



CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

July 2021

Baldwin Public Library

The Library is open for visits of any length, seven days a week and the Library has a variety of lounge and study seating available throughout the building. Curbside pickup is also available. Room rentals have now resumed and you can find out more information and make reservations at www.baldwinlib.org/rent. Baldwin's annual summer reading program is running now through August 8. At the Library Board meeting on August 16, the Library Board will vote to select the architectural firm to design Phase 3 of the Library's Building project. Three firms attended the pre-bid meeting on June 30 and bids were due on July 20. The family and friends of Miranda S. Burnett have donated money to the Library in her memory and purchased naming rights for the Miranda S. Burnett Youth Reference Desk.

The Birmingham Museum

The Birmingham Museum recently earned recognition from Twitter by becoming "verified." The checkmark symbol next to our account main page tells visitors and followers that we have met Twitter's standards for authenticity. This designation is rare for small museums, since it is largely dependent on a high degree of public interest and activity, which is usually only the case in much larger institutions. Like all of the museum's social media platforms, its Twitter account has grown steadily, currently with 1035 followers.

Birmingham Shopping District

Attracting New Businesses

A vibrant, prosperous, and walkable downtown strengthens neighborhoods, serves as the heart of the community, and drives the local economy. To that end, the BSD recognizes the importance of continually working to attract new businesses. The BSD looks forward to making some exciting announcements in the near future regarding business attraction.

South Old Woodward Reconstruction

The BSD stands ready with plans to communicate with and help support businesses that may be affected by the upcoming road construction on S. Old Woodward next year. The BSD held a Merchant Meeting on Tuesday, July 13th where the city's engineering consultant, MKSK, presented information about the upcoming project to business and

property owners. The meeting was held at Phoenicia, where owner and BSD board member Samy Eid generously let the BSD use the space. Business owners voiced the importance of ongoing communication with the city about the project, prompting the BSD to look into innovative tools like text updates and regular door-to-door check-ins with those who may be affected by the construction. Additional programs are being developed to help with access and promotions for these businesses.

Community Events

The BSD recognizes that community events strengthen the bonds between residents and their downtown. Movie Night took place on Saturday, July 17th after unfortunate weather caused the event to move to its rain date. The event theme was Christmas in July, featuring the movie Elf.

Day on the Town is scheduled for July 31st. More than 71 retailers have registered, approaching record-setting participation. BSD staff has been working to ensure the success of the event. For many, this event is a significant revenue generator and serves to strengthen our downtown retail businesses.

Preparation for the Birmingham Cruise event is proceeding. Due to the reduced footprint of the event, BSD staff conducted a lottery to fairly select the cars that will be able to participate in the car show.

Building Department

Monthly Report

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.

Short-Term Rentals

The Building Department is working on developing a procedure for identifying short-term rentals, such as Air BNBS, and contacting the property owners to inform them of the City's rental licensing policy. We have identified almost 30 short-term rentals so far and have started the registration process on several properties.

Sidewalks and Walkways

We are also developing a procedure to proactively enforce the maintenance and violation abatement of trees and shrubs that encroach on sidewalks and walkways to maintain and uphold the beautification and walkability of the City.

Online Permit Applications

In May we processed 363 online permit applications, bringing our total to 2,156 online permits for 2021.

City Clerk's Office

Elections

The Clerk's office has begun preparing for the general election on November 2, 2021. 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.

Now is a great time to confirm your voter registration at mi.gov/vote. Voters wishing to vote absentee should make sure they are on the permanent absentee voter list and that your correct mailing address is on file. When returning applications be sure to include phone and email contact information so that if any issue pops up we can reach you quickly to resolve it. The initial mailing of absentee ballot applications for the November election is planned to go out late August.

For more updates and information on the November 2, 2021 election visit bhamgov.org/voting.

Greenwood Cemetery

Future Agenda Topics for Greenwood Cemetery Advisory Board

August 6 - Meeting in-person at City Hall

- Selection of chair and co-chair
- Draft annual report for Greenwood Cemetery
- Continued discussion on updating the rules and regulations for Greenwood Cemetery
- Continued discussion on planning to conduct a grave stone inventory

September 3 - Meeting in-person at City Hall

- Continued discussion on updating the rules and regulations for Greenwood Cemetery
- Continued discussion on planning to conduct a grave stone inventory

Upcoming Board Appointments

As terms expire notice will be given for existing members to reapply or for new applicants to apply to the following boards in August and September:

- Advisory Parking Committee
- Design Review Board
- Historic District Commission

Board Vacancies

The following boards have open positions that were noticed and have not yet been filled:

- Advisory Parking Committee
- Martha Baldwin Park Board
- Multi Modal Transportation Board
- Storm Water Utility Appeals Board
- Triangle District Corridor Improvement Authority

For more information visit bhamgov.org/boardopportunities.

City Manager's Office

Communications

Engage Birmingham

The Engage Birmingham site recently saw a flurry of activity due to the [Year-Round Enclosed Outdoor Dining project](#). Within six days of launching the project, 240 people completed the survey and more than 500 people visited the site. Several new projects will launch soon, such as the Food Truck project and a Public Notice Redesign project.

Ordinance Reminders

The communications team continues to publish reminders regarding the city's ordinances pertaining to pet etiquette and safety, long grass and weeds, and other poisonous growths. Information about the ordinance pertaining to trees and shrubs that encroach on sidewalks was posted via social media this month, and an article will be included in the August Around Town e-Newsletter.

Miscellaneous

Request for Qualifications for Strategic Planning

A Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for the development of a Strategic Plan will be issued in September. Strategic planning determines where an organization is going and how it is going to get there. The Strategic Plan is intended to help the City direct its efforts and resources toward a clearly defined vision for its future. Commissioners are encouraged to [download a draft of the RFQ here](#) and provide feedback to the City Manager by August 15, 2021.

Melissa Fairbairn Accepted into Municipal Leadership Program

Melissa Fairbairn was recently accepted into the 16/50 Project's Women's Municipal Leadership Program (WMLP). As a participant in this program, she will join a dynamic community of women all on the path to becoming strong local government managers. The WMLP offers an exclusive setting to dive in on key topics instructed by municipal experts, build executive leadership expertise, and gain insight on the application of new skills from current municipal managers. Congratulations, Melissa!

Shared Parking Spaces

An article by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) titled "Parking Spaces Serving Multiple Masters" delves into the benefits of facilities with shared parking spaces serving multiple destinations. Follow [this link](#) to read the article.

Potential Changes to the Open Meetings Act

Earlier this month, Tom Markus sent a [letter to Representative Manoojian and Senator McMorrow](#) in support of allowing officials to continue participating remotely in public meetings. Follow [this link](#) to read the response letter from Senator McMorrow.

Relationship between Commercial and Residential Property

Earlier this year, Tom Markus sent an [email](#) to City Commissioners regarding the relationship between commercial and residential properties. The information provided

demonstrates the mutually beneficial relationship between the two, and suggests that in Birmingham (and in most communities) it is likely that commercial properties financially support services in the residential community more than residential properties support the commercial properties in the City. Our focus should be on the services we should expect from our county, state and federal governments to ensure we are getting the service and support we need from those entities. Learn more about this topic in a report by Public Sector Consultants titled ["Creating 21st Century Communities - Making the Economic Case for Place"](#). We have and continue to develop our sense of place, which our residential and commercial uses continue to contribute to.

Department of Public Services

Wedding Ceremony Agreement

The Administration (DPS) advanced the update to the Wedding Park Rental Agreement (Ceremony Only) to the Parks and Recreation Board on July 13, 2021 to eliminate the use of Shain Park for wedding ceremonies. The Parks and Recreation Board endorses this change. In addition, we updated the facility use fees (for use of a city park) as part of the revised Agreement. The City Commission adopted the original Wedding Agreement on June 27, 2011.

We are no longer accepting wedding ceremony applications for Shain Park during 2021. September is the last month for this year for which a wedding ceremony is scheduled. The effective date for this revised Wedding Rental Agreement will be January 1, 2022. At such time this goes before the City Commission for approval, the City of Birmingham Fee Schedule will need to be updated to reflect the price increase. The coordination for this report with the fee update will be addressed prior to returning to the City Commission.

Adams Park Concept Plan Update

Since engaging Michael J. Dul & Associates earlier this year, we continue to meet with the relevant neighborhood groups to tweak the Adams Park concept plan created and accepted during 2015-2016. As part of the work schedule, July and August includes developing the updated plan, sharing the minor revisions of creating more park and play area with the stakeholders (Community members and Roeper School), preparing preliminary cost estimates, and holding meetings to update the Parks and Recreation Board and City Commission.

We expect a proposal from Michael J. Dul & Associates to prepare construction drawings and bid specifications along with the revised concept plan to present to the City Commission in either September or October.

Ice Arena Project Schedule Status for July and August

July

• Electrical primary installation • Combo sewer installation • Dehumidification unit concrete pad installation • Cold slab tubing installation • Cold slab concrete pour • Addition

foundation pour, block walls, roof framing • Infrared heating system installation • Interior wall painting • Start bleacher installation • Start main rink HVAC system installation

August

• Install addition roofing • Install underground plumbing • Install addition brick veneer • Finish interior painting • Elect./Plumbing/HVAC/Fire Suppression installations • Ceramic tile showers • Acoustical tile ceiling grid and pads • Refrigeration equipment installations

Visit [Engage Birmingham](#) for additional updates and progress photos.

Pickleball Court Update

City administration is working with a consultant on feasibility design for each of the five potential locations: NE Corner of S. Eton and Lincoln (Kenning Park), St. James, Crestview, W. Lincoln Well, and Poppleton. This includes site evaluations and complete review of proposed sites. This information, when available, will be shared with the Parks and Recreation Board and on Engage Birmingham - as Pickleball 2.0!

Engineering Department

S. Old Woodward Reconstruction Phase 3 Update

Phase 3 of the Downtown infrastructure improvements includes S. Old Woodward, between E. Brown and Landon, and is a continuation of the work completed in 2018 on S. Old Woodward and in 2020 on Maple. City Staff and consultants are working on the conceptual plans, considering the same project goals and employing the "template" used in Phase 1 and 2 within the Phase 3 project limits. Even though the basic design elements are planned to be the same, the Phase 3 project area has some unique differences from the previous phases, which will impact how the project is designed.

The most notable difference is the number of "tee" intersections at Daines, Hazel, E Frank, Bowers, Haynes and George, and how they interact with street parking. In previous phases, this situation occurred, but with less frequency (Merrill & S. Old Woodward for example). At these intersections, bump-outs were incorporated to improve crosswalk conditions, and thereby eliminating some parking spaces that were located opposite of the street approach, which also improved driver safety. This same strategy is being proposed for Phase 3, but because of the number of these intersections, and compounded by the relative close proximity of them at Hazel/E. Frank and Haynes/George, there is more of an impact to street parking than previous phases.

Parking meter data was reviewed to see the current utilization of the parking spaces in the project area. There are 154 current parking spaces in the project area, with an average utilization of 36% (approximately 55 vehicles occupying spaces). Based on the concept plan being developed, 94 parking spaces are proposed (net reduction of 60 spaces). Using the current parking meter data, the proposed parking utilization would be 60% for the conceptual configuration. Our goal for parking space utilization is typically 85% occupancy, so even with the reduced spaces in the proposed concept, the overall utilization shows some excess parking capacity will remain. Other factors that contributed to reduction in parking spaces included ADA accessibility improvements and moving the bus stop for northbound Old Woodward from its current location on Bowers (under the elevated parking deck for the 555 building), to a safer location on S. Old Woodward, north of Bowers.

Initial concepts have been presented to the Multi-Modal Transportation Board and the Advisory Parking Committee at their recent meetings, and they provided important feedback that was considered by the design team. The concept plan was presented to the business community at their Merchant's Meeting last week, where additional feedback was received. Upcoming events include an "open-house" to present the concept plans to the public that is scheduled for 8/3, and will be hosted at the Baldwin Public Library from 4 to 7pm. The concept plans will be presented at the Principle Shopping District meeting on 8/5.

After receipt of the feedback from these presentations, as well as considering the results of the public survey currently on Engage Birmingham polling residents on their experiences as a pedestrian and driver on the previous phases of the project, the design team will refine the concept plan, complete illustrative renderings, and prepare a formal presentation of the recommended concept. Our goal is to present the recommended concept plan to the City Commission at the August 23 or September 13 regular meeting.

Information Technology

Upcoming Projects

As part of the upcoming phone system upgrade, the IT department is working to finalize the E911 configuration for the City. We are also working to finish the implementation of the Mitel Mass Notification system.

The IT department is currently getting quotes to replace the server at the museum as it is running out of space.

Staffing Update

Jamil Alawadi has been moved to a full time position – splitting his time between the IT department and Communications.

Planning Department

Update on Oakland County's Participation in the Triangle District 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 TIF District. Most of the higher intensity uses are located along Woodward, with other fine stores and offices found throughout the district.

As reported in May, 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 for the Triangle District as previously approved in 2015. Oakland County advised that the City will be required to completely restart the county TIF review process despite the previous approval of the TIF Plan.

Accordingly, City staff attempted to schedule a meeting of the Corridor Improvement Authority to discuss our options. There were only four appointed members of the

Authority, and one member advised they no longer qualified for membership, thus leaving the Authority without a quorum to conduct a meeting. The City is currently soliciting volunteers to apply for appointment to the Triangle District Corridor Improvement Authority.

MDOT Proposal for Interstate Signage on Woodward

The Michigan Department of Transportation has advised cities along the Woodward Corridor of their intent to install an Intelligent Transportation System ("ITS") for the purpose of "traffic monitoring, incident management and advance notification" along Woodward. This system is proposed to include connected vehicle technology, traffic signal controller and cabinet upgrades at several intersections, and related equipment. Based on the proposal submitted by MDOT, "related equipment" includes new 85' monopoles, large dynamic digital message signs, cameras, bracket arms and utility cabinets along Woodward Avenue that are commonly used on high speed freeways separated from the local street network.

The City of Birmingham has significant concern about the necessity for the ITS project itself, and in particular the design and placement of the ITS equipment proposed, and requested that MDOT representatives conduct an informational presentation before the Birmingham City Commission to educate City officials on the proposed ITS project, and obtain the input of the elected officials. The City also requested that MDOT set up a meeting with MDOT project management and local community stakeholders within the ITS project area to further discuss the need and scope of the ITS project, evaluate the aesthetic compatibility of the proposed equipment, and to engage the public. Please see the [letter previously submitted to MDOT](#) on June 17, 2021.

MDOT conducted a virtual meeting on Tuesday, July 20, 2021 to outline the parameters of the proposed ITS project with representatives from various communities along the Woodward Corridor, and to obtain input from the stakeholders. Birmingham, as well as several other communities along the corridor were vocal in their opposition to the use of obtrusive freeway technology along Woodward given the cultural, historic, scenic and recreational assets located along the designated All American Road and Pure Michigan Byway. MDOT did not make any formal commitment to fulfilling our request for presentation and discussion at a Birmingham City Commission meeting or future public hearings to engage the general public and residents along the corridor. MDOT did commit to sharing the presentation slides and minutes from the virtual meeting on July 20, 2021. Upon receipt, these will be shared with the City Commission.

Police Department

Co-Response Mental Health Response Team Grant Request Approved

The police department received confirmation that the Community Foundation of Southeast Michigan approved the department's grant request of \$75,000 for the Co-Response Mental Health Response Team (CoRe Team). The police department also received confirmation from Congresswoman Hailey Stevens' Office that the second federal grant the department applied for was approved by the Appropriations Committee and will now move to the U.S. Congress/President for final approval for fiscal year 2022.

Sgt. Kate Long Retirement

Sgt. Kate Long retired from the department after 25 years of service. We all wish her and her husband, Steve, a long and prosperous retirement.

Future Agenda Items

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

Future Workshop Items

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