



## **CITY MANAGER'S REPORT**

December 2021

### **Baldwin Public Library**

#### **Phase 3: Front Entrance and Circulation Area Project**

The Library Board's Building Committee continues to meet with Merritt Cieslak Design to plan the Phase 3: Front entrance and Circulation area project. The public is welcome to view renderings of the exterior and interior, view floor plans, and read meeting minutes online at <https://www.baldwinlib.org/renovation/>. The project will be presented to the City Commission at the long range planning meeting on January 22, 2022.

#### **Library Board Update**

At their November meeting, the Library Board voted to elect Frank Pisano as President, Jennifer Wheeler as Vice President, and Karen Rock as Secretary. The Library Board will meet on December 20 and will be voting to approve updates to four policies: Collection Development Policy, Social Media Policy, Staff Development Policy, Meeting Room Policy. The policies can be viewed at <https://www.baldwinlib.org/mission/>. The Library will be closed from Friday, December 24 through Sunday, December 26.

### **The Birmingham Museum**

#### **Birmingham Museum-Heritage Zone Enhancements Update**

Construction of the museum's Phase I Heritage Zone project is now complete, with the installation of the new signage in the plaza area. The total project cost came in under budget at \$32,600. Approximately half (\$16,500) of the cost of fence improvements, new trees, and signage installation was covered by private donations. Furthermore, the garden bed surrounding the sign will be the site of a community-sourced heirloom perennial garden, with plants reflecting the 1920s being contributed by the public. The museum is planning a public event in the spring with a plant exchange and donation of perennials from Birmingham gardeners, and will be utilizing Engage Birmingham to promote the project and the event.



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

### **New Businesses**

The BSD is pleased to welcome State & Liberty and Mare Mediterranean to the Shopping District!

The BSD was thrilled to see a story in dbusiness titled "Downtown Birmingham Draws Multiple Retailers and Restaurants." The article was another positive news story that originated with a press release written by the Shopping District.

### **Holiday Promotional Video**

The holiday promotional video is completed and being promoted online and on social media. The BSD's Advertising Committee worked very hard on this project and is proud of the final result. The [30-second](#) and [60-second](#) versions of the video can be viewed on the [Shopping District's YouTube channel](#).

### **Shopping District Events**

2021 saw another amazing Winter Markt. Special thanks to our many event sponsors, 50+ vendors, DPS, and the police and fire departments for being such great partners.

The BSD is transitioning into promoting the 2022 Restaurant Week and will be organizing restaurant owners for a planning session. Restaurant Week is scheduled to run from January 24th to February 4th.

### **Marketing Materials**

Be on the lookout for revised marketing materials from the Shopping District! The BSD has worked to align many of our print and digital materials with the new brand developed for the [ALLINBirmingham website](#). This consistent look will better help to strengthen our brand identity throughout the region.

### **Tenant Mix Analysis**

The BSD is also working on developing a tenant mix analysis for the shopping district. This analysis will help identify market saturation of particular industries, as well as opportunities to better diversify our downtown economy.

## **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. In November, we processed 341 online permit applications, bringing our total to 3,912 online permits for 2021.

### **Plan Review Time Concerns Update**

In response to the panel discussion held in September to address plan review time concerns, the Building and Engineering Departments are evaluating each step in our review processes. The Building Department is defining target timelines, refining our

methodologies and assessing areas for increased efficiencies. All of these improvements will be incorporated into the development of an electronic plan review procedure that will be implemented next year. Additionally, based on the feedback, HRC has made additional resources and staff available for Site Evaluation and As-Built reviews. Though plan review timeframes can vary depending on the scope of work, we have been meeting our target review times for the majority of projects since the September meeting.

## **City Clerk's Office**

### **City Commission election results stand after recount**

A Nov. 30 recount of the 2021 Birmingham City Commission election by the Oakland County Board of Canvassers found that challenger Anthony Long received five fewer votes than candidate Andrew Haig, a change of one vote from Haig's original 6-vote lead. County election officials certified the results at the recount's completion, confirming that the original winners of three city commission seats remain the same:

- Katie Schafer, with 3,084 votes
- Elaine McLain with 2,372 votes
- Andrew Haig, with 2,340 votes

The new commissioners were sworn in and began their 4-year terms at the [Nov. 8 City Commission meeting](#) . Learn more about them [here](#).

### **Lessons learned from the November 2021 Election and Recount**

- Near the end of the night on Election Day, there were several ballots turned in that were not sealed in their assigned green return envelopes. The City Clerk's Office encourages voters to carefully read and follow all instructions, allowing enough time to understand the directions and deliver your ballot to the Clerk's Office or official drop boxes before the deadline. If you are ever unsure, please ask our office - we want to make sure every vote counts!
- During the recount several issues were discovered:



- White Out
  - The use of white-out caused several ballots to be flagged for possible errors.
  - If you make an error, we strongly recommend that you spoil your ballot and obtain a new ballot if there is time. If a voter's intent is confusing or unclear, an adjudication process may determine how to allocate their votes.




- Sometimes ballots get wet!
  - Ballots can and do get wet in the mail-carrying process. We strongly caution voters against using pens or markers that may bleed if saturated by rain.



- Rips and tears.
  - In one case, a voter may have unintentionally ripped a hole in their ballot when trying to scratch out a candidate. If you ever have a rip, hole, or tear in your ballot please get a new ballot from the Clerk's Office.
- Attend to the limits.
  - Be sure to read the headings. Make sure that you don't "over vote" or choose too many candidates for a given race.

<b>City General Election</b>
<b>City</b>
<b>Commissioner</b> Vote for not more than 3

- Mark your ballot properly.
  - Every absentee ballot includes ballot-marking instructions on the yellow secrecy sleeves that clearly direct voters to completely darken the box opposite each choice (see below) Birmingham's recent recount found where a voter made x's. Making light marks with a pencil could cause the tabulator to not be able to properly read the voter's marks.
  - Use blue or black ballpoint pen only.

<b>GENERAL ELECTION</b>	
<b>BALLOT MARKING INSTRUCTIONS</b>	
<p><b>TO VOTE:</b> Completely darken the box opposite each choice as shown.</p> <p><b>IMPORTANT:</b> To mark your ballot, use only a black or blue ink pen. <b>DO NOT USE ANY OTHER INK COLOR!</b></p> <p><b>PARTISAN SECTION:</b> To vote the partisan section of the ballot, you may cast a "straight ticket," a "split ticket," or a "mixed ticket." <b>Straight Ticket:</b> Vote the party of your choice. Nothing further need be done in the partisan section. <b>Split Ticket:</b> You may vote a straight ticket AND vote for individual candidates of your choice. <b>Mixed Ticket:</b> Vote for the individual candidates of your choice in each office.</p> <p><b>NONPARTISAN and PROPOSAL SECTIONS</b> of the ballot (if any) must be voted separately.</p> <p><b>DO NOT</b> vote for more candidates than indicated under each office title.</p> <p><b>WRITE-IN CANDIDATES:</b> To vote for a candidate whose name is not printed on the ballot, write or place the name of that candidate in the blank space provided and completely darken the voting target area. <b>This must be done even if you cast a straight party vote.</b> Do not cast a write-in vote for a candidate whose name is already printed on the ballot for that office.</p> <p><b>CHECK BOTH SIDES OF BALLOT:</b> This ballot may have two sides. Be certain to check the reverse side of the ballot.</p> <p><b>WHEN YOU HAVE COMPLETED VOTING:</b> Place the ballot in the secrecy sleeve so that votes cannot be seen and the numbered stub is visible. Return the ballot to the election official stationed at the tabulator. (If voting by absentee ballot, follow the instructions provided by the clerk for returning the ballot.)</p> <p><b>NOTE:</b> If you make a mistake, return your ballot to the election official and obtain a new ballot. Do not attempt to erase or correct any marks made in error.</p>	
<p>www.PrintingSystems.us (800) 95-12345 (01/19) FORM #455-B</p>	

## **County Commissioner Districts Change**

Newly redrawn Oakland County Commission district boundaries will split Birmingham into two county commission districts in 2022. Voters in precincts 3 and 9, the city's easternmost precincts, become part of Oakland County Commission district 1. Birmingham's other precincts become part of county district 19.

In November, the Oakland County Board of Commissioners approved the new commission district map for 2022-2031, which decreases the total number of county districts from 21 to 19. The map was redrawn to reflect population changes documented in the final 2020 U.S. Census data. State law requires the county's reapportionment committee to redraw district lines every 10 years within 60 days after publication of the final census numbers. Learn more about this [here](#).

## **Updated voter ID cards**

The clerk's office will print and mail updated voter ID cards reflecting the new county districts to all of Birmingham's nearly 18,700 voters in the spring of 2022.

## **Open board and commission seats**

These boards have current or upcoming [available positions](#):

- [Advisory Parking Committee](#)
- [Birmingham Area Cable Board](#)
- Alternate [Hearing Officer](#)
- [Multi-Modal Transportation Board](#)
- [Public Arts Board](#)
- [Storm Water Utilities Board](#)
- [Triangle District Corridor Improvement Authority](#)

Learn more about Birmingham boards and commissions [here](#).

## **Greenwood Cemetery Advisory Board**

Future Agenda Topics for GCAB

January 7, 2022 - Meeting in-person at City Hall

- Continued discussion on updating the rules and regulations for Greenwood Cemetery
- Continued discussion on a policy for installing monuments in recognition of a person of historical significance

February 4, 2022 - Meeting in-person at City Hall

- Topics to be determined

## **City Manager's Office**

### **Communications**

#### **2022 City Calendar**

Residents and businesses should receive the 2022 city calendar during the week of December 13th. Keep an eye out for it in your mailbox soon!

## Engage Birmingham

Thanks to an Engage Birmingham survey in which nearly 200 people participated, Birmingham's Street Sweepers have new names. Meet "Sweeping Beauty" and "Meryl Sweep"! Keep an eye out for them around town with their brand new names featured on the vehicles.



## Website Calendar

Communications team members trained the Clerk's Office on how to enter meetings and events on the new website calendar. The web team will crosscheck all events before the end of the year.

## Human Resources

### Employment Update

The HR Generalist recruitment was unable to pull a list of qualified candidates, and an HR Assistant posting has since been made. A full-time vacancy in Police Dispatch has been internally filled, and a recruitment for a part-time Dispatcher has subsequently opened. One vacancy for Streets/Sewer/Water Assistant Foreman has been internally filled, as well as another vacancy in the same department at the Operator level. Interviews are upcoming for the positions of Accounting Administrator and IT Intern.

## City Staff Vaccination Update

### Vaccination Card Tracking

Department	# Received	Total Staff	Percentage
<b>City Staff</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>214</b>	<b>85%</b>
IT	4	4	100%
BSD	4	5	80%
Community Development	28	31	90%
Fire Dept	36	39	92%
Clerks	4	4	100%
Finance/Treasurer	11	12	92%
Building/Maintenance	2	2	100%
Museum	3	3	100%
Police Dept (w/o crossing guards)	45	58	78%
CM/HR	5	5	100%
DPS (w/o summer seasonals)	40	51	78%

## Department of Public Services

### Ice Arena

Project close out items continue at the Birmingham Ice Arena between the City of Birmingham and C.E. Gleeson, the Contractor. Planning is underway for a ribbon-cutting Grand Opening celebration for some time during the first quarter of 2022. This is due to us completing the finishing touches prior to this event, but also because we are very cognizant of the rise in COVID-19 cases and want to include all necessary safety precautions.

### Pickleball 2.0

The Parks and Recreation Board reviewed the final three locations at their December 7, 2021 Board meeting and made a recommendation for the top Pickleball location (Kenning Park corner of S. Eton/E. Lincoln), based upon survey input on Engage Birmingham, numerous public meetings, emails and various site selection criteria. While not contiguous this site is included as part of the Kenning Park Master Plan.

Next steps will be to continue with Foresite Design, a professional firm specializing in the design and implementation of athletic and recreational facilities. They will proceed with updating a site assessment and possible designs for the Kenning Park corner. Services will also include preparing bid specifications to bid out the construction of the new

Pickleball courts. This information will be routed for administrative review to City departments for comment. This item will come before the City Commission during a meeting in January 2022.

### **Woodward Avenue Update**

Pedestrian traffic control flags placed on street signs along Woodward Avenue at Forest/Brown crossing were removed from the MDOT signs by DPS. The department is proactive, as per usual course, to remove any such materials attached to signs or general items placed along roadways, in public areas. We have given this location more attention as other items continue to be placed out on the ground/posts/signs including American flags with graffiti marked on them etc. requiring more review and removal by DPS.

This department does consist of a sign shop and is actively involved with traffic control device installations throughout the City in coordination and cooperation with the Police Department.

The good news is we (DPS) have the flags and containers.

### **Finance Department**

#### **A Message from Mark Gerber, Finance Director/Treasurer**

At a recent commission meeting after the audit presentation, resident Paul Regan asked about the City's replacement ratio with the system. At the time, I did not know what a replacement ratio was. After doing some research, I discovered that the term replacement ratio is used to describe a person's post-retirement income compared to their pre-retirement income. It is a measure used by retirement planners to determine whether an individual has sufficient funding to retire. For example, if an individual's retirement income from a pension and other retirement savings is \$70,000 and their salary before retirement was \$100,000, the individual would have a replacement ratio of 70%.

Most financial planners typically say that a person should have a replacement ratio of 70-85%. Employees in the City's defined benefit plan typically work 25-30 years which provides them 62.5% - 90% of their pre-retirement income. The City also offers a 457 plan where employees can save additional pre-tax funds to meet their retirement goals. For employees in the City's defined contribution retirement plan, it is impossible to provide the replacement ratio for these individuals, because the employee can select from any number of investment options based on their risk tolerance. However, the funding provided for the defined contribution employees is similar to what the actuary recommends for employees in the defined benefit system. Therefore, if the investments that an employee selects earns a similar rate of return as the pension system, they should end up with a very similar replacement ratio as those in the pension system.

The replacement ratio is really used in individual retirement planning and not used to measure the health of the City's retirement and retiree health care plans. However, it could possibly be used to gauge the quality of the retirement options offered by the City and the City's ability to retain its employees long-term.



## **Fire Department**

### **Monoclonal Antibody Infusions**

Residents continue to be grateful for Monoclonal Antibody Infusions administered by the Fire Department. Chief Wells recently received the following letter:

Chief Paul Wells:

Late afternoon on Monday November 15<sup>th</sup> I noticed I had a fever of 99.5. I went to Beaumont urgent care at 13 and Woodward and after a 2 hour wait got a PCR test and it proved positive. The doctor at Beaumont Urgent Care immediately wrote me a script for monoclonal antibodies. He instructed me to call the infusion center at Beaumont the next day Tuesday, November 16th. When I called Beaumont Infusion center they said they were very busy and would get back to me. One of the mandates for mitigating severe COVID was to get the monoclonal antibodies as soon as possible. Obviously, I was concerned. Now witness the forthcoming miracle.

On Tuesday morning, November 16th I got a call from the Assistant Fire Chief Matthew Bartalino from the Birmingham Fire Department. At first, I thought it was a fund-raising call and when he asked me how I was I said I had COVID. He said he knew because Beaumont informs the Birmingham fire department when residents of Birmingham get COVID. His team of EMS Staff was authorized to administer the infusion of monoclonal antibodies and they could be over at my home at 1:30pm. I checked with my doctor, and he said OK.

The team of three EMS Fire Department personnel, Trevor Baker, Ryan Neville and Marshal Crawford arrived right on time. They hooked me up to the IV and it took about 20 minutes to infuse the antibodies. Then Michael Crawford stayed in his car outside and came in every 15 minutes for one hour to make sure I had no bad reactions. Talk about concierge service. He said I should feel better in about 6 hours and in 24 hours significant improvement. That has been their experience with about 20 others they serviced. All this is proving accurate. The team executed flawlessly with care and concern.

It is difficult to convey the feelings of anxiety I had when I learned I tested positive, the overwhelming surprise and relief for the offer of service when I got the call and finally my deep, deep gratitude for the service provided by the Fire Department, the support of Birmingham City government and for having been fortunate enough to be a Birmingham resident for the last 4 years and the benefits provided.

Merry Christmas, Happy New Year, Happy Holidays, and my eternal thanks for all your help. My family thanks you too.

Thomas December

## **Planning Department**

### **Residential Units & Neighborhoods**

Senior Planner Brooks Cowan prepared a report about Birmingham's residential units and neighborhoods. The report provides the number of single-family homes and multi-family units in the downtown area and other neighborhoods throughout the city. Cowan also addresses neighborhood fabric and identity. Download the [full report here](#).

### **Master Plan 2040**

The Planning Board will be continuing its thorough review of the second draft through the next couple of months. The presentation slides used by the consultant for their presentations will be available on [www.thebirminghamplan.com](http://www.thebirminghamplan.com), along with all documents relating to the 2040 Master Plan. You can also watch a recording of each meeting on the [City of Birmingham website](#). As a reminder, you can still submit comments directly to the consultant team through the aforementioned 2040 Plan website, and can also submit comments directly to the Planning Division to be placed in the next available agenda of the Planning Board.

### **Planning Board**

Moving into the holidays, the Planning Board is poised to finalize the dual outdoor dining reviews that have been the subject of conversation for many months. The City Commission should expect to see proposed ordinance language for both in early 2022. In terms of site plan reviews, the Planning Board will be reviewing applications for the following developments in the near future:

- [460 N. Old Woodward](#) – A new 3-story mixed-use development with ground floor retail, second floor office, and two residential units on the third floor with a rooftop use located above. The site currently contains the former Junior League of Birmingham building and associated off-street parking. The Planning Board will be reviewing the Final Site Plan and Design Review on December 16, 2021.
- [325 S. Eton St.](#) – Phase 3 of the District Lofts development will contain first floor commercial space and 50 residential units ranging from 596 to 1,072 square feet. With the addition of this final piece, the site itself will also receive an upgrade in circulation and pedestrian movement in the rear, as well as new plaza space and significant landscaping. Final Site Plan and Design Review for this project is scheduled on December 16, 2021.
- [211 Hamilton Row](#) – A new restaurant serving alcoholic liquors for on premise consumption is proposed in an existing tenant space in the Palladium building. The restaurant is proposed with little to no exterior building changes, but will include the addition of a small dining patio along Hamilton Row. The Special Land Use Permit, Final Site Plan and Design Review application will be reviewed by the Planning Board on December 16, 2021. After a recommendation is made by the Planning Board, the application will be forwarded to the City Commission for final approval.

- 100 Townsend – The Townsend Hotel has submitted an application for a new outdoor dining platform adjacent to the hotel and Rugby Grille on Townsend St. The Special Land Use Permit, Final Site Plan and Design Review application review is scheduled for the Planning Board’s second meeting in January, and will be forwarded to the City Commission for final approval after receiving a recommendation from the Planning Board.

### **Historic Preservation**

The Historic District Commission will be wrapping up 2021 with an intense plan of action for historic preservation in 2022, which includes the adoption of historic design guidelines, a general preservation master plan, and a signage/wayfinding plan for the Bates St. Historic District. Additionally, the Historic District Study Committee has been given the green light by the City Commission to continue its important work of updating the 1992 Wallace Frost report titled “Wallace Frost: His Architecture in Birmingham, MI.” as well as developing a proposal to reinvigorate the Heritage Home program. The first meeting is expected to be held at the start of the new year.

### **Public Art**

The Public Arts Board is working to build on its successful 2021 call for entries program by finalizing its 2022 call for entries. The program affords an opportunity for six artists to receive a small grant to provide public art in the City of Birmingham. Along with the call for entries program, the Public Arts Board continues to field donation requests and is working with the Planning Board and Design Review Board to pass new ordinance language to allow wall art in the City.

### **Multi-Modal Transportation Board**

The Multi-Modal Transportation Board (MMTB) has taken on the valiant but challenging task that is improving the Woodward corridor. At present, the MMTB will be seeking a resolution from the City Commission to move forward with the Woodward Avenue Road Diet Checklist, and will be studying various other improvements for Woodward.

### **Police Department**

The police department has filled three police officer openings:

1. Ofc. Michael Pranger - Ofc. Pranger previously worked as a police officer in the City of Taylor for the past six years. Ofc. Pranger is also a trained accident investigator. Ofc. Pranger is married to his wife Chelsea and they are expecting their first child in April of 2022.
2. Ofc. Lisa Wayner - Ofc. Wayner graduated on Friday, December 3, 2021 from the 121st class of the Oakland Police Academy. Ofc. Wayner received several honors for her performance at the academy, including earning the top academic performer out of her class of 45. Ofc. Wayner is married to her husband Paul and together they have two young children.
3. Ofc. Nicole Cordero - Ofc. Cordero graduated from the Detroit Police Academy in July of 2021 and spent the past six months as an officer for the City of Detroit. Ofc. Cordero previously worked for the past ten years for the State of Arizona Department of

Corrections as a psychology associate. Ofc. Codero was recently married in September of 2021 to her husband, Jose.

## **Parking Systems Update**

### **Parking Structure Repairs**

North Old Woodward construction has stopped for the year due to inclement weather. Construction will resume in the spring of 2022.

Construction is ongoing at the Chester Structure and will continue as weather permits.

### **Monthly Parking**

The Advisory Parking Committee approved to increase the authorized monthly permit sales by the following:

	Currently Authorized Sales	Proposed Sales Increase	Total
Chester Garage	1218	150	1368
Old Woodward	881	100	981
Park Garage	845	100	945
Peabody Garage	486	50	536
Pierce Garage	676	75	751

### **Structure Capacities**

Below are capacities for each structure for the month of November. Numbers are based on counts at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. each day Monday through Saturday.

<b><u>November</u></b>	
Chester Garage	33%
Old Woodward	49%
Park Garage	47%
Peabody Garage	25%
Pierce Garage	67%

### **Future Agenda Items**

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

### **Future Workshop Items**

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