

— City Stats —

Columbia Values Diversity Celebration

The 27th Annual Columbia Values Diversity Celebration will be held Jan. 16, 2020.



51 individuals, groups, businesses or organizations have been honored with a Columbia Values Diversity Award

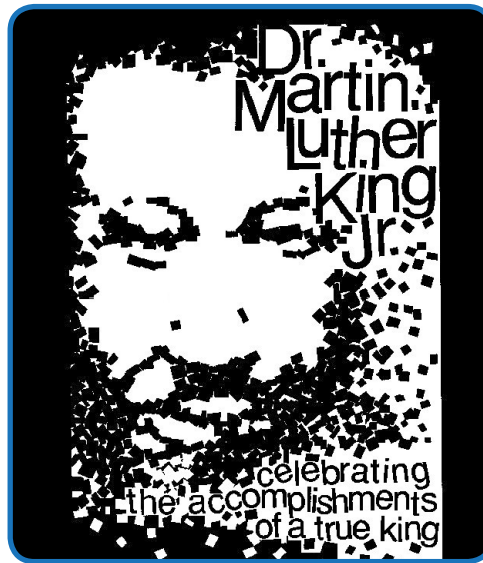


tickets were sold for the 2019 event to honor the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.



• average number of students who've participated in the Columbia Values Diversity Student Writings Program in the last five years

Registration open for Columbia Values Diversity Celebration



Join us at the 2020 Columbia Values Diversity Celebration on Thursday, Jan. 16, 2020 from 7 to 9 a.m. at the Holiday Day Inn Expo Center, 2200 Interstate 70 Drive SW. We will remember the life of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and celebrate diversity in our community.

The 2020 theme is "Our Dream: The Journey Continues." The celebration will include breakfast, the presentation of the annual Columbia Values Diversity Awards, a regional speaker and an artistic program.

Tickets are \$15. Download a registration form or register online at [CoMo.gov](https://www.comogov.org) (search: Diversity Celebration). Contact the City's Office of Cultural Affairs at 573.874.6387 to request a scholarship or accessibility accommodation.

Code Corner: Sidewalk snow removal

When it snows, having a clear sidewalk is very helpful to those on foot who may be walking to school or work or delivering mail or meals. It is the responsibility of property owners and occupants to keep sidewalks clear.

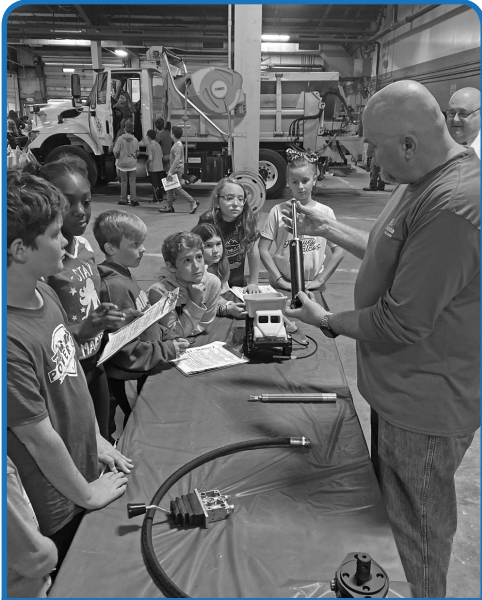
Section 302.3 of the International Property Maintenance Code says that all sidewalks, walkways.... shall be...maintained free from hazardous conditions. Chapter 24 of City Ordinance requires property owners or occupants to keep sidewalks, "clear and free from rubbish, filth, refuse, dirt, snow, ice and from any and all obstructions and dangerous agencies of every kind and description whatsoever." The City's Community Development Department is continuing to enforce these ordinances.

Seniors and those with disabilities who need assistance with snow removal and volunteers who want to assist can contact Services for Independent Living at 573.874.1646 or email Volunteer Coordinator Madison Anderson at manderson@silcolumbia.org. There is an income qualification to receive services.

Thank you for keeping our sidewalks clean for the benefit of all Columbia residents who use them!



Snow Palooza engages students with Public Works



Fleet Operations Manager Mike Guilford explains the basics of hydraulics used on dump trucks and plows.

More than 300 fifth, seventh and eighth grade students from Fairview Elementary and Jefferson Middle School attended the City's 2019 Snow Palooza community education event hosted by Columbia Public Works. Students were divided into small groups and rotated to eight 8-minute education stations.

"The stations were well thought out, hands-on and maintained kids' attention," fifth grade teacher Renee Wilcoxson said. "Sitting on the City's [electric] bus, writing names on the huge snow plow, finding their house on the snow map route and sitting in the dump truck—the kids loved it."

Three of the education stations focused on City snow fighting procedures. Students found their homes on a priority route snow map, learned what residents can do to make plow drivers' work easier and climbed aboard a snow plow. Students also learned about the effects of salt on ice, how hydraulics on plows work, Go COMO electric buses and the STEM bus sponsored by Columbia Public Schools.

"Thank you for letting us see your facility," Jefferson Middle School student Devin wrote. "I really liked how you let us sign our names on the orange scooper thing [snow plow] and let us learn about the truck that puts salt on the road."

If your school would like to inquire about next year's event please email pubw@CoMo.gov.

Help stop misuse of handicap parking spaces

The availability of a handicap or disabled parking space can be the difference in whether or not a person with a disability has access to a business or restaurant.

These spaces are not merely a convenience. They are often necessary for people to safely travel to a destination. Please help to keep businesses accessible to everyone and do not park in one of these spaces unless you're authorized to do so!

Any illegal parking in these spaces can be reported to the Columbia Police Department by calling 311 or by reporting online at [CoMo.gov](https://www.columbiagov.com/online-report) (search: Online Report). Email the City at DisabilityServices@CoMo.gov for more information about accessible parking.

CARE Program offers 'Workshop Wednesdays' for youth

The City of Columbia's CARE (Career Awareness Related Experience) program is offering free employment classes for kids in sixth through 12th grades, called Workshop Wednesdays.

The workshops are held at the Armory Sports Center, 701 E. Ash St., every Wednesday until the end of January, from 3 to 7 p.m. Youth are welcome to drop in, there is no price or pre-registration required.

Workshops will not be held Dec. 25 or Jan. 1. Topics that are covered include:

- Creating resumes
- Writing cover letters
- Improving interviewing skills
- How to get letters of recommendation
- Obtaining letters of reference



The CARE Program offers free employment classes for middle school and high school students.

For more information about CARE's employment classes, please contact CARE Coordinator Ron Schmidt at Ron.Schmidt@CoMo.gov or 573.874.6300.

Progress As Promised: Green Meadows and Forum Boulevard intersection improvement project completed 30 days ahead of schedule



The Green Meadows Road and Forum Boulevard roundabout includes street lighting, sidewalks, crosswalks and pedestrian safety islands.

The busy intersection of Green Meadows Road and Forum Boulevard was identified in the City of Columbia's 10-year plan as needing improvement due to the intersecting of a two-lane street with a four-lane road. The goal of the project was to increase safety and reduce congestion by removing the all-way stop and constructing a partial dual-lane roundabout. On Oct. 24 the roundabout opened 30 days ahead of schedule.

"Most importantly, the Forum and Green Meadows roundabout provides a safer intersection for pedestrians, nonmotorized transportation users and motorists," Public Works Director David Nichols said. "We really appreciated the public's patience and support during the construction process and the related road closures. It was a community effort."

The project included utilities, sidewalks, crosswalks, pedestrian safety islands, street lighting and stormwater improvements. The Country Club Villas II Homeowners Association has agreed to adopt the landscaping in the roundabout.

After a series of public meetings and hearings, and considering a number of options, the Columbia City Council approved the new roundabout at Forum Boulevard and Green Meadows Road on Sept. 5, 2017, as part of the City of Columbia's Capital Improvement Program. Roundabouts are not only an effective way to deal with challenging intersections, but they are also nationally recognized as a way to improve safety. The estimated investment was \$1.2 million paid for through the 2015 Capital Improvement Sales Tax.

For more information about roundabout benefits and driving tips, visit CoMo.gov/PublicWorks/Roundabout-Education.

Progress as Promised: Sewer Utility completed four private common collector sewer elimination projects

In Columbia's Fiscal Year 2019, the Sewer Utility completed four private common collector elimination (PCCE) projects which connected forty-four lots to public gravity sewer which were previously served by private common collectors. Private common collector sewers are privately owned and maintained sewer systems that run the risk of failing.

Some private sewers allow raw sewage to run on the ground and possibly into our creeks and streams. Additionally, these private systems can let storm water into the sanitary sewer system which is a source of inflow and infiltration. By replacing outdated, private sewers and connecting these properties to the publicly maintained sewer, the City can protect citizen health by reducing the

occurrence of backups and overflows. In the upcoming fiscal year, the Sewer Utility plans to complete the construction of five additional PCCE projects that will connect 42 lots to the public system. In 2013, voters approved \$32.34 million in Sewer Utility Bonds of which \$3.77 million was allocated to fund private common collector elimination sewer projects.

Utility Customer Service will assess late fees on past due balances

Section 27-19 (f), of the City's Code of Ordinance provides that the City may assess a three percent (3%) late charge against all delinquent utility accounts. The City has not charged late fees on delinquent utility account balances since July 2016 while working through new billing software configuration issues. Staff worked diligently to finalize the software, test and prepare it for all functions and services of the utility.

As of Jan. 1, 2020, the City will resume assessing late fees on past due balances on bills dated after Jan. 1, 2020. For example, if a bill dated Dec. 23, 2019 with a due date of Jan. 13, 2020 is not paid by Jan. 13, 2020 no late fee will apply. If a bill dated Jan. 2, 2020 with a due date of Jan. 23, 2020 is not paid by the due date, a 3% late fee will be applied to the amount due and added to the next bill.

Customers will also receive a past due notice listing a possible disconnection of services date if the past due amount is not paid in full. Services may be disconnected for non-payment after 30 days from the original due date. If the account remains disconnected for 30 more days, the account will be deactivated and the past due amount will be sent to the City's contracted collection agency. As per ordinance, late fees will not be applied to outstanding balances on disconnected accounts or outstanding balances covered under an active payment agreement. Late fees will not be collected in a compounding manner.

If you are struggling to pay your utility bills on time, the City has options available to assist. Please contact Utility Customer Service at 573.874.7380 to discuss your options or if you have questions about your utility bill. You can also manage your utility bills online by registering your account with [MyUtilityBill.CoMo.gov](https://myutilitybill.comogov). You can see your latest bills, check your monthly utility usage, pay your utility bill(s) and find other billing information.

New traffic box art in downtown Columbia



A frog overlooks Flat Branch Creek, Second Missionary Baptist Church, and the Islamic Center of Central Missouri in the newest traffic box art project.

Downtown Columbia is home to a brand new traffic box art piece at the intersection of East Broadway and South Sixth Street.

Local artist Christine Doerr was chosen after a competitive selection process. She completed her painted piece in October. Local plants and wildlife are shown alongside familiar downtown buildings as the design depicts the journey from Flat Branch Park to the box's location. Doerr's art will discourage graffiti and brighten the street for visitors and residents travelling downtown.

The project was coordinated by the City's Office of Cultural Affairs and received support from the Convention and Visitors Bureau and the Downtown Community Improvement District.

For pictures and locations of other traffic box art in Columbia, visit [CoMo.gov](https://comogov) (search: Traffic Box Art).

Warming Centers available for those in need

Bitter cold temperatures can pose a severe threat to health and safety. Extreme cold is a dangerous situation that can bring on health emergencies in susceptible people such as those without shelter, those who are stranded or those who live in a home that is not adequately insulated or without heat. The most common cold-related problems are hypothermia (abnormally low body temperature) and frostbite (injury caused by freezing).

The Columbia/Boone County Department of Public Health and Human Services (PHHS) works in conjunction with community partners to provide a network of Warming Centers throughout the community. A Warming Center is a heated facility where residents can find safe shelter during extreme weather.

With the temperature dropping, PHHS would like to remind residents of the various locations in Columbia available to individuals in need of refuge from the extreme cold. Warming Centers are open to the general public during the building's regular business hours. The public is permitted access to communal areas and amenities such as lobbies, restrooms and drinking fountains.

The City will monitor weather conditions and will open an additional overnight warming facility when the forecast calls for 9 degrees or lower between the hours of 7 p.m. and 7 a.m. Council approved a response plan developed by PHHS and community partners which establishes critical communications when extreme winter weather events occur.

Regular Warming Centers in Columbia include the ARC (Activity and Recreation Center), Armory Sports and Community Center, Boone County Government Center, Columbia/Boone County Public Health & Human Services, Columbia Mall, Columbia Public Library, Salvation Army and Salvation Army Harbor House.

Detailed information on Warming Centers, as well as official shelters in Columbia, can be found online at [CoMo.gov](https://comogov) (search: Warming Center).

Fire safety advice for the holiday season

Be safe this holiday season with these safety tips from the Columbia Fire Department:

1. Keep pets, children, and flammable materials at least three feet away from burning candles and electrical cords to prevent burns and electrical fires. Flameless candles are a great alternative to real ones for decorating.
2. Choose an artificial tree that is labeled, certified or identified by the manufacturer as flame resistant or fire retardant.
3. A dry tree in your home is a fire danger. Choose a tree with fresh, green needles that do not fall off when touched.
4. Decorating with a live tree? Before placing the tree in the stand, cut 1" - 2" from the base of the trunk. Always keep water in the tree stand, check daily and add water as needed.
5. Make sure the tree is at least three feet away from any heat source such as fireplaces, radiators, candles, heat vents or lights.
6. Check the manufacturer's instructions on holiday lights to know how many can safely be connected to prevent electric shock and fire. Remember to replace any string lights that have worn or broken cords or loose bulb connections.
7. Overloaded electrical outlets are a major fire hazard. Plug strings of lights directly into the wall and keep the number to a minimum.
8. Test your smoke alarms and tell guests about your home fire escape plan.

Strategic Plan: Priorities being set for 2020 plan

The City's 2020 Strategic Plan is steadily moving along from the phase that involves gathering and analyzing data to the phase that involves setting the strategic direction. On Oct. 17, approximately 60 employees representing every City department gathered for a strategic planning retreat to review data, list out priorities and brainstorm ideas about how to improve our community in the next Strategic Plan.

The 2020 Strategic Plan is different than previous plans because it involves discussions with frontline City staff members in addition to the community, City Council and City department directors. This provides an additional perspective to make sure the City's Strategic Plan priorities are reflective of the community.

City Council and City department directors will meet in early 2020 to consider the information that came from the frontline staff retreat and make decisions about the direction of the next Strategic Plan.

The October issue of the City Source newsletter invited members of the community to participate in the civic spending exercise. Those meeting dates have been canceled for the time being.



Frontline City staff members met Oct. 17 to start the process of setting priorities for the 2020 Strategic Plan.

Parks and Recreation Calendar

Call 573.874.7460
for more information

JANUARY

- 20 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Candle Light Walk and Celebration, Walk at Armory Sports Center at 6:30 p.m., proceed to St. Luke UMC
-
- 25 ROC Trail Run, Rhett's Run Trail at Cosmo Park, 9 a.m., ages 12 and up, \$35

Board and commission vacancies

The City is accepting applications for the following boards, commissions or task forces:

Application deadline is Jan. 3 at 5 p.m.
• Parking Advisory Commission

Boards and commissions are a way for residents to be involved in local government and to represent the voices of their fellow community members. Applications and information about current vacancies are available online at CoMo.gov or at the City Clerk's Office. Call 573.874.7208 for more information.

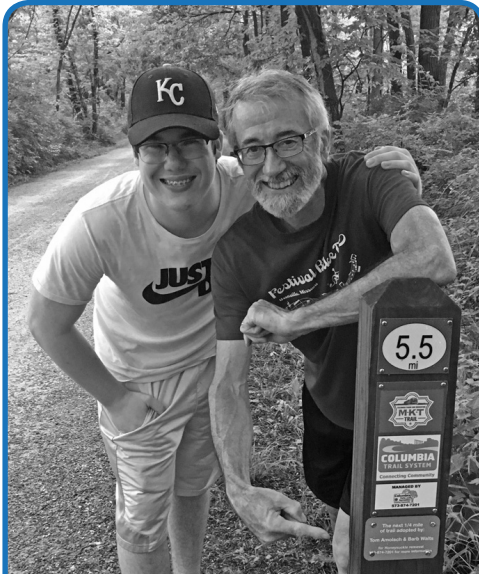
Christmas tree recycling

Did you know the City collects live Christmas trees (no tinsel, ornaments, lights or tree stands) with your curbside collection between Dec. 26 and Jan. 31? After this date trees will need to be cut into four-foot sections and bundled prior to collection.

Trees may also be taken to one of the Yard Waste Drop-off Centers where they will be shredded into mulch or used at the City compost site:

- **Capen Park** - located off Rock Quarry Road, south of Stadium Drive
- **Parkside** - located between Cosmo Park and Creasy Springs Road

Volunteer of the Month: Tom Amolsch



Tom Amolsch (right) on his adopted portion of the MKT trail alongside his grandson, Vincent (left).
Photo Credit: Jody Spriggs

Tom Amolsch has been volunteering with the City of Columbia as a park patroller since 2013, logging over 600 volunteer hours with the City. Tom has combined his love for the outdoors with his affinity for service.

As a park patroller, Tom logs close to 100 hours a year. He provides an extra set of eyes and ears along our trails and in our parks to help keep trail users safe, and assists them with any questions they may have.

Volunteer Programs Specialist Jody Cook says, "Tom's service to the community isn't restricted to Park Patrol. Tom often helps with litter events and can be counted on for special projects, whether that is distributing door hangers or helping with special events." Even with Park Patrol, litter cleanups and the

occasional special project, Tom continues to share even more of his time by recently becoming an Adopt-A-Trail volunteer and adopting a ¼ mile section of the MKT trail, adding to his long list of service projects. Tom's commitment to our community is truly admirable."

Congratulations Tom and thank you for dedicating so much of your time caring for our parks, streets and trails in Columbia.

To learn how you can get involved as a volunteer, contact us at 573.874.7499 or Volunteer@CoMo.gov.

Online non-emergency crime reporting

Did you know the Columbia Police Department offers Online Crime Reporting for certain non-emergency crimes? Residents can use their computer or smartphone to report a crime within a few minutes that does not require a police officer to respond immediately.

Crimes included in the Online Reporting System are: stealing, vandalism and suspicious activity. This service is open to any person who has a crime occur within the city limits of Columbia. The crime circumstances must also meet the requirements for online reporting.

Individuals are not permitted to report a crime online that occurred to someone else unless you are a guardian of the victim or a representative of a business and reporting a crime that occurred at that business.

All information that is entered into the Online Reporting System must be as complete as possible to ensure timely processing. It is important to know that this service is NOT an alternative to reporting emergencies. If you are experiencing an emergency, please call 911. Residents may call the non-emergency number at 311.

The Online Reporting System can be found at p2c.CoMo.gov.



OUR VISION

Columbia is the best place for everyone to live, work, learn and play.

OUR MISSION

To serve the public through democratic, transparent and efficient government.

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