



City of
University
City

2024

ANNUAL REPORT



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FROM THE CITY MANAGER

On behalf of the Mayor, Council, and the City of University City, I am honored to present the 2024 Annual Report. Our mission remains steadfast: to provide the highest level of services, vibrant shopping opportunities, recreational spaces, and safe, welcoming homes. As we reflect on 2024, I am proud of the strides our City has made in achieving the priorities set by our citizens, community and leadership. This report highlights some of these significant accomplishments.

The year 2024 marked a period of strong private-sector investment in our community. Due to the immense success of the Market at Olive, including beginning construction for the largest Target store in the St. Louis marketplace, the development team led by Clayco, Seneca Commercial Real Estate and Hutkin Properties Group LLC finalized the sale of its remaining parcels to Dierbergs in late 2024. As initially envisioned, the Market at Olive development is poised to boast three major anchors: Costco, Target and Dierbergs, as well as other well-known and popular brand businesses. These achievements reflect the hard work and vision of our Mayor, Council, and community.

While the Market at Olive was a highlight, it was not the only significant development. Crescent Plumbing completed construction and opened its doors in mid-2024, contributing an additional 76,640-square-foot warehouse, retail showroom and office space. Avenir Apartments at 8680 Delmar welcomed new residents with the opening of their 262-unit complex. Additionally, Subtext's Local on Delmar began construction in the Delmar Loop, and once completed, will introduce 259 apartment units to the Delmar Loop, as well as 7,100-square-feet of new ground floor commercial space to our community.

In the public sector, the Mayor and Council committed to significant investments by approving the renovation of the Police Annex facility and Trinity Court building. In 2024, a \$27 million bond project was authorized to finance these renovations. Upon completion, the Police Annex will feature a state-of-the-art 36,000-square-foot, three-story facility housing Police Headquarters and advanced training facilities, making it one of the most modern in the region. The 8,512-square-foot, two story Trinity Court building will house our Traffic Violations Bureau and Court. Both facilities are expected to open by mid-2026, signaling a new era of service for our residents.

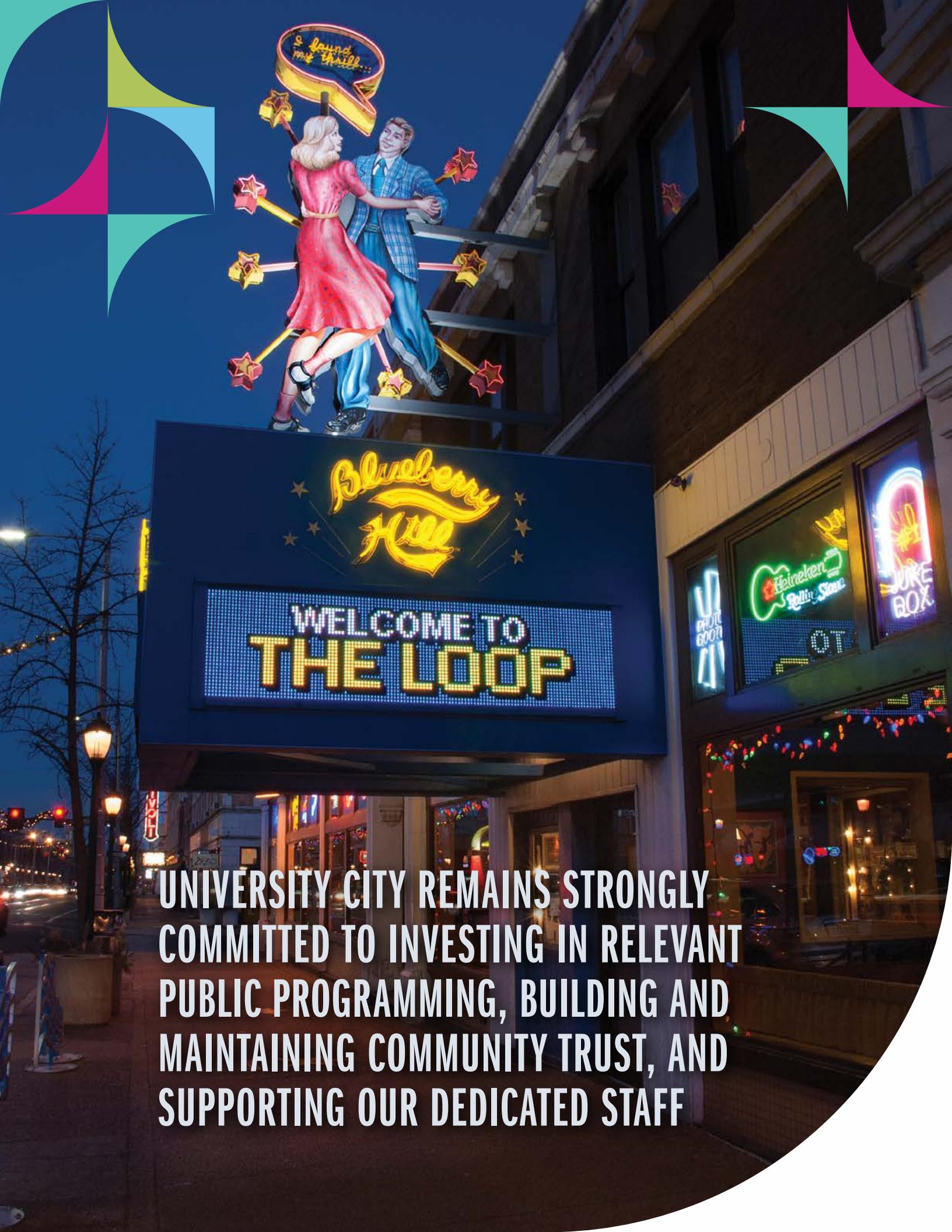
A great city is built on a clear vision and strong planning. In 2022, the Mayor and Council approved Vision 2040, and in 2024, they adopted the updated City of University City Comprehensive Plan, as recommended by the University City Planning Commission. The Planning Commission's dedication, including extensive stakeholder engagement, has been exemplary. Special recognition is extended to Chair Margaret Holly for her outstanding leadership in bringing this project to fruition.

While violent crime remains a challenge in some cities within our greater metropolitan region, University City has experienced a continued reduction in violent crime under the exemplary leadership of Police Chief Larry Hampton. From 2019 to 2024 there has been a 45 percent overall decrease in violent crime. Chief Hampton and his team deserve commendation for their dedication to ensuring the safety of our community.

I remain optimistic about University City's future. With the steadfast leadership of our Mayor and Council and the support of citizens in our community, I am confident that we will achieve our shared vision for a thriving, vibrant University City. On behalf of our talented and dedicated staff, it is my privilege to present this 2024 Annual Report to the Mayor, Council, and residents of University City.



Gregory Rose, ICMA-CM, City Manager



UNIVERSITY CITY REMAINS STRONGLY
COMMITTED TO INVESTING IN RELEVANT
PUBLIC PROGRAMMING, BUILDING AND
MAINTAINING COMMUNITY TRUST, AND
SUPPORTING OUR DEDICATED STAFF



COMMUNICATIONS

Evolving with Progress: Commitment to Transparency and Connection

The Communications Department serves as the cornerstone of University City's connection to residents, embodying our commitment to transparency, accessibility and meaningful engagement. As University City grows and evolves, so does our approach to communications – adapting to reflect the social and economic advancements of our vibrant community. Our team is dedicated to creating impactful, inclusive and forward-thinking communications strategies that resonate with residents, stakeholders and visitors alike.

As University City continues to flourish, the Communications Department remains committed to adapting and innovating to align with the City's progress. By prioritizing access, inclusivity and transparency, we empower residents to build a stronger, more connected community together.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Unified messaging with clear and authentic communications that mirrors University City's values, strengthening trust and fostering deeper connections with the community
- Expanded digital engagement through enhanced interaction on platforms like Nextdoor, Instagram, Facebook, and X (formerly Twitter), broadening the reach and impact of City messaging and ensuring a diverse range of residents stay informed
- Delivered comprehensive content strategy through dynamic and high-quality print and digital materials, including weekly email bulletins, ROARS newsletter, and University City Calendar, ensuring residents feel connected to City projects and priorities
- Transformed UCITYMO.org website with reimaged user-friendly design that prioritizes accessibility, inclusivity and a seamless navigation experience for residents and visitors

- Implemented policies to standardized communication practices across departments with a robust Communications Policy, aligning efforts with industry best practices
- Strengthened employee engagement with a dedicated employee newsletter to enhance internal collaboration and communication

ONGOING

- Refining processes for internal communications to promote clarity and alignment across City departments
- Strategically refreshing the City's brand to reflect its dynamic character and foster deeper connections across all platforms



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Driving Investment and Growth Opportunities

The Economic Development Department provides advice and guidance to businesses locating in and/or expanding within University City, including financing, workforce solutions and technical assistance that encourages investment in the community and enhances the lives of our citizens.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Awarded \$145,497 to FY24 Façade Improvement Program applicants
- Allocated \$150,000 to the Façade Improvement Program for FY25
- Awarded \$335,950 in EDRST funds to local businesses and the Loop Special Business District for various projects and programs
- Conducted graffiti removal and cleaning of the Olive Corridor and Delmar Loop
- Grand openings of First Watch and Sports Clips at the Market at Olive development
- Addition of Target and Dierbergs to the Market at Olive development
- Groundbreaking for Subtext Local on Delmar development
- Received award of \$500,000 to deploy EV charging stations throughout the Delmar Loop

ONGOING

- Construction of TRU Hotel
- Re-establish Business Retention and Expansion Program
- Beautification project at Olive and I-170
- Creation of marketing plan



FINANCE

Providing Prudent Fiscal Management

The Finance Department administers all financial affairs of University City government to achieve long-term financial stability and health, preserve the City's financial integrity and credibility, and strive to maintain the highest possible bond rating for the City.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Received Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report for fiscal year 2023
- Received Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for fiscal year 2024
- Developed and managed a balanced budget
- Calculated annual City property tax rates
- Collected fees from ambulance services under City control
- Collected refuse and other bills owed to City
- Collected fees from applications for business, liquor and dog licenses
- Council approved a one percent cost of living adjustment for non-uniformed retirees
- Council amended purchase of Creditable Service for non-uniformed pension, allowing certain former City employees who are rehired to purchase creditable service.

ONGOING

- Five-year financial forecast for revenue and expenditures
- Five-year Capital Improvement Plan to meet citizen needs
- Feasibility assessment for using purchasing cards to control costs
- Continue converting to electronic record keeping for environmental sustainability
- Work with Public Works and City Manager's office to create a Solid Waste Advisory Committee to evaluate the Rate Analysis Report
- Continue to work with Human Resources to identify financial management training needs for accounting system
- Work with Human Resources to streamline financial and payroll systems and/or upgrade the existing payroll and Human Resources system
- Continue to assess and improve employee pension programs
- Update accounting policy and procedures
- Create asset management strategy and execution
- Continue to work with State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA) for flood related costs reimbursement caused by the historic July 2022 floods in University City
- Implementation of online license payments
- Developing a designated automated phone line to take payments



HUMAN RESOURCES

Ensuring Employee Well-Being

Working across all departments, Human Resources (HR) strives to ensure that University City employees have what they need to be their best, most impactful selves at work. Serving as a steward of motivation, resource for change management, and partner for management development and strategic solutions, HR plays a vital role in fostering organizational success. The department establishes and maintains equitable and transparent employment practices to support City programs, enhance services and ensure employee well-being. HR also develops, implements and educates employees on policies that promote positive organizational behavior, as well as streamline processes and operational efficiencies. Additionally, HR encourages an environment that prioritizes personal and professional development while recognizing outstanding performance.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Hired 52 full-time, part-time and library employees
- Recognized 56 employees with awards for “Years of Service” and “Caught You Doing Something Good”
- Updated staff positions with new title of Major for Police Department, and reclassified titles of Assistant City Manager to Deputy City Manager and General Maintenance Worker to Facilities Manager
- Completed electronic scanning and storing of all personnel records for secure and efficient access
- Conducted wellness team initiatives with annual biometric blood test screening and onsite mammogram van
- Conducted safety team initiatives with over 20 employees completing OSHA certification
- Enhanced training with Franklin Covey consultant for a staff retreat, providing customer service and leadership training for more than 30 employees and supervisors
- Provided regular status updates on annual evaluation dates for all employees
- Completed second survey of three-year Gallup Employee Engagement Survey program to improve employee engagement across all departments with over 60% participation
- Held annual employee appreciation events

ONGOING

- Review and receive final approval on the updated Administrative Regulations (ARs)
- Distribute and train employees on the updated ARs
- Expand and streamline University City intern and mentor programs
- Develop a training program on internal support services
- Working with each department to conduct “stay” interviews with current employees
- Automate employee verifications
- Provide more HR self-service access and opportunities for University City employees



INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Providing Effective Support

The Information Technology (IT) Department provides University City government offices with effective and cost-efficient technology solutions, reliable technology systems and timely support to enable various departments to provide vital services.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Completed Office 365 migration
- Upgraded outdated hardware
- Replaced outdated switches and battery backups

ONGOING

- Create replacement plan for IT assets
- Replace audio/visual equipment at the Heman Park Community Center
- Digitizing paper documents



PARKS, RECREATION AND PUBLIC AREAS MAINTENANCE

Preserving the Community's Quality of Life

The Parks, Recreation & Public Areas Maintenance Department provides programs and services that enrich our community through stewardship of the environment, quality recreation programs and facilities, and fun for individuals and families

PARKS

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Refurbished playgrounds and the dog park with double-ground woodchips
- Awarded \$575,000 grant to build splash pad at Heman Park Pool
- Sealed and striped Metcalf Ave. parking lot
- Refurbished athletic fields #1, #2, #5, #6 and #10 at Heman Park
- Awarded \$90,000 matching grant for playgrounds from GameTime for Metcalf Park and Rabe Park
- Purchased picnic tables for next to splash pad
- Purchased two 2-ton dump trucks
- Refurbished batting cage at Jack Buck Field
- Restored the Park Maintenance Division complex
- Restored the Street Maintenance Division complex
- Replaced soap dispensers in restrooms at all public parks
- Added new Playground Guardian Park Protector inspection software
- Completed Memorial Fountain project

ONGOING

- Install shade structure at dog park
- Build splash pad at Heman Park Pool using Municipal Park Grant funding
- Build new high school regulation baseball field at Millar Park using Municipal Park Grant funding
- Apply for \$575,000 Municipal Park Grant 2026 for Heman Park playground
- Apply for \$575,000 matching grant for playground equipment with 2026 GameTime
- Apply asphalt overlay on parking lots at Heman Park tennis courts and Centennial Commons
- Repair cracks, seal and stripe three new basketball courts in Heman Park
- Establish a bench and tree memorial program
- Refurbish playgrounds and dog park with double-ground woodchips
- Improve appearance of Heman Park parking lot with new vertical poles
- Replace playground at Metcalf Park
- Replace playground at Rabe Park
- Purchase picnic table umbrellas and standards for splash pad at Heman Park Pool



PARKS

ONGOING (continued)

- Purchase two solar powered scoreboards for Jack Buck and Millar Park Fields
- Repair retaining wall at Lewis Park pond
- Refurbish fill around walking trail at Millar Park
- Annually refurbish all ball fields

RECREATION

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Restored Centennial Commons and Heman Park Swimming Pool for full facility access and regular operating hours and fitness/aquatic class schedules
- Reopened Centennial Commons “patron favorite areas” including weight area with new state-of-the-art equipment, new gymnasium flooring striped for basketball, volleyball and pickleball, and new turf for indoor soccer facility
- Completed successful eighth season with Cardinal Care Redbird Rookies Youth Summer Sports Program sponsored by the St. Louis Cardinals
- Introduced new programming, including VIP members only pre-opening *Heman Pool Party*, *Kid's Holiday Charcuterie Workshop*, *Mother's Day Weekend Sip and Paint*, and monthly *Laughter, Lunch and Bingo* for seniors 60+ featuring special surprise bingo announcer dignitaries such as University City's Mayor, City Manager, Police Chief, Park Director and others
- Celebrated donation from *Laughter, Lunch and Bingo* senior participants of 174 pounds of non-perishable food contributed to Operation Food Seach, providing Thanksgiving meals for 44 families
- Brought back annual programs such as *Go Red for Women Luncheon*, *National Walking Day*, *Puppy Pool Party*, *Community Yard Sale* and *Trunk or Treat*
- Replaced commercial appliances at Centennial Commons and Heman Park Community Center

ONGOING

- Convert Cub Care into Century Room III for additional class space/rentals
- Convert Teen Room into “old school” gaming room with billiards, foosball, air hockey, etc.
- Collaborate with ArchWell Health to provide monthly *Table Talk* discussions on senior issues
- Launch first season of St. Louis Cardinals Nike RBI League sports program for teens age 14-18
- Install splash pad and seating pavilion at Heman Park Pool
- Host return of the Recreation Division Job Fair for teen, adults and seniors
- Offer personal training instructors and programs
- Implement *Summer Youth Enrichment Program* for resident children ages 5 to 12
- Return youth programming for preschoolers including *Little Kickers*, *Little Hoopers*, *Little Netters* and *Little Batters and Catchers*, etc.
- Reopen private rentals for Heman Park Community Center
- Return of online program/event registration and facility reservation inquiry



GOLF COURSE

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Constructed retaining wall around outdoor restroom
- Planted eight new trees
- Continued clearing wood lines along #1, #2, #3 tees
- Replaced eight leaking or faulty irrigation heads
- Resodded 10,000-sq.-ft of fairway lost to winter kill
- Shaped and sodded new walkup for #8 Red Tee
- Completed stockpiling dirt for new #1, #2 tees and practice green at clubhouse
- Installed new drainage features in irrigation system to improve system blowout
- Removed 48 irrigation heads in preparation for range project upgrade
- Replaced three faulty isolation valves
- Built retaining wall at #7 tee flower bed
- Upgraded E-Key program to Range Star user-friendly payment platform
- Increased golf rounds played by 20%
- Increased concessions sales by 20% and merchandise sales by 10%
- Replaced worn rental club sets
- Leased new golf carts for the course

ONGOING

- Add new pull cart fleet for golfers' bags
- Replace ball washer at driving range
- Replace worn balls and balls not conforming to 80% flight restriction
- Set pricing and stock new vending machine at #5 tee
- Expand variety of hot food at concessions
- Add range shed for attendant/concessions at driving range
- Develop master plan to manage increased traffic around Ruth Park golf course and driving range resulting from the Market at Olive and new apartment and condominium developments
- Shape, irrigate and sod new complexes at #1 and #2 tees
- Contract for building USGA putting green near clubhouse
- Conduct feasibility studies and conceptual design for driving range and new clubhouse

FORESTRY

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Completed third area of five-year pruning cycle for street trees
- Developed long-range urban forestry management plan
- Removed 214 trees
- Pruned 1,432 trees
- Planted 188 trees

ONGOING

- Explore adding watering truck for volunteers to help with newly planted trees
- Remove hazardous trees
- Follow cyclical pruning schedule for street trees
- Plant replacement trees at vacant sites



PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

Ensuring Sustainable Growth and Development

The Department of Planning and Development actively promotes University City as a diverse, safe and dynamic community while enhancing a wide range of living, working and recreational opportunities and choices for all citizens and visitors.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Continued development for the Market at Olive, including building plans approved for Starbucks, Five Guys, 7 Brew Coffee and Target, among others
- Approved rezoning and final development plan for Dierbergs at the Market at Olive on south side of Olive
- Approved rezoning and final plan for the Local on Delmar mixed-use development in the Delmar Loop
- Approved building permits for Tru Hotel on Kingsland and Del Pietro's restaurant at the northeast corner of Delmar and Hanley
- Approved building permit in Ward 3 for Urban Sprouts expansion on Olive
- Approved site plan and building permit for Royal Banks of Missouri at the southeast corner of Olive and McKnight
- Approved revised final development plan for Crown Center for Senior Living on Delcrest
- Secured funding for flood buy-out program with Missouri State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA) and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
- Processed several thousand applications and collected approximately \$1.4 million in permit fees for building occupancy and others

ONGOING

- Development of additional lots for the Market at Olive
- Comprehensive update to City's Zoning Ordinance



PUBLIC SAFETY/FIRE & EMS

Providing Quality Services to Citizens We Serve

The University City Fire & EMS Department is dedicated to protecting the lives and property of citizens, businesses and visitors in our community and supporting our community and its organizations with sound fire prevention, emergency medical services and public education opportunities and resources.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Responded to more than 6,735 calls for service, including 221 structure fires, 641 mutual aid responses and over 5,056 EMS situations
- First member of fire department obtained Missouri Community Paramedic license
- Continued providing CPR training for residents and businesses
- Continued providing fire safety training and smoke detectors to residents of University City
- Increased number of firefighters trained for swift water emergencies

ONGOING

- Collaborating with regional healthcare partners to establish working model for non-emergency home medical visits
- Assisting residents who have mobility limitations with outreach program to contact contractors for possible wheelchair access to their homes



PUBLIC SAFETY/POLICE

Community Policing for University City

The University City Police Department (UCPD), in accordance with the City Municipal Code, protects the rights of individuals, enforces City ordinances and regulations, and preserves peace, order and safety.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Hired 17 new employees and two employees retired
- Added two members to University City Police Focus Group
- Conducted two hiring events for UCPD (Spring/Fall)
- Graduated eight police recruits from law enforcement training academies
- Continued Missouri Police Chiefs Association Accreditation and Certification Program for law enforcement service
- Completed more than 3,000 training hours for all officers
- Conducted 14 security audits of residences and businesses
- Continued implementation of Security Camera Project and RING Neighbors Network
- Gifted free RING doorbell cameras in strategically significant locations for crime prevention
- Continued Active Shooter Training and MACTAC Training in area schools in collaboration with University City Fire Department and Washington University Police Department
- Communicated *Table-Top Informative Active Intruder* updates for top administrators at University City School District hosted by police chief and school superintendent
- Installed new security cameras within University City
- Continued monthly meetings for Loop Area Security initiative with Washington University

ONGOING

- Coordinating with architects and engineers for building design and construction renovation of the Annex building for new University City Police Department headquarters

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Enhanced community policing strategy based on “6 Pillars” from President Obama’s 21st Century Police Task Force Report
- Coordinated Thanksgiving and Christmas food giveaways for children and families in University City
- Hosted *National Night Out* in collaboration with University City School District and University City focus group members
- Participated in University City High School *Young Men’s Night Out and Donuts with Dads* in collaboration with National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives (NOBLE)
- Participated in University City High School *Beyond the Badge* in collaboration with NOBLE
- Held *Coffee with a Cop* and *Pizza with the Police* year-round programs and added *Chit Chat with the Chief*
- Held monthly UCPD sponsored focus group meetings and end of the year holiday event for members



PUBLIC WORKS ADMINISTRATION & ENGINEERING

The Public Works Administration and Engineering Department maintains and enhances transportation infrastructure to provide safe, accessible and acceptable levels of service and accommodations for all modes of transit and mobility; provides responsible municipal services efficiently and cost effectively; maintains University City governmental buildings and their operational systems; ensures compliance for all municipal operations with Federal, State and local laws and regulations; and coordinates municipal operations with other jurisdictional public agencies and utilities for the health, welfare and safety of the public.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Administer Sanitary Sewer Lateral Repair program
- Maintain all of the approximately 750 City-owned streetlights
- Custodial care and maintenance of all City facilities
- Review all projects involving public infrastructure within City rights-of-way and parks, as well as stormwater management plans and floodplain development
- Operate City's transfer station and manage collection and proper disposal of solid waste through the Solid Waste Management Division
- Study sanitation rates and services provided to our community
- Add new automated truck to fleet to improve efficiencies
- Evaluate and monitor City's infrastructure, including streets and management of construction projects
- Initiated renovation of historic Annex and Trinity buildings
- Completed Westgate Ave. street paving and sidewalk reconstruction
- Completed final design for Phase II Canton Ave.
- Continued design and planning for Pershing Ave. rehabilitation, Kempland Bridge replacement and Ferguson Ave. sidewalks

- Continued design for Community Development Block Grant project for Polk Ave., Kempland Place and Greensfelder Park parking lot
- Completed 90% of Stormwater Master Plan
- Completed OSHA training, HR training, and Department of Natural Resources/Metropolitan Sewer District Pollution Prevention/Good Housekeeping

ONGOING

- Final phase of construction implementation for improvements to Pershing Ave., Kempland Bridge, Ferguson Ave. and Phase II Canton Ave.
- Final phase of construction implementation for Community Development Block Grant project for Polk Ave., Kempland Place and Greensfelder Park parking lot
- Complete Stormwater Master Plan
- Continue Community Development Block Grant program
- Continue renovation of Annex building for new state-of-the-art Police Department and Trinity building for Municipal Courts
- Complete study of sanitation rates and services
- Take delivery of new alley truck

ELECTED OFFICIALS AND DEPARTMENT HEADS

CITY COUNCIL



TERRY CROW, MAYOR



STEVE MCMAHON



JOHN TIEMAN



BWAYNE SMOOTHERSON



JEFF HALES



DENNIS FULLER



STACY CLAY

DEPARTMENT ADMINISTRATION



GREGORY ROSE
City Manager



BROOKE SHARP
Deputy City Manager



CHIEF LARRY HAMPTON, JR.
Director of Public Safety/Police



CHIEF WILLIAM HINSON
Director of Public Safety/
Fire & EMS



KEITH COLE
Director of Finance



AMY WILLIAMS
Director of Human Resources



DARIN GIRDLER
Director of Parks, Recreation
and Public Areas Maintenance



JOHN WAGNER,
Director of Planning
and Development



MIRELA CELAJ
Interim Director of
Public Works



JOHN F. MULLIGAN, JR.
City Attorney



LARETTE REESE
City Clerk



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