



## Community Facilities



### What are Community Facilities?

Community Facilities are the places and services that everyone in the community shares- whether they use them or not. Police, fire, schools, parks, utilities, courts and administrative functions, when well-run and accessible, add to everyone's quality of life. Community Facilities are more than just buildings. The location and condition of City Hall and your child's school are both essential ingredients for a successful community- but just important are the quality of the services provided and the ease of accessing them.

Columbia Compass will focus primarily on the City-owned facilities the citizens of Columbia use every day, as City policies can more directly affect the administration of and improvements to these facilities. However, Columbia is also home to facilities owned or operated by Federal, State, and County government agencies as well as private interests. These include, but are not limited to, schools, hospitals, parks, and private utilities. As the State Capital and County Seat, Columbia benefits from a wide assortment of these facilities, and strengthening partnerships and collaboration amongst agencies will better serve the public both inside and outside of our borders.



### Planning Ahead

We received a lot of feedback through surveys and focus groups on the topic of deferred maintenance of City properties. There was a common feeling that the City was so busy "putting out fires" that there wasn't an opportunity to look forward and create effective maintenance plans. While creating effective plans may take slightly more effort and funding upfront, the time and money saved in the long run can make the City more efficient and reduce duplication of efforts.

Part of an effective maintenance plan is having a dedicated stream of funding to complete projects and keep up to date with maintenance. Prioritizing the development, funding, and implementation of maintenance plans for our current facilities will lay down a solid foundation upon which we will build the Columbia of the future for our citizens and visitors.

### A Growing Community

The Central Midlands Council of Governments is estimating that the Midlands region's population will nearly double by 2050. As we add people to the City and surrounding areas, more facilities from schools to emergency personnel to infrastructure will be needed to continue serve the community effectively. Planning ahead will allow the City to know where these services will be needed and how to fund them.

THE CITY OF COLUMBIA  
EMPLOYS MORE THAN

# 2,200

TO SERVE RESIDENTS, BUSINESSES,  
AND VISITORS

## Employees as Entrepreneurs

The City of Albuquerque, NM implemented a program for city employees to train them in an “entrepreneurial mindset”- empowering all levels of employees with the tools and sense of ownership needed to solve problems encountered on a daily basis. In its first three years, the program recorded that employee morale had improved and that graduates of the program had created over 250 new projects that created greater efficiencies, improved customer service, and more.

### Data: Not Your Father’s Infrastructure

While we usually think of infrastructure as a something we can physically touch like a road or sidewalk, information can be just as important in our day-to-day lives. We live in the “information age” where nearly every aspect of our lives is influenced by data. Companies large and small use data to power their businesses and increase their efficiency.

Local governments, including the City of Columbia, tend to lag far behind the private sector in harnessing the power of data to inform decision-making, identifying opportunities, and improving the lives of the people the City serves. The concept of having a “Smart City” is built upon the ease of access and accuracy of data to make smart decisions. Having access to information can help to improve how the City spends its limited funds and ensure that funds are allocated equitably. Partnering with other government agencies and private companies to access the most accurate data will help to serve

both public and private interests.



The project cycle developed by the Clean Water 2020 program of Columbia Water.

This is used to establish priorities and measure progress.

### Public Servants and Ambassadors

The experience of the public when accessing municipal services is just as important as being provided the right level and mix of services in the first place. Unlike a business, a government’s primary customers are its citizens and its has different obligations to the public than a private business. That being said, some valuable lessons in service can be learned from the private sector.

Building relationships with the people the City serves helps to not only build confidence the community feels with public servants but helps City employees to do their job better and more efficiently. The Columbia Police Department has taken this lesson to heart by creating a series of “Front Porch Roll Calls”. These “Roll Calls” are community-led meetings that give officers an opportunity to build relationships, impact changes when necessary and develop trust within the community by simply having an open conversation.

Providing excellent and consistent quality services has been a goal of the City. This has been exemplified by the City’s Solid Waste and Recycling Division. These employees may be the most visible of any City division, servicing the over 130,000 citizens of Columbia every week through garbage and recycling pick up. The citizens of Columbia have come to expect and receive the regular high-quality service these employees provide.



Congolesse children learn how to pull a vase with artist Paul Moore at the Columbia Art Center located in the Cannon Parking Garage on Taylor Street

Columbia Compass is the update to the City of Columbia’s Comprehensive Plan. To learn more about the process and planning efforts, please visit [www.columbiacompass.org](http://www.columbiacompass.org).

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