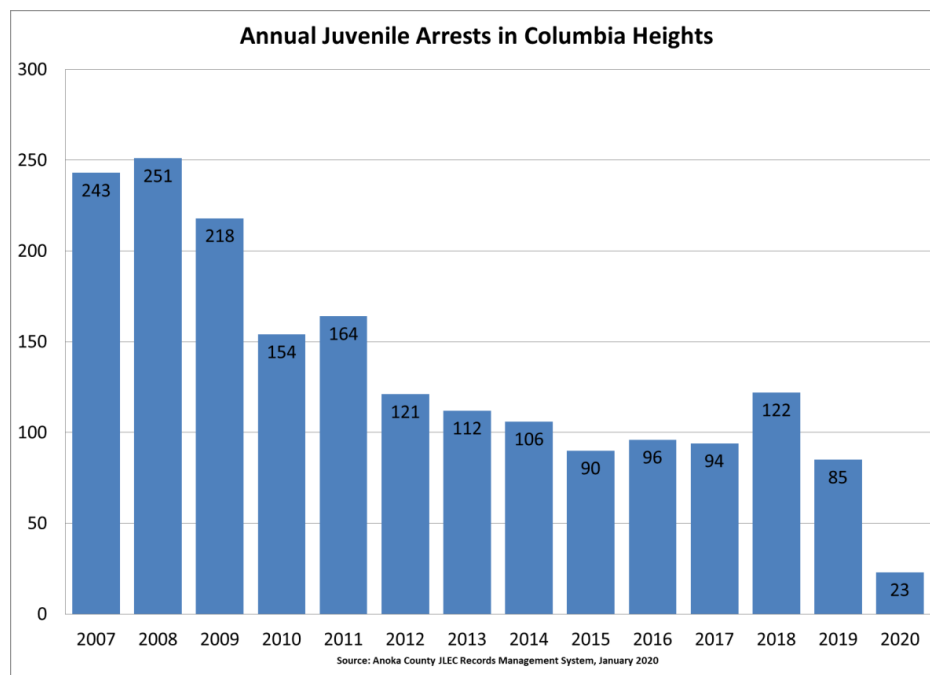
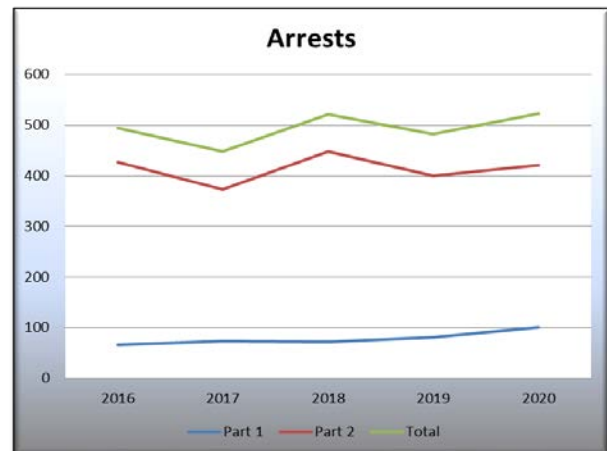
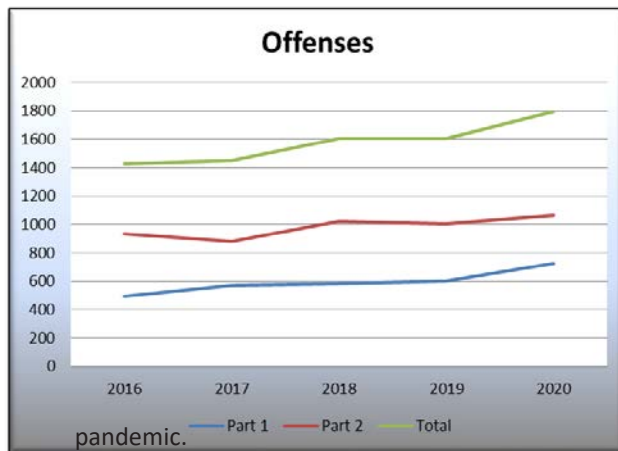
The Reserve Program has been a part of the Columbia Heights Police Department for over half a century, and thousands of hours of volunteer time have been donated. The CHPD continues to be grateful for their service to their community.

Columbia Heights Police Association

The Columbia Heights Police Association, or CHPA, didn't let 2020 slow down the many programs and initiatives they oversee. In fact, 2020 may have been its best year yet. Even during a pandemic, the CHPA found a way to provide over 50 meals to Muslim neighbors during a drive-up Iftar partnership with the local mosque. The CHPA continued its partnership with the Columbia Heights High School by providing the annual Curt Ramsdell Scholarship. The 2020 recipient was Renee Booth. Lastly, the 2020 Shop with a Cop Program was the most successful yet. Through the generosity of the community and the CHPA members, as well as from lasting partnerships with St. Timothy's Church, the Lions, the VFW, and other charitable donations, the department was able to provide food, clothes, and gifts for 31 families and over 100 children this holiday season. The CHPA's membership continues to grow. Thank you to all who contributed!

Crime Statistics

Columbia Heights saw a 12% overall increase in crime numbers in 2020 when compared to 2019. This included a 21% increase in Part 1 crimes and a 6% increase in Part 2 Crimes. This was also reflected by an increase in arrests to correspond to the crime increase. But juvenile arrests saw a significant drop.



Use-of-Force Statistics

While police use of force was already a closely watched topic, the events of 2020 brought it into even sharper focus. Columbia Heights officers continue to hold the highest regard for the dignity and liberty of all persons, and place minimal reliance on the use of force. The police department respects the value of every human life, and the application of deadly force is a measure to be employed in the most extreme circumstances. The CHPD goes beyond the state and federal reporting requirements to monitor our use of force incidents and ensure compliance with state and federal law and department policy.

In 2020, officers responded to 23,253 calls for service (Anoka County Communications). A minimal amount of force was used in 0.32% of these calls, with a total of 75 incidents for the year. Of those incidents, open hand techniques were the most common type of force used and 89% of the subjects involved where force was used reported no injury. Of those that reported injuries, minor pain or abrasions were the most common. We continue to have a supervisor review every reported use of force to ensure legal and policy requirements are met. At the same time, we look for new tools and techniques we can use to minimize the times we are required to use force.

Police Department Budget Summary

The Police Department's budget for 2020 was authorized at \$5,245,170. This budget is composed of three main sections, the first being Personal Services which is by far the largest portion at \$4,583,000. This section includes all the line items related to the payment of the department's personnel. The CHPD has an authorized roster of 28 police officers, one full-time and five part-time Community Service Officers, and six Support Services employees.

The Supplies section is the smallest portion of the Police Department's budget. Set at \$180,900 for 2020, this section includes such items as office supplies, uniform items to include protective vests, computer equipment and general supplies.

Other Services and Charges is the third section of the

budget, with a 2020 amount of \$481,270. Other Services and Charges is made up of the line items for things like training, cell phones and building utilities, and maintenance of the department's vehicles.

The 2020 Police Capital Equipment budget was \$193,100, which included funds for the purchase and outfitting of two marked utility vehicles for patrol use, and one unmarked vehicle. The Capital Equipment budget also included an amount of \$47,200 to purchase drone equipment and conduct the initial training requirements to institute an Unmanned Aerial System. This program will be operated in collaboration with the Fire and Public Works Departments, and will be used for suspect searches, search and rescue, fire scene overview, disaster assessment, accident and crime scene mapping, and various types of inspections.

Sign Up Today to Receive City Emergency Alerts at www.columbiaheightsmn.gov/alerts

The City of Columbia Heights launched a new text/email/phone citizen alert system at the end of 2020. Residents can sign up to receive emergency texts, emails, or calls about severe weather events or other area emergencies.



Uses The CodeRED® system will be used to send critical communications, from evacuation notices to missing child alerts.

Caller ID When you see the following displayed, you will know the call is from us. If you would like to hear the last message delivered to your phone, simply dial the number back.

- Emergency Notifications
1-866-419-5000 or Emergency Comm
- General Notifications
1-855-969-4636 or General Comm

Privacy Your contact information remains private and will only be used for community notifications.

Local Emergency Alerts

- Toxic Spills/Evacuations
- Severe Weather
- Child Abduction
- Water Contamination
- Armed Criminal in Area

General Alerts

- Street Closures
- Construction Updates
- Hydrant Flushing Notice
- Water Main Repair Notice
- Water Shut-off Notice
- Plowing/Salting Updates
- Street Sweeping Notices
- Public Hearings

Note: General Alerts and alerts specific to your neighborhood or block are only available to those who sign up for a CodeRED account.

You can also text "Heights" to 99411 to have the sign-up link sent to your phone. If you don't have internet access, try contacting a friend or family member to help add your contact info to the emergency database. Or you can call the City directly at 763-706-3615 for assistance.



PUBLIC WORKS

Introduction

The Columbia Heights Public Works Department provides many services to the residents of Columbia Heights. These services include but are not limited to the maintenance of City streets, parks, water mains, and sanitary and storm sewer systems, the planning, design, construction, and assessing functions of the Engineering Department, the administration of refuse collection, recycling, and hazardous waste programs, the implementation of special projects such as the Inflow-Infiltration Reduction Program and street lighting programs, management of urban forestry, and the emergency response to an array of Public Works needs at all times of day.

2020 was a challenging year due to COVID 19. While many operations were suspended early in the pandemic, Public Works adhered to CDC recommended health protocols to perform its usual duties that included street patching and repair, snow plowing and ice control, street sweeping, tree trimming, park facility and turf maintenance, athletic field preparation, continuation of a systematic program for water main and sewer main maintenance, testing to ensure our drinking water meets or exceeds all state and federal requirements, repair of water main breaks, maintenance of the sanitary lift and water pump stations,



refuse and recycling collection, vehicle and equipment repair and preventive maintenance, and the design and inspection of construction projects.

The following reports by the various departments in Public Works provide an overview of each department's many activities. These reports are composed of words and numbers, but please remember that these accomplishments are only possible through the dedication of the individuals who show up every day to do their jobs. It is these people, using their skills and experience that make it possible for

the residents to enjoy the quality of life that is available in Columbia Heights.

Few people realize that in addition to normal everyday maintenance operations, each time there is a heavy snowfall, a major water break or emergency repair, or a plugged sewer, Public Works employees respond regardless of the time of day or night. Often while the rest of us are enjoying time with our families, Public Works employees are clearing the streets of snow and ice, or ensuring that our residents have water or sewers that work properly.

Public Works Staff

Name	Title	Start Date	End Date
Kevin Hansen	Public Works Director/ City Engineer	Dec 1, 1997	----
Kathy Young	Assistant City Engineer	Aug 11, 1986	----
Lauren Letsche	Engineering Tech	May 5, 2014	----
Derek Maine	Engineering Tech	Nov 18, 2019	Feb 21, 2020
Ben Lund	Maintenance Worker (Sewer & Water Dept.) Engineering Tech	Jan 5, 2015 April 6, 2020	April 3, 2020 ----
Jesse Davies	Refuse & Recycling Dept.	Sept 13, 2004	----
Sue Schmidtbauer	Admin Assistant	March 1, 2010	----
Barb Thomas	Purchasing/Assessing Clerk	Sept 29, 2008	----
Eric Hanson	Facilities Maintenance Supervisor	July 9, 2013	----
James Hauth	Utilities Superintendent	April 29, 2019	----
Liam Genter	Urban Forestry Specialist	July 1, 2019	----
Jeff Hook	Vehicle Maintenance Supervisor	April 28, 1997	----
Cody Overson	Mechanic	March 27, 2017	----
Ted Kriesel	Sign Department	May 24, 2016	----

Street & Park Department

Name	Title	Start Date	End Date
David Cullen	Maintenance Worker Foreperson (streets) Street & Park Superintendent	May 2, 2016 July 22, 2019 Sept 30, 2019	July 19, 2019 Sept 27, 2019 ----
Ben Mathson	Maintenance Worker Foreperson (streets)	May 20, 2002 Oct 14, 2019	Oct 11, 2019 ----
Tim Lund	Foreperson (parks)	May 2, 1994	----
Matthew Edwards	Maintenance Worker	March 4, 2019	----
Jacob Fish	Maintenance Worker	Dec 2, 2019	----
Kelly Fetzer	Maintenance Worker	June 12, 1995	----
James Green	Maintenance Worker	Feb 2, 2015	----
Jeremy Hansen	Maintenance Worker	Aug 25, 2014	----
Janelle Niznik	Maintenance Worker	May 20, 2019	----
John Nordlund	Maintenance Worker	March 26, 2001	----
Jonathan Perkins	Maintenance Worker	Dec 2, 2019	----
Tim Sandquist	Maintenance Worker	June 12, 2017	----
Jackie Wohlers	Maintenance Worker	Dec 3, 2002	----

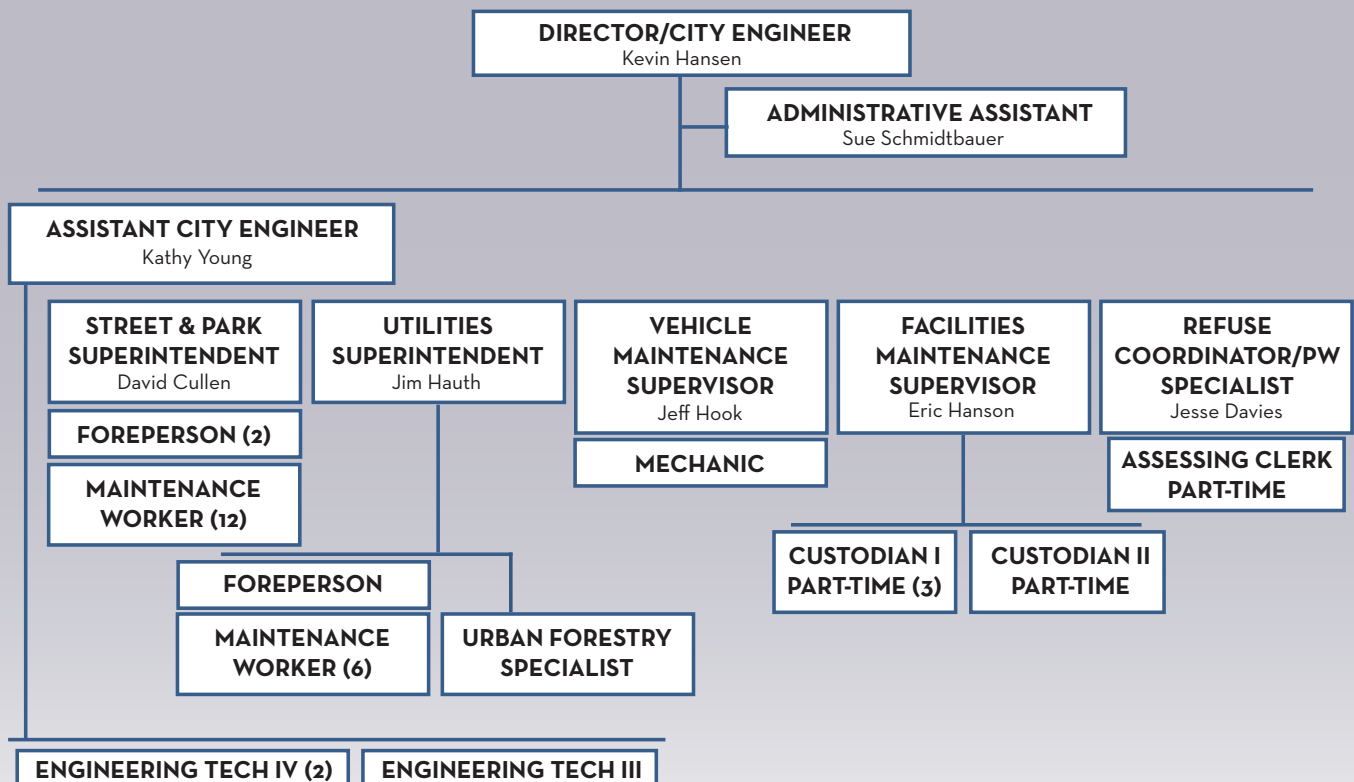


Sewer & Water Department

Name	Title	Start Date	End Date
Sherri Jensen	Foreperson	Aug 23, 1999	----
Kyle Burns	Maintenance Worker	Jan 27, 2016	----
Duane Hopkins	Maintenance Worker	May 8, 2017	----
Jeff Olson	Maintenance Worker	June 25, 2018	----
Mike Pyka	Maintenance Worker	May 3, 2016	Feb 6, 2020
David Quady	Maintenance Worker	March 30, 2015	----



PUBLIC WORKS



Major accomplishments in 2020:

- Following a grant award of \$7,000,000 for the reconstruction of 37th Avenue from Central Avenue to Stinson Boulevard, preliminary design was initiated with the City of Minneapolis for planned 2023 construction.
- Another grant secured from the State of Minnesota through the DNR provided 50% funding for the reconstruction of the Silver Lake Boat Landing.
- Staff also secured a grant from the State of Minnesota to combat Emerald Ash Borer in the urban forest. The 3-year program will accelerate the removal of ash trees in the city and completed Keyes Park, saving the City over \$35,000 of what would have been contracted costs.
- The annual Water Main Cleaning and Lining program was suspended to allow for water main replacement. This is still considered program work in cases where cleaning and lining would not be effective due to a history of breaks.
- Consultant selection and design of the new City Hall at 40th and Central Avenues was brought to 95% completion. This meets one of the goals set by the City Council at their 2017 Goal Setting retreat.
- In 2020 the large private development where City Hall will be located broke ground late in the year. Staff evaluates the existing utilities serving each site, performs plan reviews, and provides construction inspections of utilities, connections to public utilities and roads, and site erosion control.
- The annual Sanitary Sewer Lining Program was continued in 2020 in Collection Districts 1 and 3 to address I/I problems in the southeast quadrant and central area of the city, and to help offset the annual surcharge from the Metropolitan Council Environmental Services.
- The Utility Department continued the annual Sanitary Sewer Line Cleaning Program with over one-half of the entire system being cleaned in 2020.
- The City was awarded a Safe Route to Schools grant of nearly \$500,000 to support additional sidewalks and pedestrian safety improvements on 49th Avenue in the area of the ISD 13 schools.
- The annual Street Rehabilitation Program included continuing work on Municipal State Aid streets in 2020, with 5th and 6th Streets from 50th to 51st Avenues fully reconstructed. The City also partnered with Minneapolis to complete the second phase of roadway improvements on 37h Avenue from 5th Street to Central Avenue, with a paved trail added in this segment.

Engineering and Construction Activities

Design and Construction Work

Project 1801:	Seal Coat - Zone 3A
Project 1802:	Zones 4A Street Rehabilitation
Project 1902:	Madison Street Curb and Gutter Construction
Project 1903:	Water Main Construction
Project 1906:	Concrete Alley Construction
Project 1907:	37th Avenue Bituminous Trail and Pedestrian Ramp Improvements
	37th Avenue Mill and Overlay, 5th Street to Central Avenue*
Project 1908:	Traffic Signal on TH 65 (Central Avenue) at 41st Avenue*
Project 1909:	Polk Street Sanitary Sewer Construction
Project 1912:	Silver Lake Boat Landing and Site Improvements*
Project 2000:	Miscellaneous Concrete
Project 2008:	Silver Lake Lift Station*
Project 2010:	Pump Station 3 Upgrades*

Surveying/Design Work

Project 1905:	State Aid Miscellaneous Construction
Project 2002:	Street Rehabilitation - Zone 4B and Zone 5
Project 2005:	State Aid Street Rehabilitation
Project 2006:	Library Parking Lot Expansion
Project 2007:	53rd Avenue State Aid Street Turnabout / Trail*
Project 2100:	Miscellaneous Concrete
Project 2101:	Seal Coat - Zone 3B
Project 2103:	Water Main Construction

* Work coordinated with other agencies or consulting engineer/architect.

Misc Work Performed

- Warranty inspections on completed construction projects and review of corrective work done by contractors. Prepared record drawings of public improvements.
- Review of building permits.
- Street striping, citywide.
- Miscellaneous surveys, traffic counts and reports as required.
- Traffic Commission agenda and meetings.
- Implementation of Special Assessment module.
- GIS database expansion and metafile development.
- In-house and off-site seminars to enhance job knowledge and performance.
- Addressed erosion and drainage concerns on commercial and residential properties.
- Annual NPDES annual report, annual Public Works training, and implementation of best management practices (BMP), including SWMP software to track inspections.
- Public outreach with Adopt-A-Drain to encourage resident participation.
- Director of Public Works, Kevin Hansen, and Stormwater Specialist, Lauren Letsche, were involved during the year for input and coordination on projects of the Mississippi Watershed Management Organization and Rice Creek Watershed Management Districts.



Lift station

Sanitary Sewer Maintenance

Sanitary Sewer Cleaning

The Utility Department cleans over 40% of all sanitary sewer mainlines in the city annually. In 2020, 61% of sewer mains were cleaned using a hydraulic method to remove dirt, grease and root penetrations. Columbia Heights is divided into three separate districts for the Metropolitan Council Environmental Services (MCES) flow metering. Each year cleaning efforts focus on completing one MCES metering district and lines in the other two districts identified as needing more regular cleaning. In 2020, all 179,789 feet of District 1 was cleaned; an additional 11,136 feet of sanitary sewer main requiring regular or emergency cleaning was completed in District 2 and District 3. The Utility Department cleaned 190,925 feet of sanitary sewer. Cleaning the city owned sanitary sewer lines helps minimize backups that can affect residents, infrastructure and the environment. In 2020, seven sanitary sewer backups were reported and cleared.

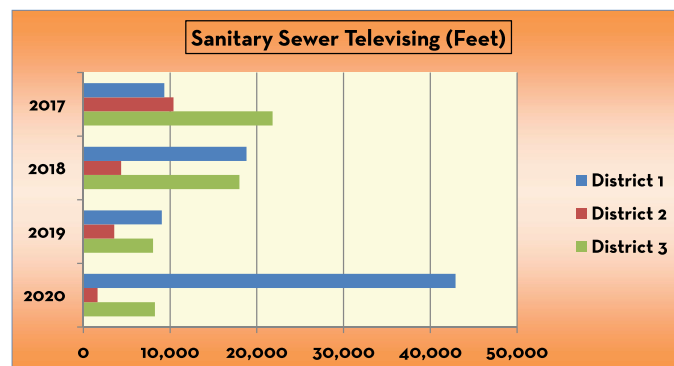
In the spring, COVID-19 presented unique challenges for the sanitary sewer. A toilet paper shortage as a result of panic buying led many people to use unapproved substances and flush them down into the sanitary sewer. The Utility Department became aware of two areas through routine monthly inspections where large piles of rags were leading to backup conditions in manholes. A proactive approach was taken which included sending letters to surrounding homes and apartments, checking the manholes daily for buildup, and cleaning when issues were found. The work of the Utilities staff ensured no properties were damaged, and no backups were reported during this period.

Sanitary Sewer Televising

The Utility Department performs Closed Circuit Televising (CCTV) of sanitary sewer main lines to assist in the assessment of condition and maintenance needs. From the pipe inspection results, determinations are made on cleaning priority and repair schedule. Each year televising records are used to identify sanitary sewer to repair with cured in place pipe (CIPP). Larger repairs are often required and identified through the inspection. Inflow and Infiltration (I/I) can be located using these inspections as well.

In 2015 the Utility Department began a goal of televising over 40,000 feet per year. The goal is designed to ensure a CCTV inspection on every pipe in Columbia Heights once every seven years. In 2020, 52,820 feet of sewer main was televised. This is significantly more than the yearly goal. The Utilities staff performed additional inspections to make up for the lost productivity in 2019 due to other projects taking additional staff time. Many significant pipe issues were identified through the sewer televising inspections and have been added to the 2021 and 2022 sanitary sewer

lining programs. The Utility Department continues to prioritize sewer inspections and focus on inspecting sewer mains that have not yet been inspected. In this way unknown issues can be found and repaired before they impact the sanitary sewer service.



Sanitary Sewer Improvements

The sanitary sewer system requires continual maintenance and repair to protect the public and environment from sanitary sewer backups and overflows. System repairs also help minimize the amount of rain water, ground water and snow melt entering the sanitary system. When clear water enters Columbia Heights' sanitary system, it must be treated. Treating clear water costs the City money.

By rehabilitating manholes and lining sewer pipes, City staff helps reduce the cost of treating sanitary sewage and improve the performance and reliability of the system. Each year, the Utility Department plans to line 6,000 feet of sanitary sewer pipe. These repairs improve broken and deteriorating pipe, and eliminate groundwater infiltration from the system.

In 2020, 5,494 feet of sanitary sewer was rehabilitated using Cured in Place Pipe (CIPP), a method that eliminates the need to dig into the street to replace the pipe. Sanitary sewer cleaning operations continued to keep main line backups low, with only seven sewer backups occurring in 2020.

Sanitary Sewer System	2020	2019	2018	2017
Repairs & Improvements				
City Main Backups	7	5	5	4
Private Service Backups	15	9	13	4
Manholes	4	38	17	47
Manhole Covers	0	20	0	11
Sewer Lining (FT)	5,494	8,262	0	5,784

Sanitary Sewer Maintenance Cont.

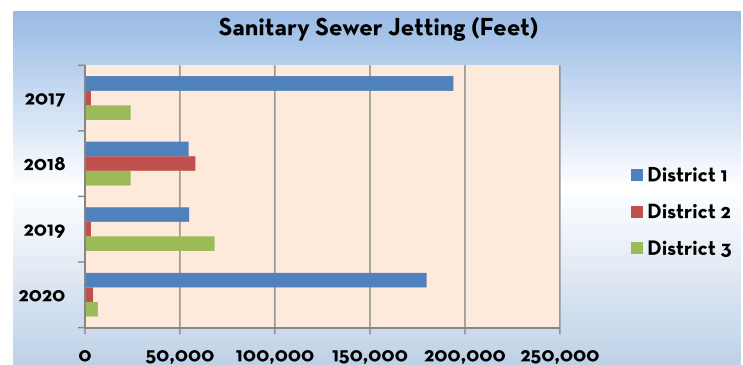
Sanitary Sewer Lift Station Maintenance

As a result of changes in elevation throughout Columbia Heights, sanitary lift stations are required to maintain proper flow dynamics within the sanitary sewer system. These stations pump sewage from a lower elevation area of town upward, and allow it to then rejoin the gravity sewer system. These stations require annual maintenance and weekly inspections to ensure they are performing as they are intended, and that the pumps, motors and other equipment are in good working order.

Each year the stations are cleaned twice, once in the spring and once in the fall. These station cleanings remove deposited materials from the walls and base of the wet well, or holding tank, that collects sewage before it is pumped up hill. By cleaning the wet wells twice annually, Utilities staff ensures no material breaks off causing damage or clogging to occur on the pumps. The pumps in the sanitary sewer lift stations are some of the hardest working pieces of equipment in the Utility and run regularly. The pumps and motors are required to start many times per day, and expected to perform without fail in the conveyance of sanitary sewage. The weekly inspection of the stations ensures pump noise and any other minor changes in the operation of the station are observed and can be remedied before they become larger problems.

In 2020, the Silver Lake Lift Station was replaced as part of the larger Silver Lake Boat Launch improvements. The replacement of the station removed the two wells on site and replaced them with one. The older station design had a well for holding sewage before it was pumped up to 40th Ave and Stinson Blvd. It also had a well for the pumping equipment.

By placing the pumps at ground level on top of the wet well, money and space were saved in the final design. The new Silver Lake Lift Station went online in October 2020 and has been pumping sewage since. The new design, with the pumps at the surface, eliminates a dangerous confined space entry and makes the pumps easier to repair and maintain.



Sewer Lift Station Pump Statistics								
Station Name	2020		2019		2018		2017	
	Starts	Hours	Starts	Hours	Starts	Hours	Starts	Hours
Argonne	3,603	771	3,435	779	3,485	743	3,493	702
Pump 1	1,808	411	1,725	412	1,744	391	1,749	363
Pump 2	1,795	360	1,710	367	1,741	352	1,744	339
Chatham	13,743	663	17,155	865	13,673	692	13,859	742
Pump 1	6,671	316	8,494	407	6,840	339	6,936	370
Pump 2	7,072	347	8,661	458	6,833	353	6,923	371
Sullivan Lake	7,649	613	8,701	811	9,143	892	9,750	947
Pump 1	3,823	300	4,357	394	4,567	433	4,879	468
Pump 2	3,826	313	4,344	417	4,576	458	4,871	479
Silver Lake	51,015	1,704	44,577	788	36,463	617	44,192	1,896
Pump 1	25,497	1,219	22,298	394	18,235	309	23,813	1,337
Pump 2	25,518	485	22,279	394	18,228	308	20,379	559
Jackson Pond Storm	456	1,450	535	1,808	136	869	591	1,375
Pump 1	387	1,399	204	1,743	40	818	127	1,329
Pump 2	69	51	331	65	96	51	464	46

Water System Operations

Uni-Direction Hydrant Flushing

The potable water system in Columbia Heights consists of more than 72 miles of water main, 565 hydrants, 1,715 valves (529 hydrant valves and 1,186 system valves), two pumping stations and one elevated water tower. To maintain aesthetically pleasing water throughout the entire water system uni-directional hydrant flushing is performed every spring. By isolating water mains and forcing water out of the system at higher than normal velocities, tuberculation and deposits are removed from the pipe walls and water quality complaints are reduced. As part of the hydrant flushing program all hydrants are inspected for damage, leaks and difficult operation. Eleven hydrants required repairs, which were completed in May.

Valve Operation Program

The Utility Department started a new preventative maintenance valve operation program in 2019. During 2019, 273 system valves were turned. The program was continued in 2020 with another 158 valves turned. In the first two years of the program, 36% of all system valves have been operated. To ensure proper operation in the water system, the goal is to turn every system valve once every 5-7 years. After two years we are on pace to accomplish this goal. By turning valves on a regular basis, the Utility Department ensures when an emergency repair for a water main break is required the water can be shut off and the impact can be minimized to as few homes as absolutely necessary.

Water System Repairs

The Utility Department responded and repaired 10 water main breaks, 3 hydrants, 3 valves and 18 valve stacks. The Utility Department was able to successfully repair all water main breaks on the same day the repair started. The Utility staff members work diligently to reduce the length of water outages for residents. With their skill and determination to complete the job as quickly and safely as possible, no Columbia Heights residents were without water overnight.

Water Main Cleaning and Lining Program

Water main lining was not performed in 2020 because the City of Minneapolis did not bid a project. After reviewing future water system needs, three years of water main replacement will take place in 2021-2023. After which, the Utility Department will again review future needs and determine if the water main cleaning and lining program will start up again.

Water System Repairs				
	2020	2019	2018	2017
Main Breaks	10	14	16	15
Hydrants	3	7	7	11
Valves	3	2	4	3
GV Risers	18	10	5	5
Water Main Lining (FT)	0	0	0	0
Valves Operated (Planned Work)	158	273	0	0

Storm Sewer Operations

Storm Sewer Overview

Every year the storm sewer system requires continual maintenance and inspection to keep it operating as intended. After every significant rain event the Street Department inspected and cleaned the pond inlet and outlet structures, street catch basins, and monitored areas that have historically flooded because of large rainfall events. Performing these inspections and required maintenance help keep Columbia Heights streets and neighborhoods safe, the infrastructure in working order, and the system operating.

Jackson Pond

In partnership with the Mississippi Watershed Management Organization (MWMO), Columbia Heights Public Works manages and maintains an iron-enhanced sand filter at Jackson Pond. On an annual basis the sand filter must be cleaned, and the pump schedule and operations must be monitored to ensure the filtering goals for the pond are being met. In 2020, the Utility Department optimized the filtration system by running the pumps that direct water to the filter bed every Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 7 am and 1:30 pm. By running the pumps on alternating days the filter bed was allowed to dry out, which is a best management practice for the filter. The pump moving water to the filter bed ran for 51 hours and started 69 times. The MWMO installed monitoring stations on the filter discharge locations to measure the amount of water passing through the filter bed and identify if it is operating as intended.

Storm Sewer Operations Cont.

Jackson Pond also requires continual monitoring to ensure the water level in the pond does not reach flood levels. The pump discharging water to the storm sewer system, and managing the pond level, started 387 times and ran for a total of 1,399 hours. All Public Works maintenance staff worked together to maintain the iron-enhanced filter bed, breaking up the iron filings that have a tendency to clump together as they age, clearing the filter bed of weeds and plant growth, and picking up trash. Through a combination of seasonal and full time staff the filter bed was fully maintained throughout the year.

Storm Sewer Structure Repairs

The Utility Department repaired five storm sewer manholes and catch basins to help with street flooding and to repair broken structures. They also took on a new task and installed a catch basin at the end of the alley for Tyler St where it meets 39th Ave. The installation required 12 feet of piping, and installation of a new structure and grate with the proper pitch at the road level. This was a new challenge for the crew that

was met and overcome. The Utility Department staff learned a useful and money saving skill that will be important for future projects.

Training and Education

In 2020, the Utilities Department received training in AWAIR, Right to Know, Slips, Trips and Falls, Fall Protection, Fire Extinguisher Operation, Vehicle Hoist Operation and Safety, Backhoe Safety and Procedures, Confined Space, Gas Monitor Operation and Calibration, Water Operator Certification, Scissor Lift Operation, Work Zone Safety and Wastewater Operator Certification.

The training and knowledge of Public Works staff is vital to ensuring the safety and best management of the City's infrastructure. By providing opportunities and training for all staff to learn good habits, proper techniques and equipment operation requirements, daily tasks run more smoothly, equipment is maintained and employees are kept safe.

Utilities Customer Response

The Utility Department is responsible for responding to many types of customer requests and concerns throughout the year.

Citizen requests include water service issues, sanitary sewer concerns and general inspection of contractor repaired, or installed pipe and valves. In 2020, as a result of COVID-19 protocols, customer service appointments were stopped from April-July.

Throughout the rest of the year the Utility Department responded to 257 customer requests and performed 1,949 locates for Gopher State One Call.

Utilities staff also collected 648 water samples to ensure compliance with all Minnesota Department of Health requirements, and resident safety.

Customer Service - Water	2020	2019	2018	2017
Turn On	16	41	52	124
Turn Off	47	37	46	102
Frozen Service	14	14	0	4
Broken Pipe - Interior	3	11	3	1
Broken Pipe - Exterior	2	8	5	0
Inspect New/Repaired Curb Stop	1	8	4	10
Inspect New/Repaired Service	8	5	12	9
Water Meter Install	11	12	32	29
Water Meter/MXU Repair	53	62	56	59
High Water Bill	44	45	37	29
Water Quality Complaints	1	1	2	3
Hydrant Flow Test	2	4	3	2
Residential Flow Test	6	3	1	4
Customer Service - Sanitary	2020	2019	2018	2017
Private Sewer Backup	15	7	13	4
Sewer Repair Inspection	27	21	17	13
Inspect Sewer Liner Install	5	4	3	5
Inspect New Install	2	3	5	8
Sewer Dye Test	0	0	1	0
Locating Services	2020	2019	2018	2017
Gopher State One Call	1,949	2,107	1,899	2,230

Street Maintenance

Asphalt Repair/Paving Operations

In March, as businesses shut down due to the rapid spread of COVID-19, Public Works placed an emergency order of cold-mix asphalt to have on hand. In the fall of 2020, Public Works purchased 8 tons of cold mix from the City of Saint Paul Public Works asphalt plant to have on hand for winter road repair. Public Works was challenged with keeping workers safe and 6 feet apart when repairing potholes and other road defects due to the nature of the work. A maximum number of two people were allowed in each vehicle, complicating the crew's ability to get to the job sites.

Despite the risks and complications of COVID-19, the Street Department still purchased 321.24 tons of bituminous material for road repairs in 2020. Of the 321.32 tons of bituminous purchased, 38.5 tons of asphalt went towards water break repairs, 223.4 tons to general street repairs, 40.97 tons for the seal coat project, and 18.45 tons of asphalt fines for micro repairs. Through best management practices, continuing education, and defined expectations, the Street Department reduced wasteful asphalt practices significantly and used 112 tons less asphalt compared to previous years, totaling over \$9,500 in savings when repairing the seal coat area for 2020.

Debris Disposal

In 2020, Public Works purchased and delivered 114 tons of Class 5 road base for street repair projects. The Street Department hauled away 128 tons of asphalt and concrete rubble from the MSC storage lot to Barton Sand and Gravel.

Winter Operations

In late October 2020, the Street Department strategically placed orange snow markers around curb lines, bump-outs, and transition areas to reduce the amount of snow plow-related damage.

In early November three salt/sand barrels were placed throughout the city for resident use. The Street Department also placed one large box container of salt/sand mix outside the fence at the Recycling Center. On November 13th the city experienced its first snow removal event.

Public Works committed to ordering 400 tons of treated rock salt in March of 2020 purchased through the state contract awarded vendor. Brine was purchased from the City of Fridley Public Works. Staff later mixed the brine with a carbohydrate liquid deicer at a specific rate based on ambient temperatures before each winter event. The Street Department used 500 gallons of brine and 150 gallons of liquid deicer. Public Works used a total of 377 tons of salt for 2019 - 2020 winter events. Of the 18 events, 15 consisted of snow and ice control, and

three consisted of ice control only. After temperatures dropped below the practical use for sodium chloride, staff applied a mixture of salt to the roadways. Public Works used 30 tons of a salt/sand mixture and 205.73 tons of straight sand in its winter maintenance program.

After snow events, the Street Department monitored pedestrian crossings and bus stops located on TH 65 (Central Ave) from 37th to 53rd Ave and University Ave from 37th to 45th Ave, for pedestrian accessibility. In between snowfalls, the Street Department hauled stockpiles of snow out of city-owned parking lots a total of seven times throughout the winter. On two occasions, Public Works maintenance staff volunteered to work an overnight shift change to remove snow berms along the TH 65 business district from 37th Ave to 43rd Ave.

During the day shift, Public Works removed snow berms along 50th Ave, 49th Ave, University Ave to Fairway Dr (south side), 41st Ave, Central Ave to Jackson St (north side), and 44th Ave, McLeod to Central Ave (north side) as needed throughout the winter. The 2020 winter season finally came to an end on April 16th, with a total of 51.1 inches of snow. When spring finally arrived and the snow had melted, each route driver was assigned to patrol their areas and address any right-of-way turf damage with black dirt and seed.

Street Sweeping

In adhering to MS4 clean water requirements, the Street Department completed two full rounds of street sweeping. The Street Sweeping program is temporarily staffed by two full time street employees that operate one regenerative air and one mechanical sweeper, plus any additional supporting staff.

The first sweeping campaign started on March 23rd and ended on May 4th. Staff collected 388 cubic yards of debris during this event. The Business District, TH 65 (Central Ave) from 37th to 42nd Ave, and TH 65 bump-out areas, intersection traffic control islands, center mediums, sidewalks, crosswalks, and bus stations between 37th Ave and 53rd Ave were the first areas to be swept. The second round of street sweeping began on May 3rd and ended on June 7th, collecting over 126 cubic yards of debris. The Street Department also swept all city-owned parking lots, flood-prone elevation areas and the MSC shop yard on an as-needed basis.

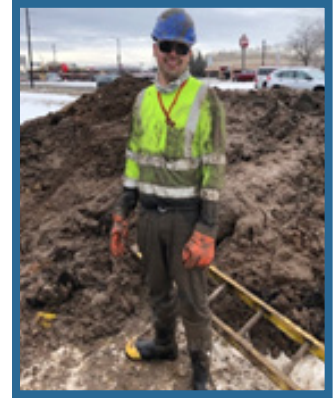
In July, the Street Department rented a Trommel to process 26.1 tons of collected street sweeping material for disposal or reuse. A total of two 50 cubic yard dumpsters were used to dispose of trash screened from the sweeping campaign.

The fall street sweeping campaign started on November 11th and ended on December 3rd. A total of 422 cubic yards of leaves were hauled away in 12 dumpsters to The Mulch Store in Shakopee.

Street Maintenance Cont.

Street Dept Storm Sewer Maintenance

After significant rain events and annually each month, the Street Department inspected and cleaned, if necessary, pond inlets and outlets, street catch basins, and monitored other flood-prone problem areas. Numerous floating bogs that plug the Sullivan Lake outlet were removed throughout the year. Clogged drain lines were jetted and cleaned, along with the extensive removal of pond debris from around the outfall on an as-needed basis.



Misc Activities

- In July, the Street Department applied a nonselective herbicide along the city right-of-way for weed control located on TH 65 (Central Ave) from 37th to 53rd Ave and University Ave from 37th to 45th Ave. Staff also sprayed various locations around the city on an as-needed basis.
- Public Works stockpiled recyclable metal from construction projects, equipment maintenance, and illegal dumping violations in a dedicated metal recycling dumpster to reduce landfill waste and generate extra revenue for the City.
- The Street Department responded to 98 illegal dumping violations reported to the Police Department.
- The Street Department monitored the MSC yard condition and cleaned up dirt, sand, and other Public Works-related debris to prevent it from entering the local storm sewers.
- The Street Department also responds 24/7 to all storm tree reported damage that blocks public roadways or sidewalks.



Sign Department



The Sign Department completed regular curb and crosswalk painting, sign installation/repair, street/traffic re-lamping, traffic counter maintenance/installation, flag raising and lowering, and tree pruning for clearance around street signs and lights.

Signage and traffic control for the Jamboree and Holiday Train in 2020 was not set up due to COVID-19. However, traffic control was set up for the Truck or Treat event in October.

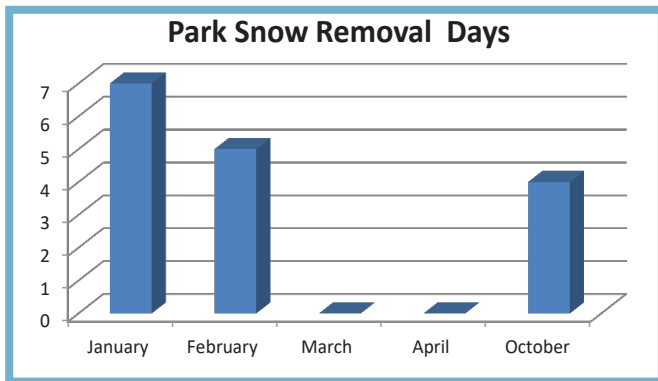
Banners and Christmas decorations were also installed, maintained, and removed along Central Avenue.

Park Department

Winter Activities

In early November through mid-December, the Park Department assisted the City Forester and a private contractor with chipping brush piles removed from hazardous tree locations, boulevard tree clearance issues, and park pathways tree obstructions.

A Toro Grounds Master, Ventrac Tractor, and an MT Trackless equipped with either a snow blower, broom, or a reversible snow blade were used by the Park Department to maintain public sidewalks, park pathways, and city-owned building entrances and sidewalks.



Ice Skating Rinks

Above-average temperatures delayed opening the skating and hockey rinks located at McKenna and Ostrander Parks until Dec 23, 2020. The rinks remained open until Feb 24, 2021, when daytime temperatures were above 32 F.

Winter Events

On Sat, Jan 25, 2020, Columbia Heights hosted the 7th annual Fire and Ice Plunge held at the Silver Lake Beach Park. The Park Department supplied and set up the event's fire rings, firewood, fencing, trash, and recyclable containers.

The Silver Lake aeration system was activated on Jan 27, 2020, when oxygen levels in Silver Lake reached critical thresholds as set by the DNR.

From late November into early December, the Park Department installed Christmas lighting at City Hall, the clock tower, Wargo Court Park, on Mill Street, and at Edgemoor Park.

Turf Maintenance

The Park Department is responsible for maintaining turf conditions at 52 locations throughout the city ranging from small lots to large parks. The Park Department added two additional properties located at 4441 Central Ave and 230 40th Ave to the maintenance list in

2020. Partial mowing operations began the last part of April and were fully implemented on May 14th. Mowing operations ended in early October so crews could switch equipment over to fall leaf clean-up operations.

The Park Department mowed the service road and the right-of-way located on the east and west side of TH 47 (University Ave) nine times throughout the summer. The equipment used to mow TH 47 included a Ventrac designed for slope mowing, a John Deere tractor equipped with a flail mower, and the Toro 5910 wing mower. Road signs, traffic signals, and signposts were hand-trimmed when vegetation growth reached an undesirable level.

The City of Columbia Heights contracted all herbicide and fertilizer applications through TruGreen ChemLawn. TruGreen completed spring weed and feed applications at Huset, Edgemoor, McKenna, LaBelle, Prestemon, Sullivan, Ramsdell, Silver Lake Beach, and Keyes Parks. Mid-summer and late fall applications were applied to the Ramsdell Park ballfield, and Gateway and Wargo Court Parks by TruGreen ChemLawn.

TruGreen ChemLawn provided pre-emergent and fertilizer applications at City Hall, the Library, SACA/MSC, 4400 Reservoir Blvd, 1307 42nd Ave, Water Tower, Jackson Pond, Public Safety, and the liquor stores on Central Ave and 37th Ave. They applied vegetation growth retardant along the 37th Ave hillside. TruGreen applied tree, shrub, and weed bed control at Central and University Avenues, Public Safety, the Library, and the liquor stores.

The majority of the athletic turf locations, the liquor stores, and city maintained properties were aerated and overseeded in the fall. Dips and holes that caused tripping hazards throughout the parks system were filled and overseeded. Park areas with poor soil conditions resulting in thinly growing grass were top-dressed with high-quality grass seed and a mixture of screened compost sand and dirt.

Irrigation Systems

The Park Department is responsible for the irrigation start up and shut down at 37th Ave, Huset Parkway, Lions Park, Wargo Court, Gateway, and Ramsdell Parks.

Shrub Bed Maintenance

The Park Department is responsible for maintaining shrub beds at 22 locations throughout the city. Typical shrub bed maintenance includes pruning, trimming, mulching, weeding, watering, plant replacement, and applying weed control.

Park Department Cont.

Ball Fields

In the spring, staff performed annual ballfield maintenance by adding ag lime to the infields, replaced base standards, and removed the infield lips. Spring athletics, soccer, and football leagues remained closed for the season as COVID-19 restrictions put all spring ballfield reservations on hold. Adult softball games resumed on June 18 and ran through early October every Thursday and Friday.

Wading Pools and Splash Pad

Due to COVID-19, the Park Department did not open the wading pools or the splash pad for summer use in 2020.

With the wading pools closed for 2020 due to COVID-19, a private contractor was hired to sandblast the McKenna and Ramsdell wading pools. Park staff later crack sealed and painted the pools in preparation for future use. Park staff also made extensive repairs to the McKenna pool shed interior and exterior.

Playground

Playgrounds and the playground equipment remained open during COVID-19 restrictions. On April 14, social distancing signage was posted at all playgrounds and park entrances, alerting people enjoying the parks to follow CDC recommendations of staying six feet apart.

Routine safety inspections continued on a monthly basis and staff repaired broken playground parts and equipment on an as-needed basis. Unfortunately, an unsolved

act of vandalism occurred at the Huset East playground damaging a crawl tube section beyond the point of repair that needed replacement.

Huset, McKenna, Sullivan Lake, LaBelle, and the Silver Lake Beach playgrounds all received a top dressing of mulch exclusively designed for safe playground use. All park entrance signs were cleaned and sealed. Full-time and part-time staff participated regularly in park and playground litter, trash and other various types of clean-up.

Miscellaneous Activities

- Park Department staff assisted the City Forester with tree maintenance and planting throughout the year.
- A memorial bench was installed at Hilltop and a memorial garden and bench was installed at Sullivan Park.
- The Park Department assisted the Library, Recreation, City Hall, and the liquor stores with special projects and tasks. Such tasks included hanging pictures, televisions, and bulletin boards, moving furniture, remodeling projects, and addressing basement water problems at City Hall and the liquor store on 37th Ave.

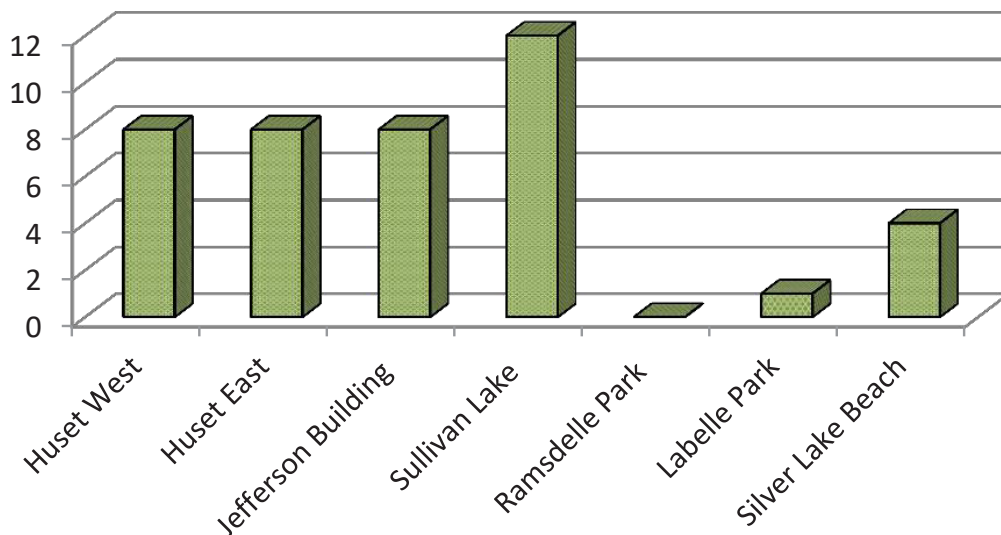
Training

Tim Lund recertified his pesticide license in January. Tim Lund and John Nordlund recertified their Tree Inspector license in September. Jon Perkins received his pool operator certification in April.

Reservations

In complying with the Minnesota COVID-19 mandates and following the Minnesota Stay Safe Plan, picnic reservations and park facilities rentals were significantly reduced in 2020.

2020 Rental Events



Central Garage

Work Orders

The Central Garage processed 1,804 repair and work orders totaling 2,497 chargeable hours at \$71.75 per hour, plus a \$5.25 surcharge per work order. Repair orders consist of requests by the operators for repairs or maintenance on the vehicles. Work orders consist of preventive maintenance procedures generated by the CFA Fleet Maintenance Program.

The Police Department, Park Department, Street Department, Water Department, and Fire Department generated the most work orders in 2020.

Major Repairs

Major repairs in 2020 which resulted in equipment down time or altered daily work programs were:

- #O280 Replace Tracks \$ 3,308.78
- #O280 Replace undercarriage \$ 3,067.42
- #OO84 Shop Installed V-Plow \$ 3,054.65
- #OO20 Rebuild Conveyor \$ 2,251.11
- #OO80 Belly Plow Repair \$ 2,242.25
- #OO82 Wing plow repair \$ 2,193.59
- #O102 Re-mount Auger \$ 2,152.50

New Capital Equipment

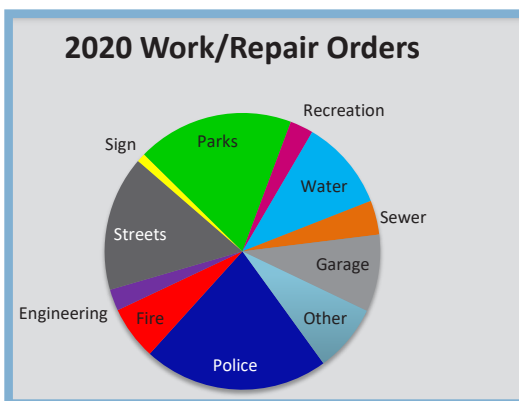
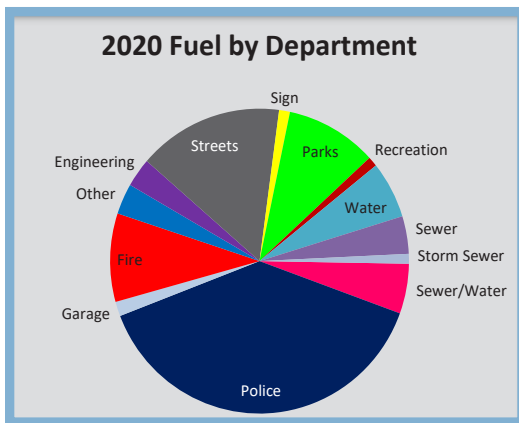
- #0001 - 2020 Ford Explorer - Streets
- #0011 - 2021 Cat Loader - Streets
- #0086 - 2021 Western Star 4700 - Streets
- #0100 - 2020 Ford Explorer - S/W
- #0181 - 2020 F350 Pickup/Plow - S/W
- #0150 - Featherlite Trailer - S/W
- #0121 - Landa Pressure Washer - S/W
- #0153 - 2020 Onan 45KW Generator - Water
- #0155 - 2020 Onan 125 KW Generator - Water
- #0370 - 2020 Toyota Fork Lift - Central Garage
- #3720 - 2020 Ford Expedition - Fire
- #3721 - 2020 Ford Expedition - Fire
- #8201 - 2020 Interceptor Utility - Police
- #8202 - 2020 Interceptor Utility - Police
- #8203 - 2020 Chevrolet Traverse - Police
- #8204 - 2020 Interceptor Utility - Police
- #8205 - 2020 Interceptor Utility - Police

Retired Equipment

- #0005 - 2009 Dodge Charger - Trade In
- #0009 - 1994 Case Loader & 12' Plow - Trade In
- #0108 - 2005 Kohler Generator - Trade In
- #0133 - 2006 CAT Generator - Trade In
- #0138 - 1999 Aladdin Pressure washer - Trade In
- #0406 - 2009 Ford Crown Vic - Trade In
- #0410 - 2009 Chevrolet Impala - Trade In
- #0471 - 2007 Ford Crow Vic - Trade In
- #3793 - 2001 Ford Expedition - Trade In
- #8104 - 2010 Chevrolet Impala - Trade In

Fuel Usage

The City purchased 36,817 gallons of unleaded gasoline and 15,507 gallons of diesel fuel. The total cost of fuel purchased in 2020 was \$108,473.00. The City used 34,790 gallons of unleaded gasoline and 14,826 gallons of diesel fuel. The total fuel used by the City in 2020 was 49,616 gallons. The Police Department, Street Department, Park Department, and Fire Department used the highest amounts of fuel in 2020.



Training, Safety, and Personnel

General Training & Education

All employees attended courses for sewer/water maintenance, street maintenance, park maintenance, forestry, vehicle maintenance and safety to obtain or maintain required certification.

Safety Management

For the 20th consecutive year, Public Works contracted with Integrated Loss Control Inc. for safety training and record-keeping activities required by state and federal regulations as well as City policy. Public Works is very pleased with the improvement that the safety program has shown under the administrative support of Integrated Loss Control Inc.

Personnel

- Derek Maine, Engineering Technician IV - Surveyor, resigned Feb 21, 2020. This position remained vacant in 2020.
- Ben Lund transferred from the Sewer and Water Department to fill the Engineering Technician III position on April 6, 2020.
- The Street Department consisted of seven fulltime employees in 2020.
- The Park Department consisted of six full time employees, one foreperson and five maintenance workers. From April through September, eight seasonal employees assisted with park maintenance duties.
- In 2020 the Utilities Department had two team members seek employment in other departments within the City. Mike Pyka was able to fulfill his dream of becoming a full-time firefighter with Columbia Heights. Ben Lund moved to the Engineering Department. He is now an Engineering Tech III and supporting project design, inspection and oversight.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Park Department faced unprecedented changes to its normal operations. In March, the Utility Department isolated at a remote location separate from the Public Works facility to ensure critical operations could continue. In response to a Utility personnel shortage, a volunteer from the Park Department was temporarily assigned to the Utility Department. That person remained with the Utility Department until June 2 when the open position was filled. Beginning March 16, Park Department staff was responsible for daily sanitation of commonly touched surfaces throughout the Public Works facility.

- The City Garage is comprised of two employees, the Fleet Maintenance Supervisor and one mechanic. Kelly Fetzer from the Park Department and Ben Arlt from the Utility Department assisted the Central Garage part-time over the winter months.



Facility Maintenance

In 2020, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Facility Maintenance Department was able to procure three 55 gallon drums of hand sanitizer, nitrile gloves and concentrated liquid disinfectant. Ionization systems were added to air handling systems at all city buildings to help purify the air. Clear Plexiglas barriers were also installed at several city buildings to protect staff.

- New safety glass was installed at Public Safety.
- Updates were made to the access control software to remotely lock buildings.
- The preventative maintenance contract was awarded to Horwitz for the next three years.
- There were 223 Help Desk requests in 2020.

Urban Forestry Operations

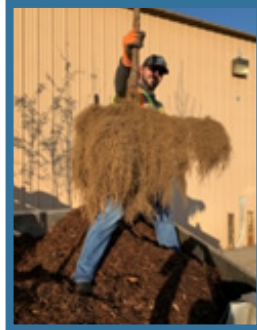
Planting

A new community gravel bed was constructed in the public works yard to heel-in bareroot trees. Gravel beds are an increasingly popular model in municipal forestry because they improve the survival rate of bareroot trees while increasing planting flexibility.

The construction of the gravel bed was made possible in part through a generous donation by the Lions Club.

In September and October the 201 bareroot trees installed in the gravel bed in April were removed and planted after spending five months being watered by an automated irrigation system.

The trees were planted in City parks and along streets over the course of 14 planting days.



Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) Management

EAB was confirmed in Columbia Heights in 2019. Urban forestry continues to manage EAB according to the comprehensive City EAB Management Plan (2014).

The City entered into a contract with Rainbow Treecare to provide preventative EAB injections for City-owned trees, as well as a discounted rate for Columbia Heights residents interested in treating privately owned ash trees. As part of the contract, Rainbow Treecare mailed a postcard to all residents of the City informing them of this opportunity.

- 94 City-owned ash trees were injected in June 2020 to prevent EAB infection
- 114 residents took advantage of the program and treated their ash trees in 2020

2020 Reimbursable Grant Activities

- 107 ash trees removed and stumps ground
- 174 replacement trees planted
- Purchase of 36" auger bit, watering bags, stakes, and bark protectors
- Progress reports were completed and filed at the June 1 and Dec 1, 2020, filing deadlines.

The City was reimbursed \$33,600 by the DNR for grant-related expenditures incurred in 2020.

Tree Inspection for Residents

To best assist the residents of Columbia Heights, the Urban Forestry Specialist inspected 74 privately owned trees upon request. The issues included: Emerald Ash Borer infestations and treatments, large seed production in birch trees, wounds and structural concerns, Japanese beetles, storm damage, Dutch Elm disease and much more!

Pruning and Removals

- 167 total trees removed
- 107 ash trees (EAB grant)
- 8 trees as part of the Silver Lake Boat Landing and various sidewalk repairs
- 12 storm damage
- 11 diseased (Dutch Elm Disease)
- 29 hazardous

Eight days of pruning for street clearance and along paved walking paths in parks was performed by Nick's Tree Service and city crews.

Six days of street tree pruning covering 5.18 miles was completed. Pruning occurred in street maintenance Zones 4 and 7. Street tree pruning goals include:

Public safety - providing unobstructed road and sidewalk clearance, clearing traffic signs and lights, and removing dead wood and hazardous limbs.

Organizational Collaboration on Property Maintenance and Inspection

In 2020, Forestry staff began assisting the Fire Department with tree-related issues during rental and property maintenance inspections. The two departments worked together to develop new guidance for residents about Managed Natural Landscapes on private property, and will continue to collaborate for enforcement questions or concerns. The new draft guidance will be implemented in 2021 and available on the city website. Throughout the year Forestry staff assisted the Fire Department with the abatement of two nuisance trees condemned during property inspections.

Refuse and Recycling

Residential Services

The Refuse and Recycling Department manages solid waste disposal for approximately 6,400 residential properties in Columbia Heights. Services include curbside refuse, recycling, yard waste/organic composting, and special collections, as well as a drop-off Recycling Center. Of these properties, 154 are multi-dwelling with four or more units totaling over 2,500 apartments or condominiums. Total expenditures for all refuse operations were almost \$2 million.

In 2020, approximately 700 service issues were escalated to the Refuse Department. A COVID-19 situation in November caused compost services citywide to be delayed for over two weeks increasing complaints during that time period.

The hauler was financially penalized 23 times for poor performance. The most common complaints expressed by residents were missed services and delayed cart exchanges. Almost 700 change orders were processed for properties that adjusted their services during the year. Audits were conducted to ensure services matched contractor invoices and utility billing charges, and to verify correct lid colors, labels with pictures (important for ESL residences), cart condition, and inventory the City owned carts.

Columbia Heights is recognized as a leader for managing solid waste and last year was awarded a League of MN Cities Sustainability Award for our curbside organics program.

Staff has professional memberships in the RAM (Recycling Association of MN), MNCC (MN Composting Council), ReuseMN, and ARM (Association of Recycling Managers). Staff served on the ARM workshop committee as well.

Several vendors were used to collect and recycle material including: Waste Management (WM) and their Materials Recycling Facility, Greenlights Recycling, Loe's Oil, Second Chance Recycling, Specialized Environmental Technologies, and the SMSCORF (Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community's Organics Recycling Facility).

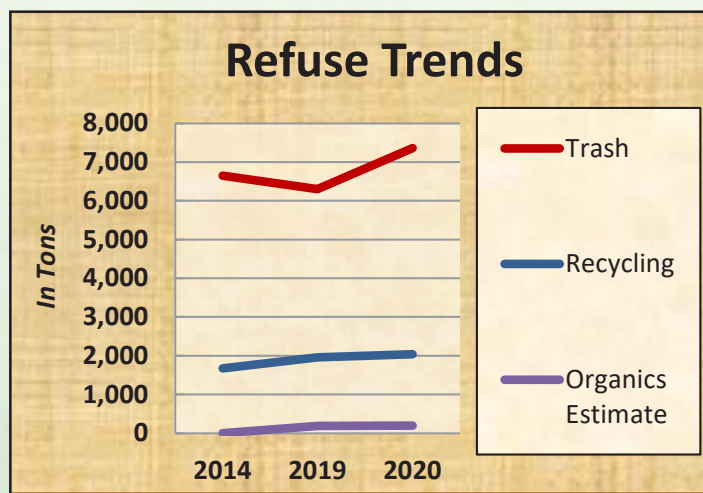
Solid Waste Disposal

The city disposed of 7,358 tons of trash for an increase of 17%. This was a trend seen across the industry due to the COVID pandemic and stay-at-home activities. All the waste was delivered to landfills due to the lack of trash incineration facilities to produce electricity.

The city recycled 2,039 tons of materials from residential curbside programs, the Recycling Center, and city facilities. This was an increase of 4% from the previous year. Residential households composted 1,876 tons of yard waste co-mingled with an estimated 200 tons of food organics for composting.

The city's subsidized \$20 flat fee for electronics curbside recycling removed over 526 electronic items. The city offers one free appliance pickup per year to each property and 450 units were recycled in 2020. The city also recycled another 9 tons of problem/hazardous materials (oil, filters, antifreeze, mercury bulbs, household batteries, tires) mainly from the Recycling Center.

Bulk curbside recycling collected over 150 mattresses that were disassembled and the various components recycled. The curbside bulk project to repair or recycle furniture is on hold as there are currently no facilities to process furniture in a feasible manner.



Neighborhood Recycling

There is no additional fee for larger or additional recycling carts; over 300 households, multi-dwelling properties, and/or duplexes increased recycling service at their properties. Those rental properties also received free tenant recycling kits.

The citywide garage sale event, Recycling Champions recognitions, Master Recycler course, refuse facility tours, and Fix-It Clinics were canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Refuse and Recycling Cont.

Community Recycling

The Recycling Center was closed for a couple of months last spring, but opened by the end of May and stayed open the remainder of the year. The Columbia Heights-Fridley Kiwanis Club staffed the Recycling Center and received rebates totaling \$4,200 for the value of the material, which they use for high school scholarships.

Film plastics cannot be put into the single sort recycling cart so staff coordinated with Trex, Inc. who recycles film plastics to make outdoor patios and furniture. The City recycled almost three tons of plastic bags and films in 2020 and Trex, Inc. awarded the City two free park benches. Besides the public drop-off at the Recycling Center, film plastics are collected from Murzyn Hall, the Public Works building, the liquor stores, City Hall, and the Columbia Heights School District kitchens. The benches were given to the liquor store and the Kiwanis Club.

Almost one ton of Styrofoam was collected at the Recycling Center. Thanks to the Coon Rapids Recycling Center as they have a Styrofoam condensing machine and a bailer for the plastic. They also ship the material to recyclers.

The Lions Club also hosted a community paper shredding event. Over 3,000 lbs. was shredded and properly recycled directly at the paper mill.

Organics

Another 210 households received a compost cart and free kitchen organics kit, plus a free bag of finished compost. 21% of city refuse serviced properties now utilize a compost cart. The local food shelf SACA (Southern Anoka Community Assistance), Murzyn Hall, Publics Works, City Hall, and the Library have organic services for their buildings as well. This is by far the most successful organics service in Anoka County.

The Columbia Heights and Fridley High School Key Clubs distributed over 180 bags (over \$500) of finished compost for their Plate to Garden Compost fundraising, a MN Composting Council Program, as part of our composting service. This was a joint project with the City of Fridley who also has an organics program. The Shakopee Sioux Community donated the compost to the Key Club.

Staff attended the CHSD Community Education Advisory Council meetings periodically to review our recycling education and outreach programs.

SCORE (Select Committee on Recycling and the Environment)

The MPCA is mandated by the state legislature to recycle 75% of solid waste by 2030. The State approved the latest version of the MSWP (Metro Solid Waste Policy) April 2017. In the document they specify numerous RBMPs (Recycling Best Management Practices, or strategies) including composting and bulk recycling. They are expecting and have been encouraging counties and cities in the metro area to begin implementing some of these RBMPs. The MPCA manages the SCORE funds and distributes them to the counties. The Refuse and Recycling Department is executing the following MSWP RBMPs in the City of Columbia Heights:

- Collection of non-traditional recyclables (mattresses, film plastic, styrofoam).
- Implement strategies for the priority materials.
- Allocate staff time for reaching the goals in the plan for reduction and reuse and ensure that grant funding eligibility should include reduction, reuse, and recycling, including organics.
- Standardize ordinances
- Cities contract for residential recycling.
- Cities contract for residential MSW collection.
- Make residential curbside organics collection available region-wide.
- Implement organics diversion at public entity facilities and in large event venues.
- We are also meeting the Storm Water Pollution Control BMPs of keeping yard waste and other organic material out of the water runoff.

The Refuse and Recycling Department received almost \$104,000 in SCORE grant money from the State of MN funneled through Anoka County. The SCORE funds are used to subsidize curbside organics, the Recycling Center, special curbside bulk recycling (mattresses, carpet, appliances, and electronics), parks, promotions, events, and multi-unit/rental programs.

Thanks to Anoka County Recycling Solutions Office for designing many of the informational materials we used and providing promotion items such as water bottles. Anoka County also provided many flyers and other publications that we use, and translated our spring and fall recycling guide into Somali and Spanish. These versions are distributed around city buildings.

Anoka County provided recycling assistance and a business grant to St. Paul Corrugating Co. of Columbia Heights.



RECREATION

Introduction

The mission of the Columbia Heights Recreation Department is to provide recreational and service opportunities for people of all ages and backgrounds. The Recreation Department offers vast, year-round, comprehensive programs that strive to meet the needs of the whole community.

These programs include Youth Athletics/Programs, Traveling Athletics, Youth Enrichment Programs, Adult Athletics, Senior Citizens Center, Senior Citizen Outings, Special Events, John P. Murzyn Hall management, Community Garden Plot Rentals, Neighborhood Event Wagon Rentals, Park Scheduling, and Hylander Gym and Fitness Center management.



The following pages contain the vast number of community members that the Recreation Department reaches, hopefully enriching the quality of life.

With the support of the Mayor, City Council, Park and Recreation Commission, City Manager, and the many civic and community orga-

nizations, the high quality delivery of services and opportunities are provided through the dedicated work of the Recreation staff and our numerous volunteers.

However, many things changed in 2020 due to COVID-19.

Recreation Department Staff

Name	Title	Start Date	End
Keith Windschitl	Recreation Director	Aug, 1997	----
Deanna Saefke	Recreation Secretary	July, 2005	----
DeLynn Mulligan	Senior Citizen Coordinator	Sept, 2012	----
Katie Holznagel	Recreation Program Coordinator	April, 2019	----
Candy Lack	Half-time Recreation Clerk	Jan, 2017	----
Doodnauth Bisnauth Sue Wolney Floyd Joswick Brian Maharaj Elise Johnson Bob Erickson Rick Peterson Steve Lindberg Randy Peterson Ashley Sivoravong	John P Murzyn Hall Custodian II Part-time	Sept, 1996 May, 1999 March, 2001 Aug, 2011 Aug, 2011 Sept, 2015 Dec, 2017 May, 2020 Sept, 2020 Oct, 2020	----

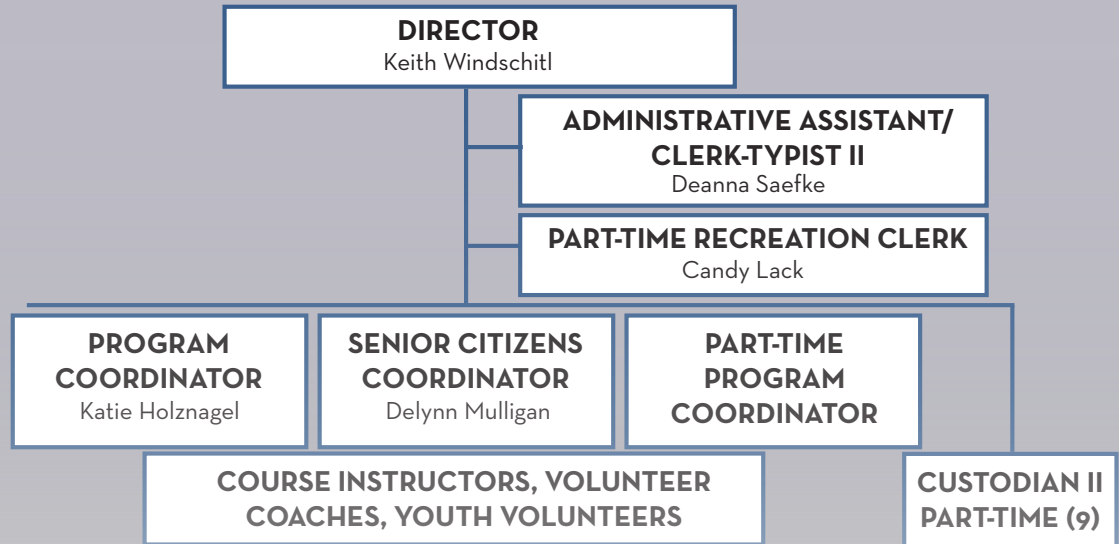


PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION

David Payne, Chairperson
Tom Greenhalgh, Chairperson
Anne Carder
Sean Clerkin, Jr.
Bruce Evans
Kevin McDonald
Marsha Stroik
Becky Groseth
Rachel James
John Murzyn Jr., City Council Liaison
Kevin Hanson, Public Works
Deanna Saefke, Staff Secretary



RECREATION



CITY PARK ADDRESSES & AMENITIES	BASEBALL/SOFTBALL FIELDS	BASKETBALL COURTS	INDOOR BATHROOM RENTALS	T= TENNIS V= VOLLEYBALL B=BOCCIE BALL	PORTABLE OUTHOUSE	GRILLS	HOCKEY & SKATING RINKS	PAVED SPACE	PICNIC TRAILS	PICNIC TABLES	PICNIC SHELTER WITH OUTLETS	PLAYGROUND	SLEDDING HILL	SPLASH PAD	SWIMMING BEACH	WADING POOL	NATURE AREA/NATIVE GRASSES
BRUCE NAWROCKI 1271 CIRCLE TERRACE BLVD	•	•							•	•	•						
EDGEMOOR 3950 EDGEMOOR PLACE											•						
GAUVITTE 4333 2ND STREET	•	•			•	•		•		•	•						
HILLTOP 4657 HEIGHTS DRIVE						•		•		•							
HUSET EAST 3965 JEFFERSON STREET	•	•	•	V		•		•		•	•						
HUSET WEST 3965 JEFFERSON STREET	•			B	•	•		•		•	•		•				•
KEYES 1345 45 1/2 AVENUE	•				•			•	•		•	•					
LaBELLE 1150 42ND AVENUE					•			•	•	•	•						•
LOMIANKI 80 39TH AVENUE								•		•							
McKENNA 4757 7TH STREET	•		•		•	•	•		•		•	•				•	•
OSTRANDER 1500 40TH AVENUE						•	•	•		•							
PRESTEMON 3900 MCKINLEY STREET	•	•			•			•	•	•		•	•				•
RAMSDELL 4956 JOHNSON STREET	•		•		•	•		•	•	•	•				•		•
SILVER LAKE 4305 STINSON BOULEVARD				V	•	•		•	•	•	•			•			•
SULLIVAN LAKE 721 51ST AVE			•	T	•	•		•	•	•	•						•

Recreation Highlights

Summary

The Recreation Department provides a wide variety of social, educational, and recreational programs for youth and adults. Youth programs are divided between athletics and enrichment programs. Youth in-house athletics are designed for children in grades K-6, with traveling athletics designed for experienced players in grades 3-9. It is envisioned that youth athletic program participation will remain steady over the next few years, with growth to be found in enrichment activities like the summer playgrounds (i.e. Glitter-Bugs, Dyno-Hites, Sparks, Puppet Wagon, T.N.T., community special events and the After School Program. Autumn of 2020 was the start of a three year grant program, with the Columbia Heights School District, that focuses on the arts for grades 5 and up. Adult athletics consists of league play in softball during the summer and fall seasons. It also includes the Jamboree Softball Tournament.

Park Scheduling

While City parks are maintained by the Park Department, the parks usage is scheduled through the Recreation Department. Both departments work hand-in-hand to provide the highest quality service to the residents who utilize our parks. In 2020, rental of park facilities were provided for a small fee of \$46.67 plus tax for Columbia Heights residents, \$70.01 plus tax for non-residents, and \$116.69 plus tax for large groups of 100 plus people. A \$100.00 key deposit was once again required to improve security of the park buildings. The \$100.00

deposit is returned if parks are left in good condition after the event and the key is returned.

Total number of park reservations in 2020: 79

Neighborhood Event Wagon

The Neighborhood Event Wagon is a 16-ft trailer equipped with tables, chairs and a variety of sports equipment. The recreation staff delivers the trailer to the residence for their use during their event. Once their event is complete, the recreation staff picks up the trailer and completes an inventory of all supplies. In 2020 a small fee of \$60.68 plus tax was charged for use of the wagon. This was a fee increase to cover the cost of additional sanitizing procedures. The Columbia Heights V.F.W. Post #230 donated the wagon. The sports equipment, tables, and chairs were supplied by the Recreation Department.

Total number of community event wagon rentals in 2020: 7

Community Garden Plots

The Recreation Department offered Community Garden Plots located on Reservoir Boulevard. In 2020 residents were able to rent a 10 x 15 foot garden plot for the summer at a cost of \$23.34 plus tax. The garden plots are maintained by the Recreation Department and tilled by the Parks Department.

Total number of garden plots rented in 2020: 48

Youth Programs

In 2020, continuing summer youth programs ran as planned, as did theater and some athletic activities. "Rec it at Home" activity kits were created for kids in response to COVID-19 restrictions. The reaction from the community was over-whelming. The entire department was exceptionally busy fulfilling take-home activity kits for the kids. Considering all the negativity of 2020, the year was very successful for recreation.

Youth Program Attendance

Program	Attendees
Youth Gymnastics	54
Dance: Preschool, Boys and Girls	16
Dyno-Hites and Glitter Bugs	55



Youth Programs Cont.



Community Enrichment Events

Program	Participation
Spring Family Fun Night	Canceled
Hall-O-Week Pumpkin Craft Kits	58 kits used
Chalk Art Artists	22 sidewalk sections
Movie Night at McKenna Park	46 groups
Hylander Center/Youth Lab	32
Heights Lights Tour Home Displays	13 map sites, 9,000 map views

ENCORE: 21st Century Learning Communities Grant

Program	Participants
Adventure/Trips	36
Arts and Science	79
S.P.A.R.K.S. and T.N.T.	38
Theater and Puppet Wagon	81
Youth Development and Sports	50

ENCORE: 21st Century Learning Communities Grant

Program	Attendees
Theater and Puppet Wagon	346
ISD #13 School Lunch Program	1,388

Athletics and Classes

Programs are divided between in-house and traveling. Youth in-house athletics are designed for children in grades K-6, with traveling athletics designed for experienced players in grades 3-9. Some parents would rather have the youth learn the basic fundamentals of the game and have fun with friends. In the traveling programs, youth travel to other communities throughout the metro area. We have had continued success with youth in-house basketball, baseball, softball, and soccer. Many youth programs did not happen due to the COVID-19 state shutdown.

Youth Athletics Program Attendance

Ice Skating, Basketball, Soccer, Martial Arts, Softball	93
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Adult Athletics, 55+ and Enrichment Attendance

Stompin' At the Hall	49
Adult Aerobic Dance	27
Total Body Conditioning	22
Crochet Class	29
Softball: Slow Pitch Summer Men's and Co-Ed	12 teams/156 players
Softball: Jamboree Tournament	canceled

Hylander City Gym & Fitness Center

Participation was on the increase as more people became aware of the facility and hours of operation. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the gym and fitness center was open for community use Monday through Friday 9 am to 11 am, after school, Monday through Thursday, 6 pm to 8:30 pm, Saturday mornings 9 am to noon, and Sunday, 11:30 am to 2:30 pm. Examples of usage include senior shuffleboard, after school youth open gym, adult open gym, youth basketball league, weekend tournaments, youth sports camps, wrestling, youth basketball kick-offs, summer park programs, and school out day field trips. This has been a wonderful asset to our Recreation Program. COVID-19 statewide restrictions shut the gym and fitness center down in March. Until that point, the department had sold 12 monthly memberships and 894 daily drop-in passes.



Top: Hylander Center from the outside.
Left: Hands-free drinking fountains installed in 2020 at the Hylander Center.

Senior Center

Columbia Heights was the only Senior Center in the area that stayed open during the year.

The Active Agers Senior Program offers a wide variety of programs for people 55 plus. We feared our senior community would be heavily impacted by the many restrictions in 2020. With them in mind, we made an environment safe without worry for those wanting to be socially engaged. We continued to offer the programs and activities they love, with increased sanitizing and social distancing. We felt the need to offer more, thus; a creative outlet was introduced providing seniors a way to express themselves through art. Although they questioned their abilities as artists, they were happy to have found a new way to escape negative news. The feedback was warming. They appreciated our efforts doing all possible to keep the doors open for them.

Senior Programs	Annual Attendance
Regularly Occurring Programs	310
Art Classes	71
Specialty Events and Classes	719
Defensive Driving Refresher Course	37
Mini Bus Day Outings	59
Motor Coach Day Trip Outings	None in 2020



Socially-distanced Bingo.

John P. Murzyn Hall

Similar to years past, Murzyn Hall was booked for most weekends throughout 2020. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the facility was closed for many months. Renters of Murzyn Hall either canceled or postponed their events. Some events were able to be held a few months later and others choose a new date in 2021. For the events that were allowed usage of the facility all groups followed the State and CDC guidelines with some months restricting attendance. Due to the fact that only 170 people maximum were allowed in attendance this impacted many rentals that wanted to have more guests closer to the 375 capacity of the hall decided to cancel. Community groups and regular programs that were held in building canceled their dates from month to month until restrictions were lifted.

In addition to housing the Recreation Department, Murzyn Hall was used by many local civic and community groups in one capacity or another in 2020. The ability to use any licensed caterer is another very attractive feature offered at Murzyn Hall. Our flexibility and willingness to work with various renters puts Murzyn Hall in a class of its own.

Aside from rentals, Murzyn Hall was cleaned top to bottom, the controls for HVAC were updated and an air purification system was added to HVAC.

The following consists of various community users that receive a reduced or waived rental fee (City organizations and related groups also use Murzyn Hall for various events, such as the Employee Holiday Lunch, the Library Foundation Fundraiser, and elections).

- AARP
- American Red Cross
- Anoka County - Housing/ACCAP
- Anoka County Senior Issues Network
- Association of Recycling Managers
- Beautification Committee
- CH Administration
- CH Athletic Banquets
- CH Athletic Boosters
- CH Basketball Association
- CH Fire Department
- CH Fire Explorers
- CH Fire Fighters Association
- CH High School Class Reunions
- CH IS Department
- CH Library Foundation
- CH Lion's Club
- Library Foundation
- CH Lion's Club
- CH Liquor Operations
- CH Police Department
- CH Public Works
- CH Recreation Department
- Community Education-ISD #13
- Friends of the Library
- Girl Scouts - 3 troops
- Happy Feet Foot Care, Inc.
- Heights Next
- IBEW Local 292
- Immaculate Conception School
- Independent School District #13
- Kiwanis Club
- Minnesota Polka Association
- Minnesota Deaf Senior Citizens
- Northeast Strikers Soccer Club
- PACIM
- Northeast Strikers Soccer Club
- Pals
- Park & Recreation Commission
- Parkview Townhomes
- Persian Student Organization of MN
- Robbinsdale Area Wrestling
- SACA
- Sister Cities
- Theater Elision
- Toastmasters
- Traffic Commission
- Train Collectors
- University Heights Condominiums
- University Heights Townhomes
- Vote No Columbia Heights
- Vote Yes Columbia Heights



John P. Murzyn Hall Cont.

John P Murzyn Hall Paid Rentals Events and Frequency

Funerals	2
Birthday Parties	7
Classes/Seminars/Meetings	8
Parties/Banquets	9
Holiday Parties	1
Wedding Receptions	7
Fundraisers	2
Total Resident Rentals	17
Total Non-Resident Rentals	5



THANK YOU!

On behalf of all City Departments, Division Heads and Staff, thank you for your support! It's an honor to serve the City of Columbia Heights and its residents. See you in 2021!

