

CITY'S OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER

# MAPLEWOOD LIVING

December 2020



## Year in Review

By Melinda Coleman, City Manager

COVID-19 has created nine months of disruptions, unfulfilled plans, economic hardships, and, for too many, illness and death. At this point most of us are looking to put 2020 in the rear view mirror.

Since the pandemic started, the City of Maplewood's priority has been to help ensure the health and wellbeing of our community and staff. This includes economic and fiscal sustainability. Early on, city department's leaders worked with City Council to help us achieve these goals.

Weeks before Governor Tim Walz issued the stay-at-home order, the City started making contingency plans for remote working. IT quickly ramped up virtual capabilities, allowing a significant number of staffers to make a smooth transition to off-site working. IT operationalized Zoom virtual meetings to continue holding normal City Council & Commission meetings remotely.

### Business Continuity During the Pandemic

IT and Finance also collaborated to keep most DMV operations and building construction permitting going virtually, via a secure outdoor drop box and online payment systems. The City has since added an online appointment system at the DMV which has allowed us to serve customers more safely and efficiently.

"Staff took these tools and helped adapt them to best perform their duties," said Mychal Fowlds, Maplewood IT Director. "As departments continue to adapt their processes, IT will continue to provide assistance to best serve the public."

### CARES Act Funding

Helping fund these IT upgrades and other COVID-related measures, has been more than \$3 million in federal funding. It also allowed Maplewood to expand a partnership with the Maplewood YMCA Community Center, which has provided more than 60,000 meals to those in need in our area. The partnership also generated coat drives and backpack giveaways for students. A portion of the funding also went to health care providers to aid in COVID response.

Maplewood's Public Safety Department was proactive in seeking out funding and partners to secure protective equipment to keep Police and Fire/EMS staff safe in the field during the pandemic's early stages.

Based on the need to trim the 2020 budget, City Council made several cost cutting decisions, including halting recreational programs and Nature Center events. This fiscal stewardship also has the City on track to pass a 0 percent tax levy for 2021, providing some relief for homeowners, renters and businesses. Despite major adjustments to battle COVID-19's impacts, core city functions and initiatives to serve the community remain on track.

### Public Works

In Public Works, this included three city-led street re-construction projects along with review and permitting of private contractor developments. Adapting to recommended COVID staffing procedures helped limit potential outbreaks, and allowed crews to continue performing infrastructure maintenance, including street repairs, sewer work, fleet maintenance, and park upkeep. In addition, Public Works crews also led upgrades to the buildings' ventilation

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## Elected Officials

- Marylee Abrams: Mayor (612) 322-1620  
[marylee.abrams@maplewoodmn.gov](mailto:marylee.abrams@maplewoodmn.gov)
- Kathleen Juenemann: Councilmember (651) 771-3670  
[kathleen.juenemann@maplewoodmn.gov](mailto:kathleen.juenemann@maplewoodmn.gov)
- Bryan Smith: Councilmember (651) 888-0085  
[bryan.smith@maplewoodmn.gov](mailto:bryan.smith@maplewoodmn.gov)
- Bill Knutson: Councilmember (612) 290-9778  
[bill.knutson@maplewoodmn.gov](mailto:bill.knutson@maplewoodmn.gov)
- Sylvia Neblett: Councilmember (651) 766-3851  
[sylvia.neblett@maplewoodmn.gov](mailto:sylvia.neblett@maplewoodmn.gov)

## City Manager

- Melinda Coleman: City Manager (651) 249-2055  
[melinda.coleman@maplewoodmn.gov](mailto:melinda.coleman@maplewoodmn.gov)

## Frequently Called Numbers

- City Hall (651) 249-2000
- Maplewood Community Center (651) 747-0922
- Parks and Recreation (651) 249-2120
- Public Works (651) 249-2400
- Police Non-Emergency (651) 767-0640

Visit the City website at [www.maplewoodmn.gov](http://www.maplewoodmn.gov) for the meeting schedule of the City Council, Commissions and Boards.



To advertise in this newsletter call Joe Sheeran at (651) 249-2061 or email [joe.sheeran@maplewoodmn.gov](mailto:joe.sheeran@maplewoodmn.gov).

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## Year in Review | continued

system to help limit the spread of Covid-19.

### Community Development

Most private development also progressed as planned, including one of the City's biggest projects – redeveloping the former Rainbow grocery site into Maplewood's first Hy-Vee complex, which features a liquor store and convenience store/gas station. Other developments include a new market-rate apartment building off County Road C and Highway 61 and the construction of a new health care building on the 1700 block of Beam Ave. Maplewood will also be adding a long-stay hotel on County Road D to house people conducting business in the area and out-of-town patients and medical professionals at St. John's.

### Parks and Recreation

While the Parks and Recreation Department cut most direct programming, it saw an increase in people using parks, trails and open spaces. This included three successful virtual programs to get people safely outdoors to enjoy fitness activities, geocaching and nature identification. Staff began implementing trail improvements at the Nature Center that include new bridges and repairs to the boardwalk and stairs.

The park maintenance crew extended the hockey rink at Afton Park to regulation size and built a new, accessible compost container site at the Edgerton Community Gardens.

### Public Safety

Through the summer when defunding police calls echoed in some metro communities, Maplewood's City Council stepped up to support officers. The Council recognized while there is a need for reform and better community outreach broadly in the profession, Maplewood's Police Department was already far along the path to progress. Since 2017, the department has increased hir-

ing of non-traditional candidates, people of color, and women by 125 percent. It has established a Multicultural Advisory Committee, a citizen-based group comprised of people from diverse backgrounds. They provide input on a series of police functions, including officer hiring and supervisor promotion. They also serve as a liaison between police and the community. In 2020, the department established its first community outreach officer position, whose main job is to seek and build relationships, set up community events and ensure all residents feel safe and welcome. This will help give more visible results to a three-year community outreach effort, which has seen a rise from a few dozen hours annually to more than 3,000.

### Coalition building

In addition to partnerships with the Maplewood YMCA Community Center, the city also collaborated with several organizations to more broadly serve the region. This included the leadership role our Fire/EMS Department took in conjunction with the St. Paul Area Chamber of Commerce and other local governments to distribute more than 600,000 masks to businesses in Ramsey County. Our General Election efforts with Ramsey County led to near record high turnout in Maplewood at 84 percent, with more than half voting by mail or early. The City also partnered with the Census Bureau, state demographer and neighboring communities to make Minnesota the number one state for Census self-reporting.

It appears the start of the year will require more sacrifice, adjustments and collaboration. We've been through several hard stretches of this pandemic and have learned and continue to deliver high quality services. On behalf of the City Council, I want to thank our community for their cooperation and patience and our staff for its hard work, dedication and adaptability.



## What brought you to Maplewood?

Do you have a story that is unique or helps inform fellow residents about Maplewood's diversity? We want to hear from you.

Maplewood's Historic Preservation Commission in partnership with the Maplewood Historical Society is the process of collecting oral histories from residents or business owners, especially those who have been part of migration from Asia, Africa, Mexico or Latin America.

These stories will be part of an interactive web-based timeline which aims to document and celebrate the City's rich and diverse history.

If you're interested in participating, please contact Joe Sheeran, Communications Manager. [Joe.sheeran@maplewoodmn.gov](mailto:Joe.sheeran@maplewoodmn.gov) or call 651-249-2061.

## Help Maplewood win the Home Energy Challenge

The City of Maplewood is competing against 16 other metro communities in the 2020 Intercity Home Energy Squad Challenge. We have one month left to catch up. Help push us to the top of the standings, improve your home's energy efficiency and save money.

Visit [mncee.org/hes](http://mncee.org/hes) or call 651-328-6220

Click the "City Challenge" tab to see the standings.





**City of Maplewood**

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**2021 Residential Solid Waste Rates**

The City’s contracts for residential trash and recycling include yearly price adjustments. The following new monthly rates will go into effect January 1, 2021. Learn more at [maplewoodmn.gov/solidwaste](http://maplewoodmn.gov/solidwaste).

**Monthly Trash Rates**

Cart Size and Collection Schedule	2021 Overall Trash Rates (collection, disposal, taxes, cart fee)
20 gallon every other week	\$12.51
20 gallon every week	\$13.02
35 gallon every week	\$15.01
65 gallon every week	\$19.44
95 gallon every week	\$23.69

**Yearly Yard Waste Rates**

Cart Size and Collection Schedule	2021 Yard Waste Rates (no tax on yard waste)
95 gallon cart with up to five compostable bags every week April through November	\$124.80

**Monthly Recycling Rates**

Cart Size and Collection Schedule	2021 Recycling Rates (no tax on recycling)
Choice of 95, 65, 35 gallon cart every week	\$5.52



**Recycle your holiday lights**

This year Maplewood will not be accepting holiday lights/extension cords for recycling.

Please take them to:

**Ramsey County Household Hazardous Waste**

**Site** - 5 Empire Drive, St. Paul

[RamseyRecycles.com/HHW](http://RamseyRecycles.com/HHW) or

**Washington County Household Hazardous**

**Waste Site** - 4039 Cottage Grove Drive, Woodbury

[co.washington.mn.us/604/environmental-center](http://co.washington.mn.us/604/environmental-center)

**Recycle your Christmas tree**

Residents with trash service through the City’s trash plan are eligible for one free live Christmas tree pick up through the first three weeks of January. Contact Republic Services for more information at (651) 455-8634.

Or recycle your live tree at a Ramsey County Yard Waste site [RamseyRecycles.com/YardWaste](http://RamseyRecycles.com/YardWaste).