



CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

April 2021

Baldwin Public Library

The Library remains open for Grab and Go service. Curbside Pickup and Grab & Go services are both available seven days per week and virtual programs for all ages are ongoing. H Jennings has started as Baldwin's new Head of Adult Services. She has worked in the Adult Services department since 2016. Librarian Mick Howey has been promoted to a full-time librarian in the Adult Services Department. The Library is currently in the process of hiring a part-time Adult Services Librarian and a full-time Network Administrator. Director Rebekah Craft recently completed a six-week course with the Library of Michigan called "Surviving and Thriving as a New Library Director," facilitated by consultant Maxine Bleiweis. At the Library Board meeting on April 19, resident David Bloom submitted a request for a public art project, entitled "Zip US Up," to be displayed along the top edge of the north, east, and south sides of the Youth Room.

The Birmingham Museum

Beginning in May, the museum will be featuring free "Porch Pop Up" exhibits every Friday from 1 to 4 p.m. on the Allen House front porch. This pedestrian-friendly format will offer a different set of artifacts each week to connect Birmingham's past with its present using a monthly theme. Museum staff will be on hand to discuss the objects and answer questions. Masks are required and social distancing, sanitizing, and public health safety guidelines will be strictly followed.

May's theme will be "The Museum's Changing Landscape," which will feature historical information about the buildings and site as well as our planned landscape restoration, which will begin this spring. Museum Board members will also be on site in May during the pop ups to greet the public and discuss current and future projects on the museum grounds.

Birmingham Shopping District

The Birmingham Shopping District is proud to announce the launch of a new, more user friendly, website - still at www.AllinBirmingham.com. A spring fashion promotional campaign is currently underway. Keep an eye out for the video on our website and social media.

We are looking forward to opening day at the Farmers Market on Sunday, May 2. We will require masks and have other safety precautions in place. Approximately 40 vendors are scheduled to attend.

We are pleased that, even during very challenging times, new businesses are opening within the BSD and Birmingham continues to be a sought after destination for retailers looking for new locations. A new BSD Executive Director should be in place soon.

Building Department

The [Building Department's monthly report](#) provides an update on the following construction activity: building permits issued, building inspections conducted, trades permits issued and trades inspections conducted.

City Clerk's Office

Recognition of Staff

The City Clerk's Office would like to thank Laura Eichenhorn for her efficient production of quality minutes. Laura scribes minutes for the City Commission, Ethics Board, Greenwood Cemetery Advisory Board and various other boards throughout the city. Her work and support is very much appreciated.

The City Clerk's Office would like to thank Brooks Cowan for his ongoing efforts and many hours spent on a digital map for the Historic Greenwood Cemetery.

Elections

Candidate filing packets for the November 2, 2021 election are available at the Clerk's office for anyone who is interested in running for City Commission or the Library Board. The Clerk's office will send confirmation letters to past election inspectors in August, recruit additional workers in September, and train all election inspectors in October in preparation for the election on November 2, 2021.

Greenwood Cemetery

Planning for Trees & Future Landscaping

A meeting was held at the Historic Greenwood Cemetery on Wednesday, April 14, 2021 to discuss the current status of trees planted in Greenwood Cemetery and plans for future planting. [Download the memo](#) summarizing the outcome of the meeting.

Future Agenda Topics for GCAB

May - Rules & Regulations, Goals for the 2022-23 Annual Report

June - Trees, Landscaping & Gravestone Inventory

Special Events

Special event applications are available on our website. We want to remind all applicants to provide a COVID-19 plan with their special event applications. After applications are approved they are reviewed 30 and 15 days prior to the event to review the current COVID-19 guidelines and see if the event can still be held or if it will be canceled.

Board Vacancies & Upcoming Appointments

There are upcoming board appointments in May and June for the following Boards:

-Board of Building Trades Appeals

-Martha Baldwin Park Board

- Historic District Study Committee
- Board of Ethics
- Hearing Officer

Government Day

The city's annual Celebrate Birmingham Hometown Parade is a beloved tradition that regularly occurs in May. The celebration serves in part to recognize residents who give their time and talents as members of city boards and commissions. In light of the current statistics and progression of the COVID-19 pandemic, the in-person gathering of the celebration is canceled. The City still wishes to show gratitude for its volunteers and has an alternative way to celebrate Birmingham. The City Clerk's Office will celebrate our board members in a safe way with an appreciation video that includes each board/commission's accomplishments and photos of members with a scheduled release date of May 16, 2021. We encourage everyone to view the appreciation video on our website: www.bhamgov.org/parade.

City Manager's Office

Communications

- **Bang the Table – Engage Birmingham**

The communications and website teams are getting ready to launch the City's new public engagement tool, Engage Birmingham. We would like to thank Melissa Fairbairn for her hard work on this project.



- **Website**

The website team recently interviewed companies for the City's Website Redesign & Hosting services. A recommendation will be presented to the City Commission in May.

- **E-Newsletter**

The Communications Team is working on a new and improved layout for the City's monthly e-newsletter (Around Town). Keep an eye out for the new version this spring.

- **Print Newsletter**

Within the past six months, we have made improvements to the print newsletter such as transitioning to full color, gloss paper stock. Additional improvements are coming soon! The City's graphic designer, Karen Bota, is working on a new design which will be unveiled in the summer edition.

- **City Style Guide**

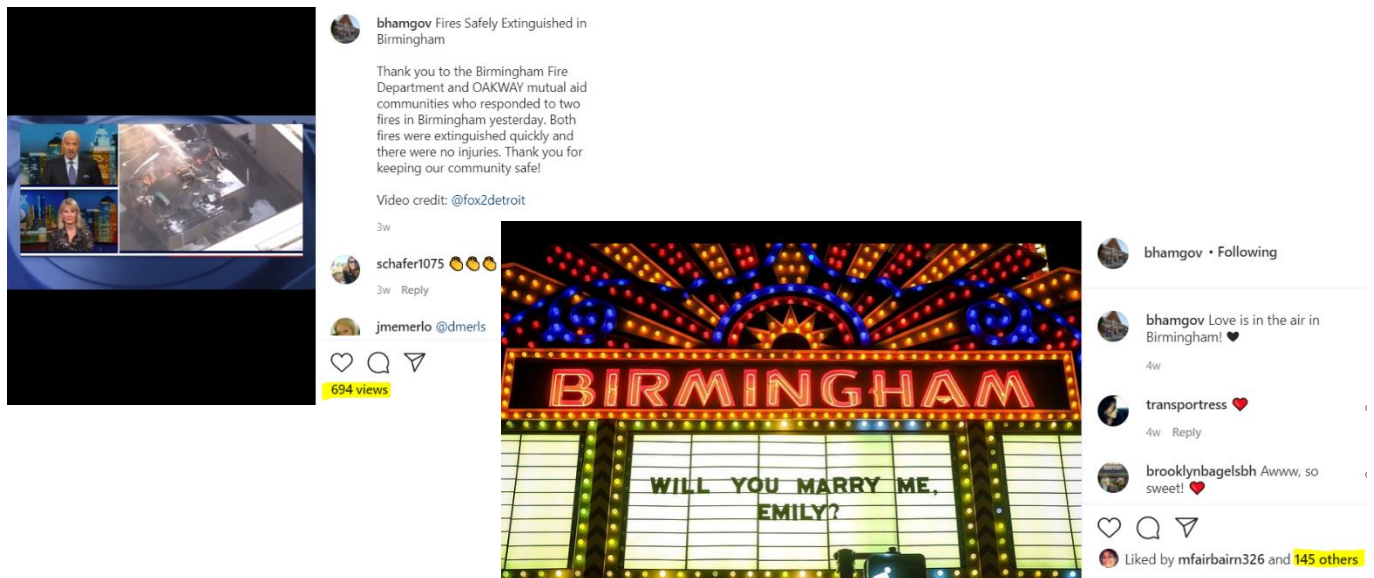
The Communications Team is working on a Style Guide to ensure all City documents and publications look cohesive and professional. The color palette and fonts selected for the new website will be included in the Style Guide and incorporated into the updated e-newsletter, print newsletter and all future publications.

- **Videos**

Continuing with our video series, the team is working on a Department of Public Services (DPS) behind-the-scenes video in lieu of the in-person DPS Open House event. Also, in lieu of the Celebrate Birmingham Parade, we will assist the Clerk's office with an appreciation video scheduled for release on May 16, 2021.

- **Social Media**

We launched the City's Instagram account last fall and are pleased to have more than 1,100 followers with steady growth. Our top two posts from the past month are shown below. Follow us on Instagram @bhamgov.



Human Resources

- Joseph Lambert has been promoted from the position of Human Resources Generalist to Human Resources Manager. Joe graduated from Oakland University with a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology, and a minor in Employment Systems and Standards (more commonly known as Labor Studies). While at college, he interned at Easter Seals Michigan's Human Resources Department as a general HR Intern, specializing in onboarding, and followed up with a post-college internship at Quicken Loans' Payroll department. Joe's professional career in Human Resources began at A-Line Staffing Solutions, a medical and pharmaceutical staffing company, as a Human Resources Representative, providing oversight to staffing recruitment functions. Joe began working for the City as the Human Resources Generalist in November of 2017. We are pleased to congratulate him on his new role as Human Resources Manager.
- The [attached advertisement](#) for the Assistant City Manager is now on the Michigan Municipal League website under "Classified" and will be in the International City/County Managers Association newsletter that is emailed to all members every week. Applications will be reviewed after Friday, May 14, 2021. The vetting process will include interviews by

department heads and part of the review process will require finalists to submit a written and oral report before the City Commission.

- The Human Resources Department is working on many recruitments. [Download a memo](#) highlighting recent noteworthy staffing changes and updates.
- The Teamsters won the unit representation election (for Public Services positions) over the Technical, Professional and Officeworkers Association of Michigan maintaining their current representation of that group.
- With COVID-19 cases increasing across the state, indoor dining remains at 50% capacity and Governor Whitmer has asked for an indoor dining pause. The City's COVID-19 relief initiative allowing expanded outdoor dining is set to conclude on June 30, 2021. The City Commission may want to consider extending this relief initiative. However, as part of any approval to extend this type of relief, it needs to be reiterated to restaurants that this is a temporary situation and the City hopes to return to the previously approved 2019 outdoor dining layout as soon as practical.

Miscellaneous:

City Commission Workshops

No City Commission workshops will be held in July or August so that everyone can enjoy their summer vacations. Workshops will resume in September.

Indigent Counsel Program

City attorney Mary Kucharek recently submitted a memo regarding changes to the state's indigent counsel program. The City of Birmingham has agreed to become the lead community to administer the new program for the 48th District Court. [Download the memo](#) to learn about these changes and next steps.

Department of Public Services

Below are some noteworthy happenings in the Department of Public Services (DPS).

- The Birmingham Ice Arena construction project is scheduled to begin April 27, 2021. Our Ice Arena General Contractor – CE Gleeson kick-off meeting was held on April 20, 2021 to discuss items such as: Construction phasing plan, Two week look ahead schedule, Long lead item approvals, Site containment plan/sub parking, Abatement, Securing the job site, Approval process for change orders, Owner direct trade coordination and Communication protocol.
- At a recent City Commission meeting, mention was made about weddings in Shain Park. Does the City allow private events in Shain Park? The City Commission adopted the Wedding Rental Agreement (Ceremony Only) on June 27, 2011. There is a permit process in place along with associated fees, depending whether the wedding is at Shain Park, Museum or another City Park. Only a portion of the park can be reserved and for a limited period. A universal calendar is used for reserving these events between the Clerk's Office and DPS. In addition, consideration is always given to the reoccurring events held in Shain Park when reserving a wedding. Reviewing records for the past six years, Shain Park averages four (4) weddings per year. The Wedding Rental Agreement will be referred to the Parks and Recreation Board to consider this issue along with making other updates.

- Mike Jurek, Assistant Foreman Parks/Forestry has announced his retirement beginning next month. Mike served as our resident landscape architect with the City of Birmingham for over 24 years. He has left his mark with the beautification and landscape enhancements made during his career throughout the entire community. His dedication and strong work ethic will be missed. We wish Mike much happiness in his future endeavors.
- Barnum Park electrical additions and upgrades included lighting bollards between the Barnum arch and the promenade and new electrical outlets have been added to each pergola. In addition, new lighting was added to the flagpole and sculpture as part of this project.
- New donation bench opportunities will be available shortly at Barnum Park. Nine (9) sites have been designed to the park plan to add five (5) benches on the walkway between the arch and the promenade and four (4) are on the Pierce St. side.

Engineering Department

Upcoming Construction Project at Parking Lot #5 (behind North Old Woodward Parking Deck) - department heads and staff had a recent meeting to kick-off a discussion for planning the reconstruction of the parking lot. Much like the work done at Parking Lot #6 a couple years ago, there are opportunities to make beneficial enhancements at this public space that could include better vehicle circulation, pedestrian accessibility, landscaping, lighting, and storm water management. In the coming months, the City's engineering consultant HRC, who was involved with the Parking Lot #6 project, will begin developing concept plans to get feedback from the various City Departments, Committee's and Boards, as well as the public (via Engage Birmingham platform). Two City residents have volunteered some ideas for the parking lot, and we will be taking those into consideration as the concepts are developed.

Finance Department

Credit Card Policy

Finance is working on an update to the City's credit card policy. In today's business environment and especially since COVID, more and more business transactions are handled strictly by digital means either by ACH or credit card. Currently, the City's credit card policy is very restrictive and inefficient. Finance would like to revise the policy to allow for easier and more efficient processing of transactions while still providing adequate controls over those transactions. This revised policy will likely be brought to the City Commission this summer.

Parks & Recreation Bonds

Since the commission approved the sale of the 1st series of park bonds on March 22nd, the Manager's Office and Finance Department has been working with our consultants Bendzinski & Co. and Miller, Canfield, Paddock and Stone, PLC to prepare for the sale. This has included providing schedules for the Preliminary Official Statement, reviewing the Preliminary Official Statement, and having a joint call with Standards & Poors (S&P) in order to have the City's rating reviewed and determined for the bond sale.

It is anticipated that the sale of the bonds will take place on May 4th with the bond closing taking place on May 20th. At which time, a bank account will need to be opened to hold the bond funds until they are used. A budget amendment will also be coming forward to record the budget proceeds and the allocation of expenses for the bond issue and the ice arena project.

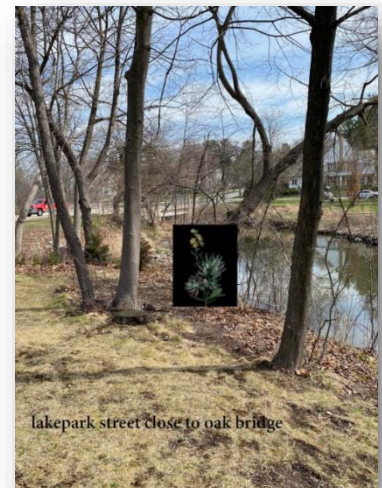
Fire Department

On April 14th, 2021 OAKWAY Mutual Aid Group received a HazMat foam trailer. The purchasing of the trailer happened with budgeted OAKWAY funds. This was a year-long process that Chief Wells led. In the past ten years, there have been a half-dozen tanker spills and/or fires that resulted in a delay of mitigation due to having to borrow a private chemical company's foam trailer. The HazMat foam trailer will be housed in Birmingham at Station One (Adams Station) where it can be rapidly deployed anywhere in the County. The foam concentrate is mixed with water to create an environmentally safe foam blanket used to prevent flammable fuel spills and to also extinguish fuel fires such as gasoline tanker fires. When this specialized piece of equipment is used on a spill, the OAKWAY mutual aid group is able to be reimbursed through cost recovery. Birmingham Fire has a very active and leading role in both the OAKWAY Tech Rescue and HazMat teams.



Planning Department

Laurie Tennent's temporary art exhibit "City Bloom" consisting of nine photographs placed throughout the City's park landscape was approved in August of 2020 to be installed for one year. One of the photographs was placed near the waterfall in the background of the gazebo facing Quarton Lake. The artist has indicated that she does not want her artwork to interfere with photo shoots occurring at the Gazebo near the waterfall, and has proposed to move it along Quarton Lake path closer to Oak Street. Staff has approved the relocation of the artwork to the location pictured at right (image is Photoshopped – not actual).



Police Department

1. The police department received information that a business located in the 200 block of Willits Alley was operating as a bar. An investigation was conducted that determined that patrons paid

a cover charge of anywhere from \$20 to \$50 per person to enter the business. Once inside, the business proved alcoholic beverages to patrons that included beer, wine coolers and liquor. The business also had live music and dancing. The owner, a 52 year old man from Keego Harbor, was issued (16) City ordinance violations (police, fire and building). The case has been turned over to the City Attorney for prosecution. The business is no longer operating.

2. Acting on resident concerns of suspicious activity, the police department opened an investigation of a residence in the 2400 block of Buckingham. Subsequent to that investigation, the police department determined that the residence was being used for prostitution and other possible crimes. The resident, a 33 year old Birmingham woman, has not been charged pending further investigation. Upon completion, the case will be turned over to the Oakland County Prosecutor's Office for warrant review.

3. The joint Mental Health Co-Response Program with the City of Auburn Hills, Bloomfield Township and the Oakland County Health Network continues to move forward. Grant applications to support the pilot program have been completed and submitted to the Community Foundation of Southeast Michigan and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) with the assistance of Congresswoman Haley Stevens.

4. In a joint meeting with Birmingham, Bloomfield Hills, Bloomfield Township, the Oakland County Sheriff's Office (OCSO) and the Michigan State Police (MSP), all agencies agreed to work together to address negative driving behaviors and the issue of noise on Woodward Ave. Birmingham and Bloomfield Township have added patrols to Woodward Ave and both the OCSO and MSP have agreed to increase their patrols on Woodward Ave. The City of Royal Oak is also stepping up enforcement efforts on Woodward.

5. The police department hosted two assessors from the Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police (MACP) for the department's final accreditation assessment on April 20 and 21, 2021. The Accreditation Program Director (Mr. Neal Rossow) selected a team of trained assessors, free from conflict of interest with our department, that conducted an on-site review of our department. On-site assessments take two days to complete. The first day included file reviews, a tour of the department, ride-alongs with officers and interviews of department personnel (City Manager Markus, HR Manager Lambert). The second day included further file reviews (policies, procedures, standards and proofs), additional ride-alongs, a public call-in session and a final exit interview with Chief Clemence, the department's accreditation manager (Lt. Greg Wald) and the rest of the department's accreditation support team. Chief Clemence was notified by the assessing team that the department was in compliance with all MACP standards and proofs and will be recommended to the MACP Accreditation Commission for final approval and certification on June 26, 2021.

Future Agenda Items

Download a summary of [future agenda items](#).

Future Workshop Items

Download a summary of [future workshop items](#).