

2012

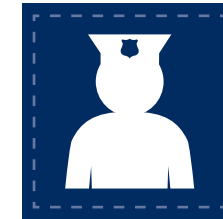
YEAR IN REVIEW



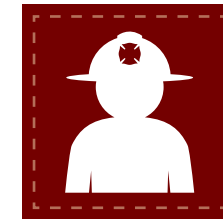


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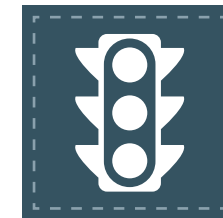
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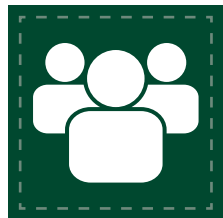
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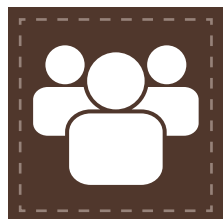
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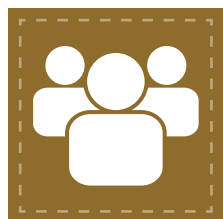
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PUBLIC SAFETY

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**SANDY SPRINGS
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YEAR IN REVIEW

A RETROSPECTIVE LOOK AT THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE CITY OF SANDY SPRINGS DURING 2012

This past year marked a turning point for the City of Sandy Springs. During our first six years, we placed an emphasis on repairs and remedies to improve our infrastructure. This past year, we focused on jobs and quality of life initiatives. We saw great strides in two new areas placed as priorities by the City Council: Economic Development and Downtown Development.

In the area of Economic Development, we established the City's first Economic Development Committee, a group of business and real estate leaders who quickly got to work in planning for the future. In June, the Council adopted the Committee's strategic plan to build and retain business in Sandy Springs. The Economic Development Advisory

Committee continues to provide valuable assistance to our staff as we begin to implement the strategies that will help ensure the City's long term financial health.

In March, we began the process of defining a strategy and course of action to develop the City's downtown area – our City Center. Development of the City Center Master Plan took seven months to complete. We took the time to build a plan based on market data, sound methodologies, and most importantly, input from our business and residential communities. The City held nine public meetings, more than a dozen stakeholder sessions, and shared all information within a click's reach through a website devoted to the process. This open, collaborative process helped us produce a plan that

represents a strong balance of ideas designed to build a solid, vital, diverse and active City Center in which we all can be proud.

A key challenge to downtown development is traffic and the ability to maneuver throughout the area. The City Center Master Plan provides strategies to improve the flow of traffic. We owe thanks to the Georgia Department of Transportation who completed two important projects within our City this past year. The newly widened bridge crossing over I-285 on Roswell Road creates an easier flow for those arriving into our City, and the lengthened ramps onto Georgia 400 off of Abernathy Road helps keep that roadway moving during peak driving hours. We're happy to report 100 percent of the traffic signals with fiber connectivity are operational and under TMC control which will facilitate improved intersection transitions. In addition, we were able to resurface 24 miles of roadways this year bringing the total of roads paved to 150 miles since the City's incorporation in 2005.

Our success in operating under the Public-Private Partnership has not been unnoticed. We had a great interest from world media in 2012. Sandy Springs was the topic of stories appearing in publications including the New York Times, The Economist, Japan's Kyodo News and Nikkei Newspaper. We were also part of broadcast stories on Fox and CNN.

In the year ahead, we will build on these successes to keep Sandy Springs as one of the best managed cities in the country. We hope you are as proud to call Sandy Springs home as we are. I'm proud of the work the City completed in 2012. I think you'll agree that this year marked a year of transition and significant accomplishments. I'm looking forward to an even better 2013.

John McDonough
City Manager





PUBLIC SAFETY

POLICE DEPARTMENT

The Sandy Springs Police Department continued its commitment to provide outstanding service to the community holding to their mission, "to prevent crime and enforce law through problem solving partnerships." Trend statistics show that violent, Part One and property crime are down from 2006 when the City's Police Department took over operations from Fulton County.

SPECIAL RESPONSE TRAINING

- To address a growing need to resolve quickly evolving incidents of public disorder, SSPD trained a select group of officers to form the Quick Response Force. The Force fills the gap between patrol officers and SWAT.

- Our Mobile Field Force was established to address potential issues of public disorder stemming from demonstrations or protests. Our Force is trained and equipped to handle any type of civil disorder on large or small scales.
- The Shift Tactical unit trained and equipped first response officers with the skills and equipment needed to address active shooters. The officers were deployed across all units within the Police Department. These officers undergo intensive initial training and continue skill development with training programs throughout the year. Shift Tactical officers are ready to address active shooter situations and establish perimeters around hostage/barricade incidents.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

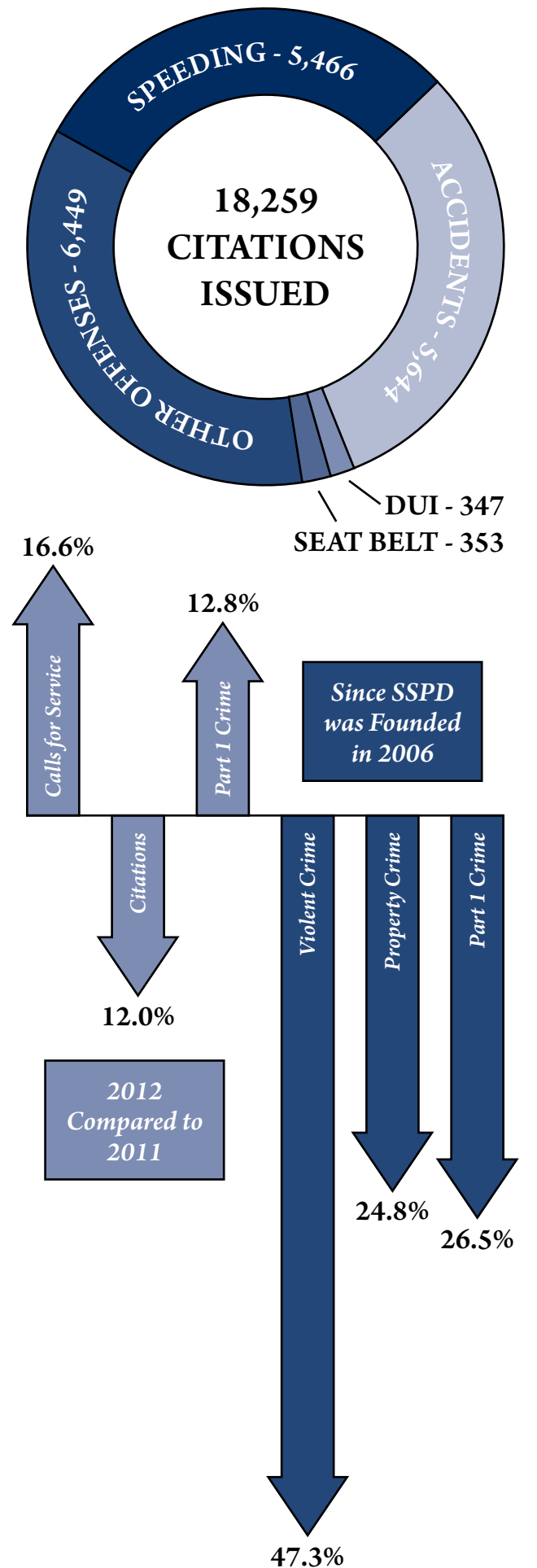
- SSPD graduated three Citizens Police Academy classes, including two Hispanic Citizens Police Academy classes in 2012. Many of our graduating members continue to serve by participating in the Citizens on Patrol Program.
- Two Citizens on Patrol Classes successfully completed training this year. There are 60 community volunteers actively working in the Citizens on Patrol and Volunteers in Police Services (VIPS) units. Our volunteers assist in the Out of Town House Check Program, provide neighborhood patrol support and participate in traffic control at public events. Both programs account for an average of 87 volunteer hours per week.
- The Sandy Springs Police Explorers Program expanded to eight full time members who participated in several competitions in 2012.
- SSPD hosted 10 student interns representing Kennesaw State University, Georgia State University, Virginia Tech University, and Chattahoochee Tech. Each student intern completed an average of 300 hours with the Department.
- SSPD Reserve officers averaged 16.8 hours each month. This year, Reserve officers gave a total of 945.5 free hours of service from Jan. 1 through Nov. 30 at a savings of \$23,637 to the City.

PROPANE VEHICLES

- Sandy Springs Police began converting department vehicles to propane in February of this year. Courtesy of a grant awarded through The Virginia Clean Cities Southeast Propane Autogas Development Program, the Department has 37 police vehicles powered with the propane Autogas system. Of those vehicles converted to propane, the percentage of propane used is 95.3 with an estimated \$34,838 savings in fuel costs (measured from the start of the program through third quarter).

BENEVOLENT FUND

- The Sandy Springs Benevolent Fund achieved a milestone, with a fund total of \$100,000. In 2012, the Sandy Springs Benevolent Fund contributed \$11,750 to officers and families in need.





PUBLIC SAFETY

FIRE RESCUE DEPARTMENT

The Sandy Springs Fire Rescue Department motto is “outstanding service by outstanding people.” The Department employs 91 full-time personnel and approximately 50 part-time personnel working out of four Fire Stations located within Sandy Springs. Three Emergency Medical Services quick response mobile units are stationed around the city to answer calls for medical assistance, and a river rescue boat crew gives us the capability to respond to calls for assistance on the Chattahoochee River.

CHILD SAFETY SEATS

- SSFR trained more than 100 people and installed 95 car seats this year. We partnered with GRACO/Rubbermaid and trained and certified eight design engineers along with 12 other community organizations.

CPR TRAINING

- Through the “Heart Ready” Program, SSFR trained 1,003 citizens in CPR in 2012. The program sets a goal to train 1,000 citizens annually, and we have accomplished this goal each year since 2007.
- The City of Sandy Springs has a 20.2 percent patient survival rate, higher than the national rate of nine percent.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

- SSFR participated in 564 Community Events reaching more than 52,000 individuals. Among this year’s fire safety events: Touch-A-Truck with our fire clown; station tours; Fire Safety House demonstrations; and birthday parties

and blood pressure checks at our fire stations. We also raised more than \$5,000 as part of our MDA Boot Drive.

H.O.P.E.

- Project H.O.P.E. (High Rise Occupancy Planning Exercises) is a program providing support, resources and information to the high rise community in the area of Emergency Planning, Preparedness and Risk Assessment. Approximately 85 percent of our high rise buildings have received this training and are implementing the concepts into their emergency planning.

TRAINING

- SSFR staff received 21,059 total hours of training in 2012 including fire, EMS, officer development and driver operator training. We surpassed all State Fire and EMS requirements, along with meeting Insurance Service Organization (ISO) required training hours.

CERT

- SSFR/CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) recruited and trained 90 new members in 2012, for a total of 175 members to date. The new members participated in a 20 hour certification program which covers CPR/First Aid, Emergency Communications, Firefighter Rehab and Tabletop drills (Tornado, Missing Person, High-rise fires).

Last Saturday, on returning to our residence, my wife and I heard a loud hissing sound as we exited the car. Almost immediately, there was also the unmistakable odor of natural gas... We went into the house, grabbed our dogs, went back to the car and called 911. Literally, by the time I backed my car out of the driveway and parked several houses down the street, the fire engine turned the corner. What an incredible response time!

Steve L., Resident

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE

- SSFR responded to 6,349 medical emergencies and treated 3,543 patients. SSFR is proud to report 10 lives were saved of patients suffering from cardiac arrest, bringing the total lives saved by SSFR since 2007 to 37.
- Striving to utilize the latest technologies, we upgraded our cardiac capabilities with the introduction of the LifePack-15 monitor and defibrillator system, replacing the older LifePack-12. Additionally, we added the Rad-57, which determines the level of Carbon Monoxide in the blood stream.



SWIFTWATER RESCUE

- October 2012, SSFR/SSPD embarked on a new program, Swiftwater Rescue. This program provides rescuers with the fundamentals of survival in moving water, identifying hydrology and river classification, along with practical skills of self-rescue, swiftwater swimming and the fundamentals of shore, boat and in-water rescues. Currently 22 Sandy Springs Fire Rescue and Police Department members are certified. This specialized team received a \$13,850 grant from Firehouse Subs Public Safety Foundation for water rescue equipment.

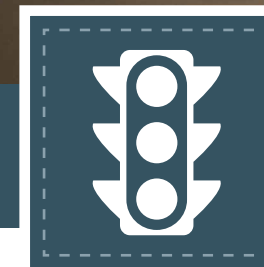
TORNADO SIRENS

- New tornado warning sirens were installed strategically throughout the City of Sandy Springs. The sirens are an additional layer in our multi-tiered approach in communicating emergency information about severe weather to our citizens. The

tornado sirens were paid for through a combination of grants from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Georgia Emergency Management Agency and City funds.

FIRE MARSHAL'S OFFICE

- 3,784 properties inspected with 1,914 violations recorded.
- 795 plans reviewed for compliance with fire and life safety.
- 36 drills with more than 2,845 participants.
- 14 fires investigated to determine the origin and cause.
- Most Frequent Inspection Types: Annual (31 percent), Re-Inspect (31 percent), Finals (10 percent), Cover-up (10 percent), Night Inspections (2 percent).



TRANSPORTATION

PUBLIC WORKS

The Public Works Department continues to focus on the City's public safety and community appearance priorities, while being responsible for another of the City's identified priorities: Transportation. The Department oversaw the implementation of \$2.49 million in Transportation programs in 2012. Projects included signal upgrades and safety and operational improvements. Among the projects was a Long-Line Striping program, evaluating the condition of pavement striping on every roadway within the City and the creation of a 10-year striping maintenance program.

ROADS AND SIDEWALKS

- Sidewalk and signal projects at Peachtree Dunwoody and Mt. Vernon; Peachtree Dunwoody; and Abernathy and Riverside at I-285 were completed.

- Field Services resurfaced 7.5 miles of neighborhood roads utilizing a \$590,000 Local Maintenance and Improvement Grant (LMIG) from the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) as well as local funds.
- Walking in the City's neighborhoods is now easier after the completion of eight sidewalk program projects. The projects added more than 4.25 miles of sidewalk valued at more than \$1.45 million.
- Three "access to transit" sidewalk projects were completed. The projects, valued at \$290,000, were funded through an agreement with the Metropolitan Atlanta Regional Transit Authority (MARTA).
- Roswell Road from Dalrymple Road to Northridge Road is now connected by sidewalk, along with wheelchair accessible ramps, pedestrian lighting and enhanced landscaping.

The improvements were funded through a \$1.5 million Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), and represent the largest streetscape project in the City since incorporation adding 2.5 miles of sidewalk.

STRIPING AND SIGNAGE

- To ease intersection congestion, the City installed its first “Don’t Block the Box” intersection markings at Riverside Drive and Riverside Parkway. The added signage is intended to remind drivers to keep the intersection clear, especially as traffic comes to a stop.
- The Georgia Department of Transportation awarded the City a \$84,941 local Off-System Safety Improvement Grant to upgrade striping and signage and install raised pavement markers on an eight-mile section of Spalding Drive.
- As part of the Federal Sign Reflectivity Upgrade Program, the City replaced 1,414 non-compliant signs.

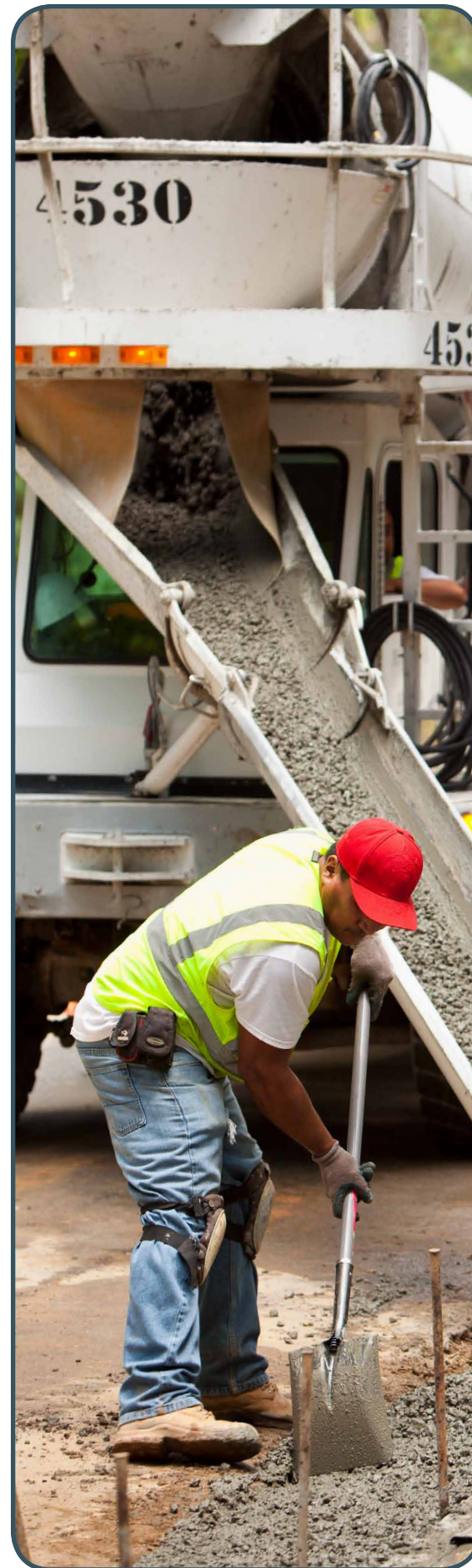
COMMUNITY APPEARANCE

- Working to keep state routes in Sandy Springs looking their best, Field Services Staff secured an agreement with GDOT worth \$99,000 in FY13 and \$140,000 annually for maintenance the City performs on state routes including litter pick-up, traffic signal monitoring, mowing and sidewalk maintenance.

PARTNERSHIPS

Capital transportation projects in partnership with GDOT and the Perimeter Community Improvement District (PCID) underway or completed this year include:

- Abernathy Road/Johnson Ferry Roadway Widening Project (completion in early 2013)
- Bridge widening at Roswell Road and I-285
- Abernathy at SR 400 Northbound Ramps



- More than 40 tons of litter were removed from highways within the City.

TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

- Staff increased the mileage in the City’s fiber optic system that is operational from 26 to 32 miles. We now have 100 percent of traffic signals with fiber connectivity operational and under the control of the Traffic Management Center.
- Public Works increased the number of traffic signals online from 8 to 97 and the number of CCTV cameras online increased 94 percent from 16 to 31.
- Staff rebuilt 20 traffic controllers and 40 switches in-house, saving the City more than \$100,000 in equipment costs.
- The City installed the SCOOT System (Split, Cycle and Offset Optimization Technique) on Riverside Drive and along Roswell Road. The system uses computer modeling to adjust signal timings to

“Thanks for your thorough response, the City has done a great job for its citizens! We appreciate all that you do to improve our lives.”

Eugene D., Resident

match traffic patterns and represents the latest technology in traffic management.

- A “traffic responsive” signal system was implemented along Roswell Road, yielding a measurable improvement in average travel times: four percent during morning and 24 percent during afternoon peak hours.





STORMWATER

PUBLIC WORKS STORMWATER DIVISION

While not often a familiar term to the general public, stormwater is a critical element of a city's infrastructure, and is among the City's key priorities. The Stormwater Division, staffed through URS, upholds state and federal stormwater regulations. The group works to improve the City's storm drainage infrastructure comprised of detention ponds and piped networks, as well as address water quality issues. The City's Annual Stormwater Report was accepted by the State with no revisions or additional information required. The City successfully passed an audit of its stormwater program by the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District and is ahead of complying with 2013 requirements.

STORMWATER PROGRAM

- In 2012, the Stormwater Division, along with Community Development and Communications, conducted public education outreach regarding proposed changes to the City's flood maps. The Division oversaw the flood map public comment/appeal period, and all received appeals were delivered to the State of Georgia for their consideration. The most recent information received from the State of Georgia indicates that the maps will be formally adopted in September, 2013.

- Engineering design was conducted and completed on 10 projects with a total cost of \$94,418. Construction was completed on 74 stormwater projects with an overall cost of \$1,045,583.
- A total of 265 inquiries were received and processed during 2012.
- Six homes were demolished with the properties returned to natural conditions as part of the FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program. Funding to purchase an additional five properties was awarded with coordination underway to demolish four of those properties.
- The Stormwater Division coordinated with GEMA regarding a FEMA Pre Disaster Mitigation Grant Program that would result in demolishing and returning to natural conditions eleven more properties in the City that are substantially damaged.
- Relationships were developed with local Boy Scout Troops to place six times the required number of storm drain markers. These relationships also resulted in staff and Scouts visiting local elementary and middle schools to discuss the importance of stormwater and why the markers were placed. (The general public does not always understand that storm drains are not routed to a treatment facility but flow directly to our waterways. The markers serve as a reminder to discourage dumping.)
- Staff conducted a field trip with the students of the local Montessori School at Big Trees Preserve Park



Trisha T., Resident

to test the creek for things such as temperature and pH. The importance of the hydrologic cycle and how these tests can be used to evaluate a stream's health was explained to the students.

- The Stormwater Division, along with Community Development, presented information on the City's Stormwater Program to Kennesaw State University students as part of their work with the Sandy Springs Watershed Alliance. Stormwater staff then worked with the students and the Alliance to complete a stream restoration project. The City disposed of the debris that was collected as part of the project.
- The City worked with local stormwater advocacy groups to collect and dispose of garbage and debris that were collected during organized stream cleanups.





COMMUNITY APPEARANCE

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The Community Development Department is charged with ensuring that growth and development in Sandy Springs is both high quality and environmentally sustainable. The development regulations the Department is tasked with implementing underscore the enhancement and preservation of the City's neighborhoods. The Community Development Department, supported by The Collaborative, is comprised of three divisions: Building and Development, Planning and Zoning and Code Enforcement.

BUILDING & DEVELOPMENT

- The Building and Development Division conducted an overall review of the development review and permitting process, instituting a number of changes to provide faster

review times without compromising quality, safety or environmental standards.

- Review turnaround time, particularly for smaller, simpler projects was reduced from 10 working days to between one to five working days depending upon project type. Permits for residential and commercial interior renovation projects are now often issued over the counter.
- With the consolidation of permits, many projects no longer require separate applications and the issuance of multiple permits. One permit authorizes all of the building and site work.
- The Department designed and implemented the *Permit GO!* web-based project status system that provides project review status online. This system is Phase I of an overall

effort to provide greater public access to information regarding development projects.

- The Department's "Thursday Developer's Meetings" continue to provide developers with one-stop assistance prior to the submission of plans for review and approval. As part of these meetings, the Department brings together a cross-section of City staff to answer developer questions. For projects requiring a demolition or land disturbance permit, our "Dial Before You Draw" program encouraging a site visit by the City's arborist prior to design has resulted in improved project design and enhanced tree protection.
- Housing construction in Sandy Springs is increasing, with 92 permits for single family detached units and 107 permits for attached units issued in the last 12 months. This total is more than double the number of permits issued in 2011.
- Non-residential permit activity tracked higher in 2012, with 506 permit issued; almost 25 percent more than were issued in 2011.

PLANNING & ZONING

- The Planning and Zoning Division provides staff support to three City Council appointed Boards: the Planning Commission, the Board of Appeals and the Design Review Board.
- Earlier this year, Zoning Ordinance changes were approved that encourage mixed-use development in the Main Street Overlay District. Community Development staff played a key leadership role in

"The one-stop meetings have been a huge help to make sure that multiple departments are properly coordinated. The engineers, planners and inspectors in Sandy Springs can be rather tough, but we also appreciate this as the best long-term approach to quality development in the city."

Charlie B.,
Home Builder

the development of the City Center Master Plan, and are working to identify needed code changes to ensure the successful implementation of the plan.

- The Division hosted its second annual Planning Commission retreat with a focus on Economic Development and development in the City Center, working to set priorities for the upcoming year.
- Planning and zoning activity tracked upward during the last 12 months. The Division analyzed, developed and presented recommendations for 24 zoning applications, 27 variances and 25 design review applications.
- Heightened interest in Sandy Springs is underscored by private sector requests for zoning information. Requests for zoning certification reports tracked upward from 71 in 2011 to 114 in 2012.



CUSTOMER SERVICE

While 2,739 code violations were identified, only 433 required court citations to achieve compliance demonstrating the City's focus on effectively resolving issues.

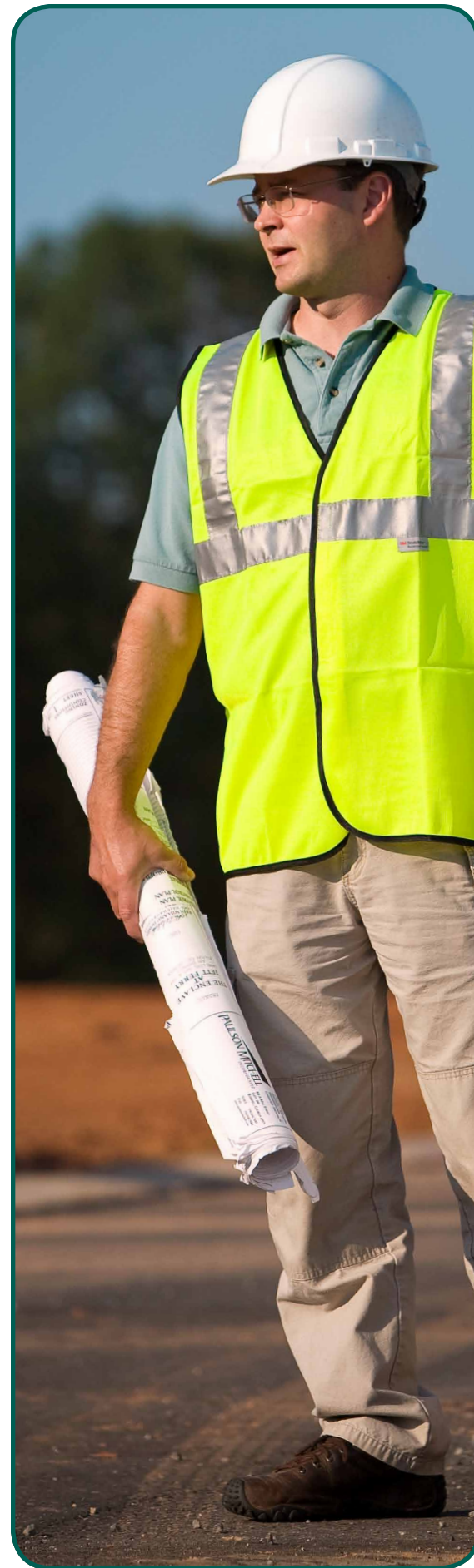
- We regularly facilitate interaction between zoning applicants and the surrounding community involved in the zoning process. In 2012, staff held more than 40 zoning related community meetings.

CODE ENFORCEMENT

- The Code Enforcement Division focuses on community appearance and ensuring Sandy Springs properties are properly maintained. Officers regularly work with property owners to address compliance, issuing citations to appear in court only as a last resort.
- In conjunction with the Fire Department and Public Works, Code Enforcement conducted eight apartment sweeps and three residential property area sweeps. These efforts are geared toward providing comprehensive assistance to owners regarding property maintenance.
- Working with the City's Finance Department, Code Enforcement officers conducted checks to ensure businesses had current licenses and complied with the state law in regards to E-Verify documentation.
- Code Enforcement efforts tracked up significantly from 2011 figures. Code violation case totals were up from nearly 1,300 in 2011 to 2,739 in the last 12 months.

PARTNERSHIPS

As part of Department efforts to improve the Building and Development Process, staff members met with representatives of the Sandy Springs/Perimeter Chamber of Commerce to discuss steps for improving the review and permitting process.



DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT

CITY CENTER MASTER PLAN

"Development of the City's downtown area is one of the most significant decisions the City will face for the next 20 plus years. This major planning effort will bring together the downtown property owners, the community, and the city leaders as we launch the redevelopment of our downtown."

- Sandy Springs Mayor Eva Galambos

MASTER PLAN ADOPTION

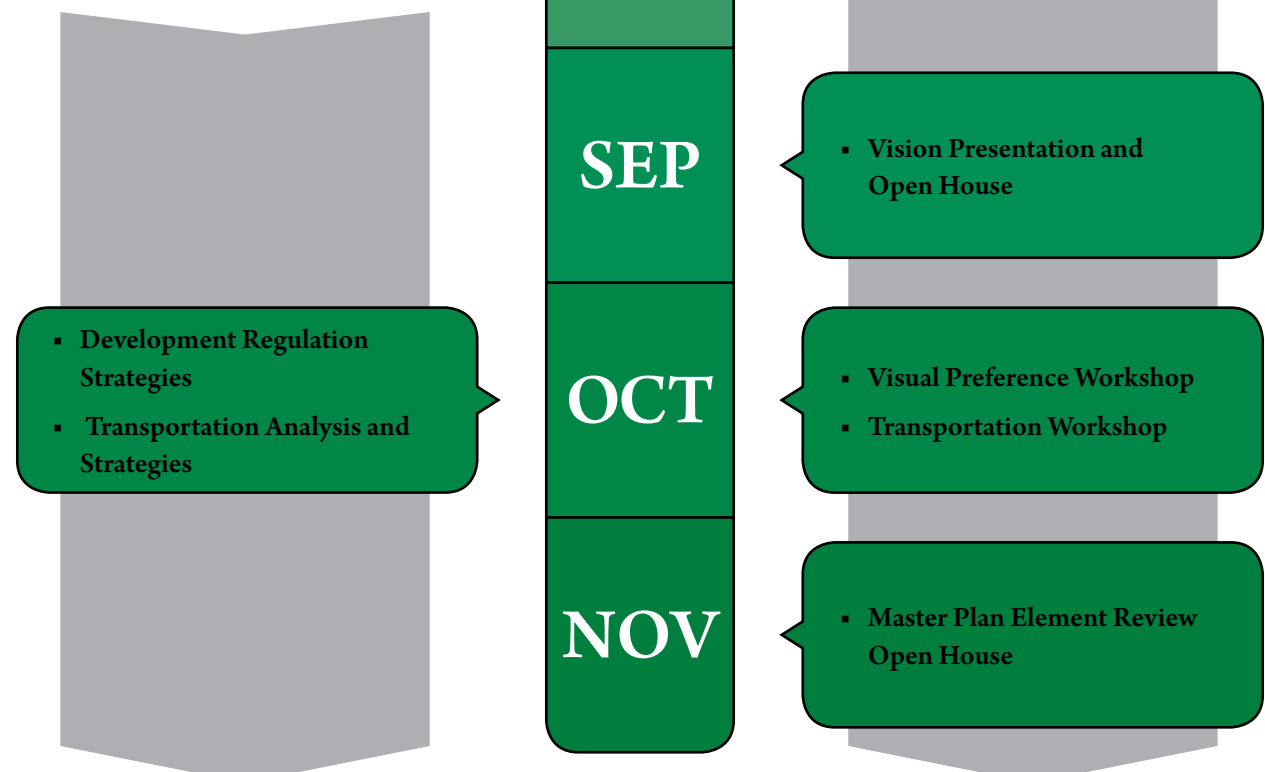
- The Sandy Springs City Council adopted the City Center Master Plan on December 18, 2012, following an extensive process of research, facilitated forums and one-on-one conversations throughout the community.

KEY OBJECTIVES

- The City Council established a set of core criteria to guide the planning process. The critical components to be included in the final plan included:
 - Identifiable sense of place
 - A vibrant, walkable City Center
 - New civic/cultural center
 - Catalyze significant market-driven investment
 - Infrastructure supporting the City Center
 - Public open space

PLANNING PROCESS

- In January, the City initiated the planning process with the issuance of a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to select a firm to help the City develop a master plan for the downtown City Center. Boston-based planning firm Goody Clancy, with a history of successfully implemented redevelopment projects including programs in Asheville, NC, Denver, CO, and Chattanooga, TN, was selected to guide the City through the planning process.
- A website, *sandyspringscitycenter.com*, was created to provide a one-stop information resource for the community regarding the development process. All research reports, meeting information and surveys were published to the site. The community was also able to submit questions and comments online directly to Goody Clancy.
- A series of public meetings and workshops were held throughout the planning process to collect input from the Sandy Springs Community.



INVESTMENT
New development shown on

EXISTING CONDITIONS **PREPARE MASTER PLAN**



AS OPPORTUNITY EMERGES **STEP 3**





ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Economic Development was added in 2011 as one of the City Council's strategic priorities. Attracting new and retaining current businesses plays an important role in the City's overall financial health. Staffed by The Collaborative, Economic Development works closely with Community Development in identifying ways to make doing business with the City an easy process. The Department also collaborates with the business community, the state's economic development team as well as the City's Economic Development Advisory Committee on best practices, incentives and strategies to help the City achieve its goals.

PLANNING

- Andrea Hall joined the City's team as the City's Economic Development Director to assist with implementation of the Economic Development Plan.
- In January, the Sandy Springs Economic Development Advisory Committee was formed. Its membership represents a strong cross section of business leaders in the City including representatives from banking, capital investment, law, real estate, property management and

marketing. The Committee's first task was the creation of an Economic Development Plan to guide City efforts.

- In June, the Sandy Springs City Council adopted the Economic Development Plan as recommended by the Economic Development Advisory Committee.

PROGRESS

- CBS Corporation invested \$1.6 million to move its IT and Creative Services division to Sandy Springs bringing 101 jobs to the City.
- Graphic Packaging Holding Company became the first business in Sandy Springs to take advantage of the City's new economic development incentive program. Adopted in late 2011, the program offers a variety of incentives and assistance options

including expedited permit processing and waiver of permit, impact fees and business and occupations taxes.

- In 2012, Cox Enterprises completed a second \$166 million tower on its corporate campus. With this completion, Cox consolidated more than 600 jobs into a single campus.
- During the year, the City approved four incentive packages, representing approximately \$29.7 million in capital investment and more than 520 new jobs, plus the retention of 825 existing jobs.
- Working in collaboration with the Sandy Springs/Perimeter Chamber, the Powers Ferry Business Alliance was formed, providing an additional communication link between the business community in the Powers Ferry area with the City.





ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM

Hospitality and Tourism focuses on promoting the amenities the City has to offer. In doing so, our Hospitality division also enhances the efforts of our Economic Development Department emphasizing quality of life for employees which is a key consideration when deciding on a location. Their efforts also provide a financial benefit for the City. For example, Hospitality and Tourism's presence at tradeshows and events to promote Sandy Springs as a meeting and convention destination resulted in booking 42 groups in 2012, producing more than \$235,000 in hotel room revenue with almost 7,000 attendees.

Year to date, the average occupancy for Sandy Springs hotels is 71.6 percent as compared to the state average of 59.6 percent and the U.S. average of 64.4 percent, according to the Smith Travel Research Destination Reports.

RECOGNITION

- The Welcome Center received approval on the Renewal of our Regional Visitor Information Center (VIC) Accreditation. Promoted by the Georgia Department of Economic Development, this status allows the Center to

receive additional promotion from the state among other benefits.

- Sandy Springs Hospitality received Convention South Magazine Readers' Choice Award. The nation's top meeting planners chose Sandy Springs as a prime meeting location in the South.

DEVELOPMENT

- New this year was the release of the "Spotlight: Sandy Springs Mobile App." This app brings the City to life by "spotlighting" cultural and outdoor attractions, as well as information about the Welcome Center. Current "spotlights" include the Anne Frank in the World Exhibit, Big Trees Forest Preserve and Morgan Falls Overlook Park.

PARTNERSHIPS

Helping events shine in 2012, Hospitality and Tourism continued relationships with ArtSSpring, the USA CRITS Sandy Springs Cycling Challenge, the Chattahoochee Summer Splash with the National Park Service, Leadership Sandy Springs' Youth Leadership Treasure Hunt event, Heritage Sandy Springs, Elegant Elf marketplace, and the City's events including Veterans Day and Sparkle Sandy Springs.

"I want to personally thank you for your professionalism, expertise and knowledge in helping me to finalize my family plans for a reunion in metropolitan Atlanta... Even when you were competing for my business, one of your best traits in helping me was your honesty, which goes a long way with me. Thank you so much and I hope that everyone can recognize the value you bring to any organization."

Larry A., Citizen

- For the second year, Hospitality and Tourism created a set at the *Next Cool Event*, promoting Sandy Springs as a "camera ready" city for the film industry. Hospitality and Tourism partnered with the promoter to highlight Sandy Springs with the creation of an app for the event.
- Sandy Springs Hospitality and Tourism assisted with the Hospitality Highway Century Ride and the promotion of a 60 and 100 mile cycling event venturing through Roswell, Sandy Springs, Alpharetta, Milton, Johns Creek and Mountain Park.
- In partnership with local restaurants, Hospitality and Tourism utilizes web and social media to highlight specials and offerings of our local businesses.





RECREATION

RECREATION AND PARKS

The many programs offered by Sandy Springs Recreation and Parks add to the quality of life for residents in Sandy Springs. In addition, Recreation and Parks staff oversees the administration and maintenance of the City's beautiful parks. In 2012, the City began construction on the Abernathy Greenway Park, which will include several artist inspired playable art pieces. Working with the City Manager's and City Attorney's Offices, the Department facilitated the creation of the Sandy Springs Foundation, a 501(c)3 organization which will raise funds for the Recreation and Parks scholarship program as well as for other City programs.

PARKS

- Shade sails were added over the playground equipment at Morgan Falls Overlook Park allowing children to enjoy the playground area during the warmer months.

- Renovation of the lower level of the Heritage Bluestone Building was completed.
- A small gymnastics room area was created at the Hammond Park Gymnastics Center for exclusive use of the preschool gymnastics program. The new space will allow all gymnastics programs to expand.

PROGRAMMING

- The Department expanded all offerings this year, adding more programming and dates to its established activities.
- More than 44,000 residents were registered for sports, leisure, athletic and special event programs in 2012.
- More than 80 children registered for track and field. The Sandy Springs Striders produced three Georgia Recreation and Parks Association State Track and Field Champions in the 50 meter dash, long jump and shot put.

- The Department offered four weeks of free swim lessons for underprivileged youth.
- The Sandy Springs Recreation and Parks Department began a partnership with the Georgia Sports League to bring flag football and basketball to Sandy Springs for adult players.
- The Sandy Springs Recreation and Parks Department, in partnership with the Atlanta Astronomy Club, increased its Astronomy education programming to include workshops on how to shop for and set up a telescope. Activities included high profile speakers in the Astronomy field and Night Stargazing events at Overlook Park.

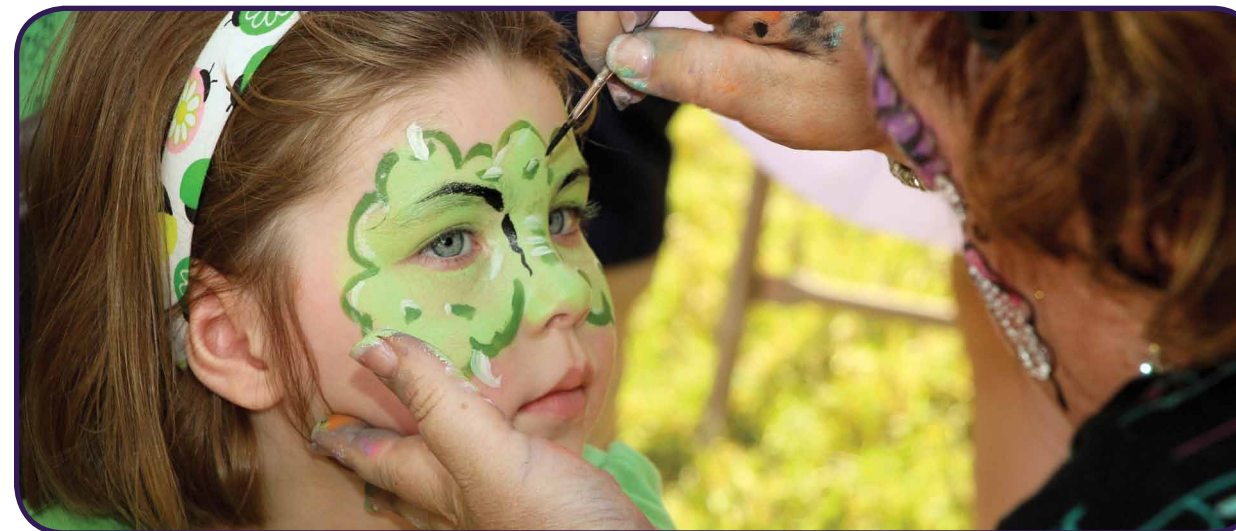
SPECIAL NEEDS PROGRAMS

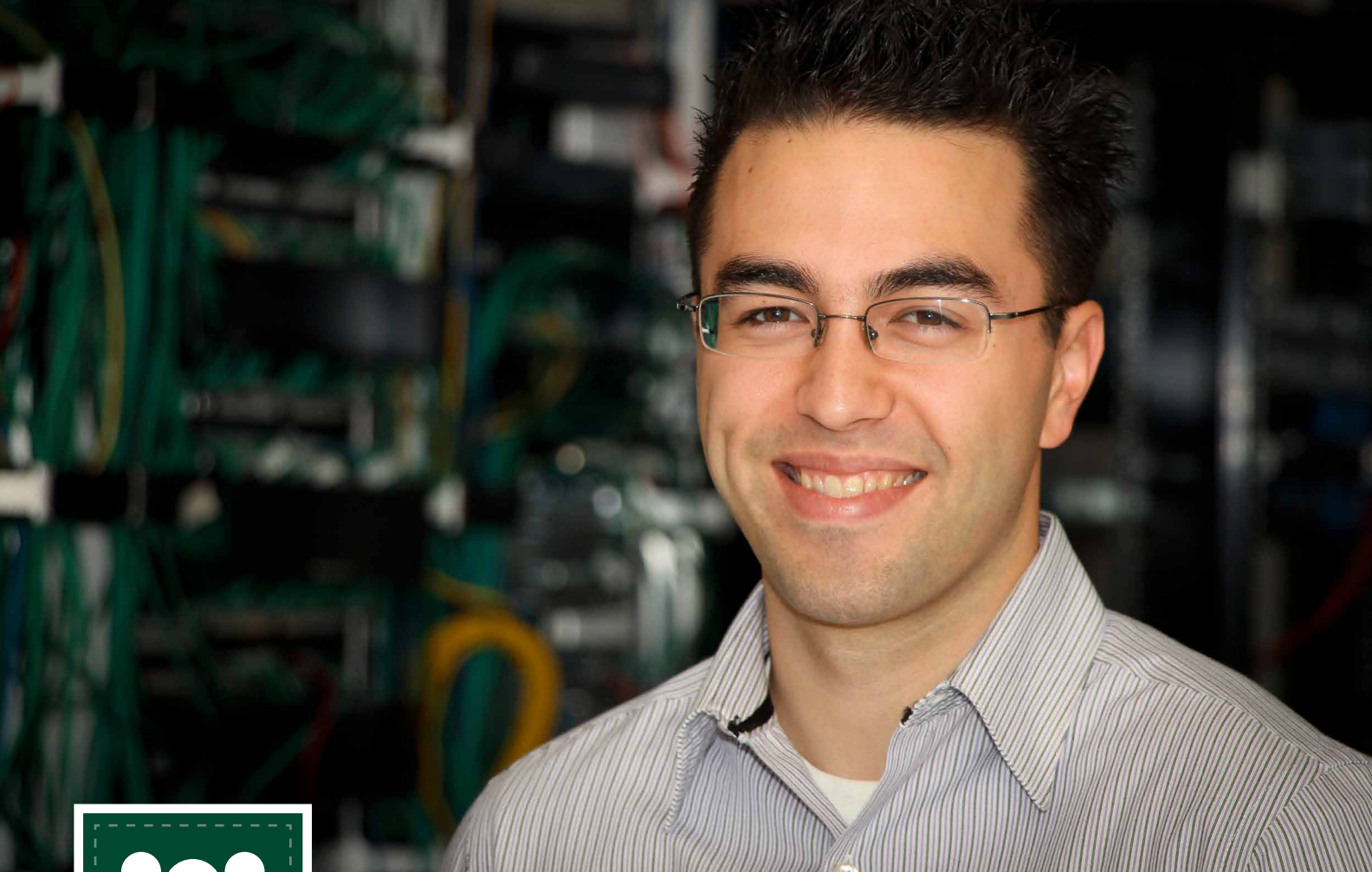
- In January, Recreation and Parks hosted the second annual Special Olympics Local Gymnastics competition for North Fulton County public school children. Adaptive teaching techniques were utilized to allow more than 60 elementary and middle school age participants the opportunity to take part in artistic and rhythmic gymnastics activities – hoop, springboard, balance beam, ribbon and parachute.
- The Recreation and Parks Department partnered with GoalSoccer to provide a free one-week GoalSoccer camp for special needs youth ages 6-18. The camp was held at the Hammond Park turf field for kids of any ability to learn fundamental skills and team play. GoalSoccer provided the 12 participants and their families with a caring and supportive group of eight volunteers for the camp week.

"Thank you to the Parks team. I appreciated that you listened and heard my concerns, and made changes in the plans to address them."

Nicholas P.,
City Resident

- A "Special Pops" Tennis program was offered to Sandy Springs residents. Tennis was the focal point for gathering, but the greater emphasis of the program is helping the athletes to develop life skills. There were more than 20 volunteers helping throughout the eight-week program at the Sandy Springs Tennis Center. Up to 11 athletes trained on a weekly basis, and several of the athletes competed in the 7th Annual Fall Classic Adaptive Tennis Tournament hosted by Special Pops Tennis.
- Special needs students from seven North Fulton County public schools participated in the third annual Special Olympics Local Bocce Skills Competition held in November at the Hitson Activities Center. The 20 teams comprised of 127 children competed in Ramp, Modified or Competition Bocce activities and games. The event also included 12 members of the North Perimeter Optimist Club who volunteered as lane coordinators and scorekeepers.





OPERATIONAL SUPPORT

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Supported by InterDev, the Information Services Department consists of an Information Technology help desk and staff as well as the Geographic Information System (GIS) division. In addition to providing IT support and performing routine maintenance, the IT Department works with all City departments to increase performance and customer service through the implementation of technology.

TRANSPORTATION OPERATION PROGRAMS

- The Sandy Springs Traffic Management Center (TMC) and Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) converged with Sandy Springs IT to facilitate interconnectivity between the TMC and GDOT control systems as

part of the Regional Transportation Operations Program, a federally funded program to allow intercommunications and monitoring of transportation routes during significant events.

- The Sandy Springs Traffic Management Center and Sandy Springs IT Department worked together to merge network infrastructures creating a network foundation which now extends communications to our Parks, Fire Stations and other office facilities.

IRON SKY VIDEO MANAGEMENT

- IT migrated the City's video management efforts to the Iron Sky Solution, allowing shared information between the Sandy Springs Police Department and the TMC. The shared solution reduces total cost of ownership

CUSTOMER SERVICE

The Information Technology Department strives to deliver excellent customer service to all of the users within the City. Satisfaction levels are measured with user surveys that are included in a ticket summary emailed after a case is closed. We are proud to report an overall satisfaction rating of 99 percent.

for the City's video systems. In addition to traffic cameras, the facility campus closed circuit video utilizes the Iron Sky system. As we continue to expand this solution into the next year, we will have the ability to stream on demand video from the Police Department Patrol units as well as incorporate the license plate reader system into the Iron Sky interface.

SYSTEM UPGRADES

- IT upgraded the City's Lucity program and its dependencies to allow better integration with GIS and with the CoSSpotter tool improving the way Citizens can enter and review work requests.

SECURITY AND LOGGING

- IT staff migrated the network device access and logging solutions so 99 percent of the network devices (e.g. firewalls, routers, switches) require the user to login using their Sandy Springs domain account. Each command executed is logged, and the configurations are backed up to a central storage point. This allows tighter security for device access as well as an audit trail.

PUBLIC SAFETY

- IT migrated the City's telephone, internet and facility connectivity services from AT&T to Windstream which is expected to save the City more than \$150,000 in 2013. The change also increases bandwidth at City Hall and redundancy features between City facilities.
- Sandy Springs Police and Alpharetta Police have partnered for the purpose of sharing data for analytical uses. The Department created secured communications between the two locations and facilitated a data replications solution for Public Safety.





OPERATIONAL SUPPORT

COMMUNICATIONS

Transparency is a hallmark of the City of Sandy Springs. The Communications Department places a priority on making sure the community is well informed. The communications team, provided by The Collaborative, accommodates full-service communications support from print and web design, to advertising planning, along with media, public relations, community engagement and event management. Communications works in close cooperation with departments across City Hall, as well as with community leadership, business and civic groups and residents to make certain information is available and easily accessible.

EVENT MARKETING

- The City is a part of more than 20 community focused events each year including the Martin Luther King Jr. Day

Celebration, Veterans Day Celebration, Sandy Springs Cycling Challenge, North Fulton and Sandy Springs/Perimeter Chamber Expos, Recreation and Parks Father-Daughter Dance and Winter Festival, Sandy Springs Festival, Sandy Springs Police Benevolent Fund Black Tie Ball and more.

- Communications assisted the City in welcoming new businesses by facilitating more than 25 ribbon cutting events throughout the year including the Indian Consulate, GT Software, Genesis 10, Aldi, Lifetime Fitness, Kudzu & Co. and the Bluestone Building at Heritage Sandy Springs.
- Partnering with the Sandy Springs/Perimeter Chamber and Sandy Springs Hospitality and Tourism, the City held its second annual Sparkle Sandy Springs holiday decorating competition among the City's business community. Participation doubled from its inaugural year.

- The Public-Private Partnership model employed by Sandy Springs attracted the interest of cities around the globe. The City hosted visits by government and university delegates from Taicang City, China, Eyup City, Turkey and Finland, in addition to a visit from officials with Rye, NY.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Communications provided outreach and logistics support for 20 Public Information Meetings in 2012. Ten of the meetings were related to the development of a master plan for the City Center. Other meetings covered road and traffic improvement programs, such as the I-285 bridge widening and Spalding Drive and Mt. Vernon Highway safety improvements, to park development including Abernathy Greenway and Lost Corner.
- Staff facilitated more than 65 meetings and responded to more than 200 inquiries from residents and neighborhood groups to answer questions and address concerns. Staff reached out proactively to neighborhoods on issues related to road closures, stormwater repairs and other construction projects, averaging three times per week.
- The City hosted a spring meeting for Homeowner Association Presidents to update them on City projects, as well as to speak one-on-one with City department heads.

PARTNERSHIPS

Working in conjunction with the Fulton County Registrars Office, City staff were trained and City Hall was added as a voter registration location. Community outreach efforts to encourage voter registration increased the number of Sandy Springs residents registered to vote by 11.43 percent.

- In less than one week, Communications developed and went live with a website devoted to the City Center master planning process. The website attracted 3,700 unique visitors with many making multiple visits.

MEDIA RELATIONS

- Media is an integral channel in communicating the City's story to local, regional, national and international audiences. In 2012, the Communications Department fielded an average of 10 media requests per week, up more than 100 percent than 2011.
- Sandy Springs found an abundance of national and international spotlight in 2012. Among the media outlets the Communications Department



collaborated with in developing stories, national media: New York Times, The Economist, Wall Street Journal, USA Today, Fox News, CNN, CBS 60 Minutes, NPR/All Things Considered and the Glenn Beck Show. International Media: Kyodo News (Japan), Inspiratia (UK), Niigata Nippo (Japan), French National Television, Freemantle Media (Italy), R O'Donnell (Freelance reporter from Australia), Khabar (India), Municipality Magazine (Finland) and Nikkei Newspaper (Japan).

INFORMATION SUPPORT

- Communications consolidated its social media offerings focusing a Twitter feed on emergency and traffic information and a Facebook page on City news and happenings. In 2012, the City's Facebook page saw a 22 percent increase in "likes," by individuals following the City's page. Twitter followers increased by 44 percent. The City also saw a reduction in Call Center volume related to traffic, road and stormwater projects when updates were published via social media.
- Communications supported departments City-wide developing approximately 20 collateral pieces each month including brochures, reports, fliers,

CUSTOMER SERVICE

In order to ensure that our 24/7 call center is equipped to offer the best level of customer service possible, the Communications Department coordinated a City-wide update of the frequently-asked-questions database used by Call Center staff. This resulted in more questions being answered without the need to transfer the caller.

posters, invitations, photography and programs. Among those: a redesigned Quarterly Newsletter; web presence and public relations materials for Community Development's Permit Go!; seasonal Recreation Guides, in English and Spanish, for Recreation and Parks; promotional fliers, a four-page brochure and advertising to support Economic Development; community program fliers for Police and Fire; and a logo for Sparkle Sandy Springs.

- The City's 2011 Year in Review received a Bronze Golden Flame Award from the International Association of Business Communicators (Atlanta) for Creative Publication Design.



OPERATIONAL SUPPORT

CITIZEN RESPONSE CENTER

The Sandy Springs Citizen Response Center is a centralized non-emergency resource for citizens to communicate with the City. In 2012, the Center managed more than 122,000 calls, with more than 91 percent of those calls answered in less than 30 seconds. In addition, the Citizen Response Center processed 1,012 requests which were entered into the City's website request portal and Smart Phone application.

- Feedback from the Citizen Response Center Quality Assurance program indicates 95 percent of citizens surveyed had a positive experience when contacting the City.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

- 70 percent of calls received by the Citizen Response Center were resolved without transferring the caller to another department. Center staff are trained to answer frequently asked questions to reduce the amount of time a caller would otherwise spend on hold.

CUSTOMER SERVICE

As part of the City's goal to provide best in class customer service, the Citizen Response Center includes in its database information related to other local, state and federal agencies that may impact our residents. In doing so, the Center is able to answer Citizens' questions rather than redirect the caller to another agency.



OPERATIONAL SUPPORT

AWARDED GRANTS

The City of Sandy Springs is committed to better serving our businesses and residents through grant applications for a variety of City programs. In 2012, the City was awarded five major grants.

LOST CORNER PRESERVE TRAILS

- **Award:** \$90,000 from the Georgia Department of Natural Resources was matched with \$31,840 from the Sandy Springs Conservancy and the City.
- **Project Summary:** Construct a one-mile, multi-part trail at Lost Corner Preserve. The trail will provide passive recreational and environmental education opportunities in an area where none are presently available.

WATER RESCUE EQUIPMENT

- **Award:** \$13,852 from the Firehouse Subs Public Safety Foundation.
- **Project Summary:** Water rescue equipment, including Urban Search and Rescue Deluxe Rescue Sets, drysuits, pulleys, riggings, Sterling high tenacity polyester ropes, rope bag, and Carlson River Boards.

BULLETPROOF VESTS

- **Award:** \$12,916 from the Bureau of Justice Assistance.
- **Project Summary:** Funds to be used for the purpose of replacing officers' bulletproof vests.

LICENSE PLATE READER

- **Award:** \$17,351 from the FY2012 Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant Program.
- **Project Summary:** Purchase and install an automatic license plate reader (ALPR) and a camera to expand the City's existing Iron Sky Network.

ARTS EDUCATION

- **Award:** \$2,000 from the Target Arts and Culture in Schools Grants Program.
- **Project Summary:** In partnership with local schools and Young Audiences, Woodruff Arts Center, provide art workshops and classes to area youth and teens.

FLOOD HAZARD MITIGATION

- **Award:** \$1,759,096 [\$1,319,322 federal share (75%), \$175,909.60 state share (10%), \$263,864.40 local share (15% - provided by property owners whose properties were purchased)].
- **Purpose:** The City was awarded funds to purchase five additional properties located in floodways determined to be substantially damaged, having undergone significant flooding on more than one occasion.

CITY OF SANDY SPRINGS

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Citizen Response Center: 770-730-5600

www.sandyspringsga.gov