



SANDY SPRINGS
GEORGIA

. YEAR IN REVIEW .

2020

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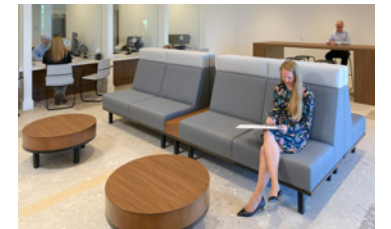
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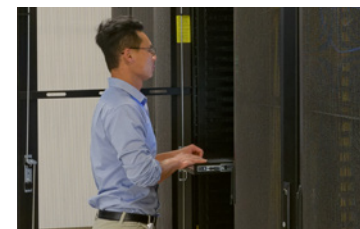
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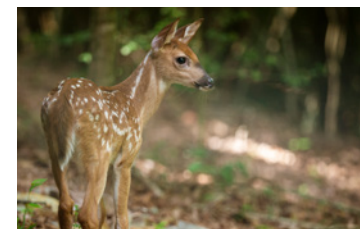
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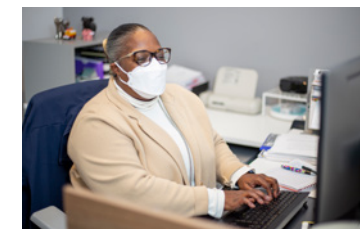
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WHO WE ARE

2020

A YEAR UNLIKE ANY OTHER

Martin Luther King Jr. said, "The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy." There have been pivotal times in our history where challenge and controversy have stood out, and no more so than in 2020.

On my first day as Sandy Springs City Manager, we were preparing to host a community-wide solidarity event in Byers Theatre. The event, produced by the Jewish community, was designed to encourage people to stand together in hope and unity across denominations, races, and geographic neighborhoods; with the charge that united, we are stronger than anything that divides us. Little did we know that the theme of inclusion and resilience would dominate our year.

In my first meeting with City staff in February, I introduced the word "pivotal," with a focus on how as an organization, we would work together to improve quality of life for our residents, our productivity as an organization, benefit our ecosystem through sustainable innovation, and be adaptive through innovation and big ideas. Pivot became so much more as we maneuvered through a Pandemic and civil unrest, interwoven into our everyday fabric.

The full force of the Pandemic took hold in March as City Hall offices closed, as well as

most of our businesses throughout the city. For a community known for momentum, a complete halt is not part of our DNA, and our staff and community showed just how resilient we are. Our well-trained staff immediately worked together, despite physical distances, to keep daily operations working in our "new normal." We embraced digital means of communicating and found innovative ways to serve the community and get the work done. As you'll see within the pages of this Year in Review, we were able to accomplish a lot, maintaining an alignment with the City Council's priorities.

It has not been easy. Every call carried additional risk for our public safety personnel, especially as COVID surges peaked several times throughout the year. While burglary calls were down as residents worked from home, cars on the road were going faster, causing more damage when accidents occurred, and we saw an increase in domestic violence. We experienced an active hurricane season, and in October, Hurricane Zeta raced through the City, toppling trees and bringing down power lines. While taxing for our residents, our Public Works crews worked 24/7 to clear roadways. Our tourism businesses took a tremendous hit, and it will be well into 2021 before this industry starts to see real recovery.

Our theatre and meeting spaces were among those entertainment facilities closing in March and remaining closed. Heritage Sandy Springs, a mainstay nonprofit in our community, terminated its operating agreement with the City in April, with the City taking on overall operations of the facilities on Blue Stone Road.

However, Sandy Springs is known for its tenacity and ability to persevere, which were evident on many fronts. While the Pandemic was not predicted, the City was ready nonetheless. As part of our general preparedness, the City maintains a Continuity of Operations Plan, and it was put into action in February as we began to hear more about coronavirus. When our offices closed in March, the IT Department was well ahead, providing staff with the needed laptops, monitors, and software required to work from home seamlessly. Municipal Court had to innovate, developing virtual court, and transforming traditional courtroom documents into a paperless system. To keep building projects on track, Community Development implemented an appointment system, minimizing contact while still providing customer service.

Recreation and Parks went virtual and hosted social exercise videos and craft programs to keep residents of all ages moving and active. The Communications Department created

more than 250 pieces related to COVID closures and safety messages, managed a COVID section on the City's website, and continues to provide a weekly update for all staff.

The financial downturn did provide one up note. We were able to take advantage of a favorable bond market to refinance our City Springs bonds. The funds generated from the sale and savings in refinancing facilitated the purchase of property on Morgan Falls Road, the future home for Police Headquarters, Municipal Court, and a future Fire Station, keeping focused on the City Council's core priority of public safety.

Community building is also a strong focus, and one mechanism to build community is our special events. One casualty of the Pandemic was our performance theatres' closure and a stop on events, such as City Green Live. But in a year of pivoting, we did find opportunities to bring back moments of community safely. The Sandy Springs Farmers Market relocated to City Springs, and using a phased approach; we were able to assist local farmers and residents looking to purchase locally-sourced foods. We pivoted with classic events. Veterans Day went virtual with a moving video featuring local veterans sharing their memories and thoughts on service. While we could not host a full-scale Spooky Springs, we did shift components to the City Green as part of the Farmers Market, allowing our youngest residents to trick-or-treat safely. The desire to join together as a community was most evident at the City's Sparkle Sandy Springs Parade. For COVID safety, the parade was flipped, with the parade elements stationary and our spectators driving through the route. Where we had planned for 500 cars, almost 1,000 vehicles made their way through the parade route!

Our battle with COVID alone would have made it an unusual year. But COVID was not our only focus.

Based on events within our country, 2020 will also be remembered as a year for social

justice. Downtown Atlanta was a hotspot for civil unrest, and we experienced its sting as one of our fire engines was damaged by rocks and bricks hurled at our crews responding in assistance to a fire. Protests locally were civil, and we are grateful for all involved that residents were able to exercise our constitutional rights peacefully. At mayor and Council's direction, Staff worked with the Civic Dinners organization to create a citywide discussion on *Inclusion and Belonging*. We held 44 virtual dinners, engaging more than 340 people over two months, with the feedback from those conversations forming the basis for a public-involved Inclusion Committee and greater emphasis on building community in the year ahead.

It has been quite a year.

Under the direction of the Mayor and City Council, our staff has accomplished the broadest range of projects in the most unusual of circumstances. I am proud of the work we have completed.

As we transition into 2021, we will continue to move forward on the work underway to enrich community engagement, improve development opportunities in the North End, continue to upgrade our transportation infrastructure, and maintain a focus on all citizens' safety. How history lessons will portray this era is still being determined. Despite the unpredictable nature of this year, Sandy Springs municipal services have pivoted to take care of our residents, and the future looks bright!

Andrea Surratt
City Manager



STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY THROUGH CRISIS

The year 2019 came to a close on a high note as the City held its first-ever Sparkle Sandy Springs holiday parade and its second successful New Year's Eve event, with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra playing to a sold-out crowd in Byers Theatre. No one could have guessed that whatever plans were made for the new decade would become completely novel. Who could have imagined that 2020 would be known for toilet paper shortages, social distancing, quarantines, Zoom meetings, and civil unrest? Historians will look back and mark turning points as the world faced a deadly Pandemic and global movement for racial justice. This year's *Year in Review* report highlights our community and those moments where we met challenges and embraced changes.

Just days into 2020, more than 1,000 people gathered at City Springs, filling both theatres in the Performing Arts Center to stand together against anti-Semitism. "This is our opportunity to stand together in solidarity during a time of great distress in our country," said Mayor Rusty Paul. "Tonight is simply another step as a community in coming together and working together to champion tolerance, respect, kindness, and peace from one to another."

A week later, more than 500 people gathered, this time to pay tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. as part of the City's annual celebration honoring the late civil rights leader. The 2020 program featured the first Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Art and Film Festival, conducted in partnership with the BronzLens Film Festival and DisporaU. The new program emphasized education, with children learning about the civil rights leader through film, art, and participatory activities. The following month, the Atlanta Jewish Film Festival returned to Byers Theatre for its second year in its new home.

In January, the City welcomed a new City Manager, Andrea Surratt. In her first staff-wide meeting held in February, Andrea focused on to the word "pivot." A few

short weeks later, the term was genuinely transformative as an action verb.

Many components shaped our City this year; however, there were three overall tides of change: the Pandemic, weather, and civic unrest.

While COVID crept across country borders as 2019 turned into 2020, it was swift and impactful when it made its mark. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) published its first public alert about coronavirus on January 8, issuing a travel health notice for Wuhan, China several days later. The first reported case of COVID-19 in the U.S. was reported on January 20 in Washington state. In February, the number of cases increased, as infections were documented in California, Massachusetts, and Wisconsin. On February 25, the Director of the CDC's National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases delivered a briefing indicating that "disruption to everyday life might be severe." By this time, there were 14 cases reported across six states.

On March 1, the City first posted information online about the novel coronavirus—COVID-19. Early guidance from the CDC placed the risk to the public as "low." Still, we began adding handwashing, social distancing, and masks into our outreach vocabulary

as preventative steps. An internal COVID Emergency Management Team was formed, including our newly hired Emergency Preparedness and Technology Officer, Imani White, and Sandy Springs Fire Department Section Chief Patrick Flaherty, along with representatives from Public Safety, Communications, Finance, and the City Manager's office. On March 2, two cases of COVID-19 were documented in Georgia—residents from the same household in Fulton County.

March came and went in a blink of an eye but was full of content. The City Council approved an Ordinance on March 17, declaring a State of Emergency as part of the Novel Coronavirus Disease 2019 Global Pandemic. On March 20, the Council approved an Order closing bars, nightclubs, and fitness centers. March 24, Mayor Paul issued a Stay at Home Directive. The City Council would also extend deadlines for occupational sales and alcohol excise tax reporting. Beginning in March, the Council provided grants to nonprofits, including the Community Assistance Center, Los Niños Primero, Sandy Springs Mission, and Solidarity Sandy Springs Food Pantry, to help provide the assistance needed throughout the community. March created a public pause in business activity, but internally, there was much to do.



Mayor Rusty Paul and members of the SSFD deliver masks to the Community Assistance Center.



Volunteers from the Solidarity Sandy Springs Food Pantry raise funds with a table at the Sandy Springs Farmers Market.

Monday, March 16, marked the first internal shift due to COVID, as City employees pivoted to working from home, with kitchen tables, sunrooms, and basements transforming into offices. In some cases, adjacent rooms turned into classrooms, as children were sent home to learn.

The City's IT Department performed a rapid implementation of WebEx Teams, and later Microsoft Teams to enable online collaboration and remote meetings. Laptops and additional monitors were deployed, so City Hall-based staff could work remotely.

Fortunately, most of the infrastructure to support remote working was already in place, as part of "just in case" scenarios prepared for in the City's Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP). Recently updated in late 2019, the

COOP enabled City Departments to react quickly to the changing environment.

Each Department focused on how to best pivot to meet the community's needs, get the work done, and stay safe. Public Works field superintendents used their vehicles as makeshift offices as they continued to oversee construction projects underway.

Permitting, Revenue, and the Planner of the Day operated digitally to serve customers. Later, an appointment system was implemented, enabling in-person visits to resume. With the Pandemic, Community Development pivoted to reviewing plans and permits entirely electronically. While fewer commercial projects were received for review, there was a marked increase in permits for residential home and lot improvements.

Thursday Developer's Meetings were shifted to be virtual meetings and filled up quickly on a weekly basis.

Municipal Court was faced with challenges related to law and court proceedings. After intensive research, virtual Municipal Court opened in April, and later transitioned into a hybrid model, allowing for both in-person and virtual hearings.

Recreation and Parks transferred programming to virtual spaces during the spring. As summer arrived, the green spaces at our parks reopened, and limited camp programming was available, restricting numbers of participants, and implementing strict health and safety precautions.

To keep the community informed, Communications maintained the COVID section of the City's website. Signage was created to close, and, later, open, buildings and parks and advise those within City facilities of health and safety protocols. The Department also began a weekly e-newsletter for staff to foster a sense of belonging and keep everyone informed.

Public Safety personnel had to operate "business as usual" but added personal protective equipment (PPE) as part of their everyday wear and observed COVID safety protocols when interacting with the public.

As offices, businesses, and retailers shut down, city streets resembled an early Christmas morning, only this time, the carless streets and darkened buildings remained that way for weeks, not hours. It was a quick ride in to work for essential workers, whatever the distance between home and office. The internal COVID Emergency Management Team began planning for recovery. Phased plans were developed to bring staff back into City Hall and reopen public facing activities, such as parks programming and events at the Performing Arts Center. Economic Development began regular e-newsletters to keep the business community informed of developments, including federal funding opportunities. The Department also issued a series of surveys to help City leaders understand key impacts of the virus. To assist struggling restaurants, the Communications and Economic Development teams worked with Visit Sandy Springs to create a web presence highlighting takeout and delivery options. The service raised public awareness of restaurants not normally considered places to order a meal-to-go.

City events took a big hit. The Performing Arts Center and Conference Center were closed for the remainder of 2020. However, people took the opportunity to find safe forms of entertainment outdoors. This summer, the Chattahoochee River's popularity was at an all-time high, with a record number of people



A Volunteer stocks shelves at the Community Assistance Center. From January 1 through the end of November 2020, CAC has distributed food to 6,855 individuals which is 2,370 more people than all of last year.

rafting, kayaking, and canoeing downstream. The Farmers Market made its seasonal return, at first offering preorders and curbside pick up and, later moving to in-person shopping, with both booths and shoppers properly distanced, and all attendees wearing masks. The year 2020 brought a full, blue moon for Halloween, and the holiday fell this year on a Saturday. The Farmers Market decked out with its spooky best, providing photo-ready vignettes for parents and their little goblins to snap a few photos, and our youngest residents were able to trick or treat at market vendors (socially-distanced, of course). Kennesaw State University's (KSU's) Coles College of Business resumed its programming, with classes taking place in the Studio Theatre to allow for ample social distancing.

The spread of the virus has been a roller coaster ride. The initial spring peak in cases then decreased, though they increased again over the summer. In August, Mayor Paul issued a statement urging everyone to wear masks. One week later, the City Council formalized Mayor Paul's statement as an Ordinance. As fall approached, we saw numbers of new cases decreasing, but by November, another potential surge was on the horizon.

Like a dark cloud, coronavirus has created a sense of anticipation and anxiety - a feeling that a storm is on the way. However, COVID wasn't our only challenge to "weather" this year. Mother Nature has had an active year. In February, snowfall closed roads and created hazardous driving conditions. Hurricane Sally became Tropical Storm

Sally as it made its way through the state in September, taking down trees and power lines. In October, severe rain caused flooding, forcing evacuations in one apartment complex and caused damage in one of the City's fire stations and at Police Headquarters, in addition to loosening land, with trees falling as a result. Before we could catch our breath, Hurricane Zeta, a record-breaking 11th named storm in the Atlantic, made its northward path with record speed. While arriving in Georgia as a tropical storm, Zeta hit the City fast and hard, toppling almost 100 trees, many with power lines during its first strike. While the storm's core passed through quickly, Zeta left behind strong winds, with trees and power lines continuing to fall for the next two days, resulting in more than 213 trees leaving roots exposed and power lines grounded.

It has been a tense year with emotions visible and events unfolding, sparking high tension and reaction. The names George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Ahmaud Arbery were among those whose deaths related to police custody sparked a national movement about racism and change. In late May, protestors in Atlanta moved northward into Sandy Springs. Several burglaries and looting incidents were reported, and one fire engine was damaged after protestors pelted the vehicle with rocks and bricks as it responded to an emergency call. Fortunately, no significant injuries were reported, and the perpetrators of the burglaries were arrested. A series of peaceful protests followed outside City Hall. Mayor Paul quickly responded, speaking to the City's longstanding opposition to hate and racial injustice, reminding everyone that

Sandy Springs was one of the first cities in Georgia to pass hate crime legislation. The City Council would also adopt a resolution to encourage the State of Georgia to pass a hate crimes bill. Mayor Paul called for community, business, and religious leaders to hold conversations in order to facilitate understanding and healing.

Working with the Civic Dinners organization, staff arranged a series of virtual conversations, each between eight and ten people, addressing inclusion and belonging. During July and August, 44 Civic Dinners were held. The feedback from those events was presented to City Council in October. At that time, Mayor Paul announced the formation of an Inclusion Commission. He promised ongoing conversations and activities focused on bringing diverse members of the community together in order to foster belonging.

The year 2020 is a year we will all remember. No single word could adequately describe the year, but there are a few that speak to the tone and what we've learned.

2020 is the year we learned to pivot and adapt to change. With the playing field changing almost daily, prioritization and process were key ingredients to staying on track and making even everyday tasks happen as they should. Pace was equally important. While we wished the year 2020 was a sprint, it felt more like a marathon. And going into 2021, holding steady will help keep us on course.

Storms kept City crews busy this year, clearing trees to reopen roads.



BIG CITY LIVING, SMALL TOWN VIBE

Sandy Springs' unique location within the metropolitan Atlanta area offers the best of both worlds for our residents, business owners, and visitors. The City's ability to provide big city amenities and opportunities, balanced by the best of what the suburbs can offer, continues to attract and retain major corporations as well as small businesses. Sandy Springs was also cited in an article that included us as part of the metro Atlanta area's high ranking in the metropolitan areas with the most entrepreneurs.

During the COVID lockdown, the community's strength shone brightly, as various programs were launched to support non profit organizations, restaurants, and other small businesses. For a mid-sized city of more than 100,000 residents, a small town vibe does, indeed, connect us.

TOPSIDE TAP TRAIL

The launch of the Topside Tap Trail offers beer lovers an opportunity to sample some of the best brews crafted in North Fulton County. Two Sandy Springs breweries, Pontoon Brewing Company at the north end of town, and Porter Pizza Brewery in the Powers Ferry area, are part of the Topside Tap Trail, which also includes breweries and brewpubs in Roswell and Alpharetta. In 2020, a website was launched, bringing the seven breweries together virtually, so that beer enthusiasts could “brew hop” from their laptops and learn more about locally-produced beers.

TOP EMPLOYERS IN SANDY SPRINGS		
RANK	BUSINESS	EMPLOYEES
1	COX ENTERPRISES	4,946
2	IBM CORPORATION	3,789
3	UNITED PARCEL SERVICE	2,195
4	INTERCONTINENTAL EXCHANGE	1,062
5	CISCO SYSTEMS	991
6	VMWARE	960
7	MERCEDES-BENZ	828
8	WESTROCK	789
9	NASCO	701
10	ELAVON	947
11	ONETRUST	616
12	NEWELL BRANDS	604
13	GLOBAL PAYMENTS	584
14	FOCUS BRANDS	416
15	AMERICOLD LOGISTICS	392

Companies ranked by most people employed. Does not include three regional hospitals located in Sandy Springs (Northside, Emory St Joseph's and Children's Healthcare of Atlanta), which collectively have more than 25,000 employees, but do not disclose official numbers.

CITY ASSUMES OPERATION OF HERITAGE

This past spring, the City assumed operations of Heritage Sandy Springs Museum and Park. While the City has always owned the Blue Stone building and surrounding property, the park was operated by the nonprofit Heritage Sandy Springs. The organization asked to be released from its operating agreement after the COVID outbreak strains created an untenable financial burden. The Create Sandy Springs team will facilitate booking and event management for the Blue Stone building, Williams-Payne House, and surrounding properties, including managing the popular Concerts by the Springs series and the Farmers Market.

Founded in 1985 as the Sandy Springs Historic Community Foundation, Heritage Sandy Springs was a keeper of city history, preserving artifacts and documents exhibited in the museum at the historic Williams-Payne House.

FARMERS MARKET FLOURISHES

Surrounding the City Green and averaging more than 20 vendors each Saturday morning, the Sandy Springs Farmers Market provides an open-air, farm-to-table shopping experience for residents and visitors to the City.

The market initially opened its 2020 season, offering preorders for easy pickup. Later in the year, the market opened its vendor tables at City Springs with safety protocols in place to keep vendors and shoppers safe.

As the year progressed, the market provided a backdrop to celebrate Halloween with a family-friendly, spooky-themed event, providing families a safe, distanced environment for Instagram photo moments and trick-or-treating.

CITY WELCOMES DELUXE CORPORATION

In September, Deluxe Corporation announced that it would invest more than \$12 million in establishing a new office, including a FinTech and Customer Innovation Center, in Sandy Springs. This will create more than 700 new jobs. Metro Atlanta is a global financial technology and payments capital, and Deluxe considered Sandy Springs to be the right location to access a talented workforce in a business-friendly environment with a supportive university system. For over a year, including during the Pandemic, City staff worked with our partners at the Georgia Department of Economic Development and the Metro Atlanta Chamber to bring Deluxe to Sandy Springs.

NORTH END REDEVELOPMENT

In March, the City hosted the first in a series of public meetings intended to illustrate how the community's vision for reimagining the North End of Sandy Springs can be realized through a variety of recommended uses, using four shopping centers in the district as examples. The kick-off meeting included nearly 200 participants, who met in-person to identify high-priority wants/needs and likes/dislikes and establish goals for the study (connectivity, walkability, public space, mixed use, new retail and housing options, and a unique identity). After the COVID-19 shutdown, the project shifted from in-person community engagement to virtual platforms where the public could share their input. Initial drafts of conceptual plans for the shopping centers were presented over a series of four weeks in August and September. Virtual input was successful, with an average of 75 stakeholders, detailed comments, and 150+ survey responses on the plans for each of the centers.

BOUTIQUE HOTEL ANNOUNCED

In September, the Marriott Corporation broke ground for a new Aloft Hotel to be located at the corner of Hammond Drive and Barfield Road. The Aloft Hotel is one of Marriott's boutique-type hotel concepts. The 119-key Sandy Springs location will be the fourth Aloft Hotel in the Atlanta metropolitan area.

HEADQUARTERED HERE

Major corporations located in Sandy Springs:

FORTUNE 500

United Parcel Service - #43

WestRock - #177

Newell Brands - #316

Veritiv - #412

Intercontinental Exchange - #459

Graphic Packaging - #477

FORTUNE 1,000

Beazer Homes USA - #965

A Housing Needs Assessment was conducted in 2020, to provide an understanding of the current housing market. A Strategic Housing Plan is planned for 2021 and will provide policy recommendations.





A SIGN OF CHANGE

The view from the Byers Theatre lobby significantly improved in September. After years of legal efforts, the billboards located directly across from City Springs on Mt. Vernon Highway and Roswell Road were finally removed. Mayor Paul took the helm of the earthmover to begin the process and leveled the first billboard. A short time later, the taller billboard face-planted onto the concrete foundation. The triangle-shaped area is planned to become a park, honoring our Veterans, as well as serving as a welcoming entranceway to the City's downtown district. The metamorphosis will take place alongside the long-planned road and intersection improvements.



ENGAGING OUR COMMUNITY

While this year got off to a strong start with great attendance for public meetings and events, once COVID hit, every department was forced to pivot. In-person interaction shifted online, and popular initiatives like Coffee with a Cop became Facebook Livestreams. Fire station birthday parties became drive-by celebrations, and we launched a platform for local artists to entertain their audiences.



Members of the Sandy Springs community come together to participate in art activities at the City's Martin Luther King Jr. Day Art and Film Festival.



CIVIC DINNERS

Two pandemics affected the nation in 2020. The first is the ongoing coronavirus; the second, a community health concern over racism and police relations. Public demonstrations and civil unrest were illustrative of the tensions building, resulting from racial, ethnic, and socio-economic issues affecting communities across the country.

These tensions reached a boiling point in the metro Atlanta area over the summer, with some demonstrations leading to violence, property damage, injury, and loss of life. Most of the civil unrest was outside of Sandy Springs, and no one was injured as a result of demonstrations in the City. However, the root causes of the unrest continue to impact the community's health and safety.

To help address the problems, City leaders wanted to understand the issues directly from community members and hear what individuals felt were the most pressing concerns contributing to the unrest.

Traditionally, addressing a citywide issue would call for a large public gathering. Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, such gatherings presented a health-safety risk and were legally prohibited under State-mandated public health safety measures.

To facilitate community discussion, the City partnered with Atlanta-based Civic Dinners, a company focused on fostering community conversations in targeted geographies. Using a program developed by Civic Dinners in collaboration with The King Center, the City launched a discussion on *Inclusion and Belonging*.

The City held 44 virtual "dinners" throughout July and August. Each event brought together between six and eight participants through a video conference call where they engaged in conversation. Three of the dinners were held entirely in Spanish. The discussions explored the community's perspectives around inclusion and belonging and how we can create a more inclusive Sandy Springs.

The Civic Dinners were the start of an ongoing process. Feedback from those Dinners was distilled into themes for action and recommendations on actionable steps the City and community can take to move forward. In November, Mayor Paul announced that he was forming a Diversity and Inclusion Committee to advise the City on programs and ideas to further efforts of inclusion.

SHOP SMART ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN

As stores began reopening after the initial COVID-19 shutdown, the Communications team created friendly reminders for shoppers to stay safe when visiting local retailers. With imitation being the sincerest form of flattery, the team was more than happy to oblige municipalities like Athens-Clarke County's request to use our imagery in their own campaigns!

TAKE-HOME FRIDAY

Shortly after the coronavirus shutdown forced restaurants to shutter their doors to dine-in food service, the City teamed up with Visit Sandy Springs to create a campaign encouraging take-out options. *Take-Home Friday* was expanded into an ongoing effort dedicated to providing the most current information available concerning take-out, curbside pickup, delivery, and more. Visit Sandy Springs shared the participating restaurant information on its website, offering a one-stop shop for interested (and hungry) diners. While web traffic was down for most Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs) due to COVID, traffic to visitsandysprings.org saw a minimal decline in comparison to the industry. This was due to a 34 percent increase in people searching for the site and a 1,223 percent increase in people clicking through to the site from social media posts related to the restaurant effort. The *Restaurant Takeout & Delivery Options* webpage was the website's top landing page, with people viewing it 4,772 times. Dozens of other websites linked to this page, cementing its value as a community resource, and benefiting our restaurants and resident foodies.

BRINGING THE PARTY TO YOU

Birthday parties at Sandy Springs Fire Stations have been a popular and well-loved tradition over the years, and we have often wondered who enjoys them more: the children or the staff that get to celebrate with them! Due to COVID, Stations could not host the parties this year, but that didn't mean they didn't think outside the box, or Station, in this case. Children wanting a firefighter-themed party could celebrate with a drive-by visit from a fire truck, complete with sirens and the firefighters wishing them a happy birthday.

MASK UP CAMPAIGN

On August 20, 2020, the Sandy Springs City Council passed an Ordinance requiring individuals to wear a mask or face covering when in public spaces and not able to maintain a six-foot distance. To help remind everyone of the importance of wearing a mask when in public areas, posters and postcards were placed in spaces around the city with a simple message: *Mask Up to Take COVID Down*. If some of the faces in the campaign look familiar, you may be looking into the eyes of friends, family members, or neighbors. Residents were asked through the City's social media channels to send photos showing their mask wear. The Communications team used some of these images as part of our campaign.

PERFORMING ARTS SURVEY

Prior to the COVID shutdown, the Performing Arts Center's programming team was busy at work preparing to announce the upcoming season. Months of planning went into what was going to be an exciting lineup of shows. Needless to say, as disappointing as it was for ticket holders to miss the performances, it was equally as disappointing to the crews eager to set the stages at City Springs. In coordination with the launch of Create Sandy Springs, the City's presenting entity for programming, the team broke the fourth wall, so to speak, inviting the audience to offer opinions on what types of programming they would like to see. The survey launched in September and ran for a month, tallying more than 750 responses. Some of the takeaways from the survey included the desire for diversity in programming. Our audience has a broad list of musical interests, and they're curious about cultural programming. They've become accustomed to learning about events online, and there's room to grow regarding target age ranges.





FROM COFFEE SHOP TO LAPTOP

Coffee with a Cop is a popular initiative that allows the community members to get to know Sandy Springs police officers in a casual setting. The get-togethers offer the chance to share important advice and tips, including how not to be a victim of a crime and what to do if one is a victim. With many coffee shops and cafes closed during the Pandemic, the Police Department used Facebook to connect with the community. It produced recorded videos and Facebook Livestream events to share vital information.

The Criminal Investigations Division (CID) produced recorded video presentations focusing on two of the most common crimes our citizens face: fraud and domestic violence. The Division's Fraud Detectives and Victim Advocate provided insight and resources to assist those in need. CID also collaborated with the Community Unit to develop a Facebook Live event—a question and answer session with active Facebook participants. In addition to discussing fraud and domestic violence, the session included a Crime Scene

Investigations Detective to shed light on crime scene processes and analysis. SSPD received positive feedback from the citizens, and CID is interested in continuing with these events, even as in-person events become possible again.

MLK DAY ART AND FILM FESTIVAL

Following the City's incorporation in December of 2005, the first community event hosted by the City of Sandy Springs was its MLK Day celebration. The event was reimagined for 2020. Inspired by the success of the *BronzLens Film Festival*, the City partnered with the Festival and DiasporaU to create the first annual *Martin Luther King Jr. Day Art and Film Festival*. More than 500 people, from all over the metropolitan area participated in the afternoon's craft projects and watched one of the two screenings of the animated film, *Our Friend Martin*. These activities were designed to educate individuals of all ages about the life and legacy of Dr. King. The Riverwood High School Community Service Club was among the many volunteers who facilitated this inaugural program.

SHOWCASING LOCAL ARTISTS

Any fan of the performing arts knows the saying, "the show must go on," but the COVID Pandemic rendered the box office quiet and theatre seats empty. To connect audiences with musicians and artists, the City launched *Create & Connect: A Spotlight on the Arts in Sandy Springs*, a virtual platform that enabled local performers do what they do best: play to the crowd! Many of the videos featured musicians who have performed and will perform in the future at City Springs. The video series expanded to include the visual and culinary arts, sharing how-to videos for crafting and cooking. On average, each post reached more than 2,000 people.

FOOD THAT ROCKS

Foodies—and those who love them—could still celebrate and support the City's restaurants with *Salute to Sandy Springs*, this year's twist on the popular annual *Food That Rocks* event. During the weeklong campaign to support local restaurants, members of the public were encouraged to support their favorite eateries with takeout, delivery, or dine-in where appropriate. From July 4-10, each participating restaurant selected three favorite menu items (in the form of appetizers, entrée, drinks, or desserts), all available for diners to order. Diners could vote for their top selections online and share via social media.

This year's event featured more than 30 of the City's restaurants and resulted in more than 5,000 fan votes to select this year's Best of Sandy Springs winners. The overall winner was Hearth Pizza Tavern. For the complete list of winners, visit foodthatrocks.org.

In addition to supporting restaurants, this year's event raised funds to feed Sandy Springs' frontline healthcare workers at Emory Saint Joseph's Hospital, Northside Hospital, and Children's Healthcare of Atlanta.



SPARKLE SANDY SPRINGS WINS AWARD

The Southeast Tourism Society (STS) named Sparkle Sandy Springs one of the STS Top 20 Events in the Southeast for December 2019.

Each year, Sparkle Sandy Springs features a holiday village of artfully displayed six-foot tall wooden houses painted and decorated in holiday themes and adorned with lights, creating a magical, walkable light display.

In 2019, the Sparkle Parade was added, featuring floats, marching groups, music, and an appearance by Santa. The festivities culminated in the lighting of the City's menorah and Christmas tree.

This year, due to COVID, the City switched the format, making the event a drive-through experience, allowing participants to remain safely in their cars to view the festivities. More than 1,000 cars attended.

CENSUS 2020

In 2019, the City formed the Complete Count Committee, comprised of community leaders and the Communications and GIS teams, to prepare for this year's 2020 Census. Achieving an accurate census is not only critical to determining fair representation in the House of Representatives, but it also improves communities by ensuring they receive their portion of \$675 billion in federal funds and grants to be used for schools, hospitals, roads, public works, and other vital programs.

Plans pivoted as the COVID Pandemic curtailed in-person Census visits and the deadline for the count changed several times, extended in one instance and shortened in the last stretch. The team got creative, using various outreach methods to remind residents to respond, including a social media campaign, bilingual initiatives, and grassroots marketing, with posters and fliers placed in retailers, gas stations, and apartment complexes throughout the City. The cumulative response rate was 64 percent, slightly up from the last Census count completed ten years ago.



KEEPING OUR CITY SAFE

Sandy Springs is the sixth-largest city in Georgia. However, despite the big city numbers and strong corporate presence, there is still a small-town feel. Our residents and business owners certainly share this sentiment, reflecting their positive relationships with our public safety personnel. Exceptional response times by our police officers, firefighters, and emergency medical technicians make the City a safe place to live and work. *Money, Inc.* included Sandy Springs on its list of the “20 Safest Places to Live in Georgia”.

The City’s murder rate is low, and the Sandy Springs Police Department (SSPD) works tirelessly to solve these crimes. This year, SSPD was able to close the book, solving the two-year old murder case of Kay Thomasson with an arrest.

As a result of the coronavirus, domestic violence calls were up in 2020. Fortunately, SSPD was able to diffuse the situation in many cases before it escalated into a more serious offense.

This year, the Sandy Springs Fire Department (SSFD) created a new full-time position, Executive Officer of Emergency Preparedness. She came on board just before the COVID shutdown and worked to keep the community healthy.

The City launched its “Green to the Scene” emergency vehicle preemption program this year to improve response times. The Fire Department is proud to say that there were no lives lost this past year to fire.



Architectural rendering of the new fire station.

NEW FIRE STATION

Fire Station No. 2 on Johnson Ferry Road first opened in 1969 and needs to be upgraded to meet current public safety needs.

The new station is planned as a two-story structure. The 20,000 square-foot building will include several new features focused on safety and firefighter health. A 1,000 square-foot gym on the second floor will help keep

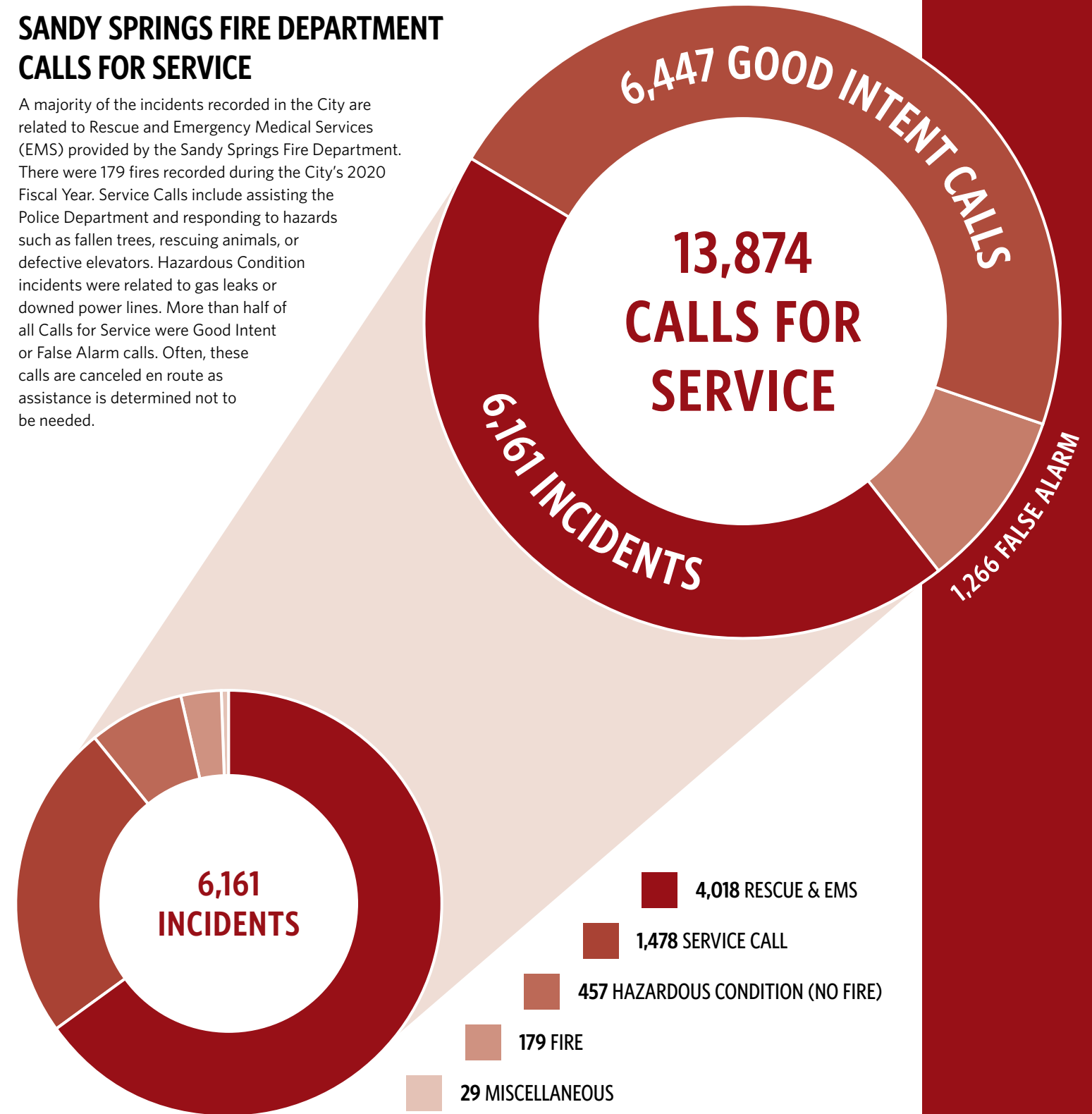
firefighters in shape. A decontamination area with a separate HVAC and airlock system will provide a space for firefighters to change out of, and clean, dirty gear. An infrared sauna will be installed to help with firefighters' detoxification process. The facility will include a training stairway with a rappelling wall and a confined-space simulator, providing firefighters with critical training in-house. Currently, this type of activity is done away from the station.

The station will have both men's and women's bathrooms and private sleeping areas in the living quarters. The first floor will also contain office space for staff and a conference/community room.

The new building will be constructed on the same property as the former building, which was demolished over the summer. Hussey, Gay, Bell & DeYoung International Inc. created the design as part of the \$351,700 contract awarded earlier this year.

SANDY SPRINGS FIRE DEPARTMENT CALLS FOR SERVICE

A majority of the incidents recorded in the City are related to Rescue and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) provided by the Sandy Springs Fire Department. There were 179 fires recorded during the City's 2020 Fiscal Year. Service Calls include assisting the Police Department and responding to hazards such as fallen trees, rescuing animals, or defective elevators. Hazardous Condition incidents were related to gas leaks or downed power lines. More than half of all Calls for Service were Good Intent or False Alarm calls. Often, these calls are canceled en route as assistance is determined not to be needed.





RIVER RESCUES

With COVID keeping people out of theatres, restaurants, and bars, the great outdoors became an increasingly popular place to gather and recreate. The song, “Take Me to the River” must have been on just about everybody’s playlist this spring and summer as more and more people spent their lazy days floating down the Chattahoochee. One of the City’s raft rental vendors, High Country Outfitters Paddle Shack, saw an 83 percent increase in business over the July Fourth weekend, as compared to 2019. All that activity also created an uptick for the Sandy Springs Fire Department’s Tactical Rescue Team. During that same holiday weekend, SSFD reported 19 river rescues, the majority being rescues of stranded floaters.

The River maintained its popularity throughout the summer. On Labor Day weekend, the Paddle Shack had more than 1,500 guests between Thursday and Monday, making that weekend the Paddle Shack’s busiest ever. Approximately 75 percent of the guests made reservations in advance using the City’s website. SSFD’s Swiftwater Rescue Team reported 15 incidents during the holiday weekend.

GREEN TO THE SCENE

In February, the City Council approved the purchase of a system that gives emergency vehicles green lights as they drive to emergency locations. This traffic signal preemption system equips all Sandy Springs Fire vehicles and ambulances and specially signalizes 113 intersections. The system combines cellular, radio, and GPS technology with a cloud-based software system to process the route in realtime as emergency vehicles leave the station, communicating wirelessly with the traffic cabinet in order to begin clearing traffic as they approach the intersection. With preemption technology, the City estimates a savings of approximately 10-12 seconds per intersection, or an overall savings of 20 percent in response time. In 2019, the Sandy Springs Fire Department received more than 14,000 calls for service, with most of the calls occurring out of Fire Stations No. 1, 2, and 4, which encompass routes along Roswell Road in the heart of the City. An ongoing challenge is maneuvering around stopped and queuing traffic at intersections. The cost of “Green to the Scene” equipment and installation was \$676,284.

CARDIAC ARRESTS RISING

The Pandemic was a factor in a decline of Return of Spontaneous Circulation for calls involving Cardiac Arrest this year. From March through September 2019, the Sandy Springs Fire Department reported a 27 percent Return of Spontaneous Circulation on Cardiac Arrest Calls. Fast forward to this year, during the same time frame; the rate dropped to 19 percent. Health officials attributed the change to a decline in preventative care during the lockdown, as routine healthcare appointments were canceled, and many individuals were reluctant to go to the hospital for fear of contracting COVID-19.

PROACTIVE APPROACH TO FIRE PREVENTION

Where there’s smoke, there’s often fire. As fire inspectors studied nine fires over two years at the same apartment complex, Sierra Place, they discovered a trend indicating that these fires had one thing in common. They were linked to HVAC units that allowed them to spread into the apartments’ attic area. In most cases, residents would smell smoke caused by electric heating elements that would heat the adjacent wood, charring it, and causing it to ignite. Fortunately, SSFD responded quickly enough to contain these fires. Taking decisive action, fire inspectors teamed up with the City’s building inspectors and partnered with private electricians, going apartment by apartment to identify issues. They found electrical code violations, maintenance shortcuts that revealed improper patching, but the main culprit was lint build-up on the HVAC systems. Apartments were prioritized for repair and replacement. The Fire Department required a fire watch, involving 24-hour monitoring and maintenance of a log until all systems were replaced.

When a similar trend was discovered at another apartment community after four fires over two years, inspectors traced it back to ventilation fans in the bathrooms. They approached the apartment’s management, which voluntarily replaced all ventilation fans in the apartment units.

EFFECTIVENESS OF FIRE MITIGATION SYSTEMS

The Sandy Springs Fire Department’s proactive measures to ensure the effectiveness of fire mitigation systems have proven effective. For the fifth consecutive year, no lives have been lost due to fire in Sandy Springs. This remarkable success can be attributed to efforts and initiatives of the Fire Marshal’s Office.



Over the years, SSFD required apartment complexes to install fire extinguishers and fire suppression canisters over stovetops and treat exposed, untreated lumber with intumescent paint.

SSFD reports a total of 62 incidents in 2020 that were either fires—or dispatched as fires—and found to be something else, such as appliance malfunctions or sparks. Of those incidents, 42 were interior to apartment units, while another 20 were outside.

SSFD routinely inspects common areas: lobbies, corridors, breezeways, clubhouses, storage sheds, and community laundry rooms. Third-party Certified Building Inspectors (CBIs) are hired by apartment complex owners to inspect individual apartment units’ interiors.

VIRTUAL COURT

Sometimes in the gravest of moments, creativity and innovation can create a positive outcome. When COVID-19 prevented the municipal courts from holding Court, as usual, the Court Clerk’s office began researching a way to provide services virtually.

The City and Statewide shut down required the municipal court system to rapidly create

telework options for a division that had never previously experienced that model of work. Many employees needed laptops, and there were security implications. With support from the IT Department, a secure process was developed, officially making the possibility of virtual Court a reality. To ensure the privacy of the defendants’ data, a separate platform, shared by the Police and Fire Departments, was used to conduct business during the COVID-19 virtual court sessions. Unlike various other municipalities that charge defendants to hear their cases virtually, the City provided these newly developed services at no cost to the defendants.

In June, Municipal Court reopened for in-person sessions; however, virtual court remains an option, with cases heard every Friday. Municipal Court typically averages 40 virtual cases per week for various non-felony cases.

The Court Clerk’s office also used the shift to telework to transition into a paperless court system. Judges can pull up case files, orders, and sentences on their computers, prepared by the clerk to sign using signature pads. Defendants are also able to review the documents electronically and sign with the use of a signature pad. Faxed documents are received through the computer system as well.



WE WERE PREPARED

FIRE DEPARTMENT COVID RESPONSE

The Sandy Springs Fire Department took an active role in COVID-19 mitigation, helping to minimize infection rates in our community.

AT THE READY

Executive Officer of Emergency Preparedness Imani White was only weeks on the job when the first cases of COVID were reported in Sandy Springs. After holding a similar position at Amazon, which transferred the Atlanta native back home, Imani was immediately struck by the City's preparedness. A testament to former city management for having the foresight to plan for extreme emergencies, the City had a three-month supply of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), even after donating 10,000 masks to the Community Assistance Center and sharing resources with another municipality.

Ms. White also marveled at learning that details like antimicrobial metal handles were installed throughout the building during the planning and construction of the new City Hall. Additionally, the Continuity of Operations Plan, updated in December 2019, provided each department with a roadmap to continue operations and supply services.

Looking collaboratively at problem-solving, representatives from the City participated in weekly calls with the Atlanta-Fulton County Emergency Management Agency (AFCEMA), which began in March. These calls provide updates and critical information, such as hospital capacities, to the major stakeholders throughout the Atlanta metropolitan area.

The Sandy Springs Fire Department created systems, determined PPE needs, and took a proactive approach to control the disease at the source. The Department divvied up responsibilities with Ms. White and Section Chief Patrick Flaherty serving as the liaisons

with hospitals and the health care community. The Fire Marshal's Office was tasked with overseeing senior care outreach in the community's nursing homes and assisted living facilities.

TESTING

The City partnered with a local lab in Sandy Springs to provide free COVID testing to employees, many considered first responders and essential workers. Among reporting agencies of similar size, SSFD ranked in the top five percent for the fewest number of positive cases nationwide, according to the International Association of Fire Chiefs.

As of the beginning of November, more than 600 employee tests were administered, with results coming back in less than a 24-hour turnaround. Getting results quickly was an important factor in the early days of testing, when it could take up to a week or ten days to receive test results.

To expand community testing availability, the City partnered with the Community Organized Relief Effort (CORE) to set up mobile sites offering free tests, initially averaging 200 tests a day. SSFD firefighters delivered CORE testing flyers (hard copies and digital versions) in both English and Spanish to the 90 apartment complexes throughout the City to encourage testing, additionally partnering with the Community Assistance Center to provide Spanish translators at the testing site.

LOOKING AHEAD

The team is currently preparing to work with the state on implementing mobile and fixed vaccine stations and providing staff to help administer vaccinations.

FEDERAL SUPPORT

Through the course of the year, federal COVID-19 relief funds for several local non-profit agencies were provided through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. The City received \$384,260 in June and \$630,769 in November as part of the CDBG COVID-19 Pandemic Response program administered through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). These funds were allocated to support programs implemented by the Community Assistance Center (CAC), Los Ninos Primero, and Sandy Springs Mission for educational programming, food, and rent and utility bill pay assistance. The City utilized a procurement process to identify the three local non-profit organizations, in keeping with HUD requirements. Beginning mid-March, the CAC experienced a 400 percent increase in calls for assistance, 60 percent seeking financial assistance for the first time. To date, more than 1,080 households have benefited from financial assistance, with 97 percent able to remain housed.

*Section Chief Patrick Flaherty
and Executive Officer of
Emergency Preparedness
Imani White*





NEW PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING

Reinforcing its commitment to prioritizing public safety, City Council announced in October 2020 that it had completed the purchase of 620 Morgan Falls Road, the future home of the Sandy Springs Police Department and Municipal Court. The City purchased the property for \$10,990,000.

The purchased property sits on 12.3 acres and includes a four-story, 109,000 square-foot building. The facility, constructed in 1990, most recently housed the U.S. headquarters of WorldPay. The City plans to repurpose the facility to include sally port areas (secured entrance areas for prisoners), secured holding and interview spaces, and larger and secured lobby areas. Long-range plans include auxiliary police uses, including vehicle maintenance bays, a shoot house, and a gun range for training. The site will also house a future fire station.

TWO-YEAR-OLD MURDER CASE SOLVED

On June 27, 2018, 71-year-old Kay Thomasson was murdered in the early morning hours at her Sandy Springs home on Old Woodbine Road in the Derby Hills neighborhood.

After a dedicated investigation utilizing all technologies at their disposal, and with the assistance of the U.S. Marshals Office, Sandy Springs Criminal Investigations Division Detectives were able to identify 24-year-old James Christopher Jones as the person responsible for murdering Thomasson. This case was very complicated, and the SSPD detectives worked non-stop to bring it to a successful conclusion with an arrest. The investigation involved the collaboration of every department employee and could not have been solved without that focused dedication. During the investigation, those working the case discovered new developments in technology, including DNA analysis and digital forensics, and future

investigations will benefit from the advances made during this case. Due to the successful conclusion of this case, CID Detectives have reopened the March 2007 murder of a newborn left in a gym bag and submitted DNA evidence recovered from the bag to a private lab for processing.

ARREST POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

As a response to the tragic events which unfolded in Minneapolis this summer, the Sandy Springs Police Department wanted to share with our citizens their policies and procedures in place to prevent the type of incident that precipitated such events. As a State Certified Agency, SSPD has established policies and procedures that are continuously reviewed. Additionally, SSPD undergoes a thorough evaluation by the Georgia Association of Chiefs of Police every three years. All officers receive training annually on critical tasks, including use of force,

de-escalation, community-oriented policing, and bias-based profiling. Officers are provided opportunities for additional training to help them make objective and principled decisions.

By policy, SSPD officers are forbidden to use any type of neck restraint, except where lethal force is authorized and deemed reasonable and necessary. Officers are trained in zone handcuffing, where multiple officers dealing with an uncooperative person on the ground can safely apply handcuffs. None of these techniques include the use of knees or choking. SSPD mandates each patrol officer to be equipped with a body-worn camera. These are in addition to a dash camera and a prisoner rear-facing camera in each patrol vehicle. Officers must activate their body-worn cameras during each encounter with a member of the public in order to document the encounter accurately. This documentation rule includes all citizen contacts, arrests, and critical incidents. SSPD also uses the body-worn cameras to identify any internal issues that may need to be addressed, such as training, communications, policy compliance, customer service, officer safety, etc.

Since its inception in 2006, SSPD has created collaborative partnerships throughout the community. SSPD strives to be a positive example for others to follow. The Department is committed to hiring the most qualified, diverse, and educated persons to deliver best-in-class service to the Sandy Springs community. Sandy Springs police officers strive to treat people with dignity and respect, core principles of procedural justice, and police legitimacy. The Department holds officers who do not practice these core principles accountable for their actions.

Citizens are encouraged to attend SSPD's Citizens Police Academy (CPA), Volunteers in Police Service (VIPS), and Citizens on Patrol (COPS) in order to learn more about the Department. SSPD has graduated approximately 700 people from CPA and has more than 50 active COPS and VIPS citizen volunteers.

CELL PHONE STORE ARMED ROBBERY

In June, two armed and masked males entered the T-Mobile store located at 5650 Roswell Road, tied up the employees, and robbed the business and employees. An employee had inserted a tracker in the bags the suspects took with them as they fled. A short time later, an SSPD traffic officer located the vehicle. After a quick pursuit, the suspect vehicle crashed, and the suspects fled on foot. Several officers and units responded, and both suspects were taken into custody. Multiple firearms in addition to the evidence from the robbery were located, and the pair were charged with armed robbery, aggravated assault, false imprisonment, possession of a firearm during the commission of a felony, possession of a firearm by a convicted felon, and countless traffic charges. The immediate response of multiple officers and the traffic officer's keen awareness helped bring this case to a successful conclusion. No one was injured, and the case investigated so thoroughly that the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) is preparing to adopt the case for federal prosecution.

LPR SUCCESS

The License Plate Reader program has proven effective in helping fight crime, and its success has expanded to neighborhood and shopping centers where the cameras can also assist SSPD.

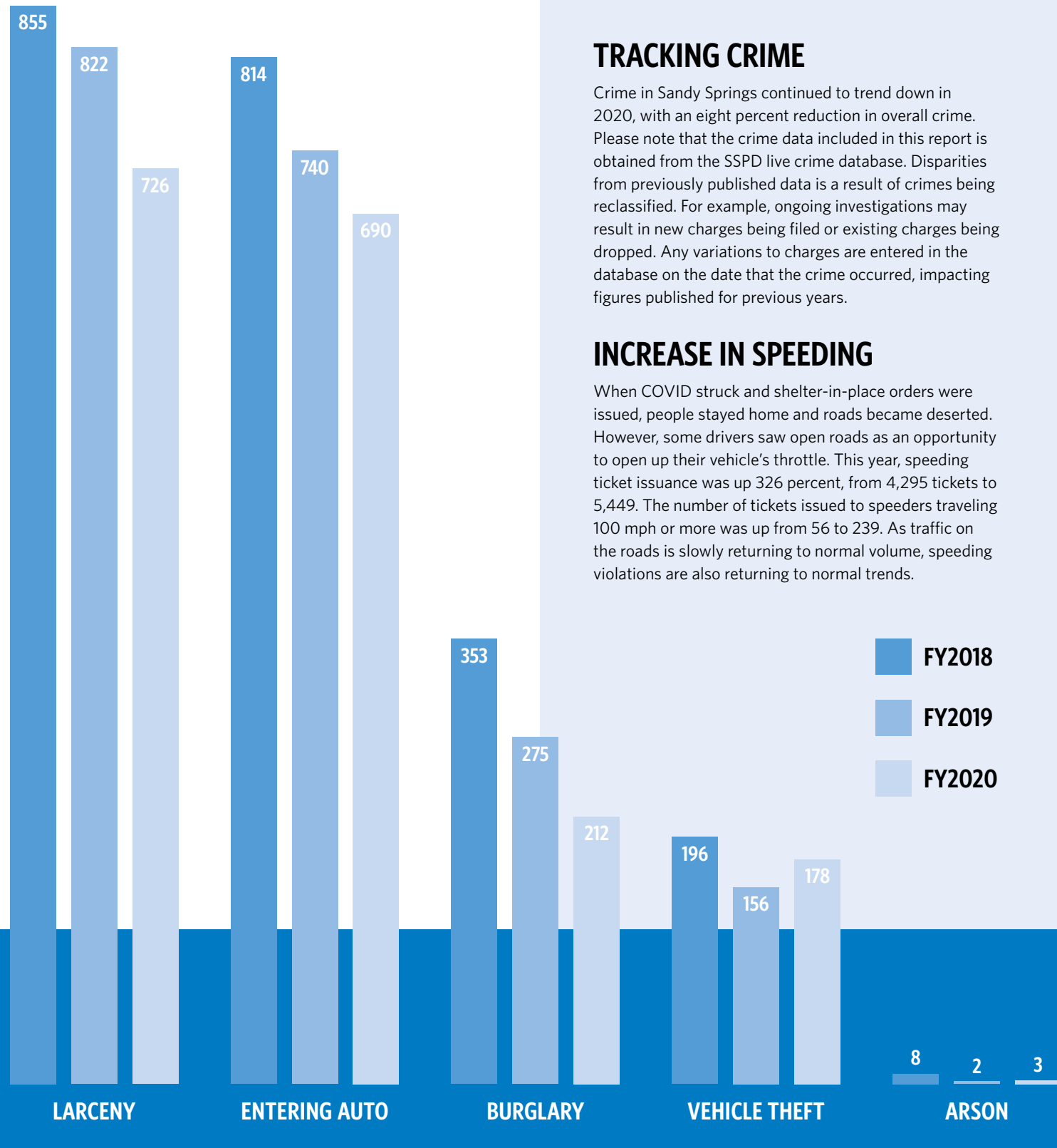
Neighborhoods have used their HOA funds to purchase Flock cameras at entrances and common areas like clubhouses. Shopping centers have also purchased these cameras. The shopping center housing the LA Fitness at the corner of Roswell and Abernathy Roads installed cameras, and the number of car break-ins has decreased. While the fitness center's closure due to COVID contributed to some of that crime decline, as the gym reopened, the number of reported car break-ins has not substantially increased.

While the LPRs are successful with crime-fighting, they are useful in other ways, too. In April, LPRs helped locate a missing and endangered person. An 86-year-old resident with dementia from the Hammond Glen Retirement Community went missing. SSPD immediately placed the gentleman's vehicle information into our LPR network system, and an officer in Emmanuel County was alerted that the vehicle had just driven through their roads. Emmanuel County is located 3.5 hours away. Had it not been for the LPR network, this man, who was lost and extremely confused, might have continued driving south. He returned home, safe and sound.

TAKING THE BAIT

To combat the ongoing and rising trend of car break-ins and theft, the Sandy Springs Police Department began deploying a bait car equipped with GPS tracking devices. When these vehicles move, the devices activate and notify officers that a theft has occurred. Using this technology, officers can track suspects without engaging in high-speed pursuits that put officers and the public in danger. SSPD is grateful for the donation of the bait car by a major insurance company.

GPS is a beneficial tool for tracking criminals. One evening in December 2019, Sandy Springs police officers were notified of an entering auto in progress in the area of River Vista Drive. Officers arrived and saw a black Dodge Challenger flee the location. One of the items taken had a GPS tracking device in it. Officers monitored the vehicle's site, tracking it to an address in Clayton County, and recovered the vehicle. The GPS device continued to move, and officers further tracked it to an Atlanta address. Atlanta Police were notified, and the North Metro SWAT team assisted in entering the house. Police arrested 18-year-old Jiquial Green, who was charged with the thefts.



TRACKING CRIME

Crime in Sandy Springs continued to trend down in 2020, with an eight percent reduction in overall crime. Please note that the crime data included in this report is obtained from the SSPD live crime database. Disparities from previously published data is a result of crimes being reclassified. For example, ongoing investigations may result in new charges being filed or existing charges being dropped. Any variations to charges are entered in the database on the date that the crime occurred, impacting figures published for previous years.

INCREASE IN SPEEDING

When COVID struck and shelter-in-place orders were issued, people stayed home and roads became deserted. However, some drivers saw open roads as an opportunity to open up their vehicle’s throttle. This year, speeding ticket issuance was up 326 percent, from 4,295 tickets to 5,449. The number of tickets issued to speeders traveling 100 mph or more was up from 56 to 239. As traffic on the roads is slowly returning to normal volume, speeding violations are also returning to normal trends.

UPTICK IN DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CALLS

The COVID-19 Pandemic has been incredibly stressful on strained relationships. From January through May of 2020, SSPD reported an increase of 26 percent in domestic violence calls over the same period in 2019. Domestic violence calls make up the majority of calls for help to 9-1-1 in north Fulton cities. In many cases, responders can diffuse the situation, calming down the parties before it escalates into something more serious, resulting in an arrest.

Intervening and helping to provide resources for victims of domestic abuse is one challenge that has kept the Criminal Investigations Division’s Victims Advocate, Caitly Barsin, busy this year. However, elder abuse is another area of focus for the Division. For example, during the COVID shutdown, one family could not visit a loved one who resided at an assisted living facility. The resident, who had Alzheimer’s disease, had suffered an unwitnessed fall, which left him seriously injured. The family was not notified, nor were medical staff or 9-1-1 called after the incident. He became bed-ridden and developed bedsores. The family couldn’t understand what happened because just ten days prior, he was fine. They hired an independent nurse to examine their loved one, who was released to hospice care and sadly passed away. The family contacted SSPD, which worked for more than five months on the case, which culminated in the arrests of both the facility’s director and head nurse.



SSPD presented Reynaldo Vidal with a Citizens Commendation of Appreciation award.

CIVILIAN AWARD

Mr. Reynaldo Vidal was driving on Abernathy Road when he came upon a load of concrete siding that had fallen from a truck and was partially blocking the road. Mr. Vidal stopped his vehicle, got out, and started to remove the debris. When SSPD arrived on the scene, he continued to assist with clearing efforts for more than an hour until the road could be fully reopened. To acknowledge him for his selfless actions, SSPD presented Mr. Vidal with a Citizens Commendation of Appreciation award.

8%
REDUCTION
IN CRIME
Versus 2019



FEDERAL TASK FORCE EXPANSION

The Sandy Springs Police Department participates in several Federal Investigative Task Forces. An SSPD Detective is assigned to each Task Force in order to serve as a liaison between SSPD and the federal government. The Department benefits by having access to federal resources, federal prosecution, asset forfeiture sharing, and reimbursement for overtime and investigative expenses.

Prior to 2020, SSPD partnered with the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), and U.S. Secret Service (USSS). Two SSPD Detectives were assigned to DEA on a full-time basis, one was assigned to HSI on a full-time basis, and one was assigned to the USSS on a part-time basis. Due to the success of these assignments, SSPD expanded its involvement with Federal Task Forces. SSPD

added a full-time Detective to each of the following: DEA, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), and Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI). The continued partnership with these federal agencies is a testament to the caliber of employees at SSPD.

GREENER FLEET

In 2020, SSPD is continuing to explore ways to have a greener fleet. The Department purchased nine Ford Explorers and is currently experimenting with a Ford Explorer pursuit-rated hybrid. The typical Ford Explorer averages 13 miles to the gallon, while the Explorer's hybrid model averages 24 miles to the gallon. Along another environmentally friendly theme of recycling, due to COVID, the new vehicle purchase budget was cut in half, causing vehicles to be repurposed. This year, two undercover cars were converted to patrol cars. The City's Fleet Manager oversees more

than 340 City-owned vehicles, and this year his office relocated to a new location in the former BMW building on Hildebrand Drive.

ELECTRIC MOTORCYCLES

SSPD added two new electric motorcycles to its fleet. The motorcycles are manufactured in California by Zero and are 100 percent electric. Not only are the motorcycles energy efficient, but they are also very quiet - a crime-fighting tool. Primarily used to patrol city parks and the City Springs District, the motorcycles have been used to help stop car break-ins in parking decks. The motorcycles are agile enough to go where patrol cars can't, and they have dual-spot knobby tires, allowing for all-terrain access. Officers who have a Class M driver's license and have taken motorcycle training can use these electric motorcycles. The new motorcycles have been extremely popular with residents and are always a conversation starter.

DONATED VEHICLES

The K-9 Unit for the City of Ashburn, Ga. has its first K-9 vehicle, thanks to a donation from the City of Sandy Springs. In August, the Sandy Springs City Council approved authorization to transfer the car's title to the City of Ashburn's Police Department.

The vehicle, a 2013 Chevrolet Tahoe, is equipped with special K-9 apparatus. At 136,000 miles, the vehicle had reached its "life of safe service" for SSPD. Ashburn, located in Turner County, south of Macon, has a K-9 unit but operates without a vehicle equipped with a kennel, which means the dog stays at the precinct until needed, potentially delaying K-9 operations. Georgia law allows a governmental agency to transfer property to another governmental agency once it is declared as surplus.

REMOTE EMERGENCY OPERATIONS

In the time of social distancing, innovation has been key to maintaining the high quality of service that the City provides for its citizens. Emergencies did not cease during the Pandemic. In March, high-level alerts were needed due to the Pandemic, severe weather, and civil unrest. As damaging storms entered the City, opening the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) presented an additional challenge: How to safely gather emergency personnel when "stay at home" orders were in place. A skeleton crew worked physically from the EOC, with the remainder of needed Staff working remotely, communicating over digital channels, including cell phones (email, text, and talk), Cisco WebEx, and the Fulton County WebEOC platform. Staff was able to provide the same high level of service through remote channels, successfully mitigating effects from this storm, as well as others throughout the year.

TROWBRIDGE FACILITY COMPLETED

This year, the City completed construction and opened a 10,000-square-foot facility on Trowbridge Road that serves as a storage site and backup/satellite EOC for field staff. Crews working on storm coverage and cleanup can now be based at this secured location that features lockers, showers, dorm rooms, and a center bay large enough to accommodate Public Works vehicles.



DJANGO UNLEASHED

In July, K-9 Django retired from the Sandy Springs Police Department after six years of dedicated service. During his career, Django conducted more than 700 drug inspections that resulted in almost 200 sniffs leading to probable cause and subsequent search warrants. Django is now enjoying retirement with his former partner, living a "traditional" family life.

ABOVE AND BEYOND

Our staff of the Sandy Springs Police Department have a reputation for exceeding expectations. Here are two examples of officers who went above and beyond this year.

SSPD OFFICER ANSWERS CALL AND ADOPTS KITTEN

In July, SSPD received a call regarding kittens being thrown from a moving vehicle on Peachtree Dunwoody Road and Johnson Ferry Road. Officer Philip Housand responded to the area and located one kitten safe and unharmed. Animal control was requested but was delayed due to other calls. While trying to decide what to do with the kitten, Officer Housand bonded with his new feline friend and decided to keep it - a new addition to his family. He named her Holly since she was found on Hollis Cobb Circle.



SAY IT WITH FLOWERS

Getting flowers is often delightful and meaningful, but this one flower delivery delivers an extraordinary back story. In January, Officer Kevin Smith responded to an accident involving a flower delivery vehicle. The vehicle had to be towed, and the driver was taken to the hospital. Officer Smith helped the driver out by making the last delivery of the day. Excellent customer service, Officer Smith!



GETTING AROUND

Keeping people moving around Sandy Springs is a major priority for the City. While our road expansion projects improve traffic capacity, we also use technology to improve traffic flows, day-to-day, hour-by-hour, and minute-by-minute. City staff also utilize traffic flow data to inform long-term planning, and our sidewalk initiatives are making Sandy Springs a more walkable place to live, connecting the community to City Springs and local parks.



SYNCHRONIZING SIGNALS

The Glenridge-Hammond-Peachtree Dunwoody Adaptive Traffic Management System project added the system detection needed to expand an adaptive traffic signal control system to include 30 intersections along five major corridors in the Perimeter Center District. Intersection upgrades included controller equipment, hardware and software components, software licensing, equipment calibration, and training.

GO GOLD AND BLACK

In 2019, it was common to see a type of “shift change” take place at City Springs, as City staff left for home at the end of a workday, and students of Kennesaw State University arrived for their “work” as students.

City Springs is a satellite campus for KSU’s Michael J. Coles College of Business, offering an MBA program and an Executive Certificate in Business Strategy. Over the summer, the City announced that the two entities would be expanding the partnership, opening the door for ongoing collaboration on research and special projects. Programs will align with classroom learning objectives, while providing innovative solutions for City services. Potential examples include:

- A Streamside Property Ownership Outreach program, delivering educational material to the community about state waters buffers
- Smart Street Design, looking at test sites for opportunities for improvements to transit, active transportation, and passenger vehicles
- The creation of a Business and Marketing Plan for CityBar at City Springs

KSU and City leadership will work together to determine specific projects to pursue.

There was additional campus buzz as Georgia Tech’s Georgia Smart Communities Challenge (Georgia Smart) announced this year’s new grant recipients, including the City of Sandy

Springs. The Georgia Smart program empowers local governments to think “outside the box” and use innovation to improve the communities.

Georgia Tech picked Sandy Springs as a partner in a pilot project to create a transit signal priority system for MARTA bus service in order to cut transit time for riders. The project targets Bus Route 5, which has high ridership between the Dunwoody MARTA Station and Buckhead’s Lindbergh Center MARTA Station via Hammond Drive and Roswell Road. It is hoped that the program will cut the time buses wait at red lights, reducing travel times for transit, and encouraging more people to use transit as travel times become more predictable. Sandy Springs will also collaborate with MARTA and the City of Dunwoody on this project.

ENGINEERING SAFER INTERSECTIONS

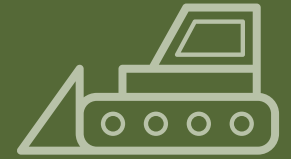
It is estimated that, on average, there is a crash every three days at the intersection of Roswell Road at Abernathy Road, totaling more than 100 per year. A recent study revealed that most of the impacts are rear-end accidents, which are due to congestion. Looking ahead to make this intersection safer over the long-term, Public Works is investigating short-term solutions that are in design. Some of the short-term solutions include: adding right-turn lane signalization for westbound Abernathy Road, pulling back the east leg median nose, simplifying southbound signage, adding a southbound left-turn barrier, installing a right-turn mountable curb and hatching stripes on Roswell Road southbound, and making the Abernathy Square shopping center’s southern driveway right-in, right-out only. These interim solutions must receive GDOT approval, as Roswell Road is a state route.

For long-range alternatives, different types of intersection designs are under consideration. Possibilities include a diverging diamond like the one at I-285 and Ashford-Dunwoody Road in Dunwoody or a “quadrant design” that would create a secondary intersection.

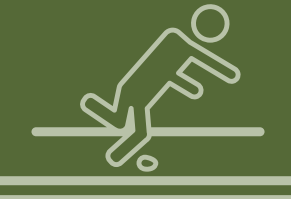
IMPROVING WALKABILITY IN CITY SPRINGS

Pedestrians will find walking around City Springs a lot easier and more scenic due to sidewalk and trail projects completed this year. The recent addition of the Mt Vernon Highway Trail behind the Chase Bank offers pedestrians a shortcut from Mt Vernon Highway to Hildebrand Drive. A decorative

screening fence now surrounds the Georgia Power substation. Also completed this spring were the Sandy Springs Circle streetscape and sidewalk projects that ran just to the west of City Springs from Mt. Vernon Highway to Johnson Ferry Road.



6
MILES OF ROADS
RESURFACED



1,700
SIDEWALK TRIP
HAZARDS REPAIRED



215
HAZARDOUS
TREES REMOVED



4,000+
POTHoles REPAIRED



POLICE USE DRONES TO EXPEDITE TRAFFIC COLLISION ANALYSIS

This year, the Sandy Springs Police Department Traffic Unit went through training on software called Pix4D, a drone mapping software that creates maps and 3D models. The software automatically converts images taken by drone or handheld cameras, and delivers exact, geo-referenced 2D and 3D models.

Traditionally, when officers responded to a crash with fatalities or critical injuries, they

would have to document the scene with hand-drawn, scaled diagrams of the crash scene.

A more modern approach utilizes digital scene mapping technology. Investigators use laser scanners to take measurements and then algorithmically combine them with photos to create 3-D images. While this significantly improves the portrayal of an accident scene, it is still very time-consuming. For example, during one 2019 incident, it took three and a half hours to map an accident with fatalities that involved a vehicle and a bicyclist during which the road was closed to the public.

To find a more efficient approach to documenting accidents, SSPD consulted with

the Georgia State Patrol and became one of only a few municipalities to use Pix4D. The drones work best in daylight and clear weather. If an accident occurs at night or conditions aren't optimal, the initial response might entail having the officers mark the area, and the drone can be brought in later. Over the fall, the technology was used on a fatality on GA 400, and it allowed the Traffic Unit to scan and map the incident scene significantly faster. What would have previously taken more than three hours to compile took less than 30 minutes, enabling crews to clear the scene more quickly. The new Pix4D software will be used by both the Traffic Unit and Criminal Investigations Division.

IMPROVING THE FLOW OF TRAFFIC

Getting around Sandy Springs is becoming easier, one intersection at a time.

In 2021, motorists traveling through the Dalrymple Road-Trowbridge Road-Spalding Drive intersection will experience added turn lanes and the removal of rush-hour turn restrictions.

Construction to realign the Glenridge Drive and Roswell Road intersection was underway this past year and expected to finish in early 2021. The City partnered with GDOT to eliminate the sharp turn for drivers heading south on Roswell Road, wanting to turn left (eastbound) onto Glenridge Drive. The intersection project will also include decorative streetscape elements.

Motorists heading toward Cobb County, traveling southbound on Dalrymple/Riverside Drive and looking to turn right in order to head westbound, will have an easier go of it with this year's completed extension of the southbound right turn lane. This intersection improvement project will also resolve issues with excessive bollard maintenance.

IMPROVING THE TRAFFIC CALMING MANUAL

While there were fewer cars on the road this year, we continued to respond to neighborhood requests for traffic calming remedies for neighborhood streets. This year, new traffic calming devices like speed cushions and radar feedback were installed in Spalding Woods, Rivershore Estates, and along the west end of Londonberry Road.

Citizen participation is an essential ingredient in the development and implementation of a successful neighborhood traffic calming plan. Neighborhood residents offer insight into the nature and extent of traffic and safety problems. The primary purpose of the Neighborhood Traffic Calming policy is to increase safety by reducing vehicular traffic in residential neighborhoods. The Communications team worked with Public Works to update the Traffic Calming Manual. While the policy remains the same, the update makes the process easier to understand and implement.

EXPANDING OUR SIDEWALKS WITH MULTI-USE PATHS

Whether leisurely strolling or walking with a distinct dedication, pedestrians will have additional multi-use paths to help them get around. This year, the City completed projects at Johnson Ferry Road and the Glenridge Connector, Spalding Drive connecting to Dunwoody (adjacent to Crooked Creek Park), and along Sandy Springs Circle. Multi-use paths, sometimes called sidepaths, are wider than traditional sidewalks, allowing pedestrians and bicyclists to share the path, providing a safe alternative where there are no adjacent bike lanes. Multi-use paths are typically 12-feet wide and create the allure of an urban trail.



FOCUSED ON CUSTOMER SERVICE

From the City's inception, providing a high level of customer service has remained a top priority. The City has gained a reputation for its dedication to customer service, as demonstrated in person, on the phone, via email, and online. While COVID closed much of City Hall to customers during much of 2020, all City Departments demonstrated responsiveness to residents, business owners, and visitors.



*Permitting, Revenue, and the
Planner of the Day served the
public throughout the year.
(Image taken prior to Pandemic.)*

SUPPORTING BUSINESSES THROUGH THE PANDEMIC

The City's focus on preparedness enabled multiple departments to act swiftly in order to help protect lives and safeguard livelihoods. Early on during the COVID Pandemic, the Economic Development team became "Resource Brokers" for the City. The team increased its outreach to the business community, sending frequent business bulletins, which offered resources to help understand and navigate changing policies and networking opportunities. The team also shared best practices and explored ways to pivot their business models to help them stay afloat.

The City partnered with neighboring North Fulton cities to conduct surveys in order to understand the Pandemic's effect on local businesses and better identify future needs. The surveys led to industry-specific forums, a partnership with the Sandy Springs Perimeter Chamber to host a Child Care Roundtable, and collaboration with the Chamber and Visit Sandy Springs on a Restaurant Roundtable. The Restaurant Roundtable led to solutions, such as outside dining.

The City developed a Temporary Outdoor Dining Operations Policy for Restaurants and a Temporary Outdoor Theater Operations Policy for Movie Theaters During Declared State of Emergency, along with Temporary Outdoor Dining Operations and Temporary Outdoor Theater Operations Permits. The Community Development Department's staff contains decades of experience in architecture, surveying, engineering, and plan review, allowing staff to review plans quickly, conduct site visits, and help businesses stay afloat during COVID.

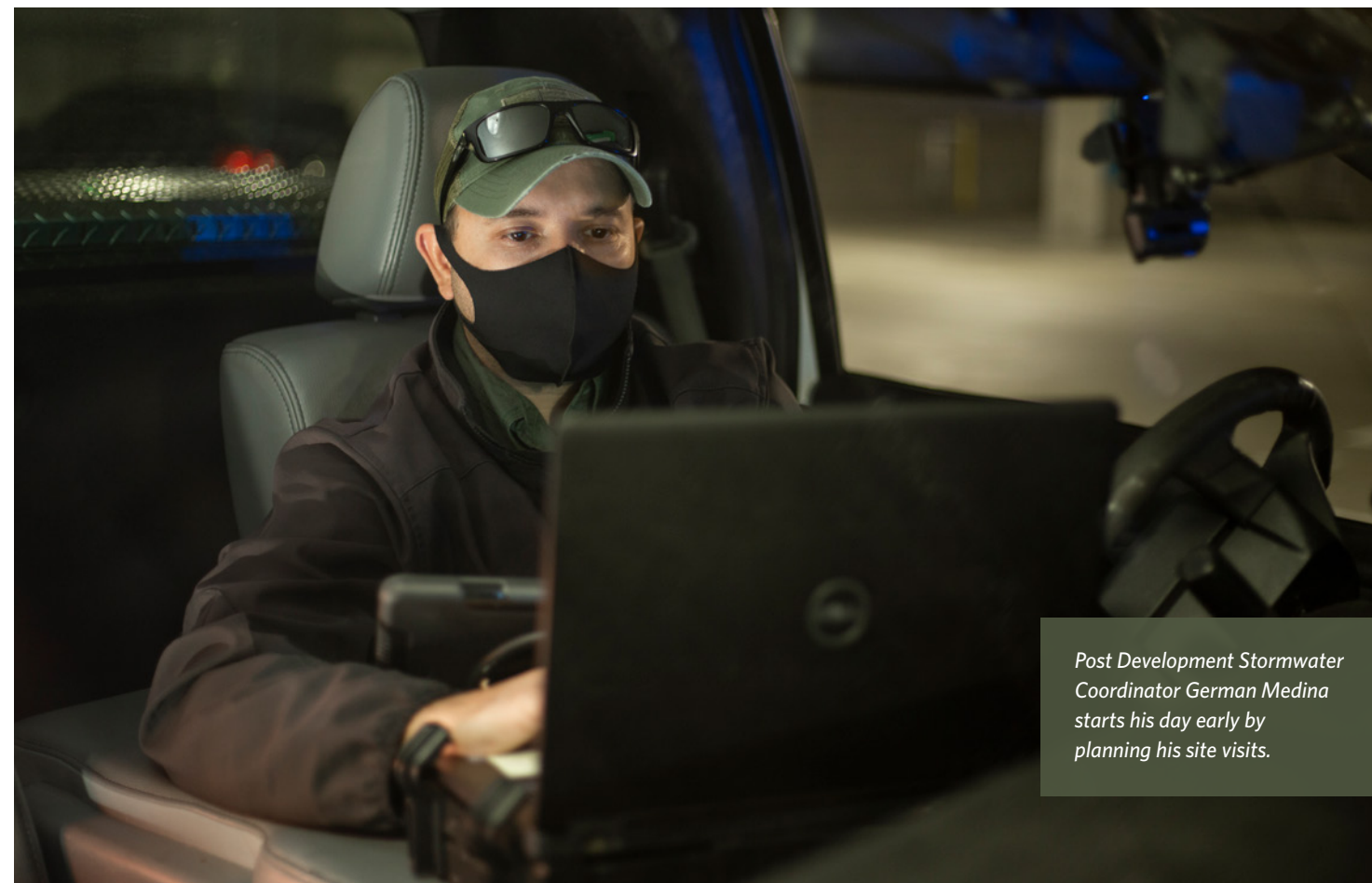
I just wanted to share my thoughts of appreciation for Mr. Kell. Wayne went above and beyond what was to be expected and made things happen for the Riverwood High School project. He ended up being on site late Friday for an underground gas line inspection—we were able to proceed with our work the next day because of his dedication.

The City Council also used CARES (Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security) Act funds the City received in order to support programs aiding our local business community. Approved in November, the City Council set aside \$220,000 for nonprofit organizations, with funding allocated through a competitive process based upon the number of people served, programs provided, and other requirements. To support the City's hospitality industry, the Council approved an \$80,000 allocation for Visit Sandy Springs to implement a targeted marketing campaign promoting the City and its tourism partners. Finally, the Council allocated \$1.2 million to fund a Small Business Assistance program for eligible businesses with fewer than 99 employees.

REOPENING TO THE PUBLIC

In June, the City began a phased approach to reopening City Hall and the reinstatement of Community Events starting with the Farmers Market. Rather than the quick flow of activity as the green flag waves at a car race, this phasing process was more in line with the yellow caution flag, reminding people to ease out but stay safe.

I would like to give a shout out to Gail Munoz for her great help regarding my permit application. In our world of automated telephonic services, it was so refreshing to actually speak to a real person. Gail talked me through the process, sent documents, helped upload them and kept me updated via email. Job well done!



Post Development Stormwater Coordinator German Medina starts his day early by planning his site visits.

Revenue, Permitting, the Planner of the Day, and the Police Department reopened for in-person visits by appointment only in June. The City implemented QLess appointment software, enabling customers to make appointments via cellphone or online.

CONTINUITY OF STAFF CUSTOMER SERVICE

While COVID had a monumental impact globally, there was minimal disruption to City of Sandy Springs services.

The City regularly plans for emergency events, and its Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) provides a strategic framework to

ensure the City is proactive and prepared, to the extent possible, in its response to an emergency. Fortunately, the City completed an update to its COOP in December 2019. City leadership, including senior staff, began planning according to the COOP in February, allowing a seamless transition to work-from-home.

Providing the highest quality of services is a priority for staff, and during this time of turmoil, our commitment to that goal remained resolute.

Community Development pivoted to reviewing plans and permits entirely electronically, and weekly Developer's Meetings were shifted to be virtual

meetings, all beginning in March, in order to continue servicing customers throughout the Pandemic. Inspections and site visits continued uninterrupted. And in-person appointments with Permitting and the Planner of the Day resumed in June.

Reduced traffic and congestion allowed Public Works to continue roadway, intersection, and sidewalk projects. Field trucks became makeshift offices. Multiple sidewalk projects were completed, linking pedestrians to City Springs, parks, and neighborhoods. The Stormwater team worked virtually to continue providing citizens with information and support, and site visits were conducted, with staff wearing masks and socially distancing.



Recreation and Parks rolled offline programming online, creating social experiences while parks were closed. With limited numbers of campers and safety protocols in place, camp programming returned during the summer.

The Create Sandy Springs team organized a successful season for the Farmers Market, with social distancing and mask-wearing integrated as part of the routine.

It was business as usual for our dedicated public safety employees. Personal protective equipment (PPE) was added to their daily equipment to maximize safety.

DEVELOPMENT RETREAT

In early March, Planning and Zoning held its annual Board of Appeals (BOA) and Planning Commission (PC) Retreat at the City Springs Conference Center. The Retreat provides an opportunity for staff and appointed officials to gather together for learning and discussion.

Planning and Zoning staff restructured previous Retreats, beginning plans for 2020's in November 2019. The goal was to enhance appointed officials' knowledge and understanding of the City and their impactful role in it and in decision-making, giving them new information and tools to do so.

Staff created informational binders for the officials, including a quick reference guide to the Board or Commission, meeting schedule, zoning case application packets, the City's Zoning, Character Area, and City Council District maps, relevant sections of the Development Code, Bylaws, and other informative materials, which were reviewed with members at the Retreat. Sessions and content focused on the decision-making process, conducting public meetings, and the role and expectations of the Board and Commission, as well as provided valuable updates from staff across City Departments.

The Retreat fostered robust discussion among the appointed officials and between them and staff. Afterwards, officials commented that the Retreat was well-executed, thoughtfully planned, informative, and well worth the time invested.

STAFF CUSTOMER SERVICE TRAINING

Just a month after City Hall closed and with most staff working from home, many employees were able to "see" each other again for the City's first, all-staff customer service training. The program, administered by the University of Georgia's Carl Vinson Institute for Government, focused on discussion around best practices for customer service. Additional sessions were offered for managers to better work with their direct reports. The Carl Vinson Institute of Government is an organization that works closely with officials and employees from state and local governments to help them achieve their missions and improve public service.

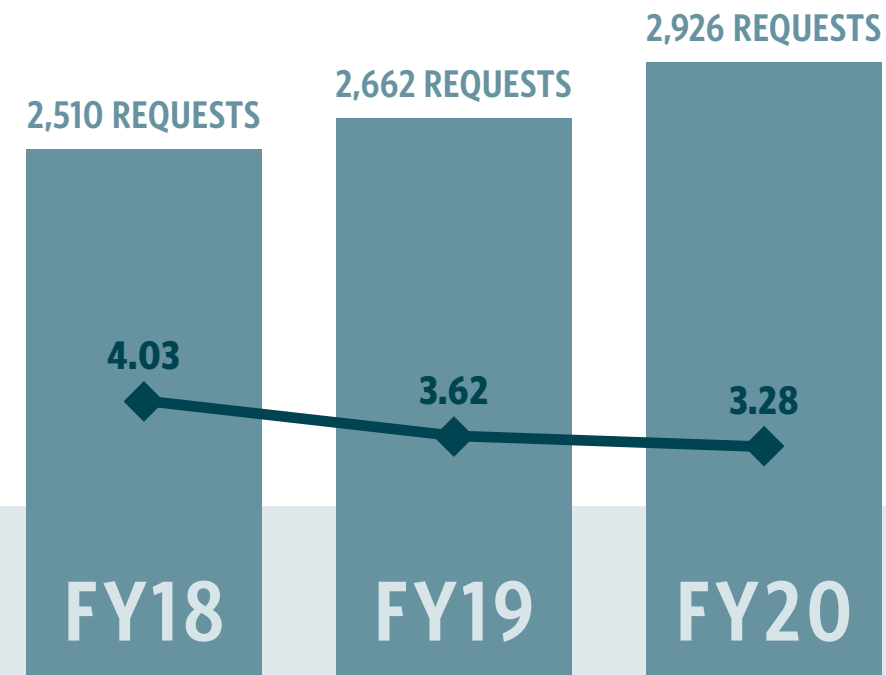


LaToya Goudeau is probably the most helpful person I have ever dealt with from any building department, and we work in 4 different states and over 50 different cities and counties. She's awesome!"



OPEN RECORDS REQUESTS

The Georgia Open Records Act requires that all public records, except those excluded by court order or law, be open for personal inspection by any individual at a reasonable time and place. The City Clerk's Office coordinates these requests and has seen an increase over the last three years. Even as the number of requests has increased, a drive toward efficiencies in record-keeping has driven down the average time it takes the office to provide the requester the information they are seeking.



■ Open Records Requests Completed
◆ Average Days to Complete Requests

WE'RE HERE WHEN YOU NEED US

The pullback from the Pandemic played a role in the reduction of call volume into our 24/7/365 Customer Service Center. Call volume decreased by 31 percent, as more people worked from and stayed home, in keeping with COVID safety suggestions.



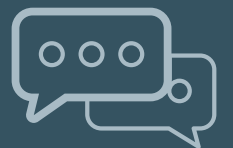
51,372

CALLS WERE RECEIVED BY THE CALL CENTER



17.4

SECONDS AVERAGE WAIT TIME. (25 SECONDS IS OUR GOAL)



1,570

CUSTOMERS CHOSE TO INTERACT WITH US VIA WEB CHAT



I want to thank all members of the Police Department for your dedicated service during these recent events and tough times. It is impossible for the average citizen to fully appreciate the physical and emotional difficulties you face, even in normal times. However, most of us recognize that working now must yield high 24-7 stress levels and that we can't possibly thank you and your families enough.





TAKING THE LEAD

The City's commitment to the highest quality of customer service is a driving force behind its innovative approach to service delivery. This section highlights our forward-thinking practices, aiding in accomplishing the guiding principles for the City of Sandy Springs: Honest, Efficient, and Responsive government.



WORKING FROM HOME: A CATALYST FOR COLLABORATION

In the past, Sandy Springs had to rely on technology services provided by third-party vendors. That meant that when the City received ideas and feedback from its residents and partners, there was no way to improve those services. However, the ongoing investment in in-house development talent, combined with the Pandemic, has accelerated the City's capability to create in-house technology, designed specifically to meet its needs.

One example of the in-house advantage is a new prototype Zoning Cases Map. While looking at third-party options to refresh the current zoning map, the City's Geographic Information Systems, Information Technology, and Communications teams concluded that a collaborative in-house development

effort could produce a mapping tool that incorporated community stakeholders' requests. Based at home because of COVID, the taskforce conducted real-time work sessions using collaboration tools, including Asana and Microsoft Teams, and found they were able to work more effectively than if they were in their respective workspaces in City Hall. As the project evolved, the scope for the Zoning Case map was extended and development was completed in December. The map will go live in early 2021.

EXPANSION OF THE UNIFIED PLATFORM

The Sandy Springs Unified Platform is an ongoing software development initiative to centralize the City's information systems. The platform enables City content creators to write and manage information in a single system, reducing duplicate work. The software uses algorithms to distribute information to multiple websites and digital signage.

The Unified Platform underwent some major upgrades this year, including improvements to many of its subsystems, a new 'smart build' function to improve content distribution efficiency, and a document library developed from the ground up to meet the City's needs.

The network of Unified Platform websites grew in 2020, with the development of a new internal website, Inside Sandy Springs. The site centralized employee information and resources to keep staff informed, even as they began working remotely.

The City took advantage of the break in the Arts Center events to implement a new ticketing system, Spektrix. The City and its partners integrated Spektrix with the Unified Platform so that events generated in Spektrix would automatically be created and displayed on *CitySprings.com* and digital signage. The Spektrix transactional system was integrated directly with the *CitySprings.com* website to enable ticket purchases.

SHARING BEST PRACTICES

Community Development Building Official Jonathan Livingston was a guest speaker during an April webinar hosted by the Greater Atlanta Home Builders Association - North Fulton Chapter. The webinar addressed the effects the coronavirus has had on the building community. Some of the areas covered in Jonathan's lecture were the impact on development and building, shifting processes to online platforms and maintaining efficiencies, and measures the City is taking to help local, small businesses.

BUILD SANDY SPRINGS SEMINARS

Build Sandy Springs seminars are a series of lectures presented by the Community Development Department to educate the public on the current policies, procedures, and expectations of the City related to construction within the jurisdiction. In January, the seminar covered the 2018 Building Code as an in-person event. Once the Pandemic took hold, they took programming online, hosting a series of webinars via Zoom, each averaging 30 attendees. Webinar topics included: Wood Deck Design and Detailing, 2018 International Residential Code Changes, and Sustainability at Home - Outdoors Edition, and training for the Customer Self Service Portal.

EMPOWERING BUSINESS PARTNERS

While the Pandemic has had a positive impact on reducing traffic congestion in and around town, a different kind of traffic has picked up online - eyeballs. With people working from home and staying close to home, browsing has shifted to the web. Visit Sandy Springs, the City's tourism division, saw an 88.83 percent increase in website traffic, primarily from social media. To ensure that visitors receive the most up-to-date information,



Community Development Building Official Jonathan Livingston presents during an industry webinar.

Visit Sandy Springs launched a partner portal for its restaurant and hotel partners. The portal allows each partner to easily update their own business information, as well as submit promotions and offerings, to display on visitsandysprings.org. Based on this success, Visit Sandy Springs is planning to extend portal access to other partners in retail and hospitality.

PLANFIRST

Several Georgia communities, ranging from metro Atlanta to rural Georgia, received statewide distinction in the PlanFirst program, which recognizes excellence in community planning and exemplary planning implementation. PlanFirst, a Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) program, recognizes and rewards communities that demonstrate an established pattern of successfully implementing their Local Comprehensive Plan.

Sandy Springs, Cornelia, and Bainbridge each received PlanFirst designation for 2021-2023. Designated communities are eligible for technical assistance, bonus points, and enhanced eligibility for certain DCA funding opportunities.

The PlanFirst program requires communities to address four primary program criteria focused on having a proven record of plan implementation success: goals, leadership, community participation, and implementation. The designation enables the City to take advantage of various incentives, including eligibility for specified grant opportunities and certain reduced interest loans.

COURT UPHOLDS ALARM ORDINANCE

The City's False Alarm policies were affirmed in July as the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals upheld the alarm Ordinance, which was opposed by the alarm industry. As part of the Court's opinion, the judges found that the

City's law is "rationally related to the City's strong interests in reducing the number of false alarms that heavily burden its police and fire department and wastes public resources." Since the City implemented True Verification, alarm companies' call volume into ChatComm has decreased by 80 percent. Of those alarm calls received, more than 99 percent remain false alarms.

ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER EMERITUS RECEIVES AWARD

Assistant City Manager Emeritus Jim Tolbert received the *Distinguished Planning Leadership* award from the Georgia Planning Association during its Fall Conference. Jim was recognized for his exemplary service to Sandy Springs and in recognition of his dedicated planning career throughout the southeast. Jim retired from his full-time position during the summer but continues to support the City as a consultant.



HELPING TO BUILD BETTER TECHNOLOGY

Sandy Springs is an active participant in the local government technology community. This year, the City was the sole beta tester for a leading government software company's Developer Toolkit. The City's in-house website developer used the toolkit to refresh the City's homepage and report his findings to the software company with ideas for how the product could be improved. Later in the year, the City was asked to join the company's Customer Advisory Board.

As the City continues its data-driven digital signage program, staff continue to look for ways to improve our systems. One member of Staff met with the CEO of a leading international digital signage company and shared ideas for improving their platform. The CEO identified an idea generated by our staff member as a solution for a challenge they were also facing with their digital signage implementation for a national office-supplies retailer.



The City's Recreation and Parks and Communications Departments received an award from GRPA for public health and safety signage.

KEEPING PEOPLE INFORMED IN A PANDEMIC

Clear, concise, and current communication is vital to any organization, but its relevance truly takes on a new meaning during crisis times. Keeping our internal audiences updated and sharing information with our external audiences are always top priorities. The City paid close attention to early reports related to coronavirus and was at work in February, preparing to implement emergency operations plans. On March 1, 2020, the City's Communications team launched a section on the City's website related explicitly to COVID. The COVID section continues to provide updates and links to information related to health safety and resources for individuals and businesses. Since the site's launch, the COVID section has become one of the website's most frequently visited areas, with the landing page generating almost nine percent of all page views for website visitors.

Departments within the City also partnered with Communications to coordinate outreach via e-Newsletters and social media to share the most up-to-date information.

The Economic Development team provided business bulletins offering resources for the business community. The Community Development Department informed developers and residents of changes that would impact their projects. Recreation and Parks used their e-Newsletter and social channels to keep information flowing regarding changing programming.

Once employees were dispatched to work from home, weekly internal staff emails shared critical information about COVID spread, the City's mitigation efforts, employee news, and often added a dose of humor to balance things out. This summer, the City's Intranet, Inside Sandy Springs, launched, providing information for employees. While the Intranet launch occurred following prior planned timelines, its arrival came when centralized information was most critically needed.

Shortly after the City's Emergency Declaration Ordinance was issued, temporarily closing non-essential businesses and restricting restaurants from dine-in offerings, the Code Enforcement team delivered 345 notices to local businesses to provide clarity and offer guidance. For example, how restaurants could proceed with take-out and delivery options

and how companies needed to heed social distancing practices.

For employees making a return to City Hall, a video was created explaining the phased-in approach for returning to work and maintaining safe practices once back in the building. The Communications team partnered with Facilities to create a comprehensive signage package to help everyone navigate their way around City Hall, following public health and safety recommendations. The COVID signage package also extended into the City's parks, Courts, and Police Headquarters. In total, more than 150 different signs were created during the first six months, with that number growing as we adapt to the changes in the Pandemic.

It is not easy balancing serious health information into signage in a stern but friendly tone. For our parks, the Communications and Recreation and Parks teams tried to strike that chord to ensure families and park visitors would heed the new park rules. In October, the Georgia Recreation and Park Association (GRPA) recognized the City for the suite of parks signage created to support public health and safety initiatives related to the Pandemic.



STAYING ACTIVE

The City's parks are always popular destinations for residents and visitors alike, but this year, maybe even more so. COVID forced many to get together outside, and our parks and trails offered space to social distance and enjoy some normalcy. A new park opened, playgrounds were upgraded, and attention to safety protocols allowed for events and camps to offer programming opportunities for families, including a first-time event for dogs!



MORGAN FALLS KAYAK RAMP

The dock and kayak ramp at Morgan Falls Overlook Park made a difference this paddling season. It enabled our water sports partner to accommodate multiple first-time paddlers in wheelchairs and individuals with disabilities.

VIRTUAL PROGRAMMING: WORKOUT AT HOME

Shortly after the lockdown began, the Recreation and Parks team decided to get social and bring their programming to a virtual audience. In addition to workout videos, the staff created Arts and Crafts Monday, Game Tuesday, Wacky Science Wednesday, Throwback Thursday, and Challenge Friday. The virtual programming also extended to annual, national recreation events like the National Park Trust's Kids to Parks Day, which pivoted to become Parks to Kids Day, featuring a week's worth of family programming.

SOCCER LEAGUE

More than 70 children from pre-K to 5th grade enrolled in this year's citywide soccer league. The program moved this year to Dunwoody Springs Elementary, which gave the program access to a lighted turf field. Due to COVID, enrollment was approximately 40 percent lower than in past years. Virus safety precautions were implemented at the field entrance, including temperature checks. The parents were just as happy as the kids to be back in the game, providing a sense of normalcy during an unusual sports season.

SUMMER CAMPS

Happy campers were smiling broadly behind their masks, as families could experience the summer tradition of day camp even during the COVID shutdown. Limited enrollment was offered for sessions that ran in July and August. Summer Day/Sport Camps were held at Morgan Falls Athletic Fields, with session sizes limited to eight



I brought my two sons to the Creek Stomp at Big Trees Preserve, and we had a wonderful time. The Guide, was not only very knowledgeable, but she was also extremely engaging. She was lovely from beginning to end. I can't wait to invite our friends to the next event. We are so fortunate to have this type of programming and green space to explore in our city. Keep up the great work!



campers and two counselors. The staff took extra measures to ensure health and safety practices were in place to make campers and their families feel comfortable amid all the COVID-19 precautions, offering the kids a positive, safe, and rewarding camp experience.

PLAYGROUND UPDATES

Allen Road Park Playground received a much-needed renovation with all new equipment, including shaded slides, swings, climbers, and crawl tubes. The poured-in-place rubber surfacing is designed for universal accessibility and is porous, allowing it to dry quickly. The peripheral ground elements are also wheelchair-accessible. The surface below the swings is engineered wood mulch. In addition, new sod and plantings were installed nearby.

As part of an intergovernmental agreement with Fulton County Schools, the City provided upgrades to the Lake Forest Elementary School playground. These improvements include synthetic turf, which is more durable than grass, stormwater improvements, allowing areas to dry more rapidly, and additional drainage to the playgrounds. There are similarly planned upgrades for Ison Springs Elementary School, including shade structures, fitness equipment, and a walking trail.

PAWS AND PASTRIES

More than 40 canine residents brought their owners to the City's first dog socialization event at our only off-leash dog park, Morgan Falls Dog Park. Insights from the recently developed *Recreation and Parks Master Plan* indicated that dog socialization events are a high priority for our residents. In keeping with COVID safety practices, human companions wore masks, practiced social distancing, and used the hand sanitizer provided. Some participants had never visited the dog park before; many offered positive feedback, and there were lots of requests for a repeated event!



CELEBRATING THE ARTS

The year 2020 started strong, with full theatres and an upcoming season that promised something for everyone. Then, one-by-one, shows were canceled, and when possible, programming was offered online. The City remained committed to its public art program, launching the second year of Arts in the Open's sculpture gallery on the City Green, and relocating selected pieces from last year's exhibit to their new permanent homes around the City.





CREATE SANDY SPRINGS

Create Sandy Springs was launched in September as the City's presenting and special events department. Formerly referred to as the Sandy Springs Performing Arts Center team, Create Sandy Springs will focus on the Department's role as the presenter of arts and cultural programming. The intention behind this shift was to define better the scope of services offered along with the expanding footprint of programmable venues throughout the City. This change to Create Sandy Springs better represents the growing repertoire of managed performance and meeting spaces within the City.

The Create Sandy Springs team manages the various venues across the City Springs campus, including the Sandy Springs Performing Arts Center theatres, the Conference Center, and the City Green. The team also manages the Heritage Park venues (the Entertainment Lawn, the Blue Stone Building, and the Williams-Payne House). Create Sandy Springs also handles venue rentals, operations, food and beverage services, and programming.

GALLERY WITHOUT WALLS

Art continues to bloom in Sandy Springs. The nine sculpture finalists in the second annual ArtSS in the Open Sculpture Competition are on display along the City Green's perimeter, filling in the City's "gallery without walls" at City Springs. The finalists were chosen through a juried process, including local museum and gallery curators and established artists working in the public art arena. More than 260 entries were received from across the country. The sculpture finalists include:

Billow by Jacob Burmood; *Boreas* by Jonathan Bowling; *Flora Duet* by John Parker; *Groovy Peace Sign* by Joe and Terry Malesky; *He Always Carried It With Him* by Charlie Brouwer; *La Voyageur Qui Fait Son Nid* by Corrina Sephora; *Motion #1* and *Mountain Landscape* by Hanna Jubran; and *Specimen* by Joey Manson.

The new exhibition is on display through the summer of 2021. At the end of the exhibition's run, at least one sculpture will be selected as the competition's winner and purchased as part of the City's growing collection. As part of the inaugural exhibit in 2020, the City purchased four pieces, now placed at Windsor Meadows Park, Hammond Park, and at a new sculpture park at the northeast corner of Abernathy and Wright Roads.

INDOOR ART PROGRAM

In December 2019, the City of Sandy Springs unveiled the first works as part of its rotating art program to be featured inside City Hall. In collaboration with Art Sandy Springs (ArtSS), this first exhibition featured paintings by Sandy Springs resident and artist Gary Bodner. The indoor art program features exhibits that rotate quarterly, showcasing different artists and artworks.

AND THAT'S A WRAP!

This past year, the Atlanta Jewish Film Festival (AJFF) celebrated two decades of showcasing international cinema and engaging diverse audiences. For the second year in a row, the AJFF has called City Springs home.

Kicking off the 2020 Festival, the Insider Preview Party, which announces the much-anticipated festival lineup, was held in the Sandy Springs Performing Arts Center for the first time.

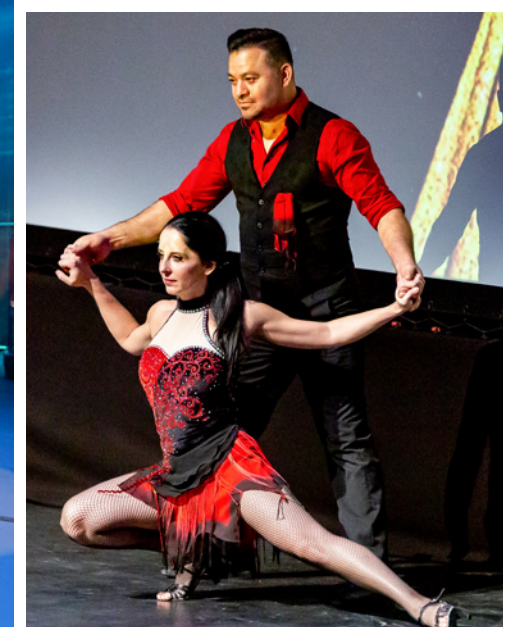
Throughout the festival's 18-day run, the Byers Theatre hosted 38 screenings, including the closing night event, with a juried award presentation, special performances, and a reception following. Two screenings played to a full house: the Closing Night screening of *Saul and Ruby: To Life*, and the comedy, *Standing Up, Falling Down*, starring Emmy Award-winner Ben Schwartz and the legendary Billy Crystal.

The Sandy Springs Performing Arts Center was also the site of a first-time panel discussion, *In Conversation: What Makes a Film Jewish?*

A school field trip to a matinee screening of *#AnneFrank. Parallel Stories* drew several hundred students from five metro Atlanta schools.

THE SHOW WENT ON VIRTUALLY

The Create Sandy Springs production team worked with the City Springs Theatre Company as it reimagined its third season to include a virtual Broadway Concert Series in place of its previously scheduled fall musical productions. The virtual concert series entertained more than 16,000 patrons, employed 104 performers, and featured 183 songs.





CARING FOR OUR ENVIRONMENT

Sandy Springs is a beautiful community known for its legendary tree canopy and the neighboring Chattahoochee River that winds along 22 miles of the City's border. Late this year, the City opened Crooked Creek Park, a new passive park with walking trails and views of the River. The Osprey Platform installation will offer visitors to Morgan Falls Overlook Park an opportunity to learn more about these beautiful birds. Multiple City departments work to protect and preserve the environment, often teaming up with residents and partner organizations in our community.



Keep North Fulton Beautiful volunteers participated in the Chattahoochee Riverkeeper's annual Sweep the Hooch. They collected 14 bags of trash from the Chattahoochee River and surrounding areas.

NAMED TREE CITY

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), along with the Arbor Day Foundation, recognized the City of Sandy Springs with the Tree Cities of the World designation. The international program celebrates cities across all continents that meet core standards for the care and planning of urban trees and forests. To achieve recognition, the City completed the five core standards: establish responsibility, set the rules, know what you have, allocate the resources, and celebrate achievements. The Tree Cities of the World program is built off the success of the Arbor Day Foundation's Tree City USA program, which has provided recognition to cities within the United States for more than 40 years. The vision of Tree Cities of the World is to connect cities worldwide through a new network dedicated to sharing and adopting the most successful approaches to managing urban trees and forests.

CROOKED CREEK PARK

Located in the City's Panhandle in District One, Crooked Creek Park is the newest park to open in Sandy Springs. Crooked Creek is a passive park featuring a one-mile earthen walking trail intended for pedestrian use. The park was developed in partnership with the National Park Service and offers a lovely hike through wetlands and diverse forests, with a view of the Chattahoochee River at the north end of the loop. The park opened for public use in November.

A NEW POINT OF VIEW FOR BIRD WATCHERS

In February, the Recreation and Parks Department teamed up with the Fire Department's Swiftwater Rescue Team to transport the lumber needed to install an Osprey Platform at Morgan Falls Overlook Park. With Georgia Power's permission,

this conservation project will provide an opportunity for boaters and visitors to Overlook Park to view and learn about these birds of prey. The platform design is based on the blueprint from the Osprey Next Platform: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Wildlife Management Manual. Once we have a nesting pair take up residence on the platform, the City will install a telescope.

GREEN COMMUNITY

In January, the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) honored the City of Sandy Springs as one of only four cities in the metro region to be certified as a Green Community. The City was one of even fewer to receive the Gold Certification, raising its status from last year's Silver Certification. The ARC highlighted the City Springs project as an example of the City's approach to sustainability and environmental responsibility.

COLLECTING RAIN

Rainwater harvesting is the accumulation and storage of rainwater to reuse it for on-site purposes. Recycling rainwater can reduce the demand from water facilities and improve conservation efforts. This past summer, the Sandy Springs Recreation and Parks Department teamed up with Fulton County Public Works to provide free rain barrels to collect rainwater for conservation and recycling. With limited quantities, interested Fulton County residents were required to pre-register. Recipients were provided with a free, 55-gallon rain barrel and down-spout kit, along with instructions. Curbside pickup took place at Lost Corner Park.



Young residents learn about our creeks and rivers during the Recreation and Parks Wild Explorers program.



3,200
MILES OF GRASS MOWED
ALONGSIDE STREETS



32,632
BAGS OF TRASH
REMOVED



3,000+
MILES OF
STREETS SWEPT



WILDFLOWER PROJECT

Curb appeal for motorists driving through our city took on new meaning this year. For the first time, crews planted 12 acres of wildflowers along sections of Interstate 285 and Georgia State Route 400 this year. The City partnered with GDOT on this initiative.

STORMWATER ACTIVITIES

The focus this year for the Stormwater Services Unit was on maintenance and repair. Staff concentrated on drainage system maintenance and capital improvement projects, while complying with State and Federal stormwater regulations, with 16 construction projects completed. Of particular note were the following projects:

- A streambank restoration project in the 5200 block of North Powers Ferry Road. The City replaced or repaired failing pipes and stormwater infrastructure in this area and restored the streambank.
- The repair of a stormwater culvert along Little Nancy Creek in the 4900 block of Peachtree Dunwoody Road. This was an emergency repair that initial bids suggested costing more than \$150,000. The City reevaluated the project and

identified an alternative solution for the rehabilitation of the culvert. This allowed the project to be completed for less than \$40,000.

- The replacement of pipes and catch basins on Underwood Drive to improve drainage in the neighborhood.
- Completion of an audit of the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District's Water Resource Management Plan, adopted by the 15-county metro Atlanta region in 2017. The audit measured the City's compliance with the Water Resources Management Plan, which includes the requirements of local governments to protect water quality and public water supplies. Completing this audit demonstrates that the City's programs to minimize the adverse impacts of development on water sources are showing success.



352

STORMWATER INQUIRIES



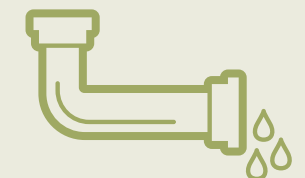
2,087

INFRASTRUCTURE INSPECTIONS



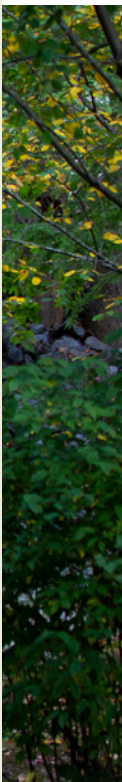
672

STORMWATER WORK ORDERS



4,000

FEET OF STORM PIPE INSPECTED





MANAGING YOUR TAX DOLLARS

The City's strong financial standing was affirmed in Fall 2020 as Moody's maintained the City's Aaa rating, and Standard & Poor's revised its outlook to "positive" from "stable," also asserting its AA+ long-term rating. The financial reviews came in advance of the City's bond refunding, which will save the City \$16.67 million over the remaining 27 years of the bonds. The original bonds were issued in 2015 in connection with the City Springs project.

The savings from the refunding will offset financing of the new public safety and municipal court facility. The refunding and resulting savings also open opportunities to move forward with other capital improvement projects.

The City operates under a July-June fiscal calendar, with financial reports reflecting that period. This report accounts for activity from July 1, 2019, through June 30, 2020. During this period, revenues increased, expenses decreased, and the City's General Fund's balance grew.

REVENUE AND EXPENDITURES

Revenue is the money that the City receives from taxes and other fees, and expenditures refers to how it is spent.

Despite the Pandemic and its toll on the local economy, revenue for the 2020 fiscal year increased by 0.78 percent over 2019.

Expenditures decreased four percent year-over-year, as the City reduced its spending.

In 2020, the City spent nearly \$17 million less than it received.

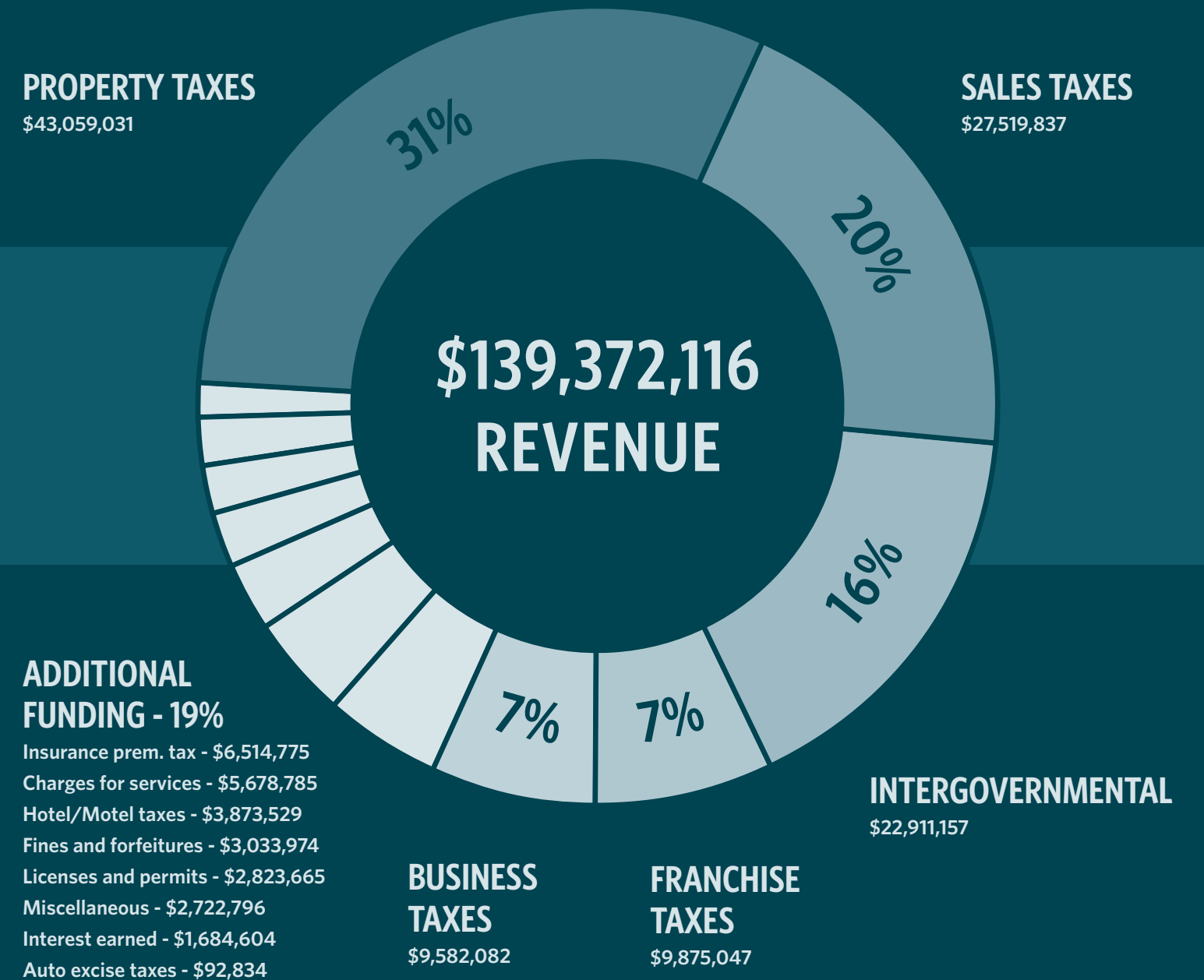


Revenues	2020	2019
Property taxes	\$43,059,031	\$38,183,182
Sales taxes	\$27,519,837	\$28,981,123
Hotel/Motel taxes	\$3,873,529	\$5,681,086
Auto excise taxes	\$92,834	\$101,595
Franchise taxes	\$9,875,047	\$9,626,740
Business taxes	\$9,582,082	\$9,876,057
Insurance premium taxes	\$6,514,775	\$6,724,330
Licenses and permits	\$2,823,665	\$2,977,714
Intergovernmental	\$22,911,157	\$22,830,155
Charges for services	\$5,678,785	\$7,532,520
Fines and forfeitures	\$3,033,974	\$2,919,796
Interest earned	\$1,684,604	\$1,936,622
Miscellaneous	\$2,722,796	\$924,042
Total revenues	\$139,372,116	\$138,294,962

Expenditures	2020	2019
Current		
General government	\$20,692,633	\$18,336,795
Judicial	\$1,342,742	\$1,492,453
Public safety	\$41,065,976	\$42,329,360
Public works	\$33,310,882	\$31,428,914
Culture and recreation	\$10,461,625	\$16,105,238
Housing and development	\$4,399,163	\$6,206,702
Debt service		
Principal	\$3,915,241	\$4,632,679
Interest	\$7,248,183	\$7,379,407
Cost of issuance	\$0	\$81,915
Total expenditures	\$122,436,445	\$127,993,463
Proceeds from sale of capital assets	\$0	\$1,418,406
Proceeds from long-term liabilities	\$0	\$2,872,000
Issuance of notes payable/capital lease	\$0	\$4,287,603
Net change in fund balances	\$16,935,671	\$18,879,508
Fund balances, beginning of year	\$127,578,476	\$108,698,968
Fund balances, end of year	\$144,514,147	\$127,578,476

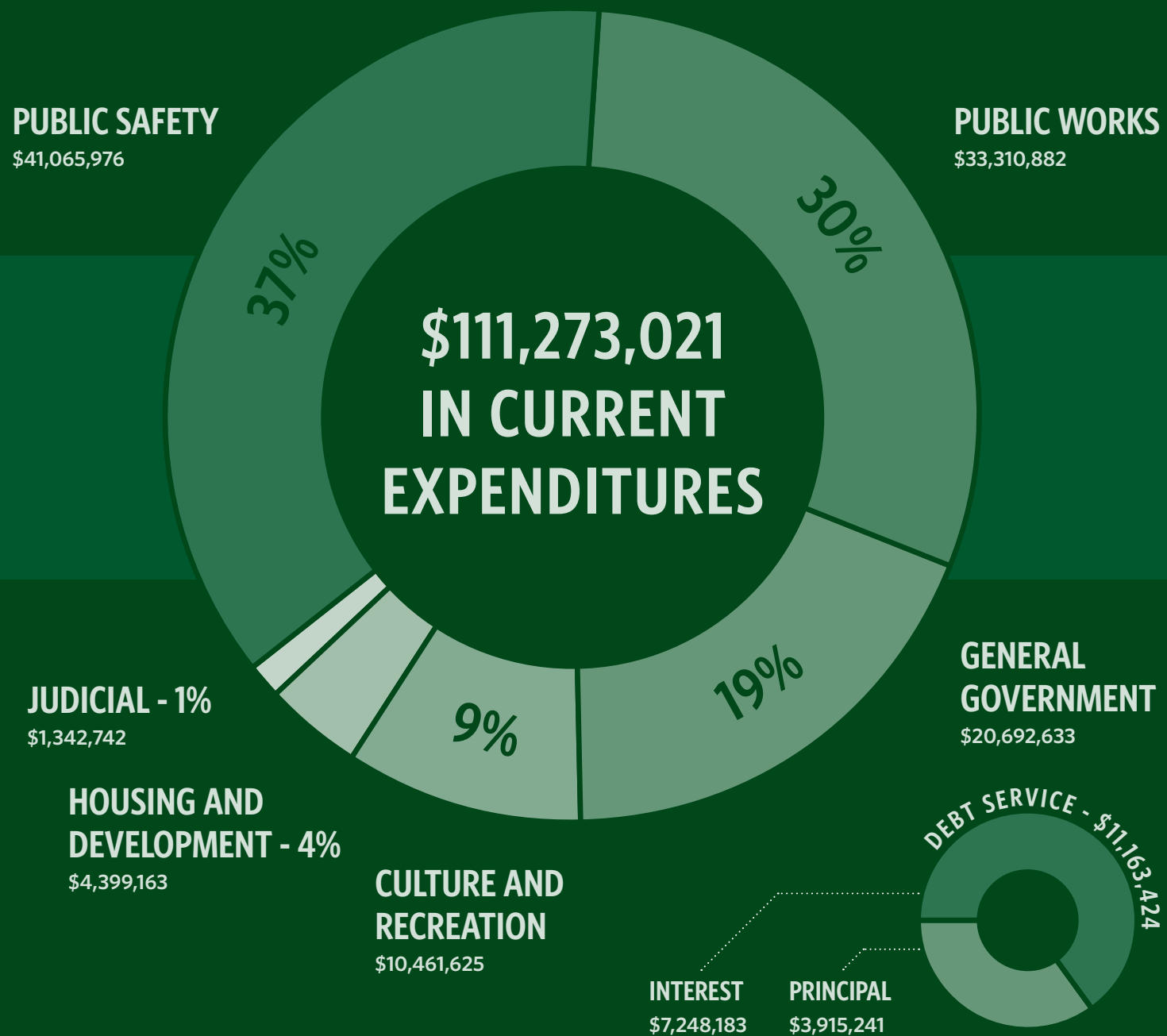
WHERE DID THE MONEY COME FROM?

The chart below represents the total amount of money received in all of the City's funds during its 2020 fiscal year and breaks down the income sources. The majority of the money the City received was from property taxes and the City's portion of the 7.75 percent sales tax collected on purchases in Sandy Springs.



HOW WAS THE MONEY SPENT?

The large chart below represents the total amount of money spent from all of the City's funds during its 2020 fiscal year and breaks down how the money was allocated. The small chart represents the amount of money the City paid against its bond debt. Of the total amount the City spent, only nine percent of it was spent on debt interest.



NET POSITION

Net Position is the difference between what the City owns and what the City owes. Positive net position balances indicate a measure of financial stability. The City's net position increased from \$424 million in FY 2019 to \$458 million in FY 2020.

The City's financial activities also include Component Units, which are legally separate organizations for which the City is financially accountable. Financial information for these Component Units is reported separately.

Assets	2020	2019	Variance	Percent
Current assets	\$160,401,408	\$147,142,315	\$13,259,093	9.01%
Capital assets, net of accumulated depreciation	\$489,919,573	\$476,814,762	\$13,104,811	2.75%
Total assets	\$650,320,981	\$623,957,077	\$26,363,904	4.23%
Liabilities				
Current liabilities	\$22,051,387	\$25,128,856	(\$3,077,469)	(12.25%)
Long-term liabilities	\$169,596,375	\$174,660,216	(\$5,063,841)	(2.90%)
Total liabilities	\$191,647,762	\$199,789,072	(\$8,141,310)	(4.07%)
Deferred service concession arrangement receipts	\$265,000	\$360,000	(\$95,000)	(26.39%)
Net Position				
Net investment in capital assets	\$318,342,207	\$297,446,240	\$20,895,967	7.03%
Restricted	\$48,435,304	44,985,095	\$3,450,209	7.67%
Unrestricted	\$91,630,708	81,376,670	\$10,254,038	12.60%
Total net position	\$458,408,219	\$423,808,005	\$34,600,214	8.16%

LONG-TERM DEBT

In 2018, the City transitioned from "renter" to "owner" when it moved into its new City Hall. The 30-year bonds issued to fund City Hall are comparable in layman terms to a 30-year mortgage. The City's bond debt will continue to decrease as the City pays down the principal.

Long-Term Debt	2020	2019
Bonds payable	\$164,918,678	\$168,635,288
Capital lease payable	\$3,175,473	\$4,140,387
Notes payable	\$4,871,797	\$5,072,124
Total long-term debt	\$172,965,948	\$177,847,799

AA+
Standard & Poors

Aaa
Moody's Investor Services

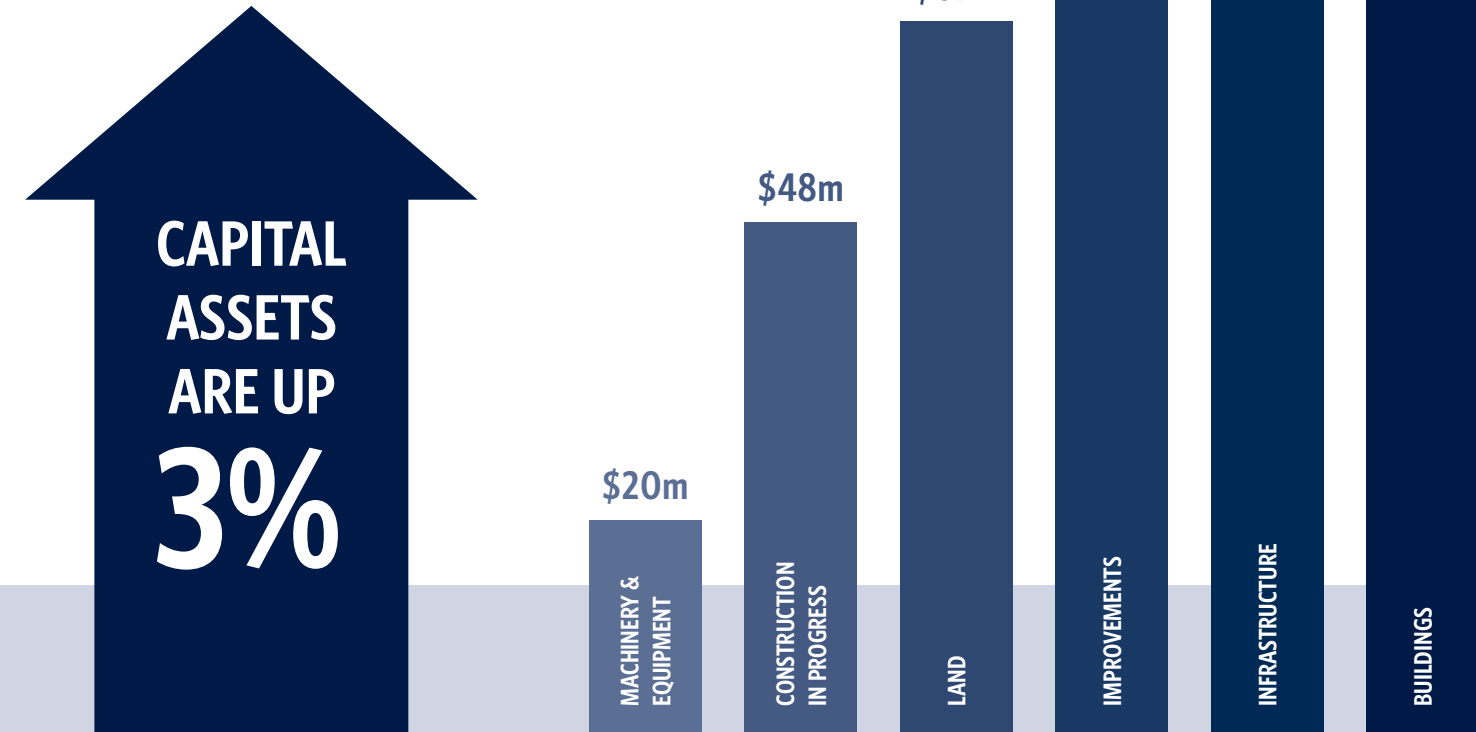


CAPITAL ASSETS

Capital Assets are items the City owns that hold value. The total amount of assets increased three percent in the 2020 fiscal year, as the City continued to invest in projects throughout the community.

As work on construction projects is completed, funds in the Construction in Progress category are reclassified as Land, Buildings, Improvements and Infrastructure assets.

Capital Assets	2020	2019
Land	\$66,922,182	\$64,963,848
Construction in progress	\$47,760,221	\$30,736,116
Buildings	\$138,248,951	\$141,894,007
Improvements	\$80,743,974	\$82,256,995
Machinery & equipment	\$19,727,068	\$20,822,334
Infrastructure	\$136,517,177	\$136,141,462
Total	\$489,919,573	\$476,814,762



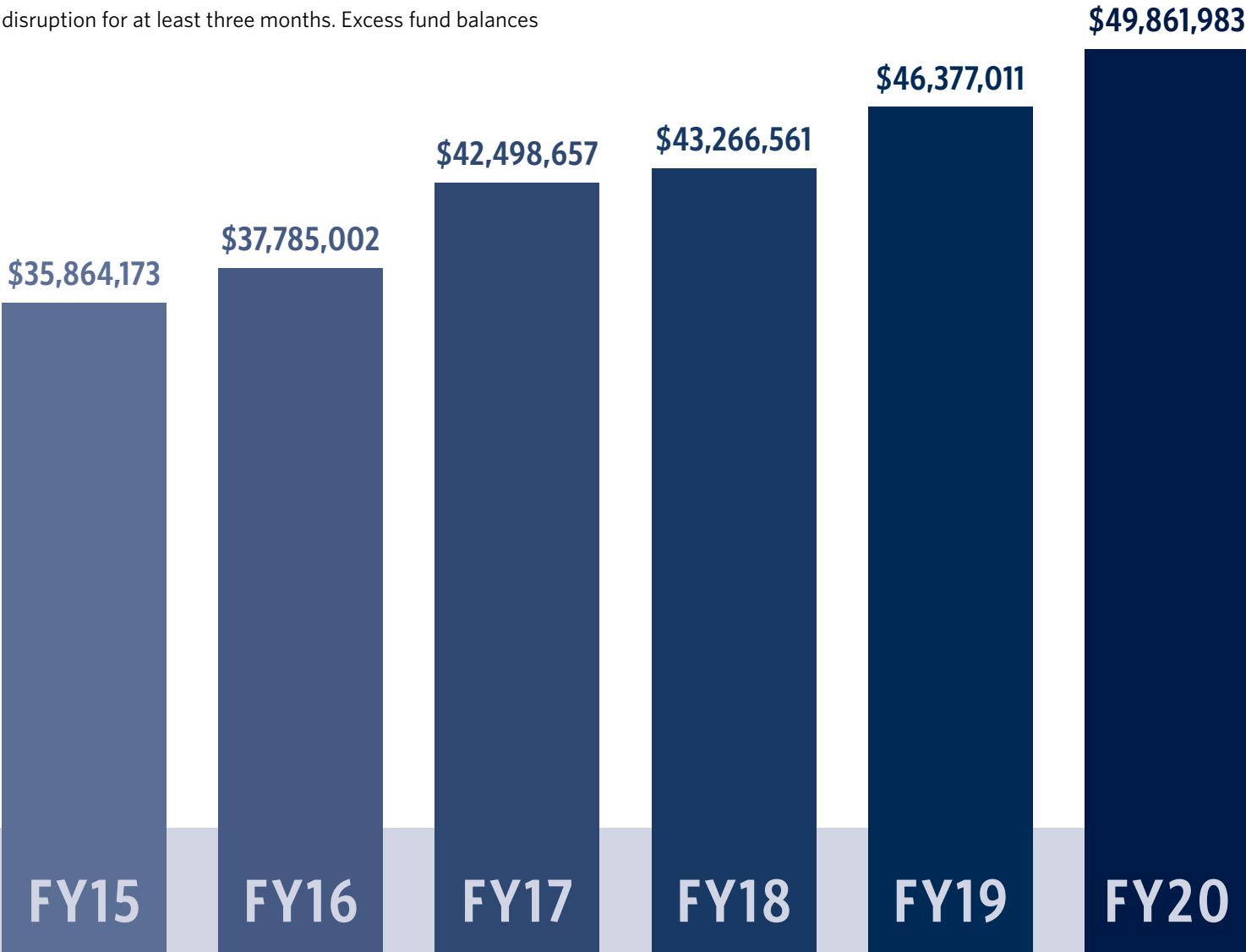
GENERAL FUND BALANCE

The General Fund balance could be considered the City's "rainy day fund." It is a good practice to have some extra money tucked away in a savings account and available to use for unexpected expenses.

The City's policy is to maintain a minimum General Fund balance reserve of \$20.5 million, or 25 percent of operating expenditures, whichever is greater. This is enough money to ensure that the government can continue operations without disruption for at least three months. Excess fund balances

over that requirement are used in subsequent years for pay-as-you-go capital projects and one-time, non-recurring expenditures.

The yearly increase in the General Fund balance is due to a combination of the City being under-budget in its expenses and over-budget in its revenues, an indicator of sound fiscal policy.





WHO WE ARE

The City is home to a diverse population which continues to grow. According to the United States Census Bureau's American Community Survey, in the past year, the City's population grew 0.61 percent to 109,466. The demographics have shifted a little as well. The Caucasian population declined from last year's 69.9 percent of the population to 63.6 percent this year, and the African American population grew from last year's 17.1 percent to 22.4 percent this year. The percentage of college graduates increased from 66 percent reported last year to 70.5 percent this year. The percentage of residents who own their homes showed a decrease from 50 to 46 percent. The Median Household Income grew by 10 percent to this year's average of \$83,111, and the Poverty Ratio declined from 5.4 percent to 3.9 percent.

The City with its unique blend of urban energy and southern hospitality is also known for its excellent schools—both private and public, access to the metropolitan area's top medical facilities, a vibrant restaurant scene, and great shopping. Sandy Springs is a dynamic community where everyone is welcome.



INCORPORATED

2005

SIZE

38 square miles

POPULATION

109,466

Daytime population increases by 100,000+ people

MEDIAN AGE

37

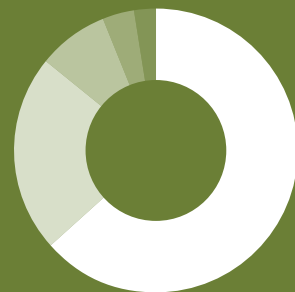
EDUCATION



96% High School Graduate

71% Bachelors Degree or Higher

DIVERSITY



- 63.6% Caucasian
- 22.4% African American
- 7.9% Asian
- 2.3% Multiracial
- 3.8% Other Race

10.3% of the population are of Latin American decent.

INCOME

\$83,111

Median Household Income in 2019 inflation-adjusted dollars

\$64,554

Per Capita Income in 2019 inflation-adjusted dollars

Poverty Ratio

3.9%

HOUSING



54% Renter Occupied

46% Owner Occupied

MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

The City Council is a non-partisan elected body, which sets policy for operations of the City. The City Council meets on the first and third Tuesday of each month.



RUSTY PAUL
MAYOR



JOHN PAULSON
DISTRICT 1



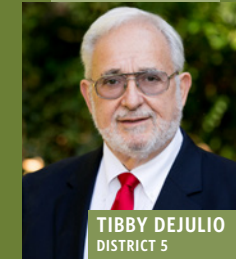
STEVE SOTERIS
DISTRICT 2



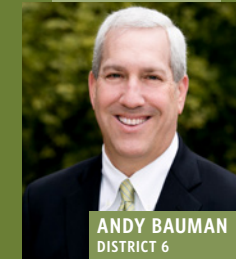
CHRIS BURNETT
DISTRICT 3



JODY REICHEL
DISTRICT 4



TIBBY DEJULIO
DISTRICT 5



ANDY BAUMAN
DISTRICT 6

AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS

In 2020, the City was recognized by the following organizations:

ATLANTA MAGAZINE

Top 500 - Mayor Rusty Paul

MONEY INC.

Ranked #16 20 Safest Cities in Georgia

SAFEWISE

Ranked #21 in the 50 Safest Cities in Georgia

24/7 WALL ST

Ranked 12 in the top 20 Cheap Cities People are Moving to

RETAILMENOT

Ranked # 15 Best Cities for working from Home

GEORGIA RECREATION AND PARKS ASSOCIATION

Marketing & Visibility for a Single Event: Sparkle Sandy Springs Event
Covid Signage Campaign

SOUTHEAST TOURISM AWARD

Top 20 Festival and Events around the Southeast: Sparkle Sandy Springs Event

U.N. FOOD & AGRICULTURAL ORGANIZATION

Tree City Recognition

THE ARBOR DAY FOUNDATION

Tree City Recognition

GEORGIA PLANNING ASSOCIATION

Distinguished Planning Leadership - Jim Tolbert

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS (DCA)

PlanFirst - Statewide Distinction



CREATING THE REPORT

The Sandy Springs annual Year in Review is produced by the City's Communications Department. The Department functions as a local newsroom and as a marketing agency in its efforts to compile and disseminate information to strengthen community engagement.

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REPORT DATA

The City of Sandy Springs operates under a July-June fiscal calendar with financial reports reflecting that period. This 2020 fiscal year report accounts for activity from July 1, 2019, through June 30, 2020. Except where noted, all data in this report are reflective of that period.

PHOTO CREDITS

The majority of the photography for this report was taken by the City's Communications Department:

Jason Green
Pages 6, 9, 10, 11, 15, 18, 22, 23, 25, 26, 32, 34, 35, 37, 41, 42,
47, 50, 52, 53, 54, 56, 58, 63, 64, 70 and 76

Marla Shavin
Page 2

Haleigh Stinson
Pages 13 and 16

Additional Photography
SSPD - Pages 29, 30 and 31, Kyle and Abby Lawlor - Page 46
Sydney Privitera - Page 49, Recreation and Parks - Page 61

CITY OF SANDY SPRINGS

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