



COLUMBIA QUARTERLY

Your Source for City of Columbia News and Events

Fall/2025



New Municipal Complex Approved

In a milestone decision that marks a bold step into the future, the Columbia City Council has approved an ordinance authorizing the purchase of a modern 35,000 sq. ft. facility at 11800 Old Bluff Road to serve as the City's new Municipal Complex. Approved at the August 4, 2025 Regular City Council Meeting, the City will purchase the facility, constructed in 2020, for \$6.9 million. A planned \$8.5 million additional investment will transform the site into a centralized hub for essential government operations, bringing together functions currently housed at City Hall (208 S. Rapp Avenue) and the Public Safety Complex (1020 N. Main Street). The City will fund this project without raising taxes. The project will include a purpose-built addition to house the Columbia Police Department, replacing the Department's current station, which no longer meets modern standards for law enforcement. In addition, the City will construct a new building on-site to serve as the permanent home of Columbia Emergency Medical Services (CEMS), replacing severely outdated quarters. When completed, the new Municipal Complex will allow the City to house all major administrative, public safety, and emergency services in one location, improving coordination, efficiency, and service delivery to residents.

Exciting Progress on Creekside Park

Creekside Park is under construction and, despite spring rain delays, remains on schedule for completion fall/winter 2025. Baxmeyer Construction is building the lake, fishing pier, parking lot, and walking trail; Lake Contracting will construct the restroom; and Middendorf & Ruess Construction will install the pavilions and playground. Another improvement in progress is the Creekside Park Trail Connector Project, scheduled for an IDOT November letting. This project will add a pedestrian bridge connecting the GM&O Trail to the new park trail, extend the trail to Rueck Road, and provide sidewalk access from Creekside Subdivision. Completion is anticipated in late 2026.

Updated FEMA Flood Maps Released

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has issued new flood maps for Monroe County, effective August 19, 2025. These maps will replace the current maps which became effective in 2003. A link, available on the City of Columbia website, will take you to a FEMA GIS map where you can view the new maps. As a reminder any work or project proposed in the mapped FEMA floodplain may need a permit prior to beginning the work. Please contact the Engineering & Inspections Department with any questions regarding the permitting process when dealing with a mapped FEMA floodplain.

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Mayor's Message



Mayor Bob Hill

As the leaves begin to change and the air turns crisp, we are excited to share the many happenings taking place in Columbia this fall. Our community continues to thrive with events, new businesses, and opportunities for everyone to enjoy.

Fall represents a transition, bridging the gap between the vibrant energy of summer and the quiet calm of winter. Over the past few months, the City has made significant progress on two major projects: addressing infrastructure failure on Valmeyer Road and acquiring a facility for a new consolidated Municipal Complex. These recent projects will mean increased public safety, more efficient government services, and a more resilient infrastructure for the City of Columbia.

As we look toward the future, it is also important to celebrate what brings us together today. This fall, our community has once again rallied around our local sports teams. From the Friday night lights at the football field to the excitement of soccer, cross country, and volleyball, Columbia's athletes remind us of the teamwork, pride, and spirit that connect us all. These moments of cheering in the stands and celebrating victories—big and small—are what make Columbia such a special place to call home.

Let's also remember to support our local events, businesses, and organizations as we move into the holiday season. In an age where online shopping dominates, the impact of supporting our local economy cannot be overstated.

As your Mayor, I am dedicated to serving our City and its residents to the best of my ability. Please don't hesitate to reach out as we continue to work together to make Columbia an even more exceptional place to call home.

Enjoy the fall in Columbia!

Safe and Fun Fall

Back to School Safety

CPD would like to remind drivers of some back to school safety tips to help keep everyone safe throughout the school year:



- **Be aware of our designated school zones. Reduce driving speed in school zones.**
- **Expect increased traffic near school zones and allow for extra time.**
- **Remember that cell phone use is not allowed in school zones. Phone calls, texts, and social media can wait!**
- **Be aware of our pedestrian crosswalks. Stop your vehicle and allow pedestrians to safely cross.**
- **Be cautious and courteous to our bus drivers. It is illegal to pass a stopped school bus that has a stop sign extended and their lights on. Stop your vehicles an appropriate distance away during loading and unloading of school buses.**

The Columbia Police Department would like to wish our local students and school staff a safe and successful 2025–2026 year.

Pictured is Columbia's School Resource Officer, Tyler McWhorter. He rotates through the different school buildings, maintaining close partnerships with school administration, staff, and students in order to provide a safe school environment. CPD is committed to making sure overall school safety is a top priority!



Welcome to Columbia's New Businesses!

Rooted on Main
538 S. Main St.

ReMax Results Realty
216 W. Sandbank Rd. Suite 7

Gateway Financial Group
503 S. Metter St.

Edward Jones
216 W. Sandbank Rd. Suite 5

Valmeyer Road Progress Update

The City of Columbia continues to navigate the design and required permitting process to address the slope failure at Valmeyer Road and D Road. Engineering firm Millennia Professional Services is completing the hydraulic review required by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR), and finalizing plans for submittal.

Since the last update, the State Historic Preservation Office is reviewing the application. Additionally, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has determined the proposed culvert installation can be permitted under a Nationwide (General) Permit. However, this will require stream mitigation in accordance with the federal Clean Water Act.

When a construction project impacts a regulated stream, wetland, or other waterway, federal law requires that the environmental functions "lost" be replaced. This is often done through the purchase of stream mitigation credits, which fund restoration or preservation of other streams in the same watershed. The goal is to ensure there is "no net loss" of aquatic resources.

In this case, the proposed culvert installation will have an "impact" on Carr Creek, triggering the need for these credits. The City is currently evaluating available mitigation options and their associated costs, which will be factored into the total project budget.

The City remains committed to advancing this project through the necessary bureaucratic steps and will continue to provide updates as key milestones are reached.

Veteran's Day Parade & Honor-Que

November 8, 2025

The annual parade will showcase local veterans, community groups, and patriotic spirit, leading into an afternoon of great food and fellowship as we come together to honor those who have served. Let's line the streets November 8th and stand together for our veterans making it a day to remember!

Fall Leaf & Limb Pickup

As the leaves begin to fall, the Department of Public Works will conduct leaf collection sweeps throughout the city starting November 10th and continuing through December 19th. Please have leaves ready by 6 a.m. Residents are reminded of the following guidelines:

- **No grass clippings, shrubs, branches, gumballs or limbs permitted.**
- **Leaves should be placed within four feet of the street, behind the curb and sidewalk, in rows not piles.**
- **Do not park vehicles in front of the leaves.**

Limb Pick-up will occur during the week of September 29th - October 3rd.

- **Place your piles of limbs parallel to road and behind the curb by 6 a.m. on September 29th to ensure timely pick-up.**

Honoring our Heroes in Blue

August 11th, Mayor Hill unveiled a lasting tribute to three of Columbia's finest. In recognition of their unwavering dedication, service, and sacrifice to our community, three streets in Columbia will now bear the names of:

Sgt. Alfred J. Descher Memorial Way
Officer Jared R. Reddick Memorial Way
Sgt. Michael A. Conrad Memorial Way

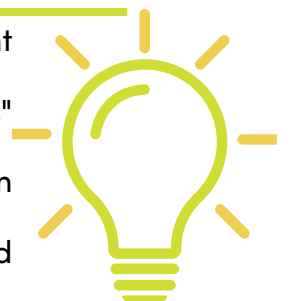
These street dedications are more than signs – they are daily reminders of the courage, commitment, and honor these officers have brought to Columbia. We thank them and all who serve in law enforcement for keeping our city safe.



Did you know?

Go paperless and save time—sign up for electronic billing and payment for your utility bills today!

1. Visit the City's website and navigate to "Online Portals & Payments" tab.
2. Set up your account, fill out the direct debit form, submit the form either at the payment drop box or the Clerk's window at City Hall. Switching to E-bill and E-pay will ensure your payments are processed efficiently!





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Know Columbia



Upcoming Events & Services

October 5	FestiFall Celebrate autumn in Columbia! Kids' activities, vendors, and food & drink including authentic German potato pancakes! <i>Music by the Z Band. Metter Park 1 p.m. - 6 p.m.</i>	 HOURS Mon - Thurs: 9 am - 8 pm Fri: 9 am - 5 pm Sat: 9 am - 4 pm Phone (618) 281-4237
October 6 - 31	Scarecrow Crawl Stroll down Main Street to see decorated scarecrows lining the sidewalks. Enter your own scarecrow for a chance to win prizes or vote for your favorite!	September Library Card Sign up Month! Sign up for a new library card in September for a chance to win a \$50 Amazon gift card!
October 9	Witches Ghoulish Night Out Food, brew, contests, prizes, shopping & fun for witches & warlocks. Info and tickets at visitcolumbiail.org <i>Historic Main Street 5 p.m. - 9 p.m.</i>	Lego Club (4-12 yrs) 9/9, 10/7, 11/17, 12/9; 4:00 - 5:00 pm
October 25	Halloween Hi-Jinks Trick or Treat at Historic Main Street Businesses and City Hall. Trick or treating and activities 10 a.m. - noon <i>Costume contest at City Hall parking lot at noon.</i>	Plant Swap Monday, September 29; 5:30 - 7:00 p.m.
November 29	Small Business Saturday Shop local for the holidays. Participating Main Street Businesses. Discounts, food & drink specials all day long. <i>Historic Main Street 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.</i>	Document Shred Event (5 box limit) Saturday, October 4, 10 - 12 pm Turner Hall Parking Lot.
November 29	City Hall Christmas Tree Lighting Join us at Fountain Park for Columbia's official tree lighting ceremony, carols, and much more. <i>Fountain Park in front of City Hall at 6 p.m.</i>	Friends of the Library Book Sale @ FestiFall Sunday, October 5, 1 - 6 p.m.
	Details at www.columbiail.gov/calendar or call (618) 281-7144	Halloween Hoopla (18 mos. to 5 yrs.) Saturday, October 11, 10 am - 12 pm @ Library
		Gingerbread House Creations (Family) Saturday, November 8 9:30 am; 11 am; 1 pm
		Novels at Night (Adults) First Tuesday of Month, 7 pm
		Seniors' Club (55+) American Legion: Thursdays, 11 am - 1 pm
		For event details and registration, call or visit www.columbialibrary.org