



## **CITY MANAGER'S REPORT**

September 2021

### **Baldwin Public Library**

#### **Library Board Vacancy**

Ashley Aidenbaum resigned from the Library Board after moving out of the City of Birmingham. As she is not running for re-election, her vacancy will be filled via the November 2 election.

#### **New Directors Workshop Pathway**

Rebekah Craft completed the workshop, "New Directors Workshop Pathway," through the Library of Michigan. This course is required for new library directors and must be taken by all libraries in Michigan that apply for State Aid. Baldwin receives approximately \$29,000 in State Aid from the Library of Michigan each year.

#### **Jane M. Van Dragt Trust**

The second floor has been carpeted and furnished, using a donation from the Jane M. Van Dragt Trust.

#### **Outdoor Story Times**

Youth librarians have started hosting outdoor story times at Shain Park each weekday. These story times will run through mid-October, weather permitting.

#### **Phase 3: Front entrance and Circulation area project**

Merritt Cieslak Design have met with staff and members of the public to gather feedback on the Phase 3: Front entrance and Circulation area project. The library has also collected around 500 responses to a [survey](#) on the project. All feedback will be used to tailor the project to the community's needs.

### **The Birmingham Museum**

#### **Museum to receive award from Historical Society of Michigan**

On September 24, the Birmingham Museum will receive an award from the Historical Society of Michigan for institutional excellence, community engagement, and scholarship in its contributions to the field. The award will be presented at the Historical Society of Michigan's Annual Meeting/Michigan History Conference on Friday, September 24, and

recognizes the Birmingham Museum's achievement and impact in advancing the goals of public history through its programs, exhibits, and publications.

### **Museum Remaining in Phase II of Reopening**

Due to continuing public health concerns, the museum will remain in Phase II of its reopening plan, which provides for limited site access on a reduced public schedule. Virtual content will be continued, including the return of the popular monthly Adult Lecture Series at the Baldwin Library, which will utilize Zoom and limited capacity audience seating, pending COVID conditions. The October 14 presentation will feature co-presenters Commander Scott Grewe and Museum Director Leslie Pielack in a repeat program examining the ax murders of early Birmingham's Utter family.

## **Birmingham Shopping District (BSD)**

### **Welcome, Lux Travel Girl**

The BSD is pleased to welcome a new business to Downtown Birmingham. Lux Travel Girl, located at 114 S. Old Woodward Avenue, specializes in curating luxury travel experiences around the world.

### **Birmingham Cruise Event**

The Birmingham Cruise event successfully occurred on Saturday, August 21<sup>st</sup>, from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on South Old Woodward between Bowers and Landon Streets. The BSD distributed over 700 cruise-themed face masks for event patrons, encouraged mask-wearing, and social distancing. Special thanks to the staff, volunteers, and other city departments that made this event a tremendous success. The BSD will develop an alternative proposal for site locations for next year's cruise event, considering that S. Old Woodward south of Brown Street will likely be under construction at that time.

### **Fall Fashion Campaign**

The production of the Fall Fashion campaign has started, which includes a promotional video and a print magazine spread that features retail items from various downtown businesses. The video will be promoted primarily on the Birmingham Shopping District social media accounts.

### **Snow Removal Services**

The BSD has hired Nick's Maintenance to perform snow removal services for downtown Birmingham. The new contract has a larger scope of work that includes snow removal from the curb extensions and pedestrian walkways that are part of the new streetscape on Old Woodward and Maple. This contractor will also work with the Department of Public Services relating to code enforcement snow removal activities.

## **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.

### **Vegetation Over Sidewalks**

Since we began enforcing Vegetation Over Sidewalks last month, 64 violations have been entered. The majority of these violations have already been corrected and are in compliance.

### **Review Process for Large New Construction Projects**

The Building Department is currently analyzing our review process for larger new construction projects such as new homes and additions. We are evaluating each step, looking for areas of improvement and increased efficiency. A panel discussion to gather feedback was held Thursday, September 16<sup>th</sup> that included the Building and Engineering departments as well as HRC, contractors and other design professionals.

### **Insurance Service Office (ISO) Evaluation**

We are anticipating our Insurance Service Office (ISO) evaluation within the next couple of months and have been working hard to verify and enter project details, create digital review checklists and prepare the required reporting.

### **Online Permit Applications**

In August, we processed 353 online permit applications, bringing our total to 2,752 online permits for 2021.

## **City Clerk's Office**

### **Elections**

#### Important Dates for the November 2, 2021 Election

- Sep. 24 – Absentee ballots will be sent out in the first bulk mailing, the city clerk's office will continue to send ballots as requested in respect to the other mailing and absentee ballot application deadlines
- Oct. 18 – Last day to register to vote by mail or at [mi.gov/vote](http://mi.gov/vote)
- Oct. 19 – Nov. 2 – Unregistered voters must register in person with the clerk's office.
- Oct. 29 by 5:00 pm – Last day to request an absentee ballot by mail or at [mi.gov/vote](http://mi.gov/vote)
- Nov. 1 at 4:00 pm – Deadline for obtaining an absentee ballot in person at the clerk's office
- Nov. 2 – Election Day - Polls are open 7:00 am – 8:00 pm
- Nov. 2 by 8:00 pm – Deadline for all absentee ballots to be received and processed at the clerk's office. Any absentee ballots received after 8:00 pm on Election Day will not be counted.

For more updates and information on the November 2, 2021 election visit [bhamgov.org/voting](http://bhamgov.org/voting).

*Additional considerations:*

**Are you registered to vote in Birmingham?** If you're not certain, need to register or change your address, visit [mi.gov/vote](http://mi.gov/vote). This website is a great tool for these tasks and more, including finding the location of your polling place and tracking your absentee ballot mailing and received dates.

**If you wish to vote absentee, you must complete an application for an absentee ballot.** If your name is on Michigan's permanent absent voter list, this application was mailed to your address on file in late August. If you didn't receive an application, the fastest way to get one is via [MI.gov/vote](http://MI.gov/vote). In the upper left sidebar, select "Apply for an absentee ballot online", answer a series of questions and click "submit" at the end.

**Does the clerk's office have your current address, phone number and email?** We need a method to contact you with questions about your absentee ballot or application, or if you forget to sign. If you will not be at your residential address in October and are voting absentee, please inform the clerk's office of your temporary address to ensure you receive your absentee ballot. By law, official election mail cannot be forwarded by the post office.

**Birmingham's ballot drop boxes are a secure 24-hour option** for returning ballots, and – keeping in mind the deadlines above – voter registrations and absentee ballot applications can also be submitted via drop box. Drive-up and walk-up ballot boxes are located behind city hall and at the clerk's office counter.



### **What is on the ballot?**

Oakland County Clerk's Office posts official candidate and proposal lists on their election website. Use [this link](#) for the county-wide candidate list; Birmingham races are on page 2. The City of Birmingham will not have any proposals on the November 2, 2021 ballot.

**Interested in becoming an election inspector?** Please contact the clerk's office at 248-530-1880. A [downloadable inspector application](#) and additional details are [available here](#). Download the [Inspector Training Selection and Placement form here](#).

### **Greenwood Cemetery**

The September 3, 2021 meeting was canceled.

### **Future Agenda Topics for Greenwood Cemetery Advisory Board**

October 1 - Meeting in-person at City Hall

- Policy for Approving and Installing Markers for Persons of Historical Significance
- Review Revisions to the Rules & Regulations: Monuments, Grave Markers and Foundations
- Review Revisions to Section IX. Lot Sales – Payment Plan Policy & Section
- Lot Resale Policy
- Review Revisions for the Cemetery Marker/Monument Survey Form & Planning for Monument Survey

### **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 October and November:

- Board of Zoning Appeals
- Birmingham Shopping District
- Board of Review
- Triangle District Corridor Improvement Authority

### **Board Vacancies**

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

- Advisory Parking Committee
- Alternate Hearing Officer
- Martha Baldwin Park Board
- Storm Water Utility Appeals Board
- Triangle District Corridor Improvement Authority

For more information visit [bhamgov.org/boardopportunities](http://bhamgov.org/boardopportunities).

## **City Manager's Office**

### **Communications**

#### **Fall 2021/Winter 2022 Birmingham Beat**

The City's print newsletter, The Birmingham Beat, will reach mailboxes around October 1, 2021. This edition features information about the upcoming election, South Old Woodward Reconstruction Phase 3, the Citywide Master Plan for 2040, holiday events, citizen involvement opportunities and more.

#### **Engage Birmingham**

The city recently launched three new [Engage Birmingham](#) projects: [Adams Park](#), [Name the Street Sweepers](#) and [Design the 2022 Birmingham Calendar Cover](#). The projects generated a welcome flurry of activity. We are pleased to announce the site now has nearly 1,000 participants.

#### **Municipal Printing Services**

A Request for Proposal (RFP) for Municipal Printing Services was recently placed on the Michigan Inter-governmental Trade Network (MITN). The city is seeking a company that will print its annual city calendar and three editions of the newsletter (The Birmingham Beat) per year. A recommendation will go before the City Commission this fall.

### **Human Resources**

#### **Healthcare Benefits**

The Human Resources department will be soliciting bids for qualified Healthcare Benefits Consultants. This effort is being made in an attempt to discover greater healthcare coverage and savings, as well as provide assurance that the City is receiving ideal value for costs related to medical, dental, and vision services.

### **Miscellaneous**

#### **Interviews for Legal Services**

This month, City Manager Tom Markus conducted second round interviews with three firms for legal services. The City Manager shared video recordings of each firm's first and second round interviews as well as their RFQ responses with the Commission. Commissioners are asked to share their advice and feedback with the City Manager by October 1, 2021.

#### **Quarton Road – Passing Lanes**

Danielle Deneau, P.E., Director of Traffic-Safety for the Road Commission for Oakland County, sent an update to city staff regarding the possibility of adding passing lanes on Quarton Road at Fairfax and Pilgrim. It was determined passing lanes are not needed at this time. Download the entire update, including crash report findings, [at this link](#).

### **Department of Public Services**

#### **OAKSTEM Grant Award \$15,000**

This serves as an update on the Oakland County Tree Grant Application submitted by us

in June. The City of Birmingham did get the grant award for \$15,000. This Grant Program will decrease impervious surface area and increase the tree canopy in communities that make up the George W. Kuhn (GWK) Drainage District – Birmingham included. Street trees will be planted as part of this program during spring of 2022.

### **2021 Adams Park Concept Plan**

The long awaited 2021 Adams Park Concept Plan reveal was presented to the Parks and Recreation Board on September 14, 2021. This new concept version is a refresher of the 2016 concept plan. The continued collaboration between the residents, neighborhood associations, Roeper School and City Administration makes this project possible to advance. Public input is being promoted and encouraged every chance we get. Visit [Engage Birmingham](#) as Adams Park is a featured project. You can review background information and the latest 2021 concept park plan. We want your feedback.

### **Ice Arena Project Schedule Status for September**

The Ice Arena renovation/addition project is in the home stretch. Listed below are significant project activities occurring during the remainder of the ice area improvement project. Preparation is underway for a dedication and grand opening date sometime in October. Online registration for our Learn To Skate program began on September 13, 2021. Classes are set to begin October 5<sup>th</sup>, subject to change based on renovation project completion.

#### **SEPTEMBER**

- September Parks & Recreation Board Meeting update
- Bench installations
- Elect./Mechanical/Plumbing installations
- Shower tile
- Bleacher installation
- Dehumidification unit installation
- Rubber flooring installations
- Team locker room millwork installations
- AV/PA/Tech/Security installations
- Dasher board installation
- Ice installation –Main and Studio Rinks
- Commissioning
- Final inspections

### **Engineering Department**

#### **Oak Street Bridge Update**

Plans and specifications have been prepared for repair of the deteriorated sidewalk on the Oak Street Bridge, as well as needed repairs to the abutments and bridge structure. Bids will be opened on 9/30, and recommendation for award will be brought to the Commission in October.

#### **Oak Street Pedestrian Crossings at Lakeside and Lakeview**

Near the bridge, the City has recently improved pedestrian crosswalks at Lakeside and Lakeview to direct pedestrians to walk along the sidewalk on the north side of Oak



Street. The sidewalk on the south side of Oak stops at Lakeview, and does not continue through to Lakeside. High visibility "snow" fence has been placed around the recently installed sod on the south side of the road where there is not sidewalk, and we advise pedestrians to use the sidewalk on the north side of the road.

## **Finance Department**

### **Audit Request for Proposal (RFP)**

The Audit Request RFP was released on August 31st. An optional bidder meeting was held on September 8th to answer any questions about the RFP or the City in general. Responses are due September 22nd. The recommended bidder will be brought back to the city commission at one of the meetings in October.

## **Fire Department**

### **Nick Soper Recognized as First Responder of the Month**

Nick Soper was recognized by State Representative Mari Manoogian for First Responder of the Month for August, 2021. As the senior paramedic on his shift, Nick admirably rose to the challenges created during the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition to providing leadership, Nick was responsible for coordinating and ensuring proper respiratory protection for the department. Nick worked tirelessly to make sure all Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) equipment was in proper working order. Nick fit tests the entire department annually for their SCBAs as well as each individual's respirator, which provides us with the highest level of protection from COVID-19 while treating patients. Lastly, Nick continued providing certified car seat installation inspections for many of the residents in need during the pandemic.

The Fire Department is proud of Nick's hard work and dedication to his fellow firefighters and Citizens of Birmingham.

## **Planning Department**

### **Consideration of a Birmingham Gateway Committee**

The Birmingham Shopping District (BSD) has proposed assembling a special committee to develop recommendations for gateway signage at the major entrances to Birmingham's downtown, with special consideration being made for the city-owned greenspace at the intersection of S. Old Woodward and Woodward Avenue. The BSD has proposed that the committee consist of members from relevant groups including City Commission, Design Review Board, the Public Arts Board, the Birmingham Bloomfield Art Center, the Planning Department, and the Engineering Department.

In regards to gateway signage, the City currently has a [Citywide Wayfinding and Signage Design Program](#). The report recommends one signage system that contributes to the visual identity of the City. For the downtown business district, there are signage recommendations for the Central Business District, the South Business District, and Gallery Row (North Business District). The business district signage is recommended to coincide with signage for parking facilities, hotels, parks, and points of interest.



City staff is requesting the City Commission's feedback regarding the review committee, and if they are amenable to allowing the Birmingham Shopping District to establish the review committee and select the members.

### **Grant from the State Historic Preservation Office's Certified Local Government Program**

The City of Birmingham has recently been awarded a \$15,000 grant from the State Historic Preservation Office's Certified Local Government program. With the grant, the City of Birmingham will retain a professional consultant or team of consultants specializing in a combination of historical preservation, architecture, and planning to create the City's first set of comprehensive historical preservation design guidelines. The new design guidelines will synthesize and summarize nearly 50 years of historical preservation efforts in the City while also preparing for the future with design specifics such as materials and architecture. Using the new design guidelines, the Birmingham Historic District Commission will be better suited to perform their duties in an environment where development pressures are tremendous and ongoing. Ultimately, the new set of design guidelines is intended to refresh the City's preservation efforts, and remain positively positioned as materials, craftsmanship, and preferences change with time. The Request for Proposals is expected to be posted by October 1st, 2021.

## **Police Department**

### **Police Training**

September is training month for the police department. All state and department mandated training will be completed this month.

### **Special Investigations Unit Take Down Armed Robbery Crew**

The Special Investigations Unit (SIU) working in conjunction with other outside law enforcement agencies took down an armed robbery crew after extensive investigation and surveillance. The armed robbery crew had previously targeted a Birmingham business, but aborted their attempt due to a Birmingham officer driving on Woodward.

## **Future Agenda Items**

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

## **Future Workshop Items**

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