



CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

May 2021

Baldwin Public Library

The Library remains open for Grab and Go service and visits of 45 minutes or less. [Curbside Pickup](#) and Grab & Go are both available seven days per week during regular hours and [virtual programs](#) for all ages are ongoing. The Library is currently in the process of hiring a full-time Network Administrator. The second floor of the Library and the Grand Hall have been repainted using a generous donation from the Jane Van Dragt Trust. The annual summer reading program begins on June 11 and runs through August 8.

The Birmingham Museum

As many rock 'n' roll fans know, Chad Smith, drummer for the Red Hot Chili Peppers, grew up in the area and played at venues around Birmingham as an up and coming musician. Chad went on to become one of the best known rock drummers in the world--a genius among an elite few. A few years ago, he and his family participated enthusiastically in a Birmingham Museum exhibit and public event, resulting in a special award for the museum and a lasting friendship with Chad.

Chad and his family have decided to donate artifacts and personal materials to the Birmingham Museum to preserve an archive of his formative years in the area. Preliminary plans include a virtual exhibit and online retrospective, which would include family photos, documents, and early recordings and interviews. Chad would also like to plan a public appearance at the museum when the exhibit launches. We anticipate that this project will take many months to prepare, but hope to have an update sometime in the next year. We are honored to be selected for this special distinction and look forward to telling Chad's story as just one of the many stories that make Birmingham special.

Birmingham Shopping District

- The Birmingham Shopping District is pleased to welcome Sean Kammer as the new executive director.
- The 19th season of the Farmers Market is off to a great start. Shoppers and vendors are happy to be back to a walkable market.

- The first Movie Night of the season is scheduled for June 11th and will feature "The Little Mermaid". In an effort to keep the event as low-risk as possible, we are working with Chief Wells on plans for a drive-in format at Seaholm High School.

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 congratulate departing Deputy Clerk Abby Hauff on her acceptance of a new position in St. Clair Shores. In the past year she has handled a mountain of tasks and has been of great service to the city and its residents. We wish her well on her future endeavors.

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

Future Agenda Topics for the Greenwood Cemetery Advisory Board

June 4 - In person at Greenwood Cemetery

- Trees, Landscaping & Gravestone Inventory, Goals for 2022-23, Annual Report

July (date TBD) - Virtually on Zoom

- Selection of chair and co-chair, rules and regulations

Board Vacancies & Upcoming Appointments

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

-Historic District Study Committee

-Board of Ethics

-Hearing Officer

-Retirement Board

-Museum Board

-Greenwood Cemetery Board

Government Day

The City Clerk's Office is celebrating our board members in a safe way with an appreciation video that includes each board/commission's accomplishments and photos of members. The video was released on May 16, 2021. We encourage everyone to view the appreciation video on our website: www.bhamgov.org/parade.

City Manager's Office

Communications

Engage Birmingham

[Engage Birmingham](#) has more than 200 registrants, and 114 people have engaged with one or more projects. The pickleball survey has more than 60 responses! New projects coming soon include: residents making a difference, pickleball second round, name the newsletter final survey, Adams Park, and more.



Website

The website team consists of seven staff members representing different city departments. The team is working hard to develop a website that residents and City Commissioners will be proud of. The team has been submitting information to Revize LLC in preparation for the project kickoff meeting.

Videos

The communications team is working on a new video to promote Engage Birmingham. We recently published our Board & Committee appreciation video from the Clerk's Office, and the behind-the-scenes Department of Public Services video. Thank you to Jamil Alawadi for his hard work on these videos! View them on our YouTube channel at www.youtube.com/birminghammi.

Miscellaneous:

Letter to Oppose New Short-Term Rental Bill

City Manager Tom Markus recently sent a letter to Representative Mari Manoogian and Senator Mallory McMorrow to express opposition to House Bill (HB) 4722. The proposed legislation seeks to eliminate a municipality's ability to regulate short-term rentals. Learn more about HB 4722 at

[https://www.legislature.mi.gov/\(S\(o1dtrkdlpefzs30cpxlnbam!\)\)/mileg.aspx?page=getObject&objectName=2021-HB-4722](https://www.legislature.mi.gov/(S(o1dtrkdlpefzs30cpxlnbam!))/mileg.aspx?page=getObject&objectName=2021-HB-4722).

City Commission Workshops

City Commission workshops will not be held in July and August so that everyone can enjoy their summer vacations. Workshops will resume in September.

Department of Public Services

- A Garlic Mustard Pull by volunteers at Quarton Lake was a success on May 16. Nine volunteers pulled 19 bags of Garlic Mustard, along with some patches of Dame's Rocket and Yellow Rocket.
- The Rouge River Annual Clean Up was held on May 15 targeting invasive species along the Rouge River Trail Corridor.

- Take a quick survey about Pickleball on [Engage Birmingham](#). The survey is open until May 31, 2021.
- Ice Arena - A Dashboard is available at www.bhamgov.org/icearena. It shows the Ice Arena project highlights along with a look ahead schedule, and pictures during the demolition phase.
- Adams Park - Plan coming soon to Engage Birmingham! Keep an eye out on engage.bhamgov.org.
- Check out the [virtual DPS Open House!](#)
- May 16-22, 2021 was National Public Works Week.

Engineering Department

Chris Morton Promotion

We are proud to announce the promotion of Chris Morton to the Senior Engineering Tech position. Chris has been with the department for over seven years, and will now serve a leading role in the engineering permitting process, and in a supervisory capacity over construction inspection activities for both private developments and city projects.

Cranbrook Road Construction

The Road Commission for Oakland County (RCOC) will be starting a paving project on Cranbrook Road between 14 Mile and Maple in mid to late-June., with a scheduled completion date in late August. Please visit RCOC's website, www.rcocweb.org/, and go to their "Road Projects" page to get [more information](#). RCOC's Customer Service Department may be contacted by phone at (877) 858-4804 or by email at mcdsmail@rcoc.org for more information.

Grant Street Paving Project Update

The Grant Street Paving Project has started, with construction activity focused on the blocks between Lincoln and Humphrey, and Bird and 14 Mile. The work is scheduled to be completed in late July. Work includes sewer and water main improvements, followed by new concrete paving. Isolated pavement patching/repairs are planned for the blocks in between the work zones. The work also includes construction of a relief sewer across part of St. James Park, so we caution residents and guests using the park to be aware of the activity, and be respectful of the construction fencing defining the work area.

Fire Department

In-Home COVID-19 Care

The Birmingham Fire Department is working with Royal Oak Beaumont on providing in-home COVID-19 care for our residents. Birmingham Paramedics will administer Monoclonal Antibody medication infusions to residents that are COVID-19 positive and are in high-risk categories of having a severe reaction. The treatment will help keep residents from needing to be admitted to the hospital so they can rest and heal at

home. This coordination will help keep the hospitals from getting too overcrowded and also provide comfort to residents in their own home. The cost for the medication is free and the procedure to administer the treatment is covered by medical insurance and Medicare, which will help pay for the at-home service.

Public Assistance Reimbursement

On May 12th, 2021 the Fire Department, in coordination with Assistant Finance Director Wickenheiser, submitted approximately \$230,000.00 to FEMA for Public Assistance reimbursement for COVID-19 related expenses. Download our [COVID-19 Grant Summary Spreadsheet here](#). These eligible emergency action expenses were primarily attributed to overtime and payroll related to COVID-19 quarantine and isolation through March 31, 2021. FEMA has waived the 25% cost sharing and is expected to reimburse 100% of the expenses submitted. The City has submitted \$1,767,511.09 in COVID-19 related grants and received \$747,398.37 to date.

Assistant Fire Chief Bartalino and Assistant Finance Director Wickenheiser have done an amazing job over the last 13 months gathering all the data required to be successful with all the different grants. Many of the grants require additional information, sometimes with small turnaround time frames, and Matt and Kim are always quick to respond. We are fortunate to have such hard working staff working on these projects. The team will continue to collect COVID-19 related expenses and apply every 2-3 months for reimbursements under FEMA Public Assistance.

Thank you, Fire Marshal Joel Campbell

Fire Marshal Joel Campbell will retire on May 15, 2021, concluding a 25-year career with the city. Joel held many positions with the city, including Firefighter, Firefighter/Inspector, Deputy Fire Marshal and retired as Fire Marshal. We thank him for his service and wish him all the best in retirement!

Planning Department

Storefront Glazing

The Zoning Ordinance currently requires clear glazing for all first floor windows, with no tinting permitted, and a minimum Visible Light Transmission ("VLT") level of 80% or greater. These standards are designed to ensure that all first floor storefronts can be viewed by patrons walking by to create an interactive pedestrian experience.

A complaint was recently received regarding the visibility into the storefront windows on the new Daxton Hotel at S. Old Woodward and Brown Street. The Planning Division conducted an inspection of the first floor glazing, and reviewed the approved plans and glazing specifications. The glazing used for the first floor of the Daxton Hotel is Guardian Ultraclear, with a low iron content, low reflectance, and 89% VLT. While this glazing does meet the current ordinance requirements for storefront glazing, the Daxton Hotel owners had originally discussed using clear glazing with a low-e coating and a light grey tint, as the project obtained Final Site Plan and Design Review approval prior to the new glazing standards being approved by the City Commission. Ultimately, the Daxton Hotel owners installed the glazing noted above that meets the new requirements. It is important to note that low interior light levels and the selection of a dark interior color palate within

the first floor of the Daxton Hotel can affect the visibility into the hotel at different times of the day, particularly in bright sunlight.

Update on Oakland County's Participation in the Triangle District Corridor Improvement Authority (CIA)

The Triangle District is located between Adams Road and Woodward Avenue, south of Maple Road. Land uses in the district include a mix of commercial, office uses, and some residential uses. The district is adjacent to a single-family neighborhood that is not included in the proposed Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District. Most of the higher intensity uses are located along Woodward, with other fine stores and offices found throughout the district.

In 2007, the Triangle District Urban Design Plan ("Triangle Plan") was developed and approved to revitalize the district with the intention to create a unified framework for development that improved the economic, social and pedestrian environments while protecting the central neighborhood that exists within the District.

After the adoption of the Triangle Plan in 2007, the City of Birmingham established the City of Birmingham Corridor Improvement Authority (the "CIA") pursuant to Act 280, Public Acts of Michigan, 2005, the Corridor Improvement Authority Act, to provide for the use of tax increment financing with the objective of stimulating and encouraging economic development activities within the established district. The City and CIA began work on a Development and Tax Increment Finance Plan ("TIF Plan") for the Triangle District to outline improvements necessary to realize the vision established in the Triangle Plan. Since the **need for improved parking was identified as the primary development impediment within the Triangle District**, the City began to assess the feasibility of providing public parking in the Triangle District. It was and is the primary goal of the Development Plan and TIF Plan to provide organized public parking that will improve the business vitality in the district by attracting new development, and bringing more business and residents into the district.

Although the City and CIA began work on the TIF Plan in 2008 and 2009 and had discussions with Oakland County about the proposed TIF Plan and projects at that time, the approval of the TIF Plan was put on hold due to the downturn in the economy and the decline in property tax values. The City and CIA decided in early 2015 to move forward with the approval of the TIF Plan by May 2015 in order to be able to use the 2014 taxable values as the initial assessed value of the proposed District to begin collecting funds under the TIF Plan to fund the construction of public parking in the Triangle District.

After a public hearing on the Development and TIF Plan and the corresponding notices were sent to the taxing jurisdictions, Oakland County changed their policy for supporting and contributing to TIF Plans, and immediately passed a resolution to opt out of participation in the Birmingham TIF Plan to support the economic development of the Triangle District. Oakland County informed the City that Birmingham would have to re-apply for their support under their updated policy for TIF Plans.

After much debate as to the application of the new county policy to the Birmingham TIF Plan, the City of Birmingham submitted a new application for county support under the amended TIF policy. The City prepared a detailed report to demonstrate that the Triangle District TIF Plan met all of the requirements as laid out in Public Act 280 for TIF Plans in Michigan, as well as all of the evaluation criteria established in Oakland County's recently adopted policy. The report made the case for Oakland County to contribute to the maximum level of 75% capture as provided in their amended policy for supporting and contributing to TIF Plans.

On October 15, 2015, the Oakland County TIF District Review Committee voted in favor of supporting Birmingham's TIF Plan, finding that it met all criteria outlined in the amended county policy, to the maximum level of 75% tax capture. On November 12, 2015, the Oakland County Board of Commissioners also voted to support the TIF Plan through tax capture and directed the county attorneys to negotiate a contract with the City. The City and county spent over a year attempting to negotiate a contract, but did not reach an agreement. There was no expiration date included with the approval granted by the Oakland County Board of Commissioners, nor is there an expiration clause contained in the amended [county TIF policy](#) that remains in force.

Thus, the City recently commenced discussion with Oakland County to attempt to resolve the previous stalemate on the contract negotiation and have Oakland County participate in the TIF Plan as previously approved in 2015. City Attorney Kucharek, Planning Director Ecker and myself met with Ingrid Tighe, Bret Rasegan, and Tim Colbect from Oakland County's Economic Development Department on May 3, 2021.

Please see the [attached correspondence](#) received from Oakland County advising that the City will be required to completely restart the county TIF review process despite the previous approval of the TIF Plan. Doing so will result in a further delay in commencing tax capture to support economic development in the Triangle District, and is likely to impact the amount of tax dollars available for capture.

New Employee

The Community Development Department is pleased to announce a new administrative member of our team. Michelle Francis started working for the City on a part time basis on May 7, 2021. Michelle will be assisting both the Planning and Engineering Divisions with a wide variety of administrative tasks, and has an impressive array of experience in the creative, technological and financial realms of business administration. Michelle originally hails from Down Under, but has been raising her family in metro-Detroit for the past 7 years.

Police Department

Suspect Arraigned in Fatal Accident

After an extensive search, investigators located the suspect vehicle and driver, Steven Fowlow, a 52-year-old man from Davisburg, Michigan involved in the accident that killed Wesley Stamps. Fowlow had placed the vehicle in the rear of his property and was attempting to repair the vehicle himself. On May 6, 2021, Fowlow was arraigned at the

48th District Court for failure to stop at the scene of an accident resulting in death. Magistrate Nelson-Klein issued a \$10,000 cash/surety/10% bond for Fowlow.

Lieutenant Ray Faes receives Bravery Award

On May 10, 2021 our department was made aware of an award received by Lt. Ray Faes issued by the Royal Oak Police Department. Lt. Faes received a "Bravery Award" which stated the following: Officers responded to the report of a suicidal subject armed with a rifle. The subject was reporting he intended to engage responding officers with the rifle and to commit "suicide by cop." Birmingham Police Department's Lt. Faes responded to the scene and offered his service as a negotiator. Lt. Faes was patched into an ongoing phone conversation between the suspect and dispatch. For over 15 minutes, Lt. Faes built a rapport with the subject and calmly continued his attempts to get the suspect to surrender. As the negotiation progressed, the suspect terminated the phone call and began advancing toward officers where a close proximity armed standoff ensued. Lt. Faes remained calm and kept the suspect verbally engaged in attempts to de-escalate the situation with police officers on scene. Lt. Faes' negotiation and de-escalation efforts were a significant contribution to the overall team effort that brought this dangerous incident to a safe conclusion.

Future Agenda Items

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

Future Workshop Items

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