

CITY'S OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER

MAPLEWOOD LIVING

January 2021



2021's promise

By Mayor Marylee Abrams

The past nine months have been the most tumultuous I can recall – COVID-19, civil unrest, and a divisive election cycle.

Between the three, almost no one has been able to avoid some type of loss be it a loved one who succumbed to COVID-19, the loss of a business, a lost job, missed opportunities, and the loss of social gatherings and civility.

As I write this article, I am cautiously optimistic to turn the page on 2020 and usher in a fresh 2021. Promising vaccines provide hope to halt COVID's spread. Action on national police-community relations and the underlying economics and hostilities that exacerbate tension are being implemented.

Despite all of the hardships, two words describe my recent observations of Maplewood: flexibility and resiliency. They describe the efforts of staff and leadership



Maplewood Public Safety receives Saint Paul Area Chamber of Commerce's Leaders in Local Government Award for their community outreach work and police department diversification.

that have helped the City manage during the pandemic, and they have also positioned us well for the new year.

In 2021 Maplewood is positioned for growth in the following areas:

Public Safety:

Our Multicultural Advisory Committee (MAC) will continue meeting with the Public Safety Department to help break down barriers leading to more effective Police-Community relations. So far they've provided tremendous insight on many fronts.

A Ramsey County social worker will be embedded with our Maplewood Public Safety Department to provide additional resources for residents in crisis.

After years of study and careful consideration, we'll take another step in our modernization of the Fire/EMS Department by breaking ground on a new station at Hazelwood and County Rd. C.

Community Development:

We'll expand grocery options and help revive an underused retail complex with the opening of a new HyVee at White Bear Avenue and Gervais.

Final development capping the Legacy Village project will conclude with a new hotel at County Rd D.



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Elected Officials

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- Rebecca Cave (651) 399-1779
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Melinda Coleman: City Manager (651) 249-2055
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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 for the meeting schedule of the City Council, Commissions and Boards.



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2021's Promise | continued

Community Infrastructure:

Residents will be able to easily report needed street, sign, traffic light and other repairs with a new mobile app.

Parks and Recreation:

Two taskforces overseeing re-visioning of Parks and Recreation and the Nature Center will release their findings and recommendations, providing a path forward for a sustainable operations model that better serves our community's diversified needs.

Most of all I look forward to being able to gather with family, friends, and neighbors, attending church in person, dining in at one of our great local restaurants, and returning to in-person Council meetings at City Hall. I can see the light at the end of a long tunnel. It shines bright and our future looks promising. We are almost there. . .

Changes on Council

Please join us in thanking outgoing council members Sylvia Neblett and Bryan Smith. Prior to joining council, Councilmember Neblett served on the City's Use of Force Task Force and helped guide police community relations. Council member Smith has been a tireless advocate for his constituents and brought private business and marketing experience to the council.



In 2020, we welcomed two new council members Nikki Villavicencio and Rebecca Cave. Councilmember Villavicencio has served on the Parks and Recreation Commission since 2014 and has served in other advisory roles including as a member of the North End task force. As a person who uses a wheelchair, she wants to use her voice and experience to make the city more accessible and livable for everyone.



Rebecca Cave returns to the council after having previously served in the 2000's. She is committed to ensuring the Public Safety Department remains strong, advocating for small business and business retention, and preserving and protecting parks and public open spaces.



Holiday Outreach

While COVID has driven up community needs this holiday season, the level of giving is also corresponding. For example, 34 people registered to receive gifts from Maplewood's giving tree last year. In 2020, that number had risen to 100. However, our public safety staff, members of the equity team, and other city staff stepped up filling the wish list in just a few days. They delivered more than 300 gifts to several schools and nursing facilities.

Social distancing restrictions made it nearly impossible for kids to visit Santa at a mall or community gathering. In place of that, Public Safety and Public Works teamed up on Santa's Neighborhood Surprise caravan around town, passing the vast majority of multi-unit housing complexes and neighborhoods in Maplewood.





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Skating Rinks Open

Park maintenance has been hard at work getting Maplewood's 13 ice rinks ready! Due to Governor Walz's recent executive order, warming houses will be closed through January 10. Here's what we're doing to facilitate skating in the meantime:

- Satellite restrooms at the warming house sites
- Extra seating near the rinks
- During normally scheduled warming house hours, lights will be on at Four Seasons, Gethsemane, and Afton Heights.
- Wakefield lights are programmed to stay on until 10pm during the skating season.
- Hockey nets will be out, weather permitting.

For rink updates, please check the website:

maplewoodmn.gov/221/Skating-Rinks

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