



City of Columbia

# CITIZEN'S HANDBOOK

2017-2018

A Citizen Guide for  
Columbia, Missouri



## *Dear Columbia Residents:*

It's my honor and pleasure to welcome you to the annual Citizen's Handbook and Programs and Priorities report. It's been a year of many successes with the City's Strategic Plan. It is an ambitious plan focused on doing what we can to ensure everyone who calls Columbia home has an opportunity to thrive. We are moving steadily towards a Columbia that truly is the best place to live, work, learn and play for all of us.

We have begun to close the employment gap between white and black Columbians and the African American unemployment rate is the smallest we've seen in many years at 11.9 percent. Thanks to the hard work of Columbia Public Schools, graduation rates of African American students is rising. We are bringing in new companies to the area that will create good-paying jobs, which is news that brings hope since the only path out of poverty is a good job that pays a living wage.

Not only do we want a community where citizens can thrive, we also want a community where citizens feel safe. There are 10 Columbia Police Department officers dedicated to the Community Outreach Unit. In the first year of the officers being assigned to Strategic Plan Neighborhoods the numbers are showing that neighborhood-based community policing is working in Columbia. Seven out of the eight categories of crime we worry about the most are down.

We hope that these trajectories of employment, graduation rates and crime mean that one day the tale of two Columbias could be a distant memory instead of a daily reminder. That doesn't mean that our work is done; but it does mean the Columbia we want to see is in reach and with a bit more effort, we can make it happen.

Our community, and many others around the country, are taking a hard and direct hit because of online shopping. We built our funding system on a sales tax approach with no notion of a non-taxable online world. The federal government does not seem to have an interest in ending the subsidy of online retailers. It continues to allow them to avoid sales tax and in turn, hurt our local business owners and our city government who count on those dollars to provide essential services. From the city government's perspective, we are looking at some lean years ahead.

Even though that will come, your city government employees will continue to work on the Council's Strategic Plan, making a difference where it matters. We will also continue to use our resources efficiently and be good stewards of the community. We're in this together.

Regards

Mike Matthes, City Manager

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# STRATEGIC PLAN

In fall 2015, the Columbia City Council adopted the 2016-2019 Strategic Plan with five priorities in mind: economy, social equity, public safety, infrastructure and operational excellence. Each priority area has a team of City employees who work to fulfill Columbia's vision to make our community the best place for everyone to live, work, learn and play.

The economy team is working to increase jobs that support families and creating more living-wage jobs. The social equity team is working toward improving the odds for success and strengthening our community so all individuals can thrive. The public safety team is working to improve safety and citizen satisfaction with public safety. The infrastructure team is working to better connect the community and plan for the future. The operational excellence team is focusing on workforce performance, engagement and satisfaction.

Three Focus Neighborhoods were identified based on the neighborhood's stress level. An index based on Census data, poverty levels, etc. (and a model developed by the City of Tucson, Arizona).

Strategic Plan neighborhood outreach specialists Glenn Cobbins and Judy Hubbard work in the three Focus Neighborhoods. The duo have conducted hundreds of neighborhood assessments since fall 2015. They ask residents about all aspects of their life including employment, health, education, activities in their neighborhood, if they've met their City Councilmember, what poverty means to them, if they have what they need to thrive and more.

"The assessments are crucial to identifying our neighbors' needs and fulfilling those needs with deliverables. Meeting people at their point of need, whether it be a job, food, shelter, medicine, resources, clothing or just someone to listen," Hubbard said.

In the East Neighborhood, Cobbins and Hubbard met a Syrian family who recently moved to Columbia. The duo helped the family get on their feet and provided resources for the mother to learn to drive and helped her get a job. Cobbins said helping bridge the gap between the City and the needs of the community is important.

"The Strategic Plan is showing the neighbors that the City is really trying to understand what people are going through and trying to help the community members thrive," Cobbins said.

As part of the Strategic Plan, a series of community meetings were held in each of the Focus Neighborhoods to bring residents together to identify issues and solutions in the neighborhood. This also provides a time for neighbors to create connections with each other and City staff. Carolyn Sullivan, Elisa Glick and Jessica Macy from New Chapter Coaching and Nikki McGruder from Diversity Awareness Partnership were hired as consultants to facilitate the meetings and help neighbors create action plans. The goal is to empower neighbors to be leaders and to create goals for the neighborhood. Part of that empowerment was creating the opportunity for several North Neighborhood citizen leaders to attend the Central Missouri Community Action Step up to Leadership program. Read more about a North Neighborhood leader on page 23 of this publication.

During neighborhood assessments, Cobbins and Hubbard invite residents to the community meetings in their neighborhood. At one of the North Neighborhood meetings an unemployed resident filled out an application to work for the City and was hired as a bus driver for the City's transit system. This is one of many examples of how the Strategic Plan initiatives have created new opportunities for citizens.

Strategic Plan consultant, Jim Whitt, works to strengthen relationships with women and minority owned

businesses. Read more about his work beginning on page 11 of this publication.

The Columbia Police Department has two officers assigned to each Focus Neighborhood where they create connections with neighbors, visit the local schools and attend events. While also doing their regular police work, the neighborhood policing efforts are about creating partnerships between the police and members of the community.

The Columbia Parks and Recreation Department hosts Neighborhood Park Fun Days to create a time and place for neighbors to gather together and interact with each other.

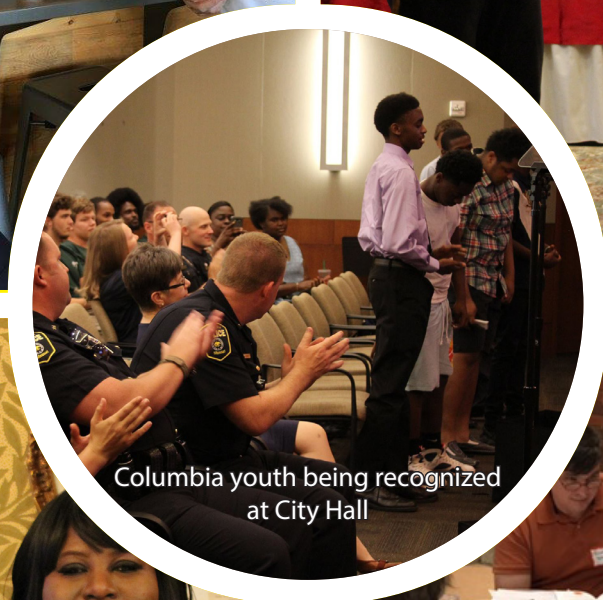
The Strategic Plan continues to create a stronger Columbia community where all residents can thrive.



Coffee with a Cop



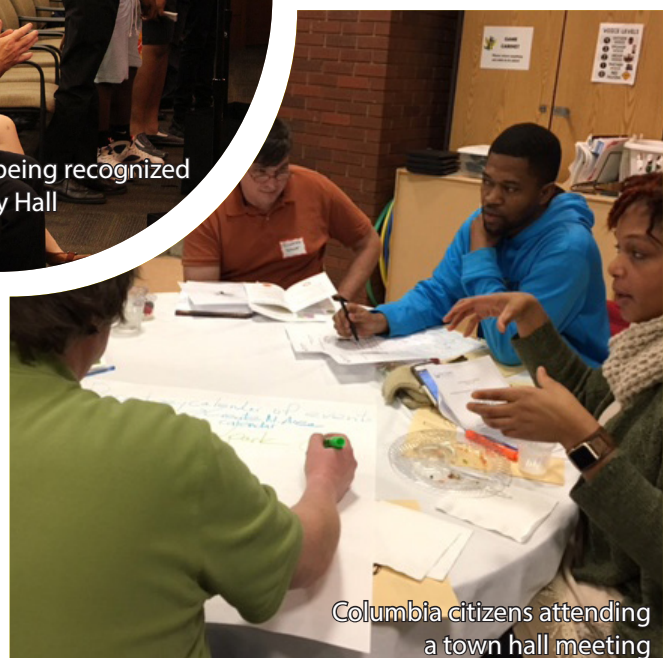
Neighborhood outreach specialist, Judy Hubbard with volunteers



Columbia youth being recognized at City Hall



Neighborhood outreach specialist, Glenn Cobbins with volunteers



Columbia citizens attending a town hall meeting



*“One of the proudest moments someone can have is  
being handed the keys to their own home.”  
- Paul Prevo, Columbia Community Land Trust Partner*



# Affordable Housing Initiatives

By: Eric Stann

**W**hen Shirley Rhoades moved onto Lynn Street in Central Columbia, her street was filled with dilapidated homes.

“Having homeowners means they care [about their property], not like rentals where there’s not much [individual] pride and longevity,” Rhoades said.

Rhoades, initially concerned about those properties, often wondered if her neighbors were safe or who may be squatting in the possibly vacant houses. Now, the City of Columbia is working to change those views that Rhoades had about her neighborhood.

Housing Programs Supervisor Randy Cole said the City felt a critical piece of creating social equity in Columbia was through empowering community members with ownership of improving their neighborhoods. As Rhoades worked with Cole during her home purchase, she was introduced to the City’s affordable housing program.

Rhoades first got involved with the Columbia Community Land Trust (CCLT) by attending and offering input at neighborhood meetings, Cole said. She was later appointed by the Columbia City Council to the Columbia Community Land Trust Board.

“Shirley now has direct influence on decisions about how public resources are utilized in her neighborhood,” Cole said.

## Columbia Community Land Trust

Homeownership is becoming increasingly less affordable for lower-income households, so the City of Columbia is working to address this issue by creating permanently affordable housing.

The CCLT is an independent, 501(c)3 non-profit organization dedicated to creating and preserving permanently affordable homes for lower-income households in Columbia. Supported by staff members from the City of Columbia, the CCLT works to provide stability for families with opportunities to build wealth

through homeownership. Rhoades believes the CCLT can help her street, her neighborhood and Columbia by making it possible for people who otherwise can't afford the down payment on a home to be able to own a home.

People buy a home and lease the land it sits on in a community land trust. In Columbia, the land is being retained by the CCLT and the rights to utilize the land are authorized through a 99-year ground lease.

"The land lease allows the CCLT to sell the home at an affordable price to a household that otherwise would not be able to own a home," Cole said. "It also protects affordability for the next buyer(s) and ensures the homes are well maintained and remain owner-occupied."

The CCLT is overseen by a volunteer board appointed by the Columbia City Council. It includes members selected equally from the following three stakeholder areas: community and business leaders, neighborhood representatives and community land trust homeowners. This is by design to foster an environment where all key stakeholders have an equal say in organizational policy decisions. For instance, they will only have a quorum when all three stakeholder groups are present.

This work is also gaining national attention. In August 2017, the City of Columbia hosted a regional event where national consultants shared information and community land trust best practices were discussed between representatives from Columbia, St. Louis, Springfield, Missouri and Lawrence, Kansas.

## Lynn Street Cottages

The Columbia Community Land Trust's first residential development consists of eight homes located on Lynn Street between North Garth Avenue and Oak Street. Four are being built by a local private developer, while the other four are being built by Job Point, Habitat for Humanity and Central Missouri Community Action. All eight feature near net-zero energy usage and universal design features.

While the homes are being built, the City of Columbia is also working to improve infrastructure and stormwater management on Lynn Street and in the surrounding neighborhood. A Community Development Block Grant helped fund the creation of new street lighting, a new sidewalk, a new bus shelter, and electric, sewer and stormwater improvements. The Office of Sustainability also assisted in getting volunteers together to remove invasive plants in the area. In addition, staff from Community Development worked closely with local residents and the Ridgeway Neighborhood Association to obtain feedback on the needs of the neighborhood.

Paul Prevo, the president of the Columbia Community Land Trust Board, said affordable housing is not just about getting people into homes, it's also about education on budgeting, home maintenance, equity and wealth.



Construction on Lynn Street



“Creating affordable housing allows individuals and families to generate equity, which can be passed onto future generations or to the purchase of a future property,” Prevo said. “One of the proudest moments someone can have is being handed the keys to their own home.”

In other communities, Prevo said community land trusts have also created local commerce where small grocery stores set up shop in the neighborhoods. Prevo hopes a similar situation could happen in Columbia.

Prevo believes the CCLT, through its various projects, helps neighbors get to know one another and help improve pride in the community. Rhoades hopes these changes to her street will foster a sense of community engagement, such as a Neighborhood Watch, where neighbors will look out for each other. You don’t have to know each other, she said, just that someone lives there and belongs in the neighborhood.

“It belongs to us,” she said.

## Planning for the Future

As the gap continues to widen between housing costs and household median income, the idea of affordable housing directly supports objectives of the social equity section of the City of Columbia’s 2016-2019 Strategic Plan. These eight energy-efficient, universally designed homes on Lynn Street are the first steps towards the City’s goals of helping 50 low-to-moderate income, first time homebuyers achieve home ownership, while also reducing the carbon footprint, so that everyone in the community thrives. There are plans for similar projects to be constructed in the future.

“The City had great vision when they put this [project] together,” Prevo said. “The Lynn Street Cottages are the first step forward for the Columbia Community Land Trust towards the larger goal of building 50 affordable houses. It’s an example of a small, tight knit community.”

Rhoades hopes the Lynn Street Cottages will serve as an example of how change can be positive in Columbia.

“Once all of the homes are built, and we can show the City what it can be like, maybe it will spark others to change,” she said. “All around, it’s a good thing for everybody.”



Members of the CCLT and other City staff and volunteers



*“We want Columbia business owners to look like the population they serve, and for everyone to have an opportunity to thrive.”*

*- Jim Whitt, Strategic Plan Consultant*



# Supplier Diversity

By: Shay Jasper

**A**s part of the Strategic Plan economy focus, the City of Columbia is working on efforts to help women and minority owned businesses in the community succeed. Jim Whitt, one of the City's Strategic Plan consultants, works to develop business programs that encourage the use of minority and women owned suppliers.

"The mission of the COMO Supplier Diversity Program is a key part of the Strategic Plan's focus on improving the economy and social equity," Whitt said. "We want Columbia business owners to look like the population they serve, and for everyone to have the opportunity to thrive."

All Columbia minority and women owned businesses qualify for resources provided by the City's Supplier Diversity Program. These services range from marketing and finance assistance to bid coaching and certification support. Additionally, the program collaborates with Regional Economic Development Inc. (REDI), Missouri Small Business and Technology Development Centers, and Women's Business Center to host workshops for small minority and women owned businesses to work on unique challenges faced during the startup stage.

Along with personalized training, the City has developed a Minority and Women Owned Business Directory to grow prime contractor awareness of the Minority or Women Business Enterprise (M/WBE) services and certifications. As of July 2017, 148 businesses were included in the directory, 30 of which have Missouri State Minority or Women Business Enterprise certifications through the Missouri Office of Equal Opportunity. The site has been upgraded and marketed to qualifying users and prime contractors. All minority, women, LGBTQ and disabled veteran owned businesses are encouraged to submit profiles into the directory.

Other ways that the City's Supplier Diversity Program encourages prime contractors to utilize Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) firms is through public and private community partnerships. In October 2016, The Boys and Girls Clubs of Columbia began a \$2.5 million expansion project, with contributions of several community partners and an investment of \$500,000 by the City of Columbia.

Coil Construction was awarded the bid as the primary contractor and committed to utilizing DBE firms for at least 12 percent of subcontracted projects.

David Coil, founder and president of Coil Construction said he believes that a workforce should mirror the community it serves.

“It has been a pleasure working with Mr. Whitt and the City on achieving the diversity goals set forth on the Boys and Girls Club project. We look forward to the opportunity of creating a more diverse workforce in our community,” Coil said.

The City’s work to connect consumers with women and minority owned small businesses has regional impacts and is strengthened with statewide programs. The Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT) is working to bring awareness to these services through the Office of External Civil Rights, a division of MoDOT, designed to assist DBE firms in being better positioned to successfully bid on MoDOT projects.



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“MoDOT is an agency that reflects the customers, communities and cultures we serve. We seek workforces that look like our community and we’re committed to diverse contracting,” DBE Supportive Services Consultant David Dickey said.

Dickey is part of a team, contracted by MoDOT, that conducts seminars for DBE firms in the state to support growth, capacity expansion and diversification of DBE firms competing for subcontracting bids. In addition to these DBE services, MoDOT uses a DBE firm utilization goal of 10 percent as a means to ensure that nondiscriminatory access is given in all contract opportunities.

In June 2017, Columbia’s Supplier Diversity Program, in partnership with REDI, hosted a MoDOT and City of Columbia DBE seminar with 22 people in attendance.

Jeremy Bexton, of local contracting firm Emery Sapp and Sons (ESS), discussed how prime contractors select DBEs for contracting opportunities and the major subcontract opportunity areas that exist. Bexton addressed the challenges of finding DBE opportunities in rural Missouri and encourages all minority owned businesses to go through MoDOT’s DBE certification program.

City of Columbia Purchasing Agent Lawrence Luck attended the seminar and spoke about the City’s procurement process and encouraged business owners to take time to introduce themselves to the purchasing team and to register their business on the City’s vendor registration list.

“When the City receives a federal grant for a large project, there may be a requirement of DBE participation. The prime contractors will look at the DBE certification list to meet the requirement. Through this process, small businesses have an opportunity to be part of a project that is larger than they might wish to bid alone,” Luck said.

In 2017, the City of Columbia Public Works Department began work with HB-A Consulting, a small minority women owned business and client of REDI’s Innovation Hub, to analyze the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the Public Works Strategic Plan and to ensure that it aligns with the City’s overall Strategic Plan.

The partnership between HB-A Consulting and Public Works began at the first Building Inclusive Partnerships Expo, hosted in March 2017 by the City's Supplier Diversity Program and sponsored by Shelter Insurance. The event was free to local minority owned businesses and other DBE firms seeking support from the area's prime contractors. The expo offered an opportunity to network and discuss upcoming opportunities.

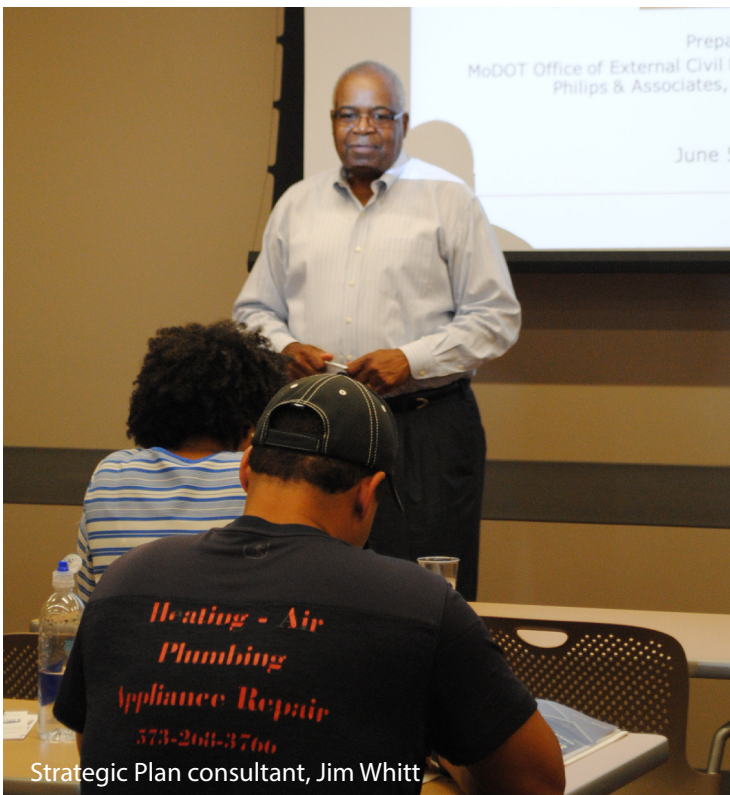
HB-A Consulting Principal Holly Burton-Aro believes she will benefit from the partnership beyond its duration.

"This opportunity allows us to build direct company experience, which we can leverage for other opportunities in the future, not only with the City but with other potential clients," Burton-Aro said.

Whitt said the expo was very successful in its first year, with 24 businesses and over 70 attendees. However, the goal of the 2018 expo will be to attract more prime contractors and grow the number of M/WBEs attending.

"Relationship building is key to success with prime contractors," Whitt said. "We are really looking forward to the 2018 Contractors Expo as our prime contractors and M/WBE firms offer ideas on how to make it bigger and better. We want the expo experience to be rewarding for all involved."

Overall, the goal of Columbia's Supplier Diversity Program is to make the City a friendlier and more productive place for disadvantaged business enterprises. Aligning with the Strategic Plan, the program works to improve the business climate and as a result, expand businesses and increase jobs with living wages that support Columbia families.



Strategic Plan consultant, Jim Whitt



*"[Officer Anthony] made me feel like people got faith in me... they gave me another chance - I was like 'ok, I just gotta make the best out of it.'"*

*- DeAngelo Washington, Jr., Basketball Team Member*



# Youth & CPD Unite to Inspire

By: Bryana Larimer

**F**or 16-year-old DeAngelo Washington, Jr. an undefeated basketball season coached by a Columbia Police officer has left an impression that will last a lifetime.

"I felt like we was doing something," Washington said.

Washington spent much of his childhood at his grandmother's home in Central Columbia. Here, Washington developed friendships with several of the boys that would later join him in victory in the undefeated basketball season.

"One of the players...told me he had found a basketball team and I was like 'I want to play,' Washington said. "He gave me Coach's number and I texted Justin. I came to [the] first practice. That weekend I started in that game. I came to like one practice and I started the next game."

Washington said it was at that game he first found out "Coach" was also a Columbia Police officer.

In a line of most Columbia Police officers, Justin Anthony would be hard to pick out - but it is his actions over the last two years that has made him unforgettable to many in this community.

He's spent the last two years working in the Community Outreach Unit. His sole mission is to build relationships with residents in the Strategic Plan Central Neighborhood. He spends time going door-to-door and visiting parks and schools. He's fostered many positive relationships that have proved beneficial in also deterring criminal activity in what once was one of the highest crime areas in Columbia: Douglass Park.

"I met these kids while patrolling Douglass Park," Anthony said. "At first some of them were leery of me being a police officer and all, but we'd shoot hoops together and eventually they came around."

Making a name for himself as the officer that enjoyed playing basketball with the kids, Anthony was approached by the Columbia Youth Basketball Association (CYBA) at the end of 2016 with the idea of coaching a team. He graciously agreed and began recruiting the young men he'd played with at Douglass Park.



"I can relate to these kids," Anthony said.

He grew up in a small mid-Missouri town where you could always find him outdoors. When he wasn't playing football, he was wrestling or spending time at the local YMCA playing "21," better known as "streetball."

"In that [basketball] game it's everyone against everyone on the court and the first one to 21 [points] wins," Anthony said.

In contradiction to its concept, the game of "21" actually brings many youth dealing with

struggle in their lives a court for comradery. From single parent households, to financial restraints, to getting into trouble - several players on Anthony's team, Anthony included, know it all too well.

"It's social economics," Anthony said. "Who grew up how I grew up? Who had what I had?"

He says that's what has bonded the team.

15-year-old Gquan Jennings recalls first picking up a basketball when he was four years old, and he has yet to put it down. He says it's a family sport.

"He's taken the place of his dad... [who is] incarcerated," Jennings' mother, Crystal Jennings, said.

Prior to playing for Anthony's team, Jennings played on other CYBA teams through the years, but says his academic standing has prevented him from being able to play for the high school team, yet.

"I feel like I'm ready to play for high school because [Officer Anthony] gave me that impact to play," G. Jennings said. "I [am] getting more comfortable playing for the team and playing for anybody else."

To help Jennings and several of the other boys with academics, Anthony schedules time during and outside of practice for mentoring and study hall. He also worked with the Columbia Parks and Recreation CARE Program to locate summer jobs for some of the boys on the team.

"I didn't just want to coach these boys in basketball, I want to be a mentor - help them build their confidence and show them people care about them," Anthony said.

"Growing up, I use to think police was only here to throw people in jail," Washington said.

He cited his own experience with the juvenile justice system and the disappointment from family and friends that followed.

"It kinda makes me feel like I'm just like a typical black kid when I did that. I was like 'that's not me'...[Officer Anthony] was disappointed," Washington said.

But Washington said through the disappointment, his "mistake" was met with grace by Anthony. The



incident occurred while the team was practicing for their June 2017 tournament. Washington was not kicked off the team, instead he was filled with encouragement.

“[Officer Anthony] made me feel like people got faith in me...they gave me another chance – I was like ‘ok, I just gotta make the best out of it,” Washington said.

Jennings echoed Washington’s appreciation for Anthony.

“He impacts my life. I look up to him...I don’t think of him as police, I just think of him as a regular person,” Jennings said.

With enormous smiles on their faces, Jennings and Washington both referred to their favorite experience on the team as going undefeated. The buzzer beater shot made by Jennings in the final game of the CYBA season is not just a mark in the books, but an eternal imprint on the hearts of eight young Columbia men.

Since going undefeated, the team has reunited on the court throughout the year. In June 2017, they competed in the cPhaseSports/Mid America Youth Basketball Classic where they took third place overall. The team also competed in the Moonlight Hoops League where they claimed the undefeated title once again.

Jennings and Washington both have bright futures ahead. They plan to go to college where they want to play basketball. In the meantime both said they will continue to play for Anthony as long as resources allow them to compete. Their team has been funded through generous donations of organizations like CYBA, Downtown Optimist Club and cPhase.

“Hopefully someone else will offer us to play for another tournament,” Jennings said with a grin.

But no matter where or who he might play for next, one thing’s certain – “Coach” Anthony has left some big shoes to fill.

“I don’t think a coach will make me more happy than him.”





*“The important thing for us is to get the students in a hands-on learning situation that gives them the opportunity to do instead of just watch.”*

*- Mike Klote, MACC Mechatronics Program Director*



# Regional Job Expansion

By: Shay Jasper & Jean Nicklas

## Community Partnerships Support Economic Growth

“Technology and healthcare industries are growing every day, and automation is dominating both fields,” Ivan Thomas, a graduate of Moberly Area Community College’s first Mechatronics class, said. “The Mechatronics program didn’t just teach current manufacturing systems, it taught me how to be hireable.”

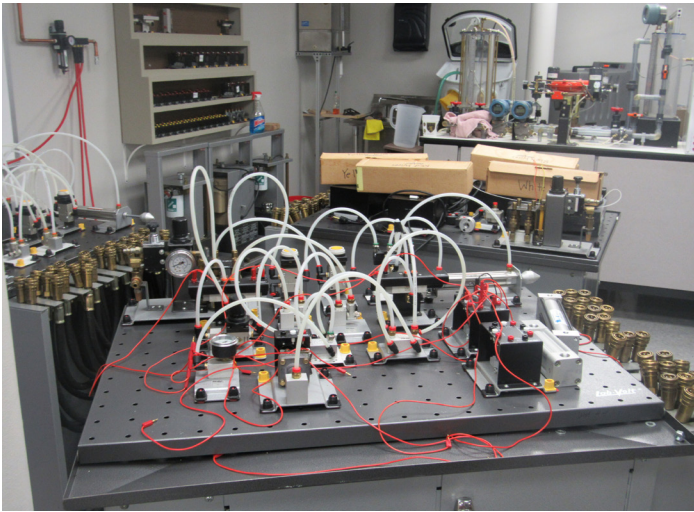
With ongoing workforce development crucial to support Columbia’s economic growth, collaboration and community partnerships are vital to these efforts. One collaboration success story is the development of the Mechatronics program at Moberly Area Community College (MACC).

Several years ago, manufacturers expressed concerns they could not find applicants qualified for jobs that combined new technology and automation. Regional Economic Development Inc. (REDI) brought together MACC, the Columbia Area Career Center and local area manufacturing firms to brainstorm how to address this emerging need. The result was the MACC Mechatronics program, developed to meet modern manufacturing demands. The program is now producing graduates with the skills needed by Columbia’s local employers.

“We were having a hard time finding and attracting people with the skills needed to work on the automated assembly, robotics and the new automated equipment that we were bringing in,” 3M Columbia Plant Manager Dale Tideman said. “At that time, the folks involved were asking the real question: What can we do now that would help address this gap in the workforce?”

The high regional and nationwide demand for trained technicians in the manufacturing sector made it apparent that the program was a great opportunity for MACC and the region. With starting funds of \$75,000 provided by a grant from 3M, the program began in fall 2013 with six students. There were 58 Mechatronics graduates in Spring 2017. Declared Mechatronics majors are measured as part of the City’s 2016-2019 Strategic Plan economy priority to help create jobs that support families.

MACC Mechatronics Program Director Mike Klote says that new companies and those moving more towards automation are going to be in demand for these jobs at a rapid growth and having the rare program in the area is really attractive to manufacturers.



“The important thing for us is to get the students in a hands-on learning situation that gives them the opportunity to do instead of just watch. We don’t only simulate a workplace situation, we integrate knowledge of complete systems,” Klote said.

He also strongly states that job placement success is in large part due to the fact that the program was started by the industry to serve the industry. Currently, Kraft Heinz Foods, Gates Corp, 3M, Quaker and American Air Filter are involved in the curriculum planning process.

“Placing the graduates is our main goal, but it’s that much more meaningful for us to place them in the area. I think I have one or more graduates with every local manufacturer. Aurora Dairy is the new one on the list and will hopefully have input into the program, as it’s important that we experience growth parallel to the industry,” Klote said.

Aurora Organic Dairy’s announcement to locate its new milk processing facility in Columbia is another example of community partnerships at work. The City’s collaboration with Boone County, the University of Missouri, and private business and organizations through REDI makes it possible to attract new business and support legacy businesses in our community. Aurora Organic Dairy and a new American Outdoor Brands distribution center will bring hundreds of new living-wage jobs to our area. Expansions at the Kraft Heinz Columbia Foods plant and Dana Light Axle will allow those facilities to employ area residents for years to come.

## Columbia Regional Airport

Another facet of the region’s growing economy is Columbia Regional Airport, referred to in the community as COU. Growing numbers of people using the airport signal an increase not only in leisure travel but the critical role the airport plays in the business community.

“The best part of the experience is knowing that when you land at COU, you’ll grab your bags and ten minutes later you’re leaving the airport in your own car. You’ll probably be in your bed within a half hour. That benefit cannot be overstated,” Airport Advisory Board member and Columbia business owner Matthew Jenne said.

Jenne, however, says that surpassing the benefits of convenience is the ability to compete with other cities to attract and keep regional manufacturers.

“When a manufacturer says that they need access to and from that community via air with one stop to a major hub in the U.S. and a region doesn’t have that, they’re not even getting their foot in the door,” Jenne said. “It’s incredibly important that we maintain that advantage.”

It appears that COU will continue to keep that edge with the improvements that have continued in 2017, as part of the 2009 Airport Master Plan. Projects have included a widened and lengthened runway, taxiway placement, and new lighting and visual guidance systems.

In 2017, more seats became available to COU travelers with larger aircraft serving flights to Dallas/Fort Worth and with the announcement of United Airlines beginning service to both Chicago O’Hare and Denver. The upgraded aircraft and new service lines added an additional 150 seats per day, bringing the Airport within reach of the “40 by 20 Goal” which aims to provide the capacity to service 40 percent of the needs of people who fly daily in COU’s 13 county catchment area by 2020.

There’s no question that Columbia has much to offer to businesses that bring jobs to our community. Columbia’s growing economy will continue to welcome and sustain jobs for our residents now and in the future.



Ground-breaking at the site of Aurora Organic Dairy



Runway work at Columbia Regional Airport



City staff and partners welcoming United Airlines to Columbia Regional Airport



*“We wanted to be responsible for what the change was to come out here because this is where we live.”*

*- Sophia Smith, North Neighborhood Leader*



# Making a Difference in Lives

By: Sara Humm

## Sophia Smith

When Sophia Smith started getting involved in the North Neighborhood, she knew she could contribute to help her neighbors.

“My passion is always been about helping,” Smith said.

Part of the City’s Strategic Plan was selecting three areas of town that needed focused efforts. Once the boundaries were drawn for the Central, North and East Focus Neighborhoods, community meetings were held in each area to discuss issues and solutions with neighbors.

The City began hosting meetings in the North Neighborhood in September 2016. Smith was one of a handful of North Neighborhood residents who stood up and volunteered to be leaders in their community. Working side-by-side with City staff and meeting facilitators from New Chapter Coaching, community members created a list of priorities and goals.

“We wanted to be responsible for what the change was to come out here because this is where we live,” Smith said.

Smith has lived in the North Neighborhood for two years but has lived her entire life in Columbia where she raised three kids. A grandmother to 11 grandchildren, the support given to children is important to her.

“Kids need positive interaction, they need positive things to do after school,” Smith said. “We don’t have any structure or anything set up on this end of town for children to do.”

Smith and the North Neighborhood leaders have suggested creating after school opportunities for the children like talent shows, field trips, fishing trips and mentorships with adults to help tutor. In summer 2017 the North Neighborhood leaders started working on a Neighborhood Action Plan to create a structure for their plans and goals. One of their ideas was to create a space in the North Neighborhood that offers resources, a food pantry and after school programs.



“It’s about making programs available to bring the positive out. It’s about helping families,” Smith said.

Smith said that instead of complaining about things that needed to be improved in the neighborhood she decided to do something about it and get involved.

“If anyone wants to be involved in helping our community, make sure you have a passion and a love for it,” Smith said. “Without passion and love, then what are you here for?”

## Cory Crosby

Cory Crosby is the owner of a growing fitness gym, 2 Real Fitness, in Central Columbia. However, Crosby’s path to get where he is was filled with hardship and perseverance.

“I didn’t really have a direction I was going in,” Crosby said. “I was working a little bit and in the streets a little bit and really didn’t have a purpose and because of that, I think I made a lot of poor decisions that lead up to the decision that ultimately changed my life.”

In 2007, Crosby was sentenced to 10 years in prison for committing a robbery. He said the first few years in prison were a hard adjustment coping with being away from his children and family but also having jail authorities telling him what to do and giving him rules to follow.

Crosby said his attitude changed when he realized that he needed to stop focusing on what he couldn’t change and start focusing on what he could change. His education, attitude, relationships with people and health became his focus. He studied hard every night to receive his GED within two months, which was the beginning of major life changes for Crosby.

“I was really proud,” Crosby said. “It showed me that I was capable of doing things”

Crosby said when he started working out in the prison gym he couldn’t keep up with the other inmates because they were more advanced and he became discouraged. Once he decided to stick with it, he said he started seeing results and became more confident.

“It gave me a sense of accomplishment every time I reached a goal so that was something that was real big for me because I never had that feeling before and I never really achieved a lot,” Crosby said. “Once I stopped making excuses and started sticking with things, it just changed my perspective.”

He started studying business and reading about successful people from Maya Angelou to Bill Gates. He was ready to work hard when he got out of prison, however, he faced many obstacles.

“When I came home from prison I didn’t really have anything,” Crosby said. “I was homeless but I had enough ambition and belief in myself that couldn’t nothing stop me and I knew that I wanted to be successful and to do better than before.”



Crosby was released from prison on Jan. 19, 2016 and he started creating his business plan for his fitness company. Crosby applied for a business license through the City of Columbia in May 2016 and was denied because of the felony on his record. He reached out to community leaders for guidance and was put in contact with Jim Whitt, a City of Columbia Strategic Plan consultant who works with minority owned businesses. Crosby appealed the business license decision and Whitt and others spoke on his behalf. Crosby won the appeal and officially opened his business on May 13, 2016.

“You’ve got a young man who has turned his life around, what he wants to do is help people in the community and he was a very dedicated young man,” Whitt said.

Part of Whitt’s involvement with the City includes working with the Strategic Plan economy team to increase opportunities for jobs and bring more exposure to women and minority owned business in the community. Whitt began a conversation with the City about changing the policy that initially denied convicted felons from obtaining a business license.

“We’ve got to change. We’ve got to break some barriers down to offer people an opportunity to become business people,” Whitt said.

As a result of Crosby’s determination, the business license office changed the way they communicate with applicants who are not approved.

“I feel like that’s my responsibility to not give up, that gives other people hope,” Crosby said. “I feel like a lot of people don’t believe that it’s possible for them to open a business or be successful because they have never seen anyone successful or been taught that so they don’t have that confidence.”

After some bumps in the road and help from others, Crosby rented a space in the Strategic Plan Central Neighborhood for his fitness company. He has started working with businesses and organizations in the community to help train and inspire others.

“I experienced the hard part of my life, this is the easy part. All I gotta do is wake up and work hard and stay dedicated,” Crosby said. “I want to help other people realize that most importantly, you’re capable of doing anything.”





*“Festivals and community events make Columbia a great place to live, learn, work and play. They bring the community and families together to celebrate.”*

*- Matt McCormick, Columbia Chamber of Commerce President*



# Building Community

By: Tammy Miller & Rachel Grant

**W**hen it comes to choosing activities for her family, Columbia parent Meghan McCullah often looks to one source.

“We are grateful to live in a city that has such an amazing Parks and Recreation program,” McCullah said. “The bar is set high. We have been pleased with Parks and Recreation events, especially compared to other organizations’ programs...and we more than get our money’s worth.”

The City of Columbia’s Parks and Recreation Department is dedicated to helping the City achieve its vision of making Columbia the best place for everyone to live, work, learn and play. Columbia offers 86 parks and recreational facilities for the community to gather, either for recreation or for citywide festivals and special events.

McCullah said that she and her family participate in Blue Thunder Track Club, martial arts classes, paddleboarding, camps and special events, sponsored or co-sponsored by Columbia Parks and Recreation.

Parks and Recreation is committed to providing leisure opportunities for all Columbians, no matter their age, ability or income level. More than 90,000 people annually attend Parks and Recreation-sponsored special events. Most of these events are free, including Fire in the Sky, Heritage Festival, Movies in the Park, Family Fun Fests, Stephens Lake Park Amphitheater Concert Series, Neighborhood Park Fun Days and Easter egg hunts.

Events such as these help make the City livable and maintain a high quality of life. According to the citywide plan, “Columbia Imagined,” the top reasons cited for living in Columbia focused on quality of life. Many of the citizens offering their input named their favorite places and activities, including parks, trails, green space, downtown assets and cultural opportunities. The most commonly liked places to go and things to do in Columbia were related to recreation, including parks, trail and athletic facilities, cultural and entertainment venues and events.

The McCullah family enjoys taking advantage of what the City's Parks and Recreation Department has to offer.

"While there are activities for everyone, there are an abundance of ones that encourage physical activity for all ages, which is a priority in our family," McCullah said. "These activities strive to make exercise fun, which leads to a lifetime of healthy activity. Instead of just running, kids can run through muddy obstacle. Instead of riding a bike, they can add lots of glow sticks and ride out at night to a s'mores campfire cookout."

It is clear that quality of life is important to Columbia residents. A 2015 Parks and Recreation survey showed that 92 percent of Columbia households visit City-owned parks. One of these households belongs to the Garland family, who normally attends events such as Fire in the Sky and Family Fun Fests.

"We attend Family Fun Fests because Parks and Recreation always has an interesting theme," said Columbia mom Kate Garland. "I enjoy going because there are many families to talk with and it allows my daughter a variety of children to play with. It allows us to share in community activities and meet up with other families in a positive recreation environment. And, Fire in the Sky is a wonderful way for us to show our patriotism and we love the fireworks."

Additionally, Columbia is home to many festivals and events that draw visitors into the community while also making it a fun place to live. The community hosts events celebrating music, art, film, books, and even food and beer.

One of these unique festivals is the annual True/False Film Fest, a four-day documentary film fest that transforms downtown Columbia and brings together filmmakers, artists, musicians, locals and visitors from all over the world. The spirit of True/False is unique – people from all walks of life immerse themselves in a weekend full of films, art, frivolity and all the best that Columbia has to offer.

"The secret weapon of True/False has always been the mid-Missouri community. We dreamt this fest up, but Columbia took it and ran – to places that surprise and delight me anew every year," True/False co-conspirator and co-founder David Wilson said.

True/False continues to make an impact on the community well after the festival takes place. In 2016, Columbia Public Schools, Ragtag Film Society, and the Columbia Public Schools Foundation began a partnership that brings together film, CPS curriculum and teacher training. This partnership works to increase the presence of film in classrooms with the intended goal of giving students the skills to be thoughtful, critical consumers of media – to decide for themselves what is true and what is false.

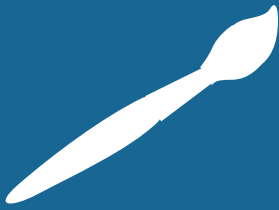
While these special events are entertaining, they also bring a boost for the local economy. Many of the large festivals and events bring in many visitors throughout the year and while they are here they spend money on hotels and food as well as shopping at local stores.

"Festivals and community events make Columbia a great place to live, learn, work and play. They bring the community and families together to celebrate. Festivals also bring visitors in from other communities which exposes new people to all the great things Columbia has to offer while also boosting the economy," Columbia Chamber of Commerce President Matt McCormick said.

## Columbia is home to numerous special and seasonal events including:



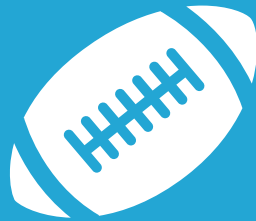
Roots N Blues N BBQ Festival  
Hot Summer Nights  
Summerfest  
Shelter Insurance Gardens Concert Series



Art in the Park  
First Fridays in the North Village Arts District  
Living Windows Festival



Citizen Jane Film Festival  
True/False Film Fest  
Movies in the Park  
Unbound Book Festival



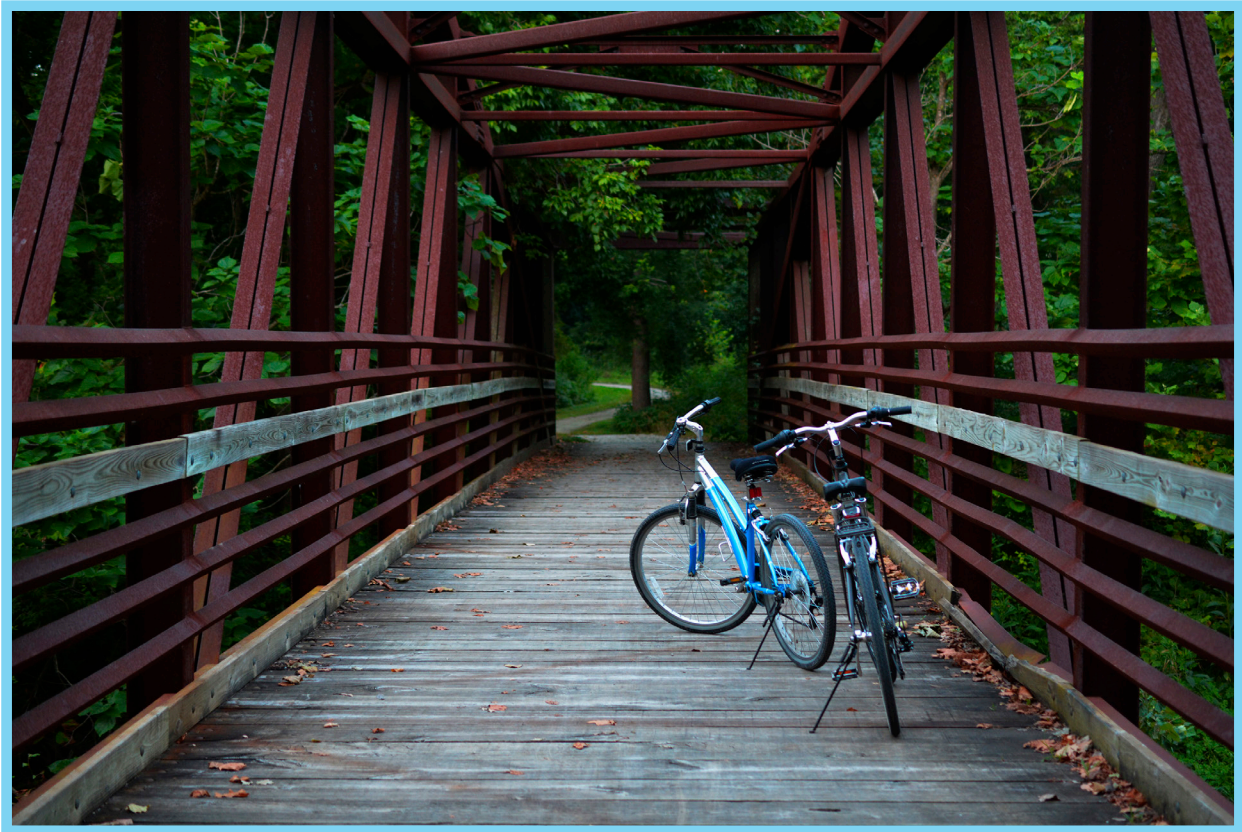
Show-Me State Games  
Area Recreation Center Camps and Events



The District's Restaurant Week  
South East Craft Beer Festival

To learn more about various Columbia events including dates, times and locations, please visit:

[www.visitcolumbiamo.com](http://www.visitcolumbiamo.com)



*“I think the park provides a good place for parents to bring their kids to play and creates an inclusive environment by offering a wide range of activities”*  
- Jamaal Foster, Camp Counselor at Armory Summer Camp



# Improving Our Parks

By: Patricia Hayles

## Building community through park improvements

Through the Strategic Plan, the City is focusing on connecting the community and determining what the City can do today in order to build for the future.

For many residents, “connecting the community” means more than smooth roadways, accessible trails and enhanced public transit. Often times, a community can connect in its own backyard. This is why park improvements are critical to achieving the City’s goal with the help of the Strategic Plan infrastructure team.

During community meetings and discussions with residents in the Strategic Plan Focus Neighborhoods, citizens expressed their desire to have safe places where people can come together close to home. Prior to several park improvements, gathering spaces were non-existent or were not well-lit, often making residents feel unsafe.

## Douglass Park – Central Neighborhood

From June through early August each summer, Douglass Park fills up around 11:30 a.m. as youth from families and nearby youth-serving organizations take advantage of the summertime Lunch in the Park program. This USDA-funded program provides nutritional meals for an average of 100 children each day 18 years of age and younger.

Jamaal Foster, camp counselor at the Armory Summer Camp, visits the park on a regular basis with his campers-- swimming at the pool one day and hitting the playground the next.

“I think the park provides a good place for parents to bring their kids to play and creates an inclusive environment by offering a wide range of activities,” Foster said.

According to Camren Cross, City of Columbia recreation supervisor, the changes to the park have created extra green space which is used to host citywide events such as Kite Flying Day, Heritage Weekend, Easter egg hunts, potato-sack races and other family-friendly activities.

By its completion in fall 2017, Douglass Park received two phases of improvements over the past four years. In addition to improving lighting and new ADA accessible playground equipment, the park's master plan includes a skate spot which has already attracted a wide range of skaters.

Gabe Huffington, park services manager for Columbia Parks and Recreation, feels the struggle for many kids in the Central Neighborhood to access the skate area at Cosmo Park because it required crossing Interstate 70.

Phillip Williams, Sr. has lived in Columbia for 47 years and often visits the park with the children of Fun City Youth Academy over the summer for the Lunch in the Park program. According to Williams, the new amphitheater has been used quite a bit. Local bands such as Chump Change and others from Kansas City or St. Louis hold concerts or DJ sets in the park.

Even though Williams feels more can be done to the park, including benches near the playground area and more shade for visitors, he agrees that Douglass Park "has had a lot of good changes" over the years.

## Edenton Boulevard – North Neighborhood

Since February 2016, Columbia Police Department Community Outreach Officers Scott Lenger and Tony Parker have been getting to know the residents of the North Strategic Plan Neighborhood. After building relationships with people throughout the area, residents began talking about their hopes for improvement

"One of the big complaints [from residents] was no green space and nothing for the kids to do, especially in the summer time," Lenger said.

Many of the children in the neighborhood attend Derby Ridge Elementary or Lange Middle School, but the play areas on school grounds are too far to walk. Additionally, for the northern most residents to access Auburn Hills Park, they would need to cross a creek and heavily wooded field.

At a North Neighborhood community meeting hosted by the City, one resident suggested placing a basketball hoop in the area to give children and teenagers something to do. After the idea was brought to the Strategic Planning team, the City of Columbia Public Works, Columbia Parks and Recreation, and Columbia Water & Light each donated a portion of their general fund in order to clean up the dead end section of Edenton Boulevard, which had previously been used as a dumping ground for construction projects.

In early spring 2017, the piles of concrete and building materials were removed and a basketball hoop was put into place. When asked about the addition, Ahmonta Harris, a nearby resident, said, "I love the fact that they put up the guards," referring to the reflective barricades placed at Edenton and Greensboro to keep cars out, thus providing a safe space for residents to play.





“The basketball goal works really well. [Now] the young kids don’t have to walk three miles to play basketball at Derby Ridge,” Harris said. “There are usually eight to 10 kids out on the court each night playing basketball or tossing the ball around.”

## McKee Street Park – East Neighborhood

For parents like Samantha Williams, having McKee Street Park nearby provides a good place for her daughters to run off some energy. The shade provided by the park’s shelter makes the park more usable during the day, and she said the additional lighting increases visibility and makes the area feel safer at night.

“The new equipment is nice, but [it] can sometimes get busy, which slows the kids down by making them wait around and take turns until the area they want to play on frees up,” Williams said.

Prior to its most recent renovations, McKee Street Park’s 4.7 acres included a 25-year-old playground, and a walking trail to the basketball court, baseball backstop and open play field.

Over the course of several months, the park plan was developed using input from the area’s residents. In addition to the new play structure and swings, the park now includes a shelter with three picnic tables, a barbecue grill and a new walkway circling the play area at the corner of McKee and Orchard Lane.

“The new walking path provides a smooth surface for riding a scooter,” Keshia Byndom said, who visits the park with her son.

This helps keep kids out of the street and away from traffic, which she said has increased in the area the last year.

## Future Opportunities

While the number of residents enjoying the parks varies depending on the season, many residents agree that the improvements made so far are positive. Every City project can lead to additional opportunities, so the City continually gathers feedback on how the parks can be improved.





*“It was not just great dealing with her, but also that I only had to call the one number and get the answer instead of trying to figure out the right person.”*

*- Sarah Rainey, Citizen of Columbia*



## Connecting People With Answers By: Sara Humm

**W**hen City of Columbia residents and visitors have questions about services, events or general information, there is one number they can call to get all their questions answered: 573-874-CITY (2489).

“Before the creation of the Contact Center, citizens had to identify the correct number for their City requests from a list of over 150 options,” Contact Center Manager Stephanie Brown said. “By listing one main number for the City, citizens have quick and easy access to City services and information.”

The City of Columbia Contact Center was initiated in 2014 after being outlined in the 2012 Strategic Plan. Part of the 2016-2019 Strategic Plan operational excellence focus is to increase the percentage of citizens who know who to contact for City services by 6 percent by 2019 which is measured by the annual citizen survey. In August 2017, the Contact Center rolled out the branding for the 573-874-CITY phone number where residents can get all their City questions answered.

“To continue one of our commitments in the Strategic Plan of enhancing operational excellence, we want to increase the amount of citizens who know who to contact for City of Columbia services and information. Having one number allows citizens to better recognize who to contact for what they need,” Brown said.

The Contact Center employs 11 customer service representatives (CSRs) who are trained to answer any City questions residents and visitors may have. To ensure that CSRs provide the highest quality of customer service, they receive a minimum of 400 hours of training in their first year and 100 to 150 hours of training each year after. Additionally, CSRs are Certified Tourism Ambassadors, which is a national recognition.

“Continuous improvement of City employees is a vital function in our organization. To be helpful to our citizens, training and development are key components in mastering excellent performance. The focus is not just to have trained CSRs, but confident, friendly and reliable ambassadors,” Brown said.

The goal is to have the caller’s question answered without having to transfer them to another person. On average, 80 percent of calls to the Contact Center are resolved without having to transfer the caller. The creation of the Contact Center has also decreased the amount of non-emergency calls to 9-1-1.

Contact Center staff utilize in-depth programs to provide the best service possible



“By calling 874-CITY, customers can handle all of their requests and needs. The CSRs are able to answer questions, take requests for services and identify the appropriate City experts to assist citizens,” Brown said.

Sarah Rainey had a first-hand experience with calling the Contact Center during a water main break. Rainey said she called to see if the area she was in was under a precautionary boil water advisory. CSR Kira Acton called Water & Light twice to get a complete answer for Rainey when additional questions arose.

“I appreciated that she did not just take a blanket answer, but listened to our concerns. She was determined to find the right answer for us, and checked more than once. She showed the initiative to take it upon herself to get it done correctly,” Rainey said. “It was not just great dealing with her, but also that I only had to call the one number and get the answer instead of trying to figure out the right person.”

Not only is the Contact Center helpful for citizens, it’s helpful for City employees who are having their calls answered by the Contact Center. Assistant Director of Human Resources Kathy Baker said having the Contact Center is an asset to her team.

“Our partnership with the Contact Center allows Human Resources staff to focus on service to building customers and to perform work with fewer interruptions,” Baker said.

Since its inception in 2014, the Contact Center has been steadily taking on calls for City departments. This process includes Brown sitting down with leadership from departments to determine the proper information to give residents when they call. However, the line of communication between the Contact Center and the department doesn’t end there. Departments are proactive about giving CSRs updated information to communicate to callers.

“The continuous collaboration and review of scripts ensures that callers receive accurate and up-to-date information,” Baker said.

From its start in 2014 to August 2017, the Contact Center logged over 200,000 calls. During fiscal year 2016, the Contact Center received 73,284 calls with the highest call volume being for Transit, Solid Waste and Utility Customer Service. The yearly total was up from 39,655 in fiscal year 2015 and 13,531 in fiscal year 2014. On average, each CSR can take 100 calls per day, with an increase during peak times.

In addition to the Contact Center, which is housed in City Hall, the CSRs also staff the information desk in the lobby of City Hall. Here they have contact with citizens through the day to help answer questions and direct citizens to the right office to ensure their visit to City Hall is pleasant and they have all their questions answered. The Contact Center rolled out an online chat option in fall 2017 to accommodate more citizens.

“Every time I am at City Hall, the employees at the lobby information desk are fabulous. I have observed them work with customers and colleagues and they are always friendly and have smiles on their faces,” Jenny Workman said.

Overall, the goal of the Contact Center is to make it easy for citizens to contact City Hall with questions and for City staff to provide the best customer service possible.

“Stephanie (Brown) and her entire staff are always pleasant and responsive. As a team we work together to provide the best possible service to all,” Baker said.



City Contact Center Staff



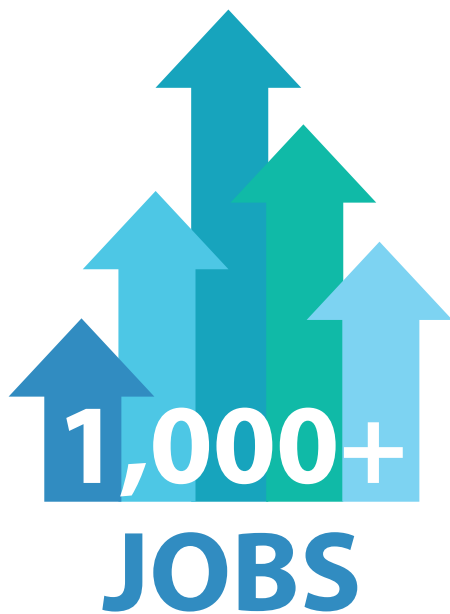
## PROGRAMS AND PRIORITIES: Job Growth & Education

The employment gap between white and black Columbians is the **smallest** the City has seen since the metric began being measured.

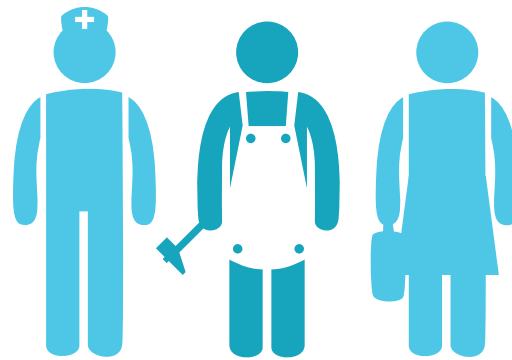
**15.7%**  
roughly 1.5 in every 10 Columbians



**11.9%**  
closer to 1 in every 10 Columbians



In the past few years, the Economic Development Department and the City Council have helped create or retain over 1,000 jobs at companies like Dana Incorporated, Kraft Heinz and NorthWest Isotopes.



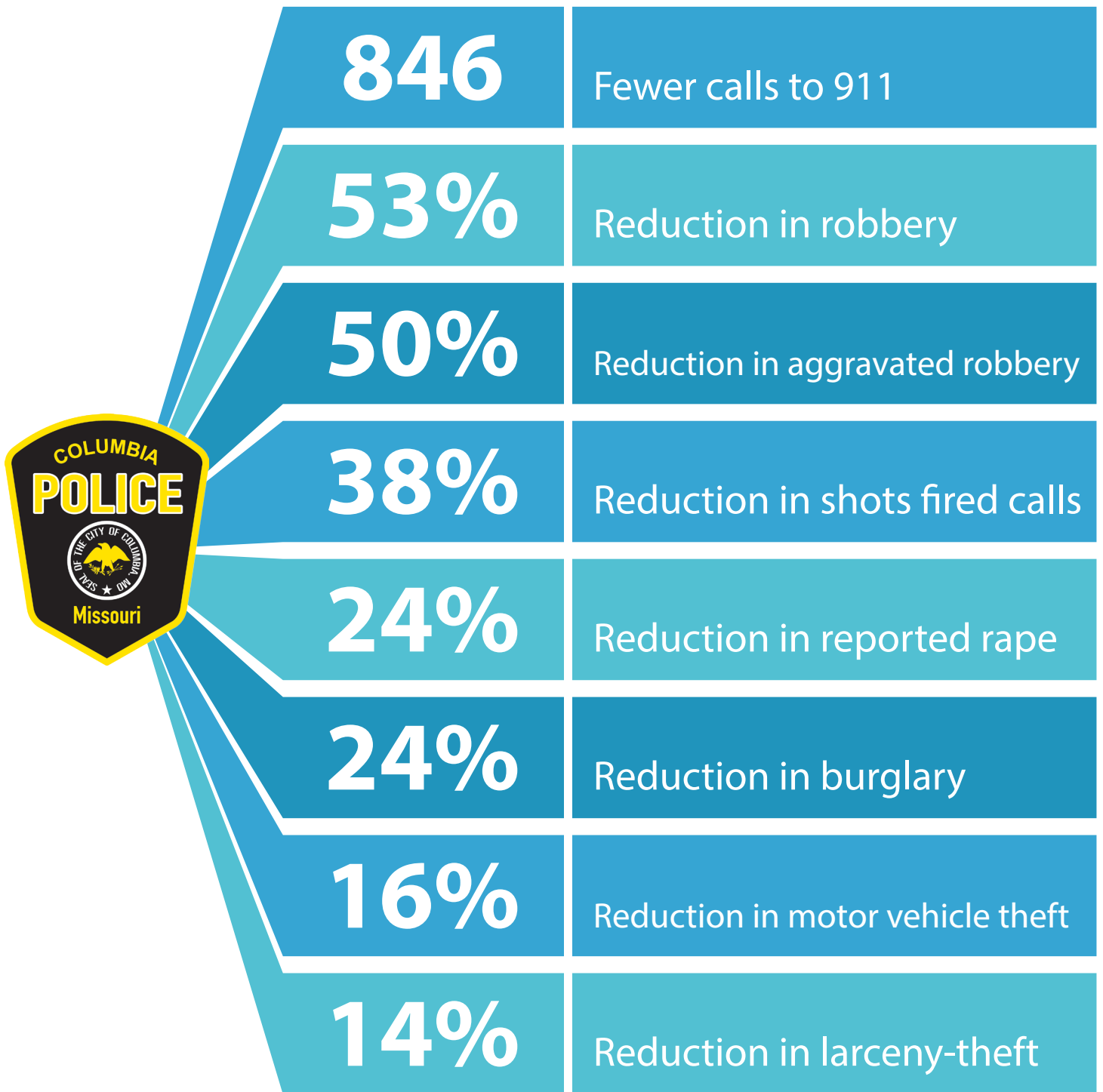
**13% Increase**

in number of African-American students in Columbia graduating high school compared to 2011.



## PROGRAMS AND PRIORITIES: Community Policing

Since the Columbia Police Department started community policing, the three Strategic Plan Neighborhoods experienced a **30% drop** in crime in just one year.





# PROGRAMS AND PRIORITIES: Sales Tax Revenue

The City's revenue issues are set to continue for the foreseeable future. Cuts, NOT including layoffs, have been incorporated in the FY 2018 budget. The reasons for the revenue issues are as follows:

## *A slumping nationwide retail market:*

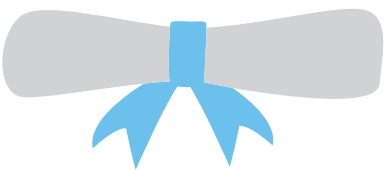
Internet sales are having an impact on the nation's retail economy.

Researchers predict that a significant amount of brick and mortar stores will close in the near future.



**Mizzou enrollment down:**

Over the last two years, Mizzou is down nearly 2,400 students.



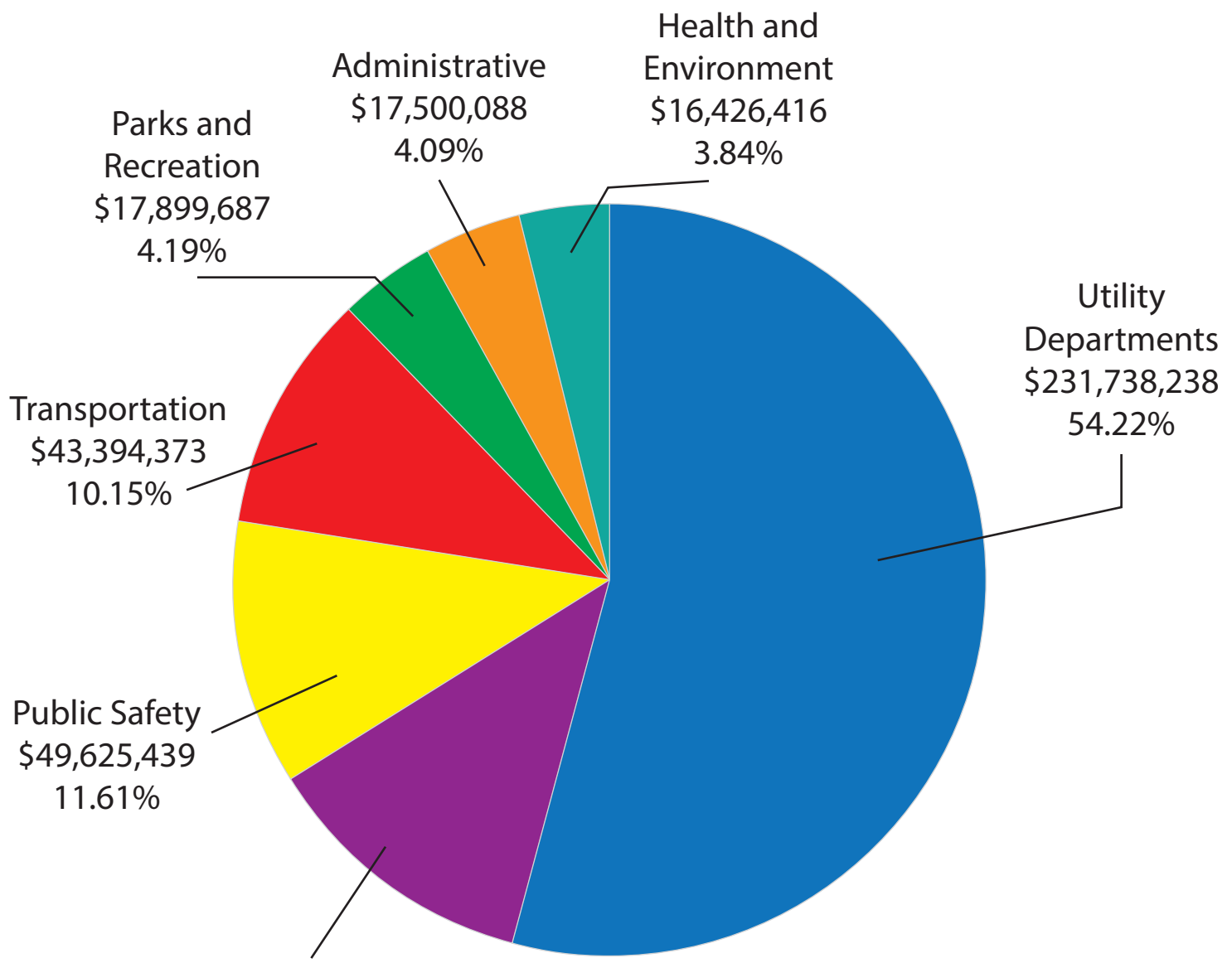
This means fewer shoppers, fewer renters and an end to the student housing boom.







# PROGRAMS AND PRIORITIES: Fiscal Year 2018 Budget



Utility Departments	\$231,738,238
Supporting Activities	\$50,841,811
Public Safety	\$49,625,439
Transportation	\$43,394,373
Parks and Recreation	\$17,899,687
Administrative	\$17,500,088
Health and Environment	\$16,426,416
<b>Total Actual Net Spending</b>	<b>\$427,426,052</b>
Other Special Revenue Funds	\$27,804,828
<b>Total Budgeted</b>	<b>\$455,230,880</b>

# HISTORY

Columbia has a rich history dating back nearly 200 years. The Columbia area was once part of the Mississippian culture and home to the Mound Builders. When European explorers arrived the area was populated by the Osage and Missouri tribes. In 1678, La Salle claimed all of Missouri for France. The Lewis and Clark Expedition passed by the area on the Missouri River in 1803. In 1806, Daniel Boone and his sons established a salt lick 40 miles northwest of Columbia. The Booneslick Trail wound from Kentucky through St. Charles, Missouri to the salt lick.

Smithton was settled in 1818 near what is now Walnut and Garth. Due to poor water supply, Smithton was abandoned in May 1821. The approximately 20 people resettled near the southeast corner of Broadway and Fifth Street, which they called Columbia. That same year, Columbia was designated the seat of the new County of Boone. In 1826, five years after Missouri became the 24th state, Columbia became incorporated and created a five-member Board of Trustees. At that time, the town was bordered by Park Avenue, Hitt Street, Elm Street and on the west by the cemetery entrance road.

In 1830 the first newspaper was started; in 1832 the first theater in the state was opened; and in 1835 the state's first agricultural fair was held. By 1839 the population (13,000) and wealth of Boone County was exceeded in Missouri only by that of St. Louis County.

The Columbia Female Academy, now known as Stephens College, was founded in 1833, making it the second-oldest women's college in the country. The University of Missouri was established in 1839 thanks to James S. Rollins and the community's financial contributions. MU's Academic Hall burned in 1892 which led citizens to raise \$50,000 toward rebuilding and providing adequate water for fire protection to keep the campus in Columbia. Christian Female College, which later became the current Columbia College rounds out the three local colleges which call Columbia home.

Columbia's city limits were expanded in 1845 and the Board of Trustees was enlarged in 1870 from five to nine because the population had grown to 2,500. The sale of slaves in Columbia ended in 1864; by the beginning of the Civil War, the slave population reached more than 5,000.

In March 1892, the city was incorporated as a city of the third class with a Mayor/Council form of government and was divided into four wards with an elected mayor and Council. During the Great Depression local public works projects, many supported with federal dollars, and Water and Light revenues kept the community viable. Columbia became a transportation crossroads when U.S. Routes 63 and 40, the latter of which is concurrent with present-day Interstate 70, were routed through the city. The first major commercial flight left Columbia municipal airfield in 1939. Between 1940 and 1950, the city's population increased about 75 percent from 18,400 to almost 32,000 people. Some of that growth is attributed to the G.I. Bill bringing students to MU.

Voters approved Columbia's City Charter in 1949 which set up the Council/Manager form of government, still with four Council wards and a member-at-large. This is the form of government that we still have today. The election in 1973 was the first where a seven-member City Council was selected. According to Census data, Columbia reached a population of 100,000 between 2000 and 2010. The 2015 Census population estimate was 119,108.

In May 2015, a ceremony was held to recognize the historic "Sharp End" area which stretched from Fifth to Sixth streets on both sides of Walnut Street from the early 1900s to the 1960s.

The Sharp End was a robust area with a wide variety of businesses owned by African-American citizens and became the cultural heart of the African-American community.

Today, Columbia is the fourth largest city in Missouri. Strong growth in the areas of medicine, education, technology, insurance, and entrepreneurial start-up companies make Columbia a supreme place for legacy and new business development. Award-winning schools, parks and trails, local artistry opportunities and many other quality of life amenities make Columbia an ideal place to raise a family, start a business or retire.



**Columbia High School, 1908 ca.**  
*Courtesy of the Missouri State Historical Society*



**First Christian Church, 1950 ca.**  
*Courtesy of the Missouri State Historical Society*



**Downtown Columbia, 1950 ca.**  
*Courtesy of the Missouri State Historical Society*



## *Dear Community Members:*

Columbia is a great place for families, young professionals, retirees, and residents looking for the right balance between a small, close knit community and a large city with many amenities.

The City Council is constantly working on policies and projects to improve our community, but clear priorities rise to the top: public safety, transparency and sustainable growth. These priorities are important when making decisions for Columbia's future.

Keeping our community safe is our top priority. In the past year, we have increased funding for public safety to attract and retain the best law enforcement officers to truly make Columbia a safe community where everyone can live, work, learn and play.

An open, active and engaged citizenry makes our Council discussions more informed and our community stronger. In August 2016, the City Council approved a transparency ordinance to make city government open, honest and transparent. To complement the policy, a records request portal was created on the homepage of CoMo.gov so citizens and members of the media can easily request information and track the process. In addition, a new Community Dashboard helps taxpayers map progress of infrastructure and Public Works projects the City is completing.

As Columbia continues to grow, it's important to consider sustainability and proper growth while respecting the history of our community. The City Council recently reformed Columbia's outdated zoning code by requiring sufficient infrastructure before development occurs, increasing downtown parking requirements, and strengthening protections for neighborhoods. In June 2017, I signed on to the Climate Mayors initiative to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, protect the local environment and improve economic competitiveness.

I am especially proud of the work we are doing on economic development and job creation. Columbia continues to be a great place to do business. Recently, we've seen an increase in companies expanding to Columbia with family-supporting jobs that strengthen our local economy.

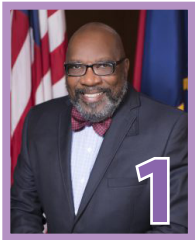
We can all do something to make our community better. I hope you will join me in this process to make Columbia a place where everyone can thrive.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "B. Treece". The signature is stylized and fluid.

Mayor Brian Treece

573-874-7222  
mayor@CoMo.gov  
term expires April 2019



**Clyde Ruffin**

573-268-4783

ward1@CoMo.gov

term expires April 2020

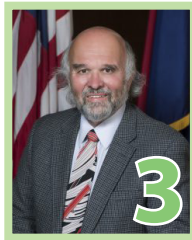


**Michael Trapp**

573-442-8828

ward2@CoMo.gov

term expires April 2018

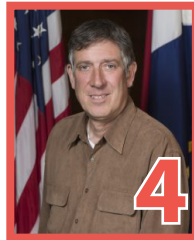


**Karl Skala**

573-474-2195

ward3@CoMo.gov

term expires April 2019

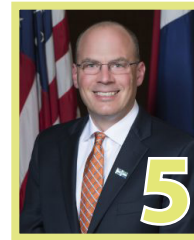


**Ian Thomas**

573-239-7916

ward4@CoMo.gov

term expires April 2019



**Matt Pitzer**

573-823-7037

ward5@CoMo.gov

term expires April 2020

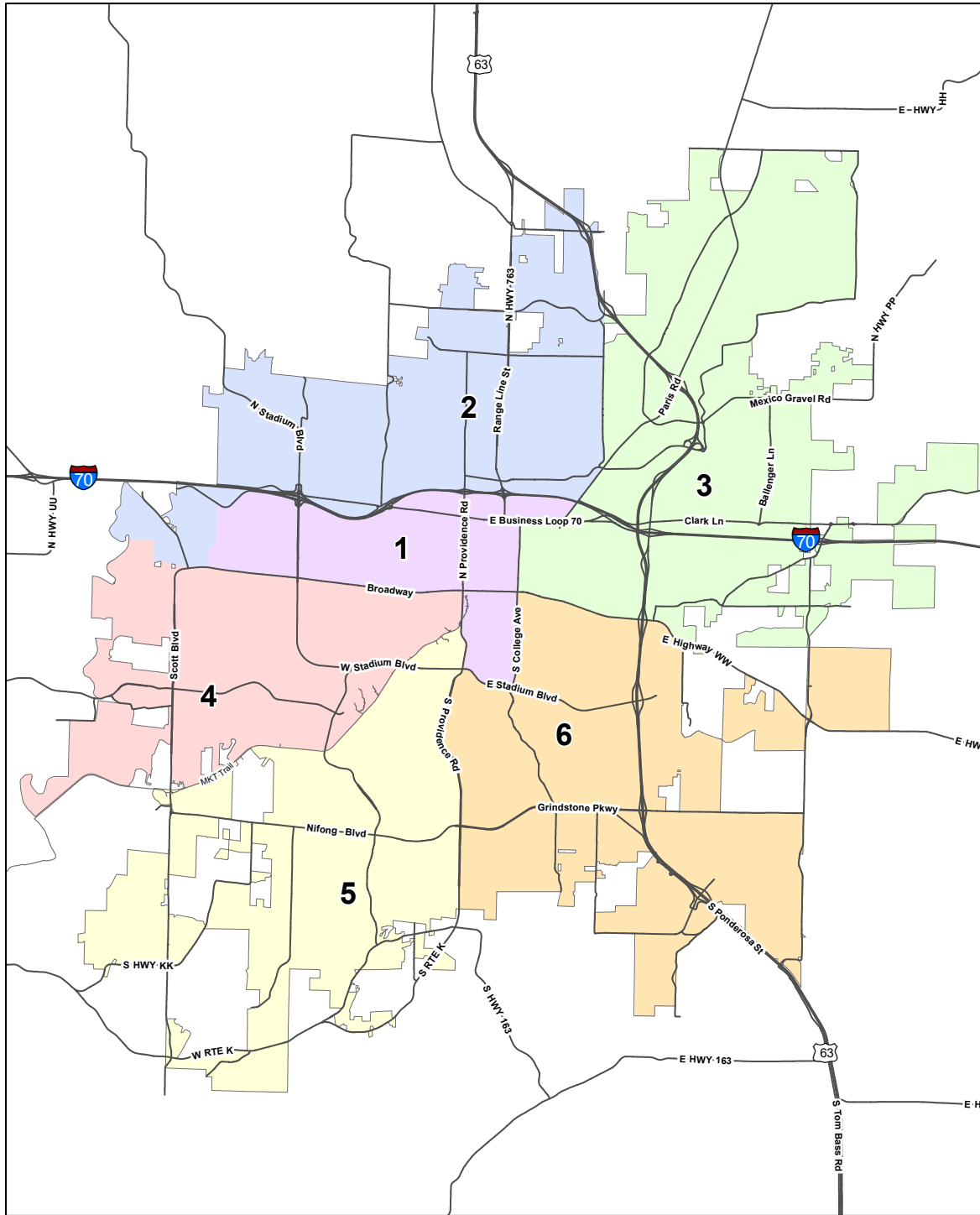


**Betsy Peters**

573-874-7812

ward6@CoMo.gov

term expires April 2018



**Legend**

	First Ward		Third Ward		Fifth Ward
	Second Ward		Fourth Ward		Sixth Ward

0 0.75 1.5 Miles  
Date: 8/25/2017



**Council Wards**  
**CITY of COLUMBIA, MISSOURI**



## Missouri Riverbilly Band

Lisa Bartlett, Acrylic on canvas

2016 City of Columbia  
Commemorative Poster Winner



Jessica Bargate, *Katy Trail*  
Oil on canvas



Jean Forrester, *Waterlilies*  
Colored pencil drawing



Madeleine LeMieux and CARE  
Art Gallery Students, *You are the Seed*  
Painted mural



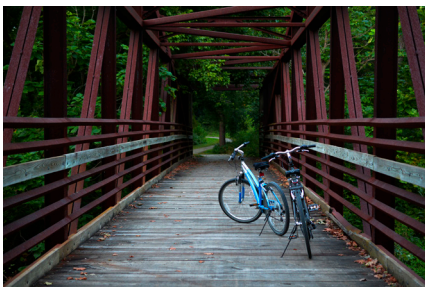
Youngshin Park, *Bridged*  
Photograph



Naomi Sugino Lear, *After the Rain*  
Oil on canvas



Edgar I Ailor III, *Booches - Since 1884*  
Photograph




Youngshin Park, *Come to Our Side*  
Photograph



Madeleine LeMieux and CARE  
Art Gallery Students, *Make a Brighter Future*  
Painted mural



**CITY OF COLUMBIA**   
**CONTACT CENTER**  
**573·874·CITY**  
CONNECTING PEOPLE WITH ANSWERS

Call **573-874-2489** for all of your questions and for City residential services including:

- ✓ Trash Service
- ✓ Recycling
- ✓ Water & Light Issues
- ✓ Street Concerns
- ✓ Sewer Issues
- ✓ Storm Water Issues
- ✓ Energy Efficiency Programs
- ✓ And more...

**Social Media Channels**



City of Columbia, Missouri (Gov't. Page.)

Columbia Missouri Police Department

Columbia Missouri Public Works

Columbia Water & Light

Columbia/Boone County Department of  
Public Health and Human Services

Columbia, MO Fire Department

Columbia Parks and Recreation

City of Columbia - Office of Cultural Affairs

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Visit Columbia MO

Columbia Regional Airport-FlyMidMo



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@CoMoWaterLight

@CoMo\_HealthDept

@Columbia\_Fire

@CoMoParksandRec

@comoarts

@GoCOMOTransit

@VisitColumbiaMO

@FLYFROMCOU

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CoMo Trails

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Public Art Guide on Otocast

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www.CoMo.gov  
City of Columbia, Missouri  
701 E. Broadway  
Columbia, MO 65201



City Channel  
[youtube.com/columbiacitychannel](https://youtube.com/columbiacitychannel)

All City published videos including Council meetings, events and informational pieces can be found here.



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