

RESILIENT COLUMBIA

Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic

★ *resilient*
COLUMBIA



We Are Columbia

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Teresa Wilson
City Manager

In May 2021, the City of Columbia celebrated National Public Service Recognition Week. During the week, our Public Relations, Media and Marketing Department highlighted the hard work and dedication of our employees. As a follow-up, the Public Relations team launched a public education campaign to share the City of Columbia's journey during the pandemic. A special video series, featuring City Manager Teresa Wilson, outlines the City's path over the last year and includes information about how our employees have continued to serve our citizens and maintain daily operations to provide critical services to our citizens. The video series is titled Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic.

To view the full video of the City Manager's overview of operations during the pandemic please visit the City's YouTube channel by searching "City of Columbia"

Continuing with that theme, City departments compiled information about various accomplishments, challenges, and outlines of daily operations during the pandemic. Those are compiled here as both a reflection of Columbia's reaction in a crisis, and as a celebration of Columbia's community and resolve. For more information regarding this report or the Resilient Columbia initiative, please visit www.resilient.columbasc.gov

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COLUMBIA EMPOWERMENT ZONE

WORKING THROUGH COVID-19

The Columbia Empowerment Zone, Inc. eagerly works toward fulfilling the goals of Envision Columbia and the mission of CEZ, Inc. We diligently focus our efforts on opportunities that create jobs, eliminate blight and the formation of strategic partnerships that encourage economic development activities. These efforts have and will continue to transform the economic landscape of the City of Columbia.

The CEZ, Inc. Board of Directors has invested in several real estate properties that have provided a place to promote job creation and retention of jobs in and around the City of Columbia. These facilities enable CEZ, Inc. to continue to work towards meeting its vision, mission and goals alignment with Envision Columbia



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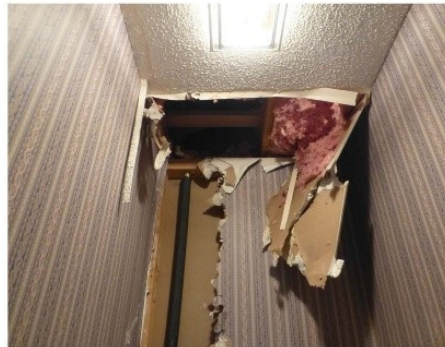
The CEZ, Inc. currently owns and manages several commercial properties; 1509 Lady Street, a 10,000 sq. ft. commercial building, 3800/3730 North Main Plaza, 18,000 sq. ft. commercial buildings, 3400 Harden Street, 4,870 sq. ft and 3200 Grand Street, 2,090 sq. ft. During this fiscal year CEZ, Inc. completed the renovation of an additional 2,100 sq. ft. commercial property, located at 712 Richland Street.

712 Richland Street Renovation Project

Before Renovations



Entrance Foyer



Damaged Area In a Restroom



An Office



Hallway



Rest room with Plumbing Issues and No Vanity/Sink

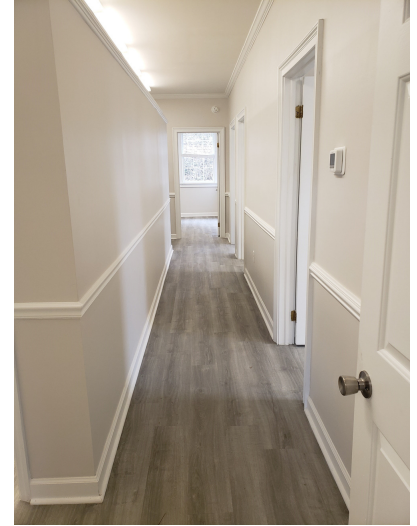


An Office



Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic

After Renovations



We Are Columbia

Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic

Objective 1:5 - Expand opportunities for small, minority, and woman owned business enterprises

Accomplishments: New small businesses located to our Lady Street building and North Main Plaza.

- Lady Street welcomed 3 new businesses: 1 start-up business and 2 business expansion.
- 75 small business meetings, training sessions and/or conference sessions were held on-site at our Lady Street Suites.
- 34 jobs have been created/retained by businesses at the Lady Street Suites and North Main Plaza.
- CEZ, Inc. manages and service a loan portfolio of 9 active accounts.



NxLevel Micro Entrepreneur Training

Objective 2.1 - Develop and implement a comprehensive strategic master plan for improving major City corridors, to include an evaluation, overall plan, and a phased approach (in collaboration with Planning and Development Services, Columbia Empowerment Zone, and Forestry & Beautification)

Accomplishments: Plans and construction of projects to improve major City corridors.

- Completed stabilization and occupancy requirements for the Veranda at N. Main. The development represents comprehensive planning for a senior node to include housing, goods, services, transportation, recreation and close proximity to comprehensive health care. This is a Ten Million Dollar investment (10,000,000) into the North Columbia Corridor. Occupancy is currently at 98%.
- Completed final/3rd-year of the Vacant Abandoned Building Incentive Program (VABIP). The awarded businesses received a 3-year forgivable loan for the purchase and up-fit of an abandoned or vacant building.

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Objective 2.2 - Implement Walk/Bike Columbia including the identification of funding and enhancing partnerships

- The corridor safety plan for crime includes improving the lighting in the corridor and updating the security and monitoring system. CEZ, Inc. maintenance monitors all properties and parking lots daily to ensure both tenants and residents are not deterred by crime while patronizing the businesses located in the corridor.

Accomplishments: CEZ, Inc. replaced control access doors and completed updates of security monitoring system at all locations. Improved technology access allows remote access from cellular devices 24 hours 7 days a week. CEZ, Inc. installed new building signage and parking lot signage to deter loitering and trespassing safety incidents at all property locations. Updates have improved response time to any alarm/safety issues and decreased loitering and panhandling at North Main Plaza.

Objective 4.2 - Develop and implement a plan to aggressively address affordable/workforce housing in the City (i.e. mixed income development, rental, multi-family, owner-occupied single-family housing, aging in place options, etc.)

Accomplishments:

- Continued to work with SC State Housing Authority to review affordable housing program policy and funding opportunities. CEZ, Inc. participated in several round table discussions and program funding training for affordable housing.
- Conducted community meeting with residents at the Veranda to identify safety concerns and ways to engage residents.
- Partnered with CPD, North Main corridor residents and businesses to discuss safety concerns and measures to deter crime in the area.
- CEZ, Inc. continues to support spending with local Small Businesses and Minority/Women Owned Businesses.
- CEZ, Inc. partnered with Eau Clair Development Corporation to oversee updates to Huffman House located at 4300 North Main Street.

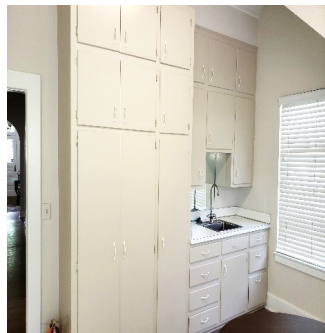
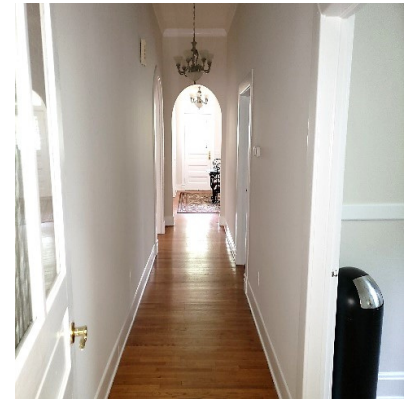
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Huffman House Renovation Project

Before Renovations



After Renovations



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Objective 4.3 - Targeted Community Redevelopment Projects

Accomplishments: Worked to accomplish policy change and secure funding.

- Worked with Richland County and City of Columbia to successfully approve allocation of Tax Incentive/Abatement Agreement for the Veranda at North Main. CEZ, Inc. awarded 97% tax incentive/abatement from Richland County. The tax incentive/abatement provided a tax savings of \$67,614.00.

CEZ, Inc. Cost Savings and Efficiencies

Measures adopted to modernize organization and improvements to continue providing key outcomes and services with high level of efficiency.

- Complete automation of billing and invoice payment system. All invoices are currently paid via automated payment and/or electronic bill payment system through our banking institution.

Outcome: Reduction in postal mailing cost and improved billing/financial reporting and tracking. Revenues from rental payments are also deposited electronically which has also reduced gas/travel budget.

- Updated security monitoring systems at each property location. Improved technology access to allow remote access from cellular devices 24 hours a day and 7 days a week.

Outcome: Updates have improved response time to any alarm/safety issues and monitoring access to all location.

- Automated all department meetings via Zoom Conference.

Outcome: Reduced department meeting cost, gas/travel budget and limited need for department pool car repairs. CEZ, Inc. Board of Directors successfully held 12 monthly meetings as scheduled during the reporting period.

- Implementation of remote work schedule/office setup/process.

Outcome: Reduced utility billing/cost for corporate office and reduced office supply cost.

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COLUMBIA HOUSING AND TN DEVELOPMENT CORPORATIONS

WORKING THROUGH COVID-19

The staff of the Columbia Housing Development Corporation (CHDC) and TN Development Corporation (TNDC) is confident that we were able to successfully make the necessary adjustments throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. In order to continue to provide decent and safe housing for our residents, we knew that, as a team, it was important that we remained flexible and keep lines of communication open continuously during these unforeseen times. The modifications and safety precautions made are as follows:

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WORKING REMOTELY FROM HOME

In March of 2020, after being notified that a pandemic had been declared and City offices would be working either on a modified schedule or remotely from home, it was determined that for the time being, staff would work remotely from home. All administrative and property management staff were provided laptops and city cellphones. It was stressed to each staff person that they were still to work 40 hours per week, answering all phone calls and responding to e-mail messages in a timely manner.

The Corporate and Property Management offices put out notices to all of our residents about the office closings by distributing notices to each household, placing notices at the mailbox centers at each of our six (6) properties, placing notices on office front doors and finally within our newsletters. Residents were assured that despite the property management offices being closed, staff would still be working on a full-time basis throughout the week and all service requests and after-hour/weekend emergency calls would be handled immediately. The lines of communication were open throughout each work day and we were able to quickly adjust to working from home. Property management staff worked remotely from home from March until May of 2020.

SAFETY PRECAUTIONS FOR STAFF/RESIDENTS

During the month of July 2020, staff began communication with Demetrius Rump and Wateka Smith in the Department of Safety and Risk Management to begin setting up safety measures within each of our locations. We met to discuss the following: Plexi-glass which would be placed at each front desk upon guests/residents entering the office, floor stickers, signage related to staying 6 feet apart and wearing masks. In the meantime, the City of Columbia provided staff with masks, gloves, hand sanitizers, etc. By mid-August of 2020, staff had all of the safety precautions in place which allowed our property management offices to revise our modified schedule and allow one (1) resident/visitor/contractor in the office at a time. The management staff worked diligently to ensure that each person was protected and communicated with the Corporate Office staff of their needs.

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MODIFIED OFFICE HOURS

Mid-August of 2020, it was determined that property management staff could begin coming in at 25-30 hours a week and then working 8-15 hours remotely. We coordinated with our cleaning service to provide additional disinfection and they were excellent in communicating with us about useful resources they had identified appropriate cleaning and sanitizing materials through the Center for Disease Control (CDC). Initially, even though staff was working in the office, we remained closed to the public until we could adjust to working together and to further protect residents and staff. As a few weeks went along, we decided to open the doors to one resident/visitor at a time while continuously practicing social distancing and mandating that everyone wear masks.

COMMUNICATION

Corporate office phones were forwarded to our cell phones and corporate office staff remained diligent in answering every call throughout the day; and at times, during the evening hours. The main lines at the property management offices were forwarded to our answering service throughout the day. Service requests were responded to in a timely manner and all emergency and after-hour calls were handled expeditiously as if we were in the office. During this time, TNDC was short on Maintenance Technicians; therefore, outside contractors were hired to assist with service requests and emergency calls. Contingency plans were discussed as to how we would resolve building emergencies; such as leaky pipes or HVAC emergencies while, at the same time, protect our residents, Maintenance Technicians and Contractors from potentially being exposed to the virus. Our contractors were good about informing us of possible exposure within their homes which is why we had several contractors on hand for each need (HVAC, plumber, painter, etc.).

INTERIOR HOUSING INSPECTIONS

In order to protect residents and staff, inspections were cancelled and residents were encouraged to keep their units clean, safe and sanitary. However, when maintenance responded to service requests and emergency calls, it was stressed to them to inform the Community Managers of uncleanliness and notify the office of any suspicious, uninvited guests. Residents who did not comply with the community policies were given lease violations. In the meantime, staff kept a close eye on the exterior buildings and grounds constantly to ensure we remained to be good neighbors within our communities.

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ACCOMPLISHMENTS/PARTNERSHIPS DURING THE PANDEMIC

Throughout the pandemic, the staff of TN Development Corporation wanted to ensure that all residents' needs were being met and continued to partner with different agencies and organizations throughout the Midlands to provide supportive services. All of staff pitched in to coordinate and distribute various food boxes, clothes, masks and hand sanitizers throughout the entire pandemic.

HARVEST HOPE FOOD BANK: Throughout the pandemic, the partnership between Ensor Forest Apartments and Harvest Hope Food Bank continued with registered residents being provided healthy fruits and vegetables on a monthly basis.

COVID-19 TESTING: On June 24, 2020 between 10:00a and 1:00p, TNDC partnered with the Department of Health and Environmental Control Midlands Public Health Region in order to get residents tested for COVID-19. In order to have a high number of residents to participate, residents were contacted individually and informed about the testing, the safety of the testing and the reason why we were holding the event...as a way to stop the spread of the virus. A total of 69 residents (and staff) participated.



DONATION OF FOOD BOXES FROM ST. JOHN BAPTIST CHURCH AND THE BOOKER WASHINGTON HEIGHTS NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

On September 28, 2020, Councilwoman Tameika Isaac Devine referred Ms. Regina Williams, President of the Booker Washington Heights Neighborhood, to TNDC because community leaders wanted to distribute food boxes to our seniors, persons receiving disability, SSI and persons who were previously homeless. After discussion and coordination, on October 15, 2020, staff met with representatives behind CA Johnson High School to unload 68 large boxes from a truck and place on our truck for delivery. Deliveries were made to residents at Ensor Forest, Forest Oaks and Oak Hill Apartments.

On behalf of our residents, TNDC thanks Ms. Williams; Pastor Jamey O. Graham, Sr. of St. John Baptist Church; Ms. Wanda Turner, President of the General Missionary Organization; Kevin Speaks, Vice-President of BWH and Councilwoman Devine for thinking of our residents!

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PRISMA HEALTH CHRISTMAS BASKETS:

On December 21, 2020, staff from Prisma Health prepared Christmas baskets for seniors of Ensor Forest Apartments. Ms. Janice Dinkins delivered the baskets on behalf of Prisma Health and staff distributed them.

THE JACK AND JILL CLUB:

On March 19, 2021, a sock and mask drive was held for the residents at Ensor Forest Apartments. The items came in an array of beautiful colors and designs. This event was sponsored by the AKA Sorority.



FRESH FRUITS AND VEGETABLE DONATIONS:

Ms. Teresa Williams contacted Ensor Forest Apartments to inquire about distributing food boxes to the seniors during the month of March. Residents received fresh fruits and vegetables and were informed that there is more to come in the near future.

THANKSGIVING LUNCHEON:

In November of 2020, to show appreciation to all of our residents for choosing to reside in our apartment communities and to thank them for their patience when dealing with office closings at the beginning of the pandemic, TN Development Corporation contacted a caterer for a wonderful Thanksgiving meal. Staff prepared over 300 boxed lunches, bagged them and distributed to each resident as they lined up outside while maintaining their social distance. It was so delightful to the residents with smiling faces, ready to eat a delicious meal.

COORDINATION OF THE COVID-19 VACCINE:

TNDC partnered with Prisma Health and Central Midlands Regional Transportation Authority in March of 2021 to get residents vaccinated. Staff made phone calls to residents informing them of a vaccine event located at the Columbia International University. Residents were informed that a COMET van would be doing a pick-up on that Saturday to and from the event location. Approximately 10 residents participated.

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COLUMBIA WATER

WORKING THROUGH COVID-19

Columbia Water is continuing its journey to become the best in class utility through innovation, environmental stewardship, and prioritizing exceptional customer service. With the COVID-19 pandemic impacting everyone, Columbia Water took numerous steps and began several initiatives to reduce its impact on our operations and our service to our customers. The following information outlines not only our COVID-19 efforts but also our many projects and initiatives throughout the year.



Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic

Customer Care and Communications

Columbia Water, Public Works and Customer Care all implanted operational plans to return to the workplace in a phased approach while exercising flexibility when COVID-19 positive cases are encountered. In the early stages of the crisis knowing that customers were being financially impacted, the City of Columbia made the decision to suspend disconnection of services and waive online payment fees for all water customers. Columbia Water then went a step further to help customers by placing everyone with a past-due bill on a six-month payment schedule in October 2020. It was only until recently that Columbia Water began disconnects for non-payment to recoup lost revenue.

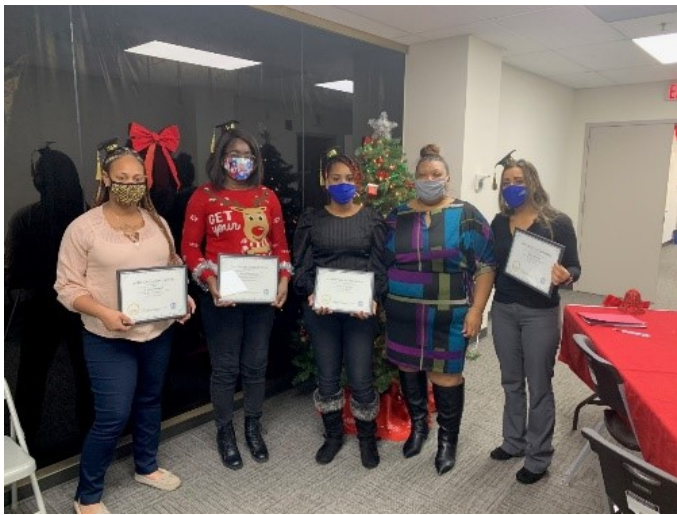
The Columbia Water Communications Team has developed a web page specifically dedicated to COVID-19 response. This information can be found at www.columbiascwater.net/covid19. In addition, this information is being pushed out routinely via social media outlets. Water quality maintenance information has been developed to advise building owners in preparation for reopening.

Customer Care's main service center in Washington Square was closed to visitors in March 2020, increasing call volume dramatically. Volume increased even more so with the resumption of disconnects. A new phone system was launched in October 2020 that introduced self-service options, virtual call back feature, chat and automatic voicemail. It has reduced call wait times.

The Customer Care team has gone a step further to empower employees and increase productivity in this challenging time by increasing employee engagement, implementing a performance incentive program, adding wallboard monitors to the Call Center, and providing more structured and streamlined training. The result has been a decrease in turnover and a substantial improvement in morale. Customer Care has also increased customer service etiquette standards and improved response time.

Streamlining the process to apply for new service is another new initiative for Customer Care. Customers will not be required to provide supporting documentation to obtain new service or transfer service. Some customers will also be able to submit the application directly from our website.

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Utility Operations

During the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Department of Utility Operations operated at a modified operating schedule providing essential services. This was in effect beginning in March 2020 when the City of Columbia's management decision to provide essential operations only. Most Utility Operations staff continued to report every day in order to provide services to our customers while maintaining our water and wastewater utility systems in a safe manner during the pandemic.

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By July 6, 2020, the Department of Utility Operations was at a more normal operating schedule. In general, the below practices were followed:

- Personnel who are staggering schedules and working from home began preparation for returning to the office.
- Staff were encouraged to follow CDC guidelines:
- Wear masks when working within close proximity
- Wash hands regularly and use hand sanitizer. Hand sanitizing stations will continue to be maintained at facilities
- Clean and disinfect facilities and vehicles on a more regular basis
- Continue temperature monitoring at the beginning of each work day
- Encourage anyone who is sick to stay home
- Encourage anyone who shows symptoms of COVID-19 to fill out the City's online testing protocol

Only necessary training and meetings were held, with limited staff and social distancing was maintained during the meetings.

Special consideration was given to employees who are pregnant, 60 years old or older, with compromised immune systems, with chronic medical conditions such as heart disease, lung disease, diabetes, cancer, and hypertension.

Engineering

The Engineering Department continued to report to the office as essential employees, with some staff rotating in office and remote working shifts. Zoom and Teams software has kept staff in communication with both internal and external clients. Several division email groups were established to accept electronic development plans and as-builts as well as new meter information. Payments are currently being dropped off in the drop box on Washington Street, and Engineering Administration is now accepting payments electronically through SC.GOV. Real Estate has been working with legal to schedule curbside document signings.

The virtual meeting options (Zoom, Teams) and conference calls have been the new way to communicate. Laptops with VPN available to staff have allowed work to continue seamlessly. Adobe Acrobat Pro is a tool the department has really utilized in the past year. Additionally, the Engineering department is gearing up to start moving the electronic submitter process into Energov with Bluebeam as the tool to provide comments and markups to our outside clients.

From electronic submittals (available access 24 hours/7days a week) to the ability to hold multiple remote meetings within one day, our various initiatives have increased our efficiency considerably.

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Organization-Wide Highlights

Columbia Water Recommends Drinking Water System Actions to Take Prior to Reopening a Building – When buildings are closed or sparsely occupied for extended periods, such as many have been during the coronavirus pandemic, the water in plumbing systems can become stagnant. This can reduce the quality of the water and can make it potentially unhealthy. From flushing the system to disinfecting water fixtures, Columbia Water disseminated information to businesses throughout Columbia on appropriate actions to take before re-opening.

Columbia Water Partners with USC on Wastewater Surveillance for Coronavirus – In April 2020, Columbia Water agreed to collaborate with researchers at the University of South Carolina to monitor wastewater for coronavirus at the Metro Wastewater Treatment Plant. According to Professor Sean Norman, who is leading the team from USC's Arnold School of Public Health, the research will be used to help determine how extensive the virus might be in South Carolina. As part of the project, researchers will sample and test untreated sewage from the Metro Plant on a weekly basis for a year to determine how much coronavirus is in the waste.

PFAS Reporting – In June of 2020, the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC) conducted testing of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) at the City of Columbia's two drinking water treatment plants at Lake Murray and the Columbia Canal as they conducted PFAS sampling at 44 water systems across the state of South Carolina. In an effort to develop reliable information about PFAS in Columbia's drinking water, Columbia Water is continuing to perform testing for these compounds twice per year. The second set of these additional bi-annual samples was collected in April of 2021. Columbia Water created a dedicated web page to post the results and answer questions from the public at www.columbiascwater.net/PFAS.

Columbia Water and FEMA Come to Agreement on Scope of Canal Work – The City of Columbia/Columbia Water announced in September 2020 that they have come to a fundamental agreement with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Public Assistance program on the scope of damage to the Columbia Canal from the historic flooding that took place in the Midlands in 2015. This is the culmination of years of negotiations with the federal agency and signals the beginning of the repair process for the canal and hydroelectric plant. Both the City and FEMA have identified approximately \$42 million in damages as a result of the 2015 historic floods. The scope of work includes repairing the breach in the canal embankment, fixing other damaged sections of the canal embankment and repairing the hydroelectric plant at the south end of the canal to return green power to the City of Columbia. Updates to the project can be followed at www.columbiascwater.net/columbiacanalproject.



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Columbia Water to Enhance Resiliency with Proposed Project

– Columbia Water has proposed a project to develop a new raw water intake facility that will allow the Canal Plant to draw water directly from the Congaree River. The proposed facility will provide a second raw water intake that will greatly enhance the resiliency of Columbia’s drinking water supply.



Both Clearwells at Canal Plant Completed – Columbia Water’s Canal Plant has been undergoing a series of upgrades to infrastructure and equipment over the past few years. One of the most visible is the construction of two new finished water storage tanks, commonly called clearwell tanks. The first of the two was completed in late 2019 and was put into service in 2020. The second tank was completed in 2020 and placed into service in 2021. The clearwell tanks will each hold five million gallons of water, enough to fill nearly eight Olympic-sized swimming pools. The total construction cost of the project is \$44.4 million.

The Customer Meter Upgrade Project Hits 100,000 Installations –

Columbia Water’s new advanced meter upgrade project hit a milestone when it surpassed 100,000 new meter installations in February 2021. This is about two-thirds of the more than 150,000 meters that will be installed as part of the project, which is scheduled to finish in early 2022. This project will provide customers with fewer estimated bills, real-time alerts about possible leaks, and the ability to better manage water use. Customers with a new meter are encouraged to download the Eye on Water app that allows them to track their water usage in real time and set up leak notifications at columbiawater.eyeonwater.com/signin.

**100,000 CUSTOMERS
HAVE NEW DIGITAL
WATER METERS**



LEARN MORE ABOUT USING DIGITAL METERS
TO TRACK YOUR WATER USE AT HOME
AT COLUMBIASCWATER.NET/METERUPGRADE

Stormwater Projects GIS – Columbia Water’s Engineering team created a Project Dashboard for Stormwater Projects in 2020. Customers can view the status of projects, download a PDF of the project summary and leave a comment; all through one seamless dashboard at www.columbiawater.net/capital-improvement-projects/.

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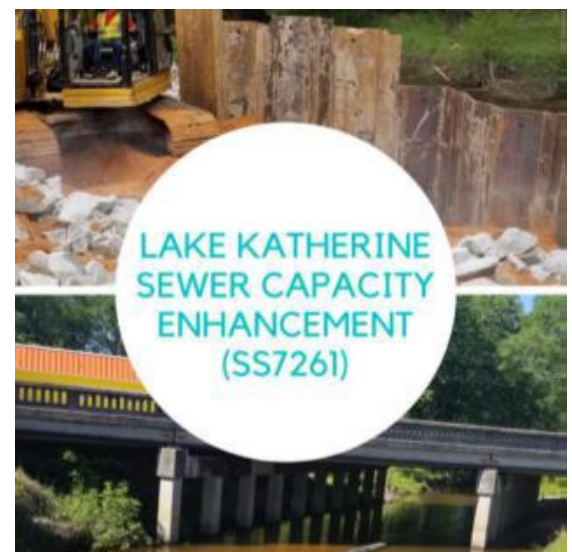
New Online Chat Feature Unveiled – In an effort to improve accessibility to our Customer Care Team, a new chat feature was rolled out in 2020. It can be found on our website at columbiascwater.net/customer-care/.



Available Monday - Friday
9 AM - 5 PM

Cybersecurity and Adverse Weather Readiness – A cybersecurity breach at a Florida water plant and extreme cold weather impacting water supplies in the Midwest was a wake-up call for many in the utility industry. Because of its redundant systems and protocols in place for cybersecurity as well as adverse weather, Columbia Water is prepared for all types of emergency conditions.

Lake Katherine Sewer Capacity Enhancement Project Completed – Construction began on the Lake Katherine Gravity Sewer Capacity Enhancement project in May 2019 and was completed in late 2020. The project will provide much-needed capacity enhancement and replacement of 12,700 feet of the aging existing gravity sewer along Gills Creek, Lake Katherine, and Penn Branch.



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Blue Thumb Landscaper Conference Held Virtually – In February 2020, Columbia Water in partnership with Richland County held its annual conference for grounds maintenance and landscaping professionals virtually for the first time ever. Participants learned about native plants and insects, mosquito control soil health and wetland maintenance among other topics.

Rain Barrel and Compost Bin Sale – Our Rain Barrel and Compost Bin sale was a huge success. On November 14, 98 rain barrels and 27 compost bins were given out to the customers who bought them.



Trenchless Technology - The Wastewater Management department participated in training in 2021 to learn new skills in trenchless technology. This innovative water industry advancement will offer a number of advantages to our wastewater management processes including reduced time when repairing sewer clean outs and lateral lines. Columbia Water is one of a few publicly owned water companies in our region that will begin to offer this service at no additional charge to our customers.

Olympia Sewer Extension Construction Begins – As part of the City of Columbia’s commitment to improve our infrastructure and serve all customers within the City’s service area, Columbia Water has recently entered the construction phase of the Olympia Sanitary Sewer Extension (SS7449) project. Construction began in August 2020 with plans to be complete by April 2021. The project includes the installation of approximately 1,700 linear feet of new 8-inch pipe and 14 new manholes along the streets of Nevada, Virginia, Dover, Texas, and Quarry, all within the Olympia neighborhood near downtown Columbia. The project also includes the installation of sanitary sewer service connections to 65 residents in Olympia.

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Brewer Coming to Columbia – Mark Anthony Brewing, which makes White Claw Hard Seltzer, recently announced plans to build a \$400 million facility in Richland County, a massive investment that state officials say will create 300 new jobs. The South Carolina Department of Commerce says the move represents one of the largest economic investments in Richland County history. Columbia Water will provide both drinking water and wastewater services.

Rock Branch Sewer Project Gets Underway – Clean Water 2020 began construction on the Rocky Branch 03 SSES project (SS7425) in late 2020 with plans to complete the project by early 2022. Sanitary sewer pipes and manholes in the downtown area will be inspected and evaluated for rehabilitation. This area was selected following an analysis of the age of the system, the number of work orders, and the number of sanitary sewer overflows that have occurred. In addition to reducing sanitary sewer overflows, this project will reduce the amount of excess water that enters the system, also called inflow and infiltration (I/I), and reduce the overall amount of wastewater that is treated.

East Rocky Branch Sewer Improvement Project Kicks Off – Columbia Water began the East Rocky Branch Sewer Improvements Phase 2 (SS733702) project in late 2020 with plans to be complete by September 2022. Our crews will expand the existing sewer for a distance of roughly 7,200 linear feet with new 36-inch and 42-inch pipes along Rocky Branch. The project will begin at the corner of Main and Whaley Streets and end near the Vulcan quarry along the Congaree River. In addition to reducing sanitary sewer overflows, this project will allow for additional development in the downtown area by increasing the capacity of the main sewer lines in the area.

Brookland Circle Sewer Project Nears Completion – Construction of the Brookland Circle Sanitary Sewer Extension project (SS7323) is expected to be complete by the end of April. The project includes the extension of sewer service to customers along Brookland Circle near Beltline Blvd and Two Notch Road, as well as the decommissioning of the Food Lion Pump Station located in the old Food Lion parking lot on Two Notch Road. The pump station did not meet City standards for operation and will therefore be removed from service, helping to eliminate a major risk factor for sanitary sewer overflows in the area.



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Lower Saluda Sewer Project Begins in April 2021 – With a budget of 16.5 million, the Lower Saluda Relief Sewer project (SS7428) includes the installation of a new 36-inch to 42-inch diameter sewer main for approximately 20,000 linear feet, beginning at the Saluda River Pump Station near Garden Valley Lane, continuing along the Saluda River through Saluda Shoals Park, and ending near Bush River Road. The new sewer main will parallel the existing 27-inch to 36-inch sewer main scheduled to remain in service and will provide a substantial increase in capacity for the system. Upon completion, the increased capacity will greatly reduce overflows that are currently prone to occur during heavy rain events, thereby allowing for new upstream development. Construction is anticipated to take approximately 20 months, with completion expected in late 2022.

Shandon and Rosewood Water Projects Begins in 2020 – The City of Columbia began the design process for a multiyear project to replace existing potable waterlines within the Shandon and Rosewood Communities in Fall 2020. The City of Columbia's consulting engineers began by conducting field surveys in late 2020.

Harlem Heights Storm Drainage Project Begins in Fall 2020 – Consisting of new storm drainage lines and a new detention area, this project was designed to help alleviate flooding issues within the neighborhood. Construction began on August 24, 2020 with a completion date of February 15, 2022. Construction is expected to be complete by end of 2021. Contract amount is \$5.6 million.

Shandon Phase II Stormwater Project – The consultant has been engaged for final design drawings based on the completed alternatives and recommendation scope of work. The project includes improvements to two subbasins within the Shandon Rosewood Drainage Study, the East Watershed Improvements (EAST) and the West Watershed Improvements (WEST).

The EAST improvements consist of approximately 7,000 linear feet of new storm drainage piping ranging from 18" in diameter to 72" in diameter. The project also includes relocation of existing sewer mains and the repair of impacted roadways, sidewalks, and driveways. Streets impacted are: Ravenel, Wheat, Wilmot, Duncan, Monroe, Heyward, Cannon, Rosewood, Ott, Moss, Prentice, Capers, Tyler, Harvard, Montgomery, Manor, Lanier, S Bonham, Tempo, Live Oak.

The WEST improvements consist of approximately 4,000 linear feet of new storm drainage piping ranging from 15" in diameter to 60" in diameter. The project also includes relocation of existing sewer mains and the repair of impacted roadways, sidewalks, and driveways. Streets impacted are: Maple, Monroe, Heyward, S. Holly, Burney, Rosewood, Prentice, Elm, Kennedy, Superior, Harvard, Shamrock, Wando, Montgomery, S Bonham, S. Ott.

Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic

Queen Street Stormwater Improvements – The design engineer completed a feasibility study and an alternative was selected. The engineer has completed 90% plans for the selected alternate that includes adding a detention basin, upsizing pipes as necessary, and fixing negatively sloped pipes within the Old Shandon neighborhood, most notably around 814 Queen Street. The plans are on hold pending discussions with the property owners for property acquisition for the detention area.

Allen- Benedict Bioretention Stormwater Project (LID 40) – The City of Columbia is aware of backwater flooding within the Smith Branch watershed due to the likelihood of undersized stormwater infrastructure and high impervious area within the watershed. In order to reduce the overall impervious area and promote groundwater infiltration of stormwater, low impact development (LID) design techniques have been recommended to be implemented within the Smith Branch watershed. This project has been identified to help accomplish those objectives. The project is planned to consist of bio-retention areas (bump-outs) and plantings along Read Street, Richland Street, Laurel Street, and Haskell Avenue in the Benedict College area of Columbia. The design is 90% complete. It is expected to have the complete package to Procurement by summer 2021.

Penn Branch Stabilization Project – This project addresses rehabilitation and stabilization of portions of Penn Branch from Brentwood Drive to Woodlake Drive. The design plans are complete, however, all necessary easements for the entire project have not been acquired. Once all easements have been obtained, the project will be moved forward for construction.

Water & Wastewater Management Building and Site Receive Award – Watson Tate Savory's City of Columbia Water & Wastewater project received a prestigious AIA South Atlantic Region (SAR) Merit Award for Adaptive Reuse on September 16th, at the virtual awards gala of the annual SAR "Aspire" conference. The award was one of only 29 given in the region which includes Tennessee, Georgia, North Carolina and South Carolina. The project transforms a former abandoned car dealership, on a brownfield site, into a LEED Gold facility with state-of-the-art sustainable features, such as a green roof and seven rain gardens.

Sulfide and Corrosion Control Program Completed – Columbia Water and Clean Water 2020 staff completed the Sulfide and Corrosion Control Program (SCCP) as part of the Consent Decree in late 2020. The SCCP team identified and evaluated potential sources of sulfide and corrosion in the sewer system. Corrosion is a primary reason that sewer systems lose their structural integrity. Corroded pipes can allow excess water into the sewer system which can cause sanitary sewer overflows and result in early pipe replacement. The SCCP will allow staff to track and address corrosion in the system.

Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

WORKING THROUGH COVID-19

The City of Columbia's Office of Community Development (OCD) is committed to making the City of Columbia and its neighborhoods a better place to live, work, play and thrive. Our mission is to promote diversity, inclusion and equal access through engagement, education, empowerment and enhancement of housing and economic opportunities. In order to continue our mission during the COVID-19 pandemic, the office has made adjustments to operations starting March 2020 through March 2021.



Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic

The OCD staff received city issued laptops and cell phones in order to work remotely and operate on a staggered in-office work schedule alternating different staff 2 or 3 days. Staff practices social distancing while in office by working in their offices and holding any staff meetings virtually.

Implementation of COVID-19 safety protocols and procedures have been established by designation of supply areas throughout the office which includes the front reception area, copy room and breakroom for staff to utilize. Sanitizing wipes, sanitizing spray, face masks, gloves, hand sanitizers and no-touch forehead thermometer (front office) are available in these designated areas. Posting of COVID-19 information flyers are displayed in the copy room area and COVID-19 Cleaning and Disinfection Logs are located in the front reception area, copy room and breakroom for staff to sign once daily cleaning is completed. A protective shield is installed at front reception desk to help with the social distancing recommendations.

In an effort to maintain vital operations, measures have been put in place for taking mortgage applications over the phone and using virtual platforms for public meetings and workshops. The safety protocols were developed for housing construction staff within OCD to practice when in the field performing on-site inspections for housing construction projects.

Despite the challenges faced during COVID-19, the OCD celebrates the following accomplishments:

- Commendation of Excellence presented by South Carolina Chamber of commerce awarded to Community Development – Housing for the 2020 Safety Program Recognition presented March 25, 2021.
- Virtual Recognition of National Community Development Week held in April 2021.
- Virtual Recognition and Outreach during National Financial Empowerment Month held in April 2021. Virtual Recognition and Outreach during National Fair Housing Month held in April 2021.
- Funded loans consisting of 2 City Lender I – Uplift, 3 City Lender II, 1 Affordable Housing Loan and 2 Employee Loans.
- Funding reported for HOPWA with revenue of \$1,475,403 and expenditures of \$1,277,166; CDBG with revenue of \$1,812,493 and expenditures of \$958,118 and HOME with revenue of \$813,486 and expenditures of \$750,325.
- Assisted Nine (9) neighborhoods – (\$7,086) to make direct improvements through the City's OCD ACTION Grant program.
- Served 113 City of Columbia water and sewer customers in financial need (\$38, 303.40) through the Deborah Christie Customer Assistance Program (DCCA, formerly the Change Up Program).

Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic

- 17 Participants completed the Individual Savings Account (ISA) program. Over \$75,000 was awarded in Grant Matching funds. 15 Participants – Post-Secondary education and 2 – Entrepreneurial endeavors.
- Conducted 2 Bank On Columbia workshop with a total of 46 participants.
- Established new partnership with First Horizon Bank and Operation Hope for Bank On initiative.

The City of Columbia's Office of Community Development has exerted great effort to perform as a solid team to help ensure that the administration of federal, state and local funds with ensuring compliance; to increase home ownership; and build neighborhood capacity through excellent customer service during this unprecedented pandemic.



Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic



COLUMBIA POLICE DEPARTMENT

WORKING THROUGH COVID-19

The Columbia Police Department (CPD) is a nationally accredited law enforcement agency committed to achieving policing excellence through problem-solving partnerships. The diverse staff of sworn officers and civilian personnel provides professional, ethical, and fair and impartial police services to all our citizens and visitors. Officers are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week to protect life and property within city limits. They are responsible for responding to calls for service, investigating criminal activity and traffic collisions, apprehending suspects and more. The organizational structure of the department is divided into four bureaus and five patrol regions.

Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic

PROJECTS & INITIATIVES

FRONT PORCH ROLL CALL

Through the Front Porch Roll Call program, police squads host pre-shift roll calls at a home in the neighborhoods where the squads patrol. Anyone in the community can request that a shift roll call be held at their residence or business. These interactions have been invaluable for fostering understanding and collaboration between the community and the officers who serve them.

COFFEE WITH A COP

Coffee with a Cop brings police officers and the community members they serve together—over coffee—to discuss concerns and learn more about each other.

HOME VISITS

Region officers visit offenders (juvenile and adults, youthful offenders on probation, parole or home conditions) to verify whereabouts nightly.

HANDLE WITH CARE

In partnership with area schools, the Handle with Care (HWC) initiative promotes safe and supportive homes, schools and communities that protect and help traumatized children heal and thrive.

The goal of the HWC Initiative is to prevent children's exposure to trauma and violence, mitigate negative affects experienced by children's exposure to trauma, and to increase knowledge and awareness of this issue.

If a law enforcement officer encounters a child during a call for service, that child's name and a description of the incident are forwarded to the school/child care agency before the school bell rings the next day using the HANDLE WITH CARE form, The school implements individual, class and whole school trauma-sensitive curricula so that traumatized children are handled with care.

OPERATION REAL TIME

A federal case priority adoption program in partnership with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), immediately removes a violent offender from the community at the point of arrest. CPD has a pre-screened priority offender list for all of the officers to reference it in the field. If an offender is caught with a gun, accelerated federal charges with immediate custody/detainer will be applied.

Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic

SHOTSPOTTER TECHNOLOGY

UNVEILED TO PUBLIC

In a news conference on May 10, 2019, City of Columbia Mayor Stephen K. Benjamin and Police Chief W.H. 'Skip' Holbrook announced the Columbia Police Department's (CPD) implementation of an innovative gunshot detection technology that reduces violent gun crime in the City of Columbia. The technology, known as 'ShotSpotter' relies on acoustic sensors to pinpoint where gunfire occurs. Chief Holbrook: "The area that we defined is based on the where we have the highest concentration of gunfire. We want to affect that, change that narrative, change the footprint to where we don't need this initiative." The information from the sensors is sent to CPD officers and 9-1-1 dispatchers through real-time digital alerts. Since the implementation of ShotSpotter in the City of Columbia on April 18, 2019, CPD officers have responded to 964 SpotSpotter alerts/activations. ShotSpotter does not replace the need for residents to call 9-1-1.

SHOTSPOTTER OVERVIEW:

- Utilizes multiple acoustic sensors to pinpoint gunfire activity
- Sensors strategically placed around City
- Approximately 20 sensors per square mile
- Aids in locating crime scene, evidence, suspects & witnesses
- Quicker response & situational awareness by law enforcement
- ShotSpotter acoustic analysts review the sounds to determine actual gunfire
- Acoustic analysts can determine full-automatic weapons & if shooter is on the move
- Real-Time Alerts for Law Enforcement & 9-1-1 Dispatchers
- Digital Alerts through ShotSpotter App for smart phones & patrol car computers
- Utilizes user-friendly maps to pinpoint gunfire activity
- Time stamps incident & provides audio of gunfire
- No monitoring of conversations
- Strengthens court cases
- Sends message to offenders
- ShotSpotter does not replace police officers or community involvement & calling 9-1-1
- Cost over 3 years = \$1,180,000 | 1st Year - \$400K | 2nd Year - \$390K | 3rd Year - \$390K
- Other cities utilizing ShotSpotter: Oakland & San Diego, Miami, Atlanta, Chicago, Boston, New York City, Pittsburgh and Las Vegas



Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic

STATISTICS (JANUARY 1, 2020 - DECEMBER 31, 2020)

Number of ShotSpotter Calls: 1,167 348 Single Shots

704 Multiple Gun Shots

115 Probable Gun Shots

Number of Firearms Seized: 63

Number of Stolen Firearms Seized: 9 of 63 were identified as stolen

Number of Shell Casings Recovered: 2,046

Number of Arrests: 42

FEDERAL CRIME GUN INTELLIGENCE

CENTER INITIATIVE GRANT ANNOUNCEMENT (JULY 2019)

Columbia Police Chief W. H. 'Skip' Holbrook, City of Columbia Mayor Stephen K. Benjamin, City Manager Teresa Wilson along with state and federal partners announced the latest federal grant awarded to the Columbia Police Department to prevent, reduce and solve gun-related violent crime in the City of Columbia. The three-year grant called the Crime Gun Intelligence Center (CGIC) Initiative Grant comes from the Department of Justice (DOJ) and totals \$668,414 that will directly support the Columbia Police Department's (CPD) newly created Crime Gun Intelligence Unit. The Unit will be comprised of the following sworn & civilian subject-matter experts:

- Program Manager
- Unit Supervisor
- Two Crime Analysts
- National Integrated Ballistic Information Network (NIBIN) Analysts – Ballistic Evidence Input – Embedded at SLED
- Ceasefire Coordinator

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Specifically, the NIBIN analyst is funded through a separate \$77,471 Project Safe Neighborhood (PSN) Grant making a combined grant award of \$745,885. The PSN Initiative was announced in July 2019 with local, state and federal partners in the Greenview Community in North Columbia. The Project Safe Neighborhood Strategy focuses on: Prevention & Education, Partnerships, Evidence-Based Practices, Technology and Building Trust in the Community. The CGIU will enhance the PSN model.

\$745,885 combined grant award



Here are some additional Crime Gun Intelligence Center (CGIC) Quick

Facts:

- Supports CPD's existing partnerships with:
- Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms & Explosives (ATF)
- United States Attorney's Office -District SC
- SC Law Enforcement Division (SLED)
- Fifth Circuit Solicitor's Office
- SC Department of Probation, Parole & Pardon Services (PPP)
- Richland County Sheriff's Department (RCSD)
- Follow-Up on actionable leads for investigations
- Provides feedback to partner stakeholders

Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic

Follows CGIC best practices:

1. Commitment from Chief Holbrook & Command Staff
2. Comprehensive Firearm-related Crime & Forensic Tracing
3. Crime Gun Intelligence Analysis
4. CGIC Investigations
5. Law Enforcement & Prosecution Collaboration & Arrests
6. Focused State & Federal Prosecution
7. Similar to Ceasefire Columbia – a focused deterrence initiative to address gun violence offenders in 29203 neighborhoods
8. Local CGIC Feedback

Utilizes intelligence, technology to:

- Identify gun crime offenders & firearms sellers/purchasers
- Disrupt illegal pattern/cycle of behavior
- Hold offenders accountable on federal gun crime penalties (Arrests)
- Gather information for investigations & court cases on state and/or federal level for prosecution

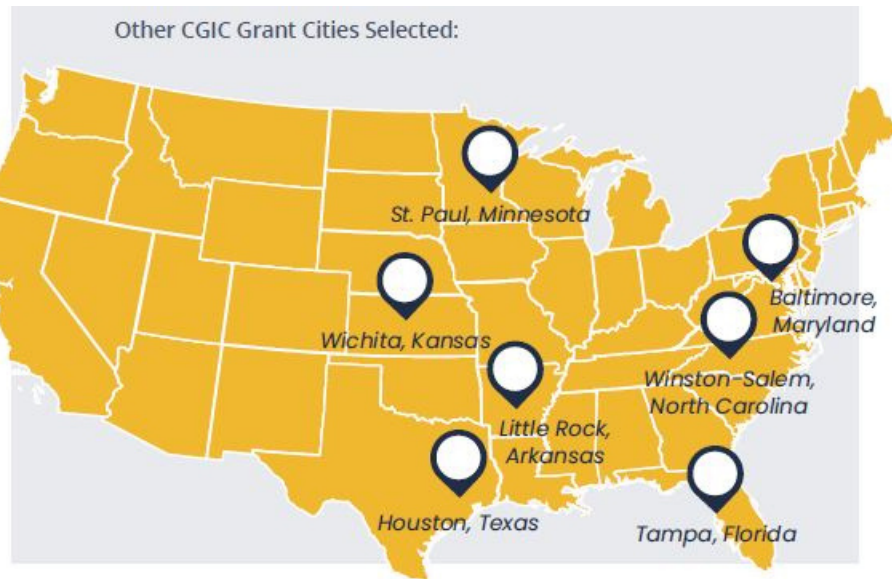
Augments Gun Crime Analysis with:

- Grant-funded surveillance equipment
- Web-based software
- Training of CGIU personnel

Future Plans:

- Performance measures
- Additional grant-funding for sustainability
- Additional personnel based on caseload

Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic



COLUMBIA STRONG – A Critical Incident Review of the Columbia Police Department's Response to Protests and Rioting



In December 2020, Chief Holbrook publicly released a 92-page document detailing the Columbia Police Department's after-action review from the protests and civil unrest from May 2020. The document titled "Columbia Strong – A Critical Incident Review of the Columbia Police Department's Response to Protests and Rioting," outlines CPD's actions/response, mutual aid from partner law enforcement agencies, situational awareness, and internal and external communications from the May events. Chief Holbrook's primary focus for the document was to show the public that CPD remains committed to transparency and accountability.

Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic

In June 2020, Chief Holbrook directed staff to form a committee to conduct a critical review of the department's actions/response in May. As a result, the diverse committee comprised of CPD staff and the City of Columbia's Directors of Emergency Management and Safety and Risk Management followed the National Police Foundation's review model to help devise the document. After two-months of preparation and planning, the committee provided a review assessment to Chief Holbrook.

The following document outlines the sound decision from CPD leadership and the selfless actions of courageous officers: <https://columbiapd.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/CPD-Critical-Incidents-Review-2020.pdf>

Chief Holbrook Appointed to New National Committee for Police Reform and Racial Justice

The United States Conference of Mayors (USCM) has announced in Washington, D.C., the appointment of Columbia Police Chief W. H. "Skip" Holbrook to the new National Police Reform and Racial Justice Working Group. The Working Group is a consortium of the nation's Mayors and Police Chiefs tasked to find solutions to end police violence and patterns of racial discrimination among law enforcement agencies. City of Columbia Mayor Stephen K. Benjamin, "The US Conference of Mayors has recognized the outstanding service and leadership achievements of Chief Holbrook by bringing his voice into the national conversation on their Police Reform and Racial Justice working group," Many of the policing reforms now being called for across the country have already been put into practice by Skip Holbrook in Columbia, which has made our city's police force a national model of best practices. By adding his experience and 21st Century law enforcement vision as one of three national-level chiefs in this working group, Chief Holbrook will help bring about lasting, systemic, and positive changes to policing in America." City Manager Teresa Wilson says, "It is an honor for the City of Columbia and the Columbia Police Department to have a seat at the table for such an important and significant national initiative. During this challenging period, across our country, the time is now to have an open dialogue, identify best practices, and develop new approaches toward police reform and racial justice. Chief Holbrook will not only add to these efforts, as a member of the working group, but he will also have an opportunity to be on the forefront for nationwide reformation and the continuation of community policing efforts right here in Columbia."

Chief Holbrook was chosen among his peers to include, Baltimore Police Chief Michael Harrison and Phoenix Police Chief Geri Williams.



Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic

The group is led by former Police Chief Charles Ramsey, adviser to the U.S. Conference of Mayors, former police chief in Philadelphia and Washington, DC and Co-chair of President Obama's Task Force on 21st Century Policing. According to the USCM, the Working Group will produce, advance and enact meaningful reforms to address police violence and patterns of racial discrimination. The Police Reform and Racial Justice Working Group will take on the urgent task of outlining a series of specific recommendations related to America's policing practices to help end the injustices facing black Americans.

The Working Group is also composed of the mayors of Chicago, Tampa, and Cincinnati, and will be assisted by other experts in the field with the goal of releasing actionable recommendations in the coming weeks.

To learn more about the National Police Reform and Racial Justice Working Group and the Columbia Police Department's community policing initiatives and 21st Century Policing publications, review the following links: <https://bit.ly/2MLCHJb> | <https://columbiapd.net/publications/>

Columbia Police Department Operations During the Pandemic



The Columbia Police Department has maintained its 24-hour operational and professional service to the City of Columbia despite the world-wide COVID-19 pandemic. Health and safety modifications were made at CPD Headquarters and Regional offices to help protect employees and the public. At the onset of COVID-19, city officials and department heads collaborated to develop a safety protocol "plan of action" for all City of Columbia Departments including CPD and all employees. Of utmost importance, the Chief Holbrook and Deputy Chief Kelly maintained good communication of those COVID-19 protocols, to include modified telework schedules for civilian staff, police officer safety measures, and work environment disinfection.

Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic

In following recommendations for the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC), health protocols were emphasized to include the importance of washing hands, using hand sanitizers, encouraging proper social distancing, wearing face masks inside City buildings and taking your temperature with readily-available thermometers. Additionally, a COVID-19 testing partnership with Doctors Care and Precisions Genetics was established through City leadership to give first priority for front-line first responders and other essential staff. This process began in April of 2020 and continued through to the present. City leaders also implemented 'COVID First Two Weeks, 80-hour leave time' for police officers and civilian staff to utilize for COVID-19 complications, symptoms or a family member illness. All COVID-19 positive and negative tests for all COPD employees were tracked for accountability purposes, with information being reported on a weekly basis to CPD leadership.

To date CPD had tracked the following COVID-19 related tests: Officers/Investigators/Administrative: (60) Have tested positive for COVID-19. (58) Have returned to work (1) COVID CPD Officer passed away (1) COVID CPD Officer retired from March 2020 to present.



Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic

In Memoriam Master Police Officer (MPO) Robert “Bob” Hall



On July 14, 2020, the Columbia Police Department lost a valued, 35-year-veteran of the law enforcement family. Master Police Officer Robert “Bob” Hall passed away from complications due to COVID-19. He contracted the virus on June 25, 2020, after working on the frontlines alongside his law enforcement family during the number of protests and civil unrest in the City of Columbia in May and June 2020. Prior to becoming ill, he was a valuable part of CPD’s Special Events Unit under the Special Operations Bureau, assisting the public with traffic control and security during special events to include parades, marathons, and festivals, and most recently, hostile protests at CPD Headquarters on May 30 and 31, 2020. Chief Holbrook said, “Officer Robert “Bob” Hall exemplified everything that is expected out of a 21st Century police officer – service before self, professionalism, integrity, and compassion. MPO Hall was well-known within the City of Columbia’s business and entertainment districts, having played an integral part in event planning and security. MPO Hall served with distinction and honor for more than three decades and has left a lasting legacy at the Columbia Police Department.”

MPO Hall retired with 25 years of service as a Police Corporal only to return to the profession he loved and served 12 more years before his End of Watch. MPO Hall’s dedication and devotion to his family, the City of Columbia Police Department, and the community will be missed, but never forgotten.

Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic

CHIEF HOLBROOK SALUTES CPD OFFICERS AND STAFF FOR ACHIEVEMENTS

2020 Award Recipients

CIVILIAN OF THE YEAR

A. Beckham

CODE ENFORCEMENT EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR

R. Hingleton

ROOKIE OF THE YEAR

I. Jones

INVESTIGATOR OF THE YEAR

J. Fisher

OFFICER OF THE YEAR

A. Leech

Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic



COLUMBIA-RICHLAND 911 COMMUNICATIONS CENTER

WORKING THROUGH COVID-19

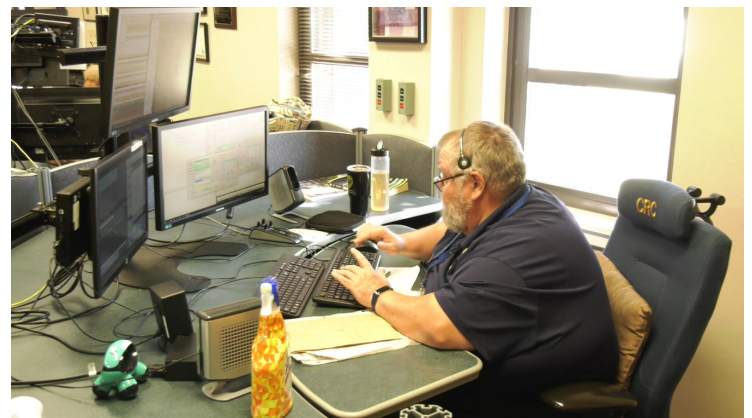
As essential personnel, the Columbia-Richland 911 Communications department continues its operation uninterrupted; however, when coronavirus began to sweep the nation, the department took immediate steps to safeguard personnel against the threat. As time progressed, the Center continued to invest in safer ways to manage/slow the spread of interpersonal contact.



Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic

Measures taken included:

- Screening personnel, at the beginning of their shift, with COVID-19 symptom questionnaire.
- Taking and recording employees' temperature at the beginning and end of the shift.
- Supplying masks, gloves, cleaning products, hand sanitizers.
- Installing additional air purifiers; installing plexi-glass in various areas throughout the Center.
- Posting signs promoting safety (social distancing, wearing face covering, washing/sanitizing hands constantly, disinfecting workplace surface areas).
- Investing in/issuing personal phone handsets to employees to eliminate them from sharing handheld devices.
- Discontinuing large group meetings
- Restricting visitors from entering the Center.
- Any personnel suspected of having COVID-19 symptoms were cautioned to remain at home and were tested.
- Weekly deep cleanings were conducted by an outside Disinfectant Team. The team came in and applied concentrated solutions on surfaces.
- Additional safety measures were put into place to assist with safeguarding/informing First Responder of potential COVID-19 exposure.
- The call processing protocol was adjusted to screen callers for COVID-19 and the response was relayed to the responders. If a citizen/caller was suspected of potentially having COVID-19 (or if their status was confirmed), the caller was then routed to an approved EMS Triage line for additional screening.
- Implemented preventive measures by creating an additional position designated to cross reference all dispatch locations into the DHEC portal to verify if said location had a positive COVID-19 case within the past 14 days—this task was often assigned to one of the Center's employees working from home.



Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic

While the City of Columbia ensures our needs are consistently met, we are fortunate to receive contributions from various sources such as: staff, user agencies, and citizens. Some of the essential items donated were:

- disposable face masks
- gloves
- hand sanitizer
- various disinfectants

The Department of Safety and Risk Management played a critical role in ensuring we were in compliance with safety guidelines by

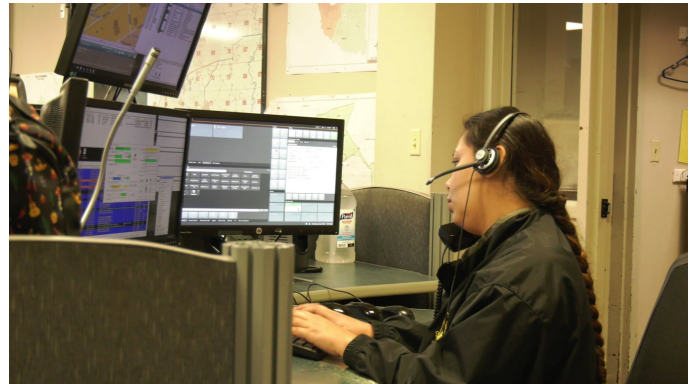
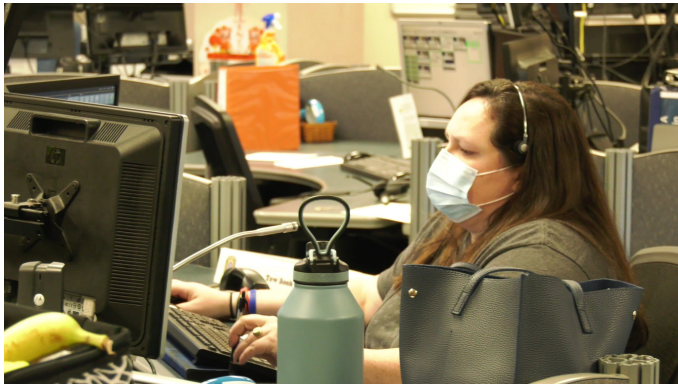
- conducting an assessment of the Center
- offering/supplying reasonable solutions
- promoting health/safety tips
- constantly staying on top of the latest ways we could combat/slow the spread of the virus.



In 2020, the Center answered 959,909 calls. During this pandemic, the Center has experienced an influx in employees resigning due to concerns about safety. However, the Center continued to be replenished with staff by continuing to interview, hire and and train personnel. Some personnel received On the Job Training, as opposed to them obtaining the traditional In Classroom Training prior to assisting on the Operations' Floor.

Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic

The Center had 19 members of staff who tested positive for COVID -19 which affected operations, budget and overtime. 911 Operations are vital and continued throughout the pandemic. Modifications and necessary improvements will continue to be implemented as needed.



Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic



COLUMBIA-RICHLAND FIRE DEPARTMENT

WORKING THROUGH COVID-19



Beginning in March 2020 the Columbia-Richland Fire Department began steps to modify all operations in light of the COVID-19 Pandemic. Not only did the threat of the virus change daily activities within CRFD it also prompted us to pursue new ways to engage with the citizens we serve. Later on in the year - as more businesses in the City of Columbia and Richland County began to open back up - more of our efforts at CRFD were shifted to mitigation efforts to control the spread of the virus in our communities. This included increasing education and enforcement of the city's protective mask ordinance.

Below is a timeline of department activities related to the pandemic:

Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic



March 2020

In response to the threat of COVID-19, the department began to implement actions and procedures to keep our staff protected from the spread of the virus.

Actions taken by the CRFD included the following:

- Non-essential staff began to work from home
- All department-related travel out of the state of South Carolina was cancelled
- All firefighter and firetruck appearances at schools and public events were cancelled
- Training classes were modified or cancelled to allow for social distancing
- CRFD adjusted response protocols for responding to calls for service involving 'cold & flu' like symptoms
- CRFD started equipping firefighters with protective gear (N95 masks, eyewear, gowns for responding to calls for service)
- All fire stations were placed in lockdown with limited visitor accessibility
- Department leaders established a COVID-19 exposure matrix and quarantine protocol for staff that may have been exposed to the virus
- Department leaders established a COVID-19 Task Force and IAP protocol to manage and coordinate all department activity related to the virus

CRFD began pushing information out to the public through our media partners and on social media on (1) how to prevent infection from the virus, (2) local & state response efforts to COVID-19 and (3) fire safety messages to combat the risk for property fires that comes with more people staying at home.

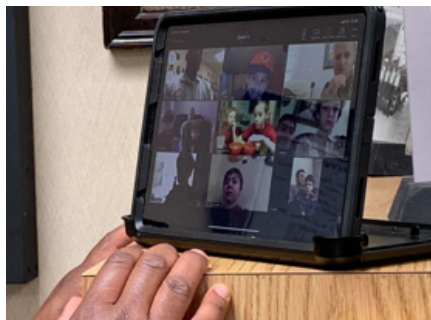


Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic

April 2020

CRFD took the following actions in April as the pandemic continued:

- New occupancy limit signs were installed by department staff in area businesses.
- Two Quick Response Vehicles (QRVs) were mobilized to assist with handling medical calls. This helped reserve our larger vehicles for fire-suppression and rescue operations and reduced the risk of exposing entire crews to COVID-19.
- All department stations were issued non-contact infrared thermometers with instructions to check temperatures of all staff daily. Above normal temperatures were recorded and sent to the department's safety officer.
- Working with staff at the University of South Carolina and several other community partners, CRFD commissioned the design of a decontamination system for our protective masks. This system uses ultraviolet light to decontaminate the masks and neutralize any viral threat that may develop on them.
- Three of the devices were installed in a modified trailer at Station 3 and guidelines were created for staff to turn their masks in for decontamination. The machine is capable of decontaminating hundreds of masks over a period of hours.
- City Manager Teresa Wilson and several local media outlets attended a demonstration of the equipment on Thursday, April 30, 2020.
- The department's Fire Prevention Office began conducting virtual fire safety inspections for area businesses. The Fire Education Office also began doing virtual home safety surveys.
- Fire Education Officer Bengie Leverett hosted a virtual tour of department headquarters on Sunday April 26, 2020. Several members of Cub Scout Pack 287 joined him for the tour via Zoom.



Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic

The department also took part in a number of community outreach events in April 2020 to bolster spirits during the pandemic.



Sirens for Solidarity – Stations across the Columbia-Richland Fire Department took part in ‘Sirens for Solidarity’ on the evening of Friday, April 3, 2020. As a sign to show area communities that first responders are still here to help them, all fire crews that were not on calls at 7:00 p.m. sounded the sirens on their firetrucks for a period of 30 seconds.

CRFD was joined in the campaign by the Irmo Fire District, the Lexington County Fire Service and other public safety agencies in Lexington County.

Thank Your Neighbors – On the evening of Friday April 10, 2020 all CRFD crews that were not on calls once again sounded their sirens for a period of 30 seconds. This was done to show support for area healthcare workers through the ‘Thank Your Neighbors’ initiative. The campaign was organized by Columbia City Councilwoman Tameika Isaac Devine.

9-1-1 Parade – The second week of April was National Public Safety Telecommunications Week. As a show of gratitude to staff working in the 9-1-1 Office a first responders parade took place on Friday April 17, 2020.

CRFD crews joined the Columbia Police Department, the Richland County Sheriff’s Department, the Richland County Coroner’s Office and Richland County EMS in a procession that went from Columbia City Hall to the 9-1-1 Office on Laurel Street.

Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic



Cruise Calls & Birthday Parade – At the request of citizens CRFD crews began taking part in a number of small parades to celebrate birthdays for area residents. All of these parades had short routes and several were done in partnership with other agencies.

The department also drafted and implemented 'Cruise Calls for Support' guidelines. This created instructions for crews to follow when answering drive-by requests. CRFD has continued to schedule and provide 'Cruise Calls' even today.

Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic



Prisma Health Parade – On Friday April 24, 2020 CRFD took part in another initiative to honor area healthcare workers serving on the front lines of the COVID-19 Pandemic. Several of our firetrucks and other vehicles took part in a procession that made its way from department headquarters to Prisma Health Richland Hospital and later to Prisma Health Baptist Hospital.

The procession stopped in two area of the Prisma Health Richland campus to show staff at the hospital gratitude and appreciation. CRFD was joined in the parade by our partners at the Columbia Police Department, the Richland County Sheriff's Department, the Richland County Coroner's Office and Richland County EMS.



Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic



May 2020

Video Recruitment Sessions –The department started looking at new virtual ways to recruit new firefighters. During the month of May one resource our staff began using was virtual 'Q&A' sessions through Zoom.

Our Recruiting Officer Captain James Bostic organized these sessions with the help of Volunteer Coordinator William Broschious. Multiple sessions were promoted on our social media platforms and all meetings were well attended. Since last May we have continued to hold these virtual Q&A sessions during department hiring periods.

Back to Business – In late May CRFD assisted the city with getting information out to area businesses as more were allowed to reopen. Fire Chief Aubrey D. Jenkins shot a public service announcement (PSA) with the city's public relations department. Specifically, the PSA focused on guidelines for area restaurants and other businesses to follow on new occupancy limits in light of the COVID-19 Pandemic. It also encouraged consumers to practice social distancing when they ventured out to support their favorite businesses. The video would debut online.



Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic

June 2020

Emergency Mask Ordinance – A new ordinance requiring the use of protective masks in the City of Columbia went into effect on Friday June 26, 2020. The following week members of our command staff visited area businesses to notify them of the new guidelines and enforce consequences for those who chose not to comply.



July 2020

New Applicant Testing – From Thursday July 16 through Saturday July 18, 2020 the department began assessing applicants to fill our next firefighter recruit class. Staff in training and professional services did an outstanding job facilitating written and physical agility testing while at the same time enforcing COVID-19 preventative guidelines. Written testing for applicants was conducted at Bible Way Church on Atlas Road while agility tests were done at the department's training grounds.



Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic

Recruit Class 2020-01 Graduation - On the morning of Friday July 24, 2020 commencement exercises were held for the members of CRFD Firefighter Recruit Class 2020-01. The graduation was hosted by Benedict College at Charlie Johnson Stadium.

Outside guests were not able to attend the graduation due to the threat of COVID-19 but the ceremony was livestreamed online using the department's YouTube account.

All 27 recruits wore masks during the graduation and adhered to strict social distancing guidelines. They began work with the department as probationary firefighters from Saturday July 25 through Monday July 27.



September 2020

Home Safety Surveys - In an interview with WACH FOX News the department successfully promoted our current ability to offer Home Safety Surveys virtually through phone video conferencing.

Our Fire Education Officer Bengie Leverett had been offering this service to our citizens for some time in the wake of COVID-19.

USC Football - The University of South Carolina would commence its 2020 football season on Saturday, September 26. Our Fire Chief Aubrey D. Jenkins and members of our staff were out at Williams-Brice Stadium to promote the city's mask ordinance.



Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic

October 2020

Free Mask Giveaway – On the evening of Friday October 2, 2020 CRFD Fire Chief Aubrey D. Jenkins joined Richland County Councilwoman Allison Terracio, County Administrator Leonardo Brown and Assistant County Administrator Dr. John Thompson in handing out free protective face masks in Five Points

The group hit several bars and nightclubs in the Five Points area and handed out roughly 1,250 masks to our citizens. This was all done in support of county and city ordinances that remained in effect requiring the use of protective masks in public areas.



November 2020

Election Day 2020 – In light of the COVID Pandemic, CRFD personnel helped support and protect area citizens as they headed to area polling stations to vote on Election Day. Fire Chief Aubrey D. Jenkins and Fire Marshal George Adams distributed free protective facemasks to any person who needed one while waiting in line to cast a ballot.



Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic

Stepping Up on Mask Enforcement - Department heads joined leaders in the City of Columbia as well as officials from the University of South Carolina in announcing expanded changes to the city's protective mask ordinance on November 5, 2020.

Fire Chief Aubrey D. Jenkins took part in a press conference in Five Points announcing the changes. Under the revisions CRFD deputy marshals could now issue steeper fines to private citizens who refused to wear a protective mask while in public areas. The ordinance also now requires mask use on crowded sidewalks that do not allow for social distancing.

Columbia City Manager Teresa Wilson, City Councilman Will Brennan, City Councilman Edward McDowell and City Councilman Sam Davis also took part in the press conference. The changes to the mask ordinance kicked off a heightened period of enforcement as CRFD deputy marshals issued more citations for individuals who refused to wear a mask in public. In total more than 150 of these citations were handed out over the course of the month.



Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic

Sparky the Fire Dog Masks Up – As part of CRFD’s efforts to promote changes to the city’s mask ordinance, the department joined the City of Columbia in unveiling a new mascot to encourage mask use in public areas. A mask-wearing ‘Sparky the Fire Dog’ made his debut at the press conference on November 5.

In the days that followed Sparky joined members of our staff as they handed out free masks in Five Points and other areas of the city. These masks were provided by officials at the University of South Carolina as a way to encourage mask-use with members of their student body. Several citizens liked seeing Sparky and asked to get their photo with him during his ‘patrols’ on the street!



January 2021

Firefighters Vaccinate – At the beginning of 2021 members of CRFD began to receive opportunities to get a vaccination for COVID-19. Fire Chief Aubrey D. Jenkins and other members of the command staff were among the first to get a shot.

In later months as COVID vaccinations became more widely available, the department began to put out content on our social media platforms encouraging citizens to get vaccinated.

All of this content has been pushed out under the ‘Firefighters Vaccinate’ campaign.



Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic

Providing COVID-19 Relief –On Friday January 15, 2021 the department mobilized resources to support two COVID-19 Vaccination sites: one in the Columbia area and another in York County.

CRFD staff moved two 20 foot by 20 foot pop up tents as well as folding chairs and tables to Gamecock Park on Bluff Road where Prisma Health Midlands will be distributing vaccinations. In addition to that the department also provided York County Emergency Management with 20 tables and 50 chairs for a vaccination site in York County. The items were loaded by our staff on a trailer which was picked up. York County officials will store the trailer in a secure location for the duration of the clinic.

Both vaccination sites will be operating indefinitely and so these resources will remain at them for the foreseeable future. The resources were requested through South Carolina DHEC Midlands Medical Coalition. The equipment is part of the Metropolitan Medical Response System. CRFD is the custodian of resources for the program in this part of the state.



February 2021

Virtual Reading Days – During the last two weeks of February CRFD staff members videotaped several reading segments for children to enjoy at area schools. The videos were aired during virtual reading days at Carver-Lyon Elementary School, Catawba Trail Elementary School and CrossRoads Intermediate School.

A reading segment that Fire Chief Aubrey D. Jenkins and Deputy Fire Marshal Ariel Thomas also taped for a Black History Month program at the Richland Library also aired there during the month of February.

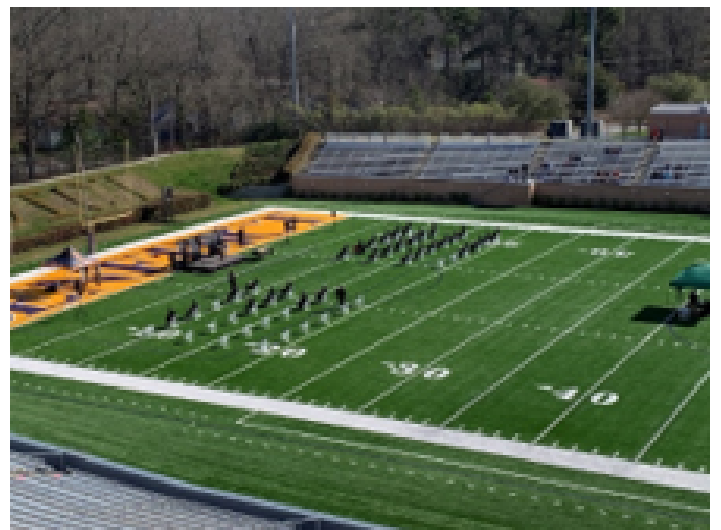
Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic



March 2021

Firefighter Recruit Class 2020-02 Graduation – The department welcomed 16 new firefighters into our ranks as the members of Recruit Class 2020-02 officially graduated on Friday March 5, 2021. Their graduation ceremony was held at Charlie Johnson Stadium on the campus of Benedict College.

Assistant County Administrator Dr. John Thompson served as the keynote speaker for the event and the recruits were able to invite guests to attend. Everyone in attendance adhered to COVID-19 preventative guidelines.



Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic

CRFD RESPONSE TO MAJOR INCIDENTS

Despite the pandemic CRFD crews continued to provide excellent response to emergencies across the City of Columbia and Richland County. Here are just a few of the major incidents that were handled by our firefighters from March 2020 through March 2021. In all over the course of the year 2020 CRFD firefighters handled 31,788 calls for service.



Cardinal Chemical Fire – On April 9, 2020 a fire broke out at the site of the former Cardinal Chemical Company off of South Beltline Boulevard. Our crews arrived on scene to find building with heavy fire. Several other areas of the property also began catching fire due to the dry conditions. No one was injured.



Fountain Lake Road – On April 11, 2020 three homes were left damaged by a 2-Alarm fire on Fountain Lake Road. Two of the homes were left uninhabitable and that displaced 5 people. There were no injuries reported. The fire was determined to have started in the garage area of one of the homes near the gas water heater.



Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic

George Floyd Demonstrations – During the last weekend in May CRFD supported the Columbia Police Department and other agencies with operations during the ‘George Floyd Demonstrations.’ Protests were held in the area of the State House and Columbia’s Vista on Saturday May 30 and Sunday May 31. The department went into these events committing fire suppression vehicles, our HAZMAT trucks and manpower.

During the first day of public protest on Saturday May 30 rioting broke out. Several vehicles were set on fire in and around the Columbia Police Department. Fires were also set in nearby buildings.

By the end of the day on Saturday the fires caused about \$90,000 in property damages. While responding to emergencies two firefighters were injured due to items being thrown at them. These staff members were treated by EMS and able to return to service.

Projected items also caused a combined \$4,600 in damages to Engine 1, Engine 2 and Reserve Ladder 57.

Epworth Children’s Home Fire – A fire at Epworth Children’s home on Tuesday June 2 caused significant damages to a building that was used for storage. No one was injured in the fire but Epworth did lose several supplies that are critical in running the home.

The cause of the fire was later determined to be an air handler that malfunctioned.



Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic

Hillandale Apartments Fire – In the late morning hours on July 27 a fire went 2-Alarm at the Hillandale Apartments off of Alcott Drive.

The first crews that arrived on scene found heavy fire coming out of one of the units in an apartment building. Heavy smoke was also present and firefighters quickly called for a 2nd Alarm. Roughly 50 CRFD personnel would become involved in the operation. There were no injuries but four units of the building would suffer damages and six people were left displaced.



Large Scale Gatherings – Beginning in the summer months of 2020, members of CRFD investigated and shut down several large scale parties and gatherings that were found to be in violation of the city's protective mask ordinance. This was part of the department's ongoing efforts to make sure citizens wear a protective face mask while out in public and adhere to social distancing guidelines.



Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic

Swiftwater Rescue on Low Head Dam – Close to 20 CRFD personnel were involved in a water rescue on August 14 that saved the life of a 12-year-old boy.

The teen got his leg caught in the crevice of several rocks on the low head dam in the area of the Columbia Canal on the Broad River. Responding crews spent close to 2 hours working to free him and were successful in the face of rising water levels and dangerous weather conditions.

The male patient was transported by EMS and escaped the incident with no major injuries.



Massive River Rescue During Tubing Event – On August 22 CRFD crews would work with the West Columbia Fire Department to safely help about 80 tubers off of the Broad River.

The tubers were taking part in an event involving about 300 people on the river when water levels began to rise greatly north of the Gervais Street bridge. Many people had to be rescued from the tree lines alongside the river. No tubers suffered any major injuries.

Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic

3-Alarm Fire at Historic Babcock Building – In what was the largest fire CRFD has seen in years, our firefighters responded to the historic Babcock Building on the Bull Street Development on the morning of Saturday, September 12, 2020. The fire would go to three alarms as flames quickly spread from floor to floor of the building and brought down its iconic dome.

More than 60 members of our staff would become involved in the operation and crews were cycled in and out of the scene over the course of the day to put the fire out. After 10 hours of work by our firefighters the fire was finally extinguished. While the interior damage to the building was substantial its outer shell was saved. The cause of the fire is currently being investigated by CRFD and the Columbia Police Department with the assistance of SLED and the bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.



Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic

Mutual Aid Structure Fire in Sumter – Beginning on October 27, 2020 CRFD began sending support to fight a massive fire at Howell’s Recyclable Materials near South Lafayette Drive in Sumter. Shift leaders would send multiple engines, a ladder truck and one of our battalion chiefs to lend support to the Sumter Fire Department.

Salvage Yard Fire - Our 3rd Shift crews were called out to North Columbia Auto Salvage on November 17 at 7716 Fairfield Road after getting reports that several vehicles there were on fire. Crews arrived to find a plume of black smoke coming from the facility and an area of debris on fire that was at least 40 feet long and 40 feet high. It took our firefighters a period of 4 hours to completely extinguish the fire. Several of our ladder trucks were used to get water on the fire from overhead. Crews also mixed the water with Dawn dish detergent to give more viscosity to the suppressant and save us from using foam. No injuries were reported.



Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic

Furniture Warehouse Fire – On November 24 CRFD crews responded to 1423 Ellerbe Street for a commercial structure fire. A fire broke out inside a building being used to store sleeper sofas and other furniture for 'Furniture Barn.' The fire appeared to start in the rear of the building and then spread throughout the interior and into the roof. It took our firefighters several hours to bring the fire under control. There were no injuries but the building did suffer extensive damages.



2-Alarm Structure Fire - On December 12 our crews in Battalion 3 responded to 213 Fox Grove Drive for a house fire. While en route command requested a 2nd Alarm as the fire was spreading to other homes. Upon their arrival crews found heavy fire coming from the home at 213 Fox Grove Drive with exposure damage to the homes to the left and right of it. An aerial was used to knock down the fire in the main structure and hand lines were used to protect the exposures. Occupants of all 3 homes made it out safely and there were no injuries.



Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic

Mutual Aid Structure Fire - During the afternoon on December 23 our crews provided mutual aid assistance to the Irmo Fire District during a massive apartment fire that tore through a building at River Oak Apartments. Several people were transported by EMS after having to jump out of the building. About 30 people were left displaced by the fire.



Plane Crash in Rosewood - On January 13, 2021 CRFD 3rd Shift crews along with Richland County EMS and Columbia Police Department crews responded to 2909 Kennedy Street in the Rosewood neighborhood for a reported plane crash that caused multiple homes to catch fire. Crews called for a 2nd alarm while en route to the scene. Upon their arrival firefighters found one home on fire with the flames primarily in the attic area. The home had one occupant inside at the time but she was able to escape with minor injuries that were unrelated to the crash. Crews entered the home and were able to extinguish the fire. The aircraft itself, which was a small single-engine plane, crashed in the backyard of the home. One person was found inside the wreckage and pronounced dead on scene. Officials with the Federal Aviation Administration and the National Transportation Safety Board arrived on scene to begin investigating the crash.



Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic

Fire at Willow Run Apartments – On Friday January 29 CRFD 1st Shift crews responded to the Willow Run Apartments at 511 Alcott Drive for a reported apartment fire. The first units en route to the scene saw thick smoke in the air and called for a working fire dispatch and a 2nd alarm was toned out when crews arrived on scene. Heavy fire broke through one part of an apartment building’s roof and flames began to spread across the building. By the time the fire was out 8 units had been damaged and roughly 30 people were left displaced. There were no injuries to civilians or fire department personnel.

An investigation by the CRFD fire marshal’s office determined that the fire was caused by a space heater that was being powered improperly in one of the apartments. This caused an electrical fire.



Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic

OTHER DEPARTMENT HIGHLIGHTS



Aside from responding to emergencies and the challenges of COVID-19, CRFD has continued to be involved in our communities in many ways over the course of the past year. Here are some of the ways the fire department worked with other agencies and the public at large from March 2020 through March 2021.

Phoenix Dawn Exercise at SCFA – Several members of our staff took part in mock disaster exercises organized by SLED at the South Carolina Fire Academy. 'Phoenix Dawn' took place at the academy from March 9, 2020 through March 13, 2020 and fire-service agencies from across the state took part.

Crews with CRFD were tasked with and completed multiple training scenarios that required multiple patient rescues. **(March)**



Humvee Training Course – 22 members of the department successfully completed a new course focused on driving Humvees in June. The department recently acquired several Humvees over the course of 2020 which will help our firefighters provide citizen rescues during major flooding situations.

The driving course was facilitated by members of the South Carolina Army National Guard. **(June)**



Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic

Juneteenth – Several CRFD firetrucks participated in the annual Juneteenth parade to celebrate the end of slavery in America. The parade made its way from Columbia City Hall to the South Carolina State House. **(June)**



Recruit Class 2020-01 Graduation - On the morning of Friday July 24, 2020 commencement exercises were held for the members of CRFD Firefighter Recruit Class 2020-01. The graduation was hosted by Benedict College at Charlie Johnson Stadium. Outside guests were not able to attend the graduation due to the threat of COVID-19 but the ceremony was live-streamed online using the department's YouTube account.

All 27 recruits wore masks during the graduation and adhered to strict social distancing guidelines. They began work with the department as probationary firefighters from Saturday July 25 through Monday July 27. **(July)**



Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic

National Guard Project – On August 14, 2020 members of the South Carolina Army National Guard assisted our training division with moving several large storage containers on the department’s training grounds. The guard provided a forklift and a crew to help run it, which allowed the containers to be moved in a period of minutes.

The items were being moved to help the training division prepare new drill exercises for our firefighters. **(August)**



9/11 Remembrance Ceremony – CRFD members were once again involved in the annual 9/11 Remembrance Ceremony on September 11, 2020. This year our 1st Shift crew on Ladder 9 was instrumental in plans to unveil the newly-updated 9/11 Memorial outside of the convention center. Members of our honor guard also took part in the event. **(September)**



Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic

Fire Prevention Month – In light of the COVID-19 Pandemic this year's Fire Prevention Parade and several other activities for National Fire Prevention Month had to be cancelled. However, this did not stop the members of our department from promoting the important message of fire safety with the general public.

Throughout the month of October members of our staff were featured on our social media channels to remind citizens to take steps to prepare in case they experience a fire in their home or business. These lessons included encouraging people to form and practice their own fire escape plans as well as invest in fire extinguishers for their homes and offices.

Members of our Fire Prevention Division also conducted interviews with our local TV stations to get fire safety messages out to the community. **(October)**



Firefighter Cancer Bill Signing – On October 14, 2020 Fire Chief Jenkins and other members of our department joined firefighters from across the state at a ceremonial signing of the Firefighter Cancer Healthcare Benefit Plan.

South Carolina Governor Henry McMaster would sign the plan alongside other state lawmakers at the South Carolina Fire Academy. Once it goes into effect the new law will make new benefits available to firefighters across the state of South Carolina who may face a cancer diagnosis. **(October)**



Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic

New Ladder 9 – Several leaders with both the City of Columbia as well as Richland County joined our staff for a community ‘Push-In’ ceremony for the new Ladder 9 truck. The ceremony was held at CRFD Station 9 on Devine Street.

The new Ladder 9 is a Pierce-model firetruck equipped with integrated stabilizer ground pads that allow for rapid setup. The truck also has side roll and frontal air bag protection. Station 9 primarily serves citizens living and working in the Five Points area as well as the Shandon and Old Shandon neighborhoods. **(October)**



Thanking Benedict College – Fire Chief Jenkins and members of our command staff visited Benedict College on Friday October 23, 2020 to give leaders there a well-deserved ‘Thank You’ for the assistance the college provided with our recent recruit firefighter graduation ceremony. In July 2020 Benedict College allowed us to use their football stadium for the graduation and also assisted us with our equipment and media needs for the event. In appreciation CRFD presented Dr. Roslyn Clark Artis - the president of Benedict College - as well as Athletic Director Willie Washington with framed certificates as well as honorary challenge coins from Fire Chief Jenkins. **(October)**



Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic

Reading in Our Schools – During the last week of October members of CRFD would bring story time to Burton-Pack Elementary School! Staff members read to several classes at the school virtually using Microsoft Teams. **(October)**



New Fire Engines Arrive – The new Engine 2 and Engine 11 arrived at CRFD and went into service for the department over the course of the fall. Both engines are Pierce-model firetrucks. **(November)**



Training Opportunities on Gordon Street – Several of our firefighters were able to practice their ventilation techniques using several dilapidated homes on Gordon Street. These homes were purchased by 'The Progressive Church of Our Lord Jesus Christ' in Columbia and donated to the department for training purposes. **(November)**



Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic

Fire Safety for Thanksgiving – In the weeks leading up to the Thanksgiving holiday, staff in CRFD's Fire Prevention Division did several interviews to promote cooking safety. This tied in well with continuing the message of this year's Fire Prevention Month, which was also fire safety in the kitchen.

In addition to doing media interviews the department also pushed out a lot of information on cooking safety through our social media channels. **(November)**



CRFD Promotional Ceremonies – From November 11 through November 13, 2020 department heads recognized 58 members of CRFD who earned promotions over the course of the past year. These recognitions took place through a series of small pinning ceremonies at department headquarters. Each honoree was allowed to invite a limited number of guests to witness them being badged by Fire Chief Aubrey D. Jenkins. All participants in the promotional ceremonies were required to wear a mask and follow COVID-19 preventative guidelines. **(November)**



Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic

Holiday Parade – On Friday December 4, 2020 Fire Chief Aubrey D. Jenkins as well as our 2nd Shift crews at Station 1 took part in a holiday parade to honor veterans at C.M. Tucker Nursing Facility. The parade made its way around parts of the hospital’s campus beginning at 10 a.m. The Richland County Sheriff’s Department and the Columbia Police Department also took part in the event. **(December)**



Good Night Lights – Several of our CRFD firetrucks once again took part in the annual ‘Good Night Lights’ on Sunday December 6, 2020 to bring holiday cheer to kids at Prisma Children’s Hospital. Ladder 9 and Ladder 7 supplied their aerials for the event to give Santa Claus a lift so he could greet children who were currently in care at the hospital. **(December)**



Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic

Fire Prevention Promotions – On December 15, 2020 CRFD would recognize four members of our staff who recently earned promotions within the department’s Fire Prevention Division. Fire Chief Aburey D. Jenkins presented each honoree with their new badge and a certificate of recognition during a small pinning ceremony in the department’s fire museum.

All honorees were allowed to bring a few guests for the event and all in attendance followed COVID-19 safety guidelines. **(December)**



Firefighters Feeding Families Holiday Food Drive - On Friday December 18, 2020 the department hosted its largest community food drive in recent years. From 9:00 a.m. until 5:30 p.m. canned goods and non-perishable food items were collected during the ‘Firefighters Feeding Families Holiday Food Drive.’ All items collected were organized into bags and distributed to area families in need.

By the time the campaign ended on Tuesday December 22, CRFD had distributed more than 200 bags of food. Area supermarkets also supported the event by donating money to CRFD so we could purchase food items for distribution. **(December)**



Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic

Chief Jenkins Made President of SC Fire Chiefs Association – On Saturday January 9 CRFD Fire Chief Aubrey D. Jenkins was officially sworn in as the new president of the South Carolina State Association of Fire Chiefs. This took place during the association’s annual leadership conference in Myrtle Beach.

South Carolina Governor Henry McMaster was in attendance and CRFD battalion chiefs David Laird and Philip Yarchuk also took part in the conference by teaching a course for battalion chiefs and fire officers. Chief Jenkins has now become the first African-American fire chief to lead the organization, which provides growth and training opportunities for officers in the fire service working across the state. **(January)**

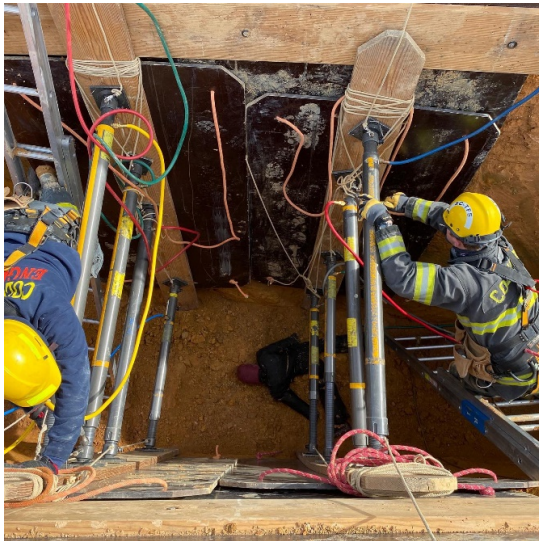


CRFD Selected for Community Risk Reduction Program – The Columbia Richland Fire Department became one of only 250 fire service agencies in the U.S. that will take part in a nationwide pilot program to map areas of risk in our communities. The program is being organized by the National Fire Protection Association. In the coming weeks a new software will be coming online at the department that will help keep track of and chart areas in Richland County that have experienced fires and other types of emergencies. Using this information, the department can then take actions that will help reduce risk in communities that need it the most. **(January)**



Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic

Trench Rescue Training – On February 4 and 5 CRFD companies took part in a Trench Rescue Technician course at Fort McCrady. A total of 15 personnel completed the training, which was compliant with the National Fire Protection Association. **(February)**



Volunteering with 'Meals on Wheels – Over the course of the week of March 22 several members of our CRFD Command Staff stepped up to assist 'Senior Resources Inc.' with making 'Meals on Wheels' deliveries around the area. Fire department staff made the deliveries during 'Senior Resources Community Champions Week.'

By the end of the week our staff has successfully delivered roughly 30 meals to area citizens who are currently home bound. **(March)**



Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic

Spring Promotional Ceremonies – During the week of March 22 CRFD officially recognized 10 members of our staff who recently received promotions within the department.

Fire Chief Aubrey D. Jenkins presented 2 new fire captains and several new engineers with their new badges during a series of promotional ceremonies at department headquarters.

Honorees were able to invite a limited number of guests to witness the promotions. All in attendance wore protective masks and adhered to COVID-19 preventative guidelines. **(March)**



Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

WORKING THROUGH COVID-19

Economic Development COVID Response

- Launched the new Columbia Economic Development website during the first week of pandemic, and assisted with providing COVID information to businesses until the Resilient Columbia site was established
- Created a dedicated “COVID-19” page on the CED website to host updates and information, such as SCRLA’s hospitality employee relief guide, SBA updates on EIDL programs, PPP program and CARES act updates, etc...

Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic

- Developed an “Open For Business” listing that was regularly updated on the Economic Development website early on that directed people to a comprehensive listing of businesses open for takeout, curbside pickup, and closure updates, which later evolved into a GIS Planning map asset that provided a visual map and more comprehensive listing of business information including contact information, business type, website, gift card availability, and more.
- CED staff assisted OBO in qualifying pre-applications and with loan application approval to aid the disbursement of \$1.4 million in local small business loans
- Coordinated regularly occurring meetings with the local business associations, gathering feedback and status updates on restaurant, retail, and service businesses in the areas.
- Provided individual outreach to at risk businesses, helping to connect them with information on assistance programs and funding, as well as providing marketing and promotion assistance when needed.
- Assisted with the Mayor’s Economic Relief task force, assisted with the development and distribution of multiple surveys as well as reporting on the impact of COVID-19 on the local economy
 - Led coordination of City’s COVID Community Testing Programming
 - Partnered with national marketing and social media influencer firm XOMAD to establish the #MASKUPCOLUMBIA campaign to help promote social distancing and mask wearing protocols early on during the crisis, helped facilitate a \$50,000 sponsorship gift from Walmart to help extend the duration of that campaign
 - Provided guidance and assistance to other communities about social media influencer campaign through our experience with the #MASKUPCOLUMBIA program as well as sharing information on COVID testing strategies and logistics
- Served on Rockefeller Center Pandemic Solutions Group
- Assisted with the development and roll out of the Resilient Columbia Pledge Challenge, including the development of marketing collateral, mapping assets, and the distribution of pledge bags and sanitation supplies to businesses who adopted the City’s recommended safety measure

Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic

- Partnered ByFarr along with BCBS of SC, OBO, Nephron Pharmaceuticals, Experience Columbia, and the Columbia Chamber on two separate rounds of the “Support Small. Save Local.” Business PR/Marketing campaigns (December to current) to provide community marketing support and raise awareness for the continued need to support small businesses all across our entire City - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N9SBFfyKDSY&t=10s>
- Continued to attend virtual recruiting conferences (Insurtech Connect, ICSC, etc..) and engage leads and prospects in the absence of in person travel
- Hosted and served as panelists for a wide variety of COVID related webinars, providing updates and guidance on local, state, and federal safety policies, regulations, and requirements
- Updated lists and resources provided monthly in the CED newsletter and frequently on all of our department SM channels (FB, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn)
- Included COVID-19 updates in our monthly webinars subjects
- Assisted with the planning and execution of both virtual and hybrid business conferences, including Open Source 101 (2021), Growth Summit (2020), and 1 Million Cups (2020 and 2021)
 - a. Open Source 101 – A technology event attracting regional and national tech talent, with some international attendees, focused on talent attraction/retention and building the tech pipeline. Promotes the City of Columbia as a tech hub and helps connect developers and students with local companies. 350 people attended this past year.
 - b. Growth Summit – Hybrid event held at Segra Park this past year, bringing together entrepreneurs, leaders, and “doers” in Columbia. The conference focuses on growing businesses, local leaders, and their networks. 130 people attended this past year. CED staff were main co-organizers.
 - c. 1 Million Cups – CED staff co-organizes this weekly virtual event showcasing a new business each time in a pitch style competition, with other entrepreneurs providing insight and feedback.
- Assisted new business owners in getting licenses and approved by the City for operation, helped facilitate license applications, loan program access, inspections, grease trap assistance and incentives, DHEC inspections, and campaigns promoting openings, to include some of the following: Femme X, Rambo’s Fatcat Biscuits, Hampton Street Vineyard, Bangback Pinball Lounge, Nail Salon, Lucky Spot Barbershop, Azalea Coffee, and others.

Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic



FINANCE

WORKING THROUGH COVID-19

Payment Center

Due to the fact the City was closed to the public and this is an area where you cannot work from home, staff worked rotating shifts. The first week of a pay cycle half of the staff would work M-W-F and the second half would work on T-TH. The second week they would switch. Someone is in the payment center every day. Robert Anderson was looking for help and we sent two of our cashiers down to public works to help him out. As we started to lose staff, we needed to call them back in order to ensure all of our payments were processed timely.

Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic

As we near the time of reopening to the public, we will need to hire those that we lost and get them trained. As there is no public at this time, we are good to run with a short staff.

- There have been some safety measures put into place for our staff. There have been speakers installed in the safety glass that separates the public from our employees. Risk management came in and assessed the back office to ensure our employees are all 6 feet apart.
- During this period the Payment Center issued an RFP for a new Cashiering system. The vendor was selected and they are currently working on an installation of the new system. This process will take approximately 6 months to complete. In the same time frame, we are looking to upgrade our billing software.

In addition, we created a procedure for handling payments when we do open to the public in order to keep our employees safe. We have shared this with each division in the city that handles payment. Please see below for the information.

City of Columbia Depositing Divisions Transaction Procedures

As we prepare to open back up to the public, please see below the attached new procedures on how to accept payments (cash, checks & credit cards).

When processing a transaction, please do the following:

- All Clerks must have on gloves during a transaction.
 - Give the customer a basket to put his or her credit card, cash or check in – Per the recommendations of the COC Risk Management team & Payment Center (Finance). Baskets will be provided to each depositing division.
 - Process the payment and put the receipt and change in the basket.
- Wipe down all baskets with a disposable disinfectant wipes.

TO CLEAN YOUR OFFICE CREDIT CARD TERMINALS:

Disinfecting Credit Card Terminals: Use disposable, disinfectant wipes or a paper towel that has been sprayed with a disinfected spray on devices. Do not spray any liquid directly on the card terminals.

REMEMBER TO DO THE FOLLOWING:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds or more. If not available, use hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Keep work area clean regularly with disinfectant wipes.

Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic

Business License

When the City closed to the public on March 17, 2020, the decision was made to postpone the due date of business license renewals from April 15 to May 15, 2020, and Hospitality Taxes from April 20 to June 30, 2020.

The City was closed to the public, and the Business License Division provides a service that could not be performed remotely. Because of this, staff worked a rotating schedule to allow for more social distancing in the office. The first week of a pay cycle, half of the staff would work M-W-F and the second half would work on T-TH. The second week they would switch. This allowed staff to be available in the office every day to assist customers.

As we got closer to the end of the license year, all staff returned to the office in November to work fulltime. We needed to ensure that all renewal applications were processed timely, and the billings mailed out by the end of the calendar year.

The 2021 business license renewals were due on April 15 with no additional extensions. Because the business license office remained closed to the public, staff provided various options to assist customers. Office staff assisted customers by phone and email, as well as offering curbside assistance outside the Washington Street entrance to collect documents and payments. Business license inspectors scheduled field visits with business owners to pick up renewal documents and payments. We worked to accommodate customers in every way possible.

Our inspectors have continued to go out and find new unlicensed businesses, and work with others to address any concerns they may have. Due to safety precautions, training has been limited for new inspectors as we are trying to keep a safe distance and wear our masks.

Risk management staff did a walk-through of the division and created a risk assessment plan. They installed safety glass with speakers at the front counter to provide social distancing between the customers and staff. Because of space constraints among office staff, they also recommended and installed Plexiglas between each workstation as they are not 6 feet apart.

Business license staff has been active with several upcoming projects. Staff is currently working on the migration to the statewide Business License Standardization Act and Model Ordinance. We are working hand in hand with MASC to get this accomplished. In addition, we are working with legal to ensure that ordinances are compliant with the new legislation.

We are continuing to work with our outside counsel on all short term rentals, be it housing, furnishings, or anything else relevant. This is due to the pending class action lawsuit we are a part of.

We are also working closely with the other divisions that are currently using EnerGov to ensure the upgrade goes smoothly.

Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic

Accounting Division

Because we do not have any outside (public) interaction only that of our internal customers, our reaction was a little different. As our vendors and are employees must be paid, we continued to work as normal. When we were provided with the tools to work from home, staff immediately changed gears and kept processing. We had some technical difficulties in the beginning, but we had the best IT department anyone could ask for in getting things corrected. When the squirrel decided to take a shortcut over our lines, they create a lot of difficulty for us in managing to just get our daily jobs done. But with dedication and cooperation we have managed to resolve most of the issues. There are still some lingering problems, but we take them as they come.

The AP staff works in the office 2 days a week in order to get the new invoices and any information that was dropped off from our internal customers. We will be increasing that to 3 days a week as we get closer to the end of the fiscal year. We have continued throughout this process our normal process of writing checks on Monday and Thursday. In addition to our regular payments, we issued all the checks for the Small Business Assistance program.

For payroll, there is someone in the office every day of the week in the event we need to assist on of our employees. During the pandemic we achieved a major accomplishment in that we went from 2 pay cycles to having everyone on a single pay cycle. This has been talked about since I came to the city in 2008. In addition to eliminating a pay cycle we added a waiting week to the process. This has completely changed the manner in which we process payroll. While this has had its moments, we are now completely settled into our new processes.

In treasury and all the accountants, there has not been much of a change with the exception of where they are working from. They too are currently in the office 2 days a week and will be transitioning to 3 days. They will still do their cash audits and remember to maintain all safety precautions at all times. We have continued to issue our outside funding and are issuing an IPRB for the first time in the City's history.

In the grants area there has been some staffing changes and due to training of new accountants, they are working more in the office as it is easier to train that way. Our Single Audit for FY'20 had no findings and was completed timely. Considering this was a virtual audit, they did a great job.

Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic

We now handle our staff meetings through teams as we are trying to ensure the safety of our employees

As for the end of FY'20, we managed to have a completely virtual financial audit. This was completed on time and we submitted it for the Certificate of Excellence on time and without asking for an extension. We are still waiting to hear the outcome, but it generally comes out in August. We had no findings in our audit. This could not be done without the teamwork we have and the attitude of the staff.

Utility billing is on the same path as the rest of the department. They are currently working 2 days a week in the office and moving to 3. They have had to learn to communicate better with other departments who are on different schedules. Sometimes you can't just pick up the phone and make a call you need to use the other tools at your disposal.

This upcoming year is going to be a challenge as we will be upgrading IFAS, SunGard, EnerGov and installing a new cashiering system.



Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic



INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

WORKING THROUGH COVID-19

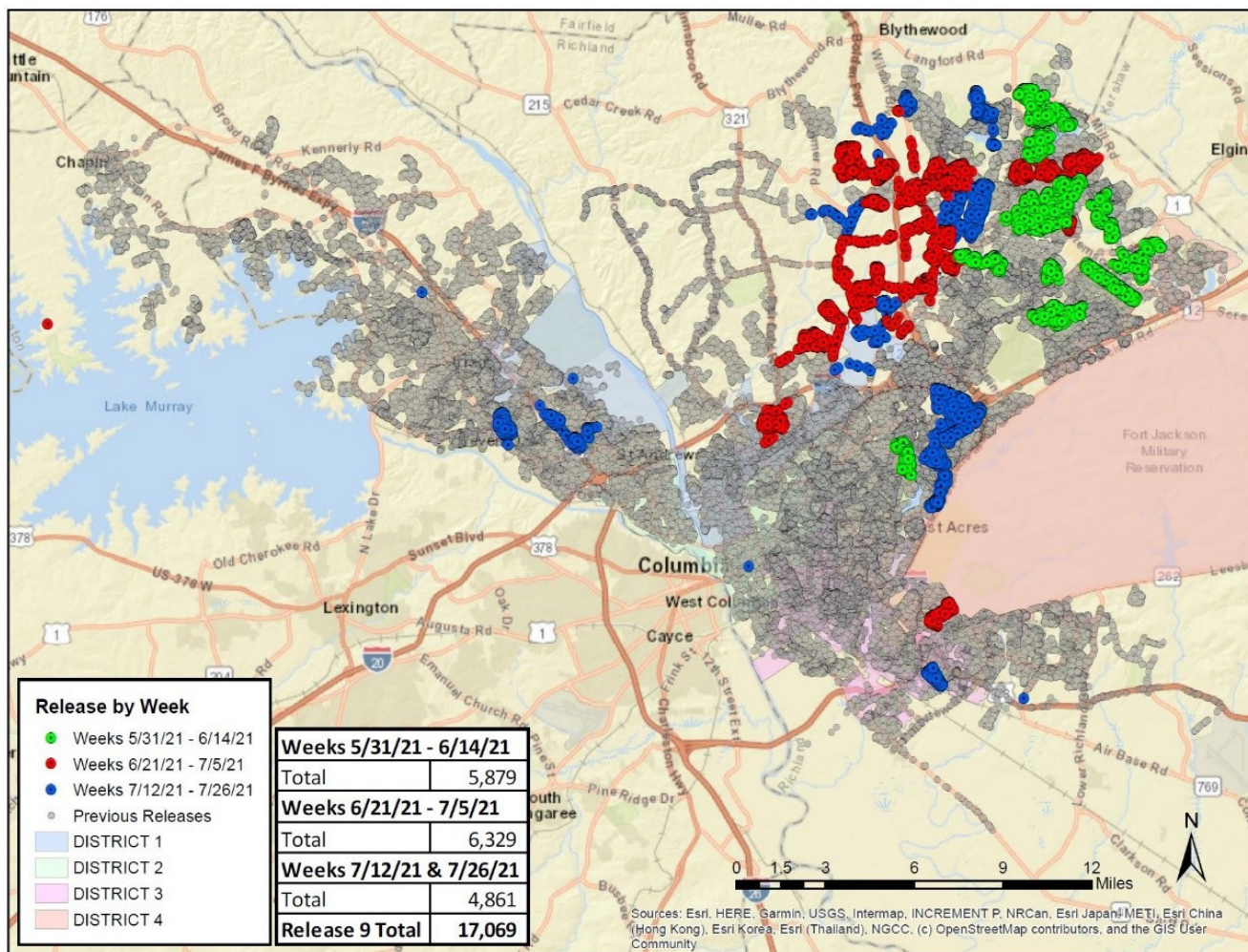
Applications Group

Utility Billing System

Through the COVID-19 pandemic, the City of Columbia IT staff, as well as other departments and partner vendors have developed safe work plans to continue daily activities as well as project plans. The Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) project remains on schedule and is two thirds of the way through completion with meter replacements in the field with about 110,000 meters of 150,000 meters complete for residential and other meters in the service area. This will enable the City of Columbia to have a smart infrastructure for water and will enable near real-time alerts for leak detection and backflow in the system. This project is part of the City's overall Smart City Initiative.

Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic

IT, Engineering, Customer Service, UMS, PMO, Badger and Jacobs, the project management team have been meeting remotely on the project. IT, Badger, UMS and Hansen have developed interfaces to handle data processing for the duration of the project to ensure data is synchronized between Beacon, Exchange and Banner to perform the Mass Meter Change Out (MMCO) and transition the City from manual meter reading to AMI automated meters in the next three years. Customers who have had an AMI meter installed, can create an account on Beacon and will have access to their detailed meter data and be able to sign up for leak alerts in real time and enable them to better manage their water usage and be able to analyze prior usage. The following map shows the routes being replaced in the next release. An online map is available for customers to find out when their meter is in the schedule to be replaced.



AMI 2021 2nd & 3rd Quarter rollout of water meters in the Columbia service area.

Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic

Utility System Upgrade

Upgrade to a current version of Customer Suite in a cloud environment is underway and initial plans to create the cloud infrastructure on Amazon's Web Services have begun. The cloud infrastructure will allow the City to have a more robust and agile system that is friendly to remote access, especially for staff that is working off-site during COVID-19. The target go-live is initially set for 3rd quarter of 2022.

Financial System

IT has worked diligently with Accounting, Finance, HR, Payroll, Purchasing and other departments to ensure that the City's financial operations continue in a safe and effective manner through the COVID-19 pandemic. Staff has been working in a combination of remote and on-site operations with meetings taking place on Microsoft Teams to facilitate communication. IT and the Helpdesk have worked with staff to ensure timely resolution to any issues that have developed over the past year.

Financial System Upgrade

Upgrade to a newer version is in process and will be hosted in the cloud. The new cloud solution will allow for better application support and ensure the City's financial system is meeting the latest end of year regulatory requirements. The newer system will also provide a remote-friendly environment, especially for staff that is working off-site during COVID-19. With the removal of the cashiering module going to a 3rd party vendor, the updated project will be more streamlined and allow for easier upgrades in the future. Central Square is in the process of developing a new project plan and establishing timelines for the current upgrade.

Utility Billing

IPARC Parking System Transition: IT, PMO and Parking are working on the new iParc Parking System implementation and the migration of the monthly parking accounts from Banner to iParc. Customer accounts will end in Utility Billing and then new accounts will be set up in the iParc system as they migrate to the new system. The remaining garage to migrate to iParc will take place in April of 2021.



Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic

GIS Group

External Web Applications for City Employees

One key feature of telecommuting is the necessity to maintain a secure work environment for employees and information. One such asset maintained since before the COVID – 19 pandemic utilized by the staff of multiple city entities is the Internal Citywide GIS Viewer. The viewer is used on a daily basis for a wide variety of functions and, because of this, has become an essential part of city operations.

With many employees no longer plugged directly into the city's local area network, it became necessary to develop and maintain an Off-network Citywide GIS viewer for employees. This was done through the deployment of an Off-network Citywide GIS Viewer through a secure ArcGIS Online environment that does not require a local area network or a virtual private network to be provided through the city for employees to have access to their essential Citywide GIS Viewer information.

- Provides main city related information with an address input
- Be able to view all city maintained assets and other GIS layers
- Be able to search address, parcel and other city maintained assets

COVID-19 Dashboard Web Application

As the COVID – 19 pandemic escalated, the need for tactical information concerning the virus increased among city officials. This web application provides the mayor's office, city management, and emergency operations with tactical information consisting of the number of reported cases, estimated cases, and total cases for ZIP codes within Richland County in addition to the county as a whole. Deaths related to COVID – 19 were also provided at the county level. The web application provides plots allowing users to see trends of cases and deaths over time.

- Provides ZIP code level daily and accumulative cases (DHEC has stopped sharing ZIP code level data December of 2020)
- Provides daily confirmed case in a serial chart
- Provides daily confirmed death cases in a serial chart



Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic

Building Damage Assessment Survey app and Dashboard

Internal Web Applications

Calls for Service with COVID-19 Web Application

The intensification of the COVID – 19 pandemic created a need for the spatial recording of calls for service along with daily COVID – 19 cases. Columbia Fire Department (CFD) requested the development of a web application that would allow the CFD and Columbia Police Department (CPD) to visualize the spatial relations between calls for service and COVID-19 daily cases. The resulting web application, while simple, may potentially yield valuable information for members of CFD and CPD.

- Provides daily medical related calls in a heat map and a gradual symbol format
- Provide daily COVID-19 cases

Boil Water Advisory Editor

The Columbia Customer Center needs to provide boil water advisory information. The data required for this task needs to be easily accessible and up to date for the public. (Note: A boil water advisory notification coming from Columbia Water is limited to certain formats because it's not readily identifiable.)

The Customer Care Center wanted to be able to identify individual callers and determine whether or not they are located in a boil water advisory area. If they are, residents are provided appropriate information and instructions for protecting the health and safety of community residents. The challenge in building such an app was that the GIS team had to integrate boil water advisory notification system with the customer care center application.

The GIS team's solution developed a web application that contains custom data processing tools. The water advisory team first identified impacted areas and then generates data that can be imported into the boil water advisory system and generates a list of water customers who are impacted. The list will be linked to the customer care center system. Repealing a boil water advisory takes a similar approach. The advisory team updates the status and runs a tool which removes the list of repeal boil water advisory customers. This process enhances customer care center's capabilities and improves the efficiency by eliminating manual processes of transferring data between two systems and to be able to provide boil water advisory information to the public without going through an additional system.

Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic

Public Facing GIS Web Applications for Public

Columbia Resilient Pledge Survey Web Application

When the Governor began to lessen stringent restrictions, the City of Columbia's Upper Management team approached GIS to see if we could develop and deploy an application in a short period of time to serve as an accessible form for businesses to participate in the Columbia Resilient Pledge. This pledge was designed to encourage businesses to maintain public health precautions as they opened up during the COVID -19 pandemic. The request resulted in two separate web applications. One, entitled Resilient Columbia Pledge, where businesses can commit to the Columbia Resilient Pledge, and two, an application allowing the public to view what businesses have taken the Columbia Resilient Pledge.

Resilient Columbia Pledge Survey

A survey application to take Resilient Columbia Pledge

Resilient Columbia Pledge Dashboard

A dashboard web application to display total number of pledges taken with individual business information.

City of Columbia Public Parking and Parks Finder

A map to display city owned parking decks and parking lots

Public Viewer for Current and Proposed Zoning

An application that displays the proposed City of Columbia Zoning information. This application contains both current and proposed zoning districts.

Mobile Market Planning and Research GIS Web Application

This application was developed for the Columbia Food Policy Committee to support Mobile Market research and planning processes.

Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic

Helpdesk Group

Computer Refresh

Information Technology completed replacement of computers for the entire city. The deployment included replacement of desktop computers with Windows 10 operating system.

Helpdesk Work Flow Improvements

To better handle calls while working remotely the helpdesk implemented an Interactive Voice Response System (IVR) for better call tracking and quality assurance.

Covid-19 Remote Work

As the pandemic hit and City offices were moved to remote locations, the helpdesk deployed over 100 laptops to City staff. These laptops have allowed employees to work remotely during the pandemic.

Computer Deployments/Relocations

Performed several computer deployments to city departments. Sites included deployment of computer equipment to Hampton Park, the relocation of TN Development from 1225 lady St. 2nd floor to 720 Calhoun Street and completed relocation of Water Customer Service Department from 1136 Washington St to 1401 Main Street.

Police Vehicle Equipment Upgrades

The helpdesk performed software upgrades to over 150 Columbia Police vehicles. These upgrades included inventorying, imaging, configuration, and documentation. These upgrades will allow more officers on the streets to respond to dispatched calls.



Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic

Systems Administrators

Enterprise City-wide Computer Refresh

The IT department completed replacement of the City's legacy desktop computers. All new computers have Windows 10 and Microsoft Office 2016 installed as part of the base installation. This project involved many resources from IT including: System Administrator team for project management and technical setup, the network team, and the helpdesk team for inventorying, reinstalling software and deploying new desktops. The project was complete one week prior to Covid-19 stay home orders.

FOG Upgrade

The Swift Comply FOG Management Program is an online platform for the management and reporting of fats, oils, and grease (FOG) pump-outs. The goals of this digital solution are to standardize restaurant compliance, simplify environmental regulation, and enhance consistency of compliance with Columbia's Grease Control Regulation. The food service establishments (FSE) can upload manifests themselves, by adding details about their most recent service to their business profile and a photo of the manifest left by the service provider. This project included system configuration, testing, training and migrating data from the legacy XC2 FOG software to the new Swift Comply cloud based software. The upgrade has been successfully implemented in Production.

GraniteNet Upgrade

GraniteNet, provides the City of Columbia with a central repository for efficient tracking of CCTV inspections and condition management of pipe and manhole assets. The CCTV solution enhances efficiency, safety and regulatory compliance for the City's sanitary sewer system and provides full integration to the existing Cityworks work order system, for improved asset management and reporting. GraniteNet was upgraded from version 3.5.2 to version 4.2. This upgrade included installing and configuring a new development environment, testing the new application and the interface to Cityworks work order system. The upgrade has been successfully implemented in Production.

Enterprise Cityworks Upgrade

Cityworks is an Enterprise work order and asset management system which tracks service requests, work orders and inspections. The Cityworks was upgraded from version 15.1.3 to version 15.5.5. This upgrade included installing and configuring in a development environment, testing the following interfaces: Banner Billing interface, WWM GraniteNet CCTV interface, WWM SL-RAT interface, WSP interface and functional user testing from each division. The upgrade has been successfully implemented in Production.

Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic

Work order Summary Process (WSP) Implementation

The WSP application automates work order creation of contractor data by interfacing with Cityworks work order system to import Wastewater contractor work activities. This solution provides full integration to the existing Cityworks work order system, for improved productivity and reporting. IT staff installed the application in a development environment, assisted in testing for several months by collaborating with CDM Smith and Power Engineering to implement the Power Engineering developed application. The upgrade has been successfully implemented in Production.

Fleet Services System Upgrade

The Fleet Focus system is a fleet asset management, work order, preventative maintenance and parts inventory application with bar-coding capabilities. Fleet Focus was upgraded from version 17 to version 21. The Fleet Services and IT staff are performing extensive testing to ensure successful integration with the City's fuel interface from the City's fueling sites, interface for Mansfield fuel transactions and the financial billing interface to the accounting department.

Public Input Solution

Deployed a secure solution focused on maintaining the public engagement processes during City Council meetings. The Public Input solution has allowed citizens a method to participate in City Council without the need for a computer.

Other benefits include:

- Secure meeting environment with meeting-specific codes
- The ability for citizens to call and record their comments
- City Council can interact in real-time with citizens
- Unlimited online participants
- No downloads or logins required
- Phone participation options
- Structured survey questions and private comment options
- Online, text, or phone based commenting



Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic

Energov Mobile Deployment

The Information Technology Department along with the Planning Department worked in collaboration on remote access to the City's planning, permitting, and licensing applications. The two applications that were deployed were:

iG Enforce: City employees can complete enforcement management tasks in real time. This solution streamlines the enforcement process, and enables staff to proactively manage cases.

iG Inspect: City employees can quickly and easily manage inspections for buildings, land use, environmental, health, safety, and compliance in a wireless environment. Employees in the field can easily manage the daily inspection process from research and review to recorded comments, digital signatures, and printing capabilities.

Remote Collaboration Tools

In an effort to keep dispersed city employees connected and communicating during COVID-19 the Information Technology department deployed several virtual conference technologies. These technologies include WebEx, Zoom, and Microsoft Teams. Features for these technologies include:

- A chat-based collaborative workspace that features group and individual messaging with threaded and persistent conversations. Users can elevate a group or one-on-one chat to a voice or video call.
- Audio Calling provides cloud-based telephony for voice calling. Users can make voice over IP (VoIP) calls between clients. Users can also make, receive and transfer calls to and from landlines and mobile phones on the public switched telephone network.
- Video meetings. In addition to audio-only calls, users can conduct virtual video meetings. Amid the COVID-19 pandemic and work-from-home (WFH) directives, video conferencing adoption soared as people collaborated remotely. Video conferencing features, such as customized virtual backgrounds, meeting recording, and transcription can be utilized.
- Screen sharing. This older but critical capability is a common feature among team collaboration tools. As the name implies, screen sharing enables users to share their desktop screens, including files, in real time during calls or video meetings.
- Calendar. Microsoft Outlook email integration features include extensive calendaring so users can keep track of their workweek, meetings and other daily appointments.
- File sharing. In this document management feature, users can store, share and edit files. Users can also collaborate on the same document in real time.
- Webinars. Interactive meetings and webinars for up to 1,000 attendees. Features include live reactions and host moderation controls to disable attendees' chat, audio and video. webinars can accommodate 10,000 people in a view-only broadcast.

Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic

Call Center Resiliency

The Information Technology Department quickly deployed a solution to allow call center employees to be able to work from home, to take calls from concerned residents, and to have secure access to city information and the latest guidance. This solution was expanded to any department that needed to reroute phone communications to a home office. Employees are able to use a headset and laptop to answer calls while working remotely.

Residential Property Check

The Information Technology Department worked with the Columbia Police Department to develop an online residential property check form. Property check forms are submitted to request increased police patrols of citizen's residences or businesses while residents and business owners are away for an extended period of time. The request form is located on Columbia Police website at <https://columbiapd.net/property-check-request-form/>

Upgrades to Mobile Data Terminals

In preparation of a joint Columbia Richland 911 call center upgrade, the Information Technology department upgraded 150 Mobile data computers to maintain CJIS compliancy. This upgrade was mandatory for the Columbia Police Department to continue to integrate with the 911 Computer Aided Dispatch system.



Resilient Columbia: Maintaining Service Delivery During the Pandemic

Network Group

SCADA Remote Tools

The Information Technology Department was able to enhance current SCADA remote connectivity. This solution provides features such as: Real-Time Status Control, Alarming, Reporting, Data Acquisition, Scripting, Scheduling, MES, and Mobile support.

Antivirus Upgrade

The move of our antivirus software to software as a Service allowed internet connected City devices to receive patches from anywhere removing the need for an endpoint to always be connected to the City network. The product includes virtual patching capabilities powered by Zero Day Initiative, along with a range of modern technologies to detect and block advanced attacks, including file-less threats.

Cellular Management

Continued staff issuance of cellular equipment including phones and MiFis as well as staff WorkOrders. Followed City COVID requirements including limiting user interaction, social distancing, disinfection measures, and mask wearing.

Network Management

Configured City staff to allow remote WFH phone access. Assisted with new Customer Care and Helpdesk IVR configuration and implementation. Continued to provide on-site network support while following all City COVID requirements.

Network Security

Antivirus Upgrade

Upgraded our main anti-virus software to the latest version and migrated our agents to a new cloud solution. The security benefits this gives us is advanced automated threat detection and response against an ever-growing variety of threats, including fileless and ransomware. The new security agent has evolved to be a lightweight endpoint protection agent that maximizes performance and effectiveness to detect sophisticated attacks.

Internet Web Filter

Migrated our users from our old internet web filter to the new proxy appliance. This allows us to provide fine-tuned control over our users' web access, while providing comprehensive protection against web threats such as viruses, malware, data loss, and phishing attacks.

City Building Security

Expanded the City building security system with 234 cameras and 195 card readers now on line. These expansions will allow more visibility of locations throughout the City.