



Mayor's Message

For many of us, April and May are favorite months as spring unfurls in our City. Despite the clay soil, we are home to gardeners who delight in finding just the right plants for front porch pots, creating beds that survive the summer heat, and who fight off the squirrels and rabbits that nibble on our tomatoes.

Two of our boards and commissions will soon see the spring bring results from their projects. Last year the Sustainability Commission obtained a grant that helped about 500 of our residents purchase compost bins that folks will use to enrich their soil. The Green Space Advisory Commission has led the way in the removal of honeysuckle that will allow native plants to grow and thrive.

We will also soon see parks department staff at work beautifying our business districts with pots and hanging baskets that the districts have funded. They will also be ensuring that our parks and ball fields are ready for summer usage, and that public spaces provide a level of care that the community has come to expect.

The City is now popping with colorful yard signs – an indication that democracy is at work in our City. We believe that local government is where the democratic form of government is at its best. Despite all the bad news that comes from other levels of government, we can be assured that local government functions well because citizen voices are heard. **-Gerry Welch**



In the Know – Your City

Back by popular demand is a quiz that tests your knowledge about the City of Webster Groves. Take the quiz and look on the back of this newsletter to see how well you have done. If you got a perfect score, let us know by emailing conradj@webstergroves.org. We will send you congratulations!

1. When was the City of Webster Groves established? How old is it?

- a. 1798, 220 years
- b. 1896, 122 years
- c. 1905, 113 years
- d. 1918, 100 years

2. Which of the following statements is true?

- a. In 1954, residents of Webster Groves chose to organize as a charter city with a council-manager form of government.
- b. In Webster Groves, the mayor is an administrator with veto power over Council decisions.
- c. The City's fiscal year runs from January 1 to December 31.
- d. All of the above are true.

3. The number of owner-occupied housing units in Webster Groves is approximately

- a. 2,400
- b. 4,800
- c. 7,750
- d. 12,200

4. The percentage of a resident's property tax bill that goes to the City is

- a. 75%
- b. 50%
- c. 20%
- d. 9%

5. What percentage of the City's revenue comes from traffic tickets?

- a. 0%
- b. 4%
- c. 20%
- d. 37%

6. Each of the following business areas is a special taxing district except

- a. Old Webster
- b. Old Orchard
- c. Crossroads
- d. Yorkshire

7. To date, the City has sold _____ \$10 gift certificates

- a. 1,200
- b. 4,400
- c. 9,100
- d. 13,300

8. The City of Webster Groves has _____ parks.

- a. 19
- b. 12
- c. 8
- d. 5

9. Funding for the items in the Capital Improvement Program for the City of Webster Groves comes from which of the following?

- a. Capital Improvement Fund
- b. Street Improvement Fund
- c. Grant Fund
- d. All of the above

Quiz answers can be found on the back of the newsletter!

The List is Long

Now that the reindeer, polar bears, and penguins are tucked away until next winter, our parks department is hard at work planning a spring and summer filled with projects and events.

Upcoming projects include:

- Renovation of Barbre Park.
- New pavilion in Southwest Park.
- Improved efficiency for trash and recycling in the parks.



- In-house improvements to the parking lot, trail, and landscape at Deer Creek Park.
- Installation of a monarch habitat and other restoration in Lockwood Park.
- Partnering with the Deer Creek Watershed Alliance on chemical-free honeysuckle removal.
- Updates to lighting and landscaping at Backflip.
- Lighting in the Sculpture Garden.

This year's theme for annual displays is Pollinators. Pollinators include birds, bees, bats, butterflies, moths, and beetles. Plants to look for this spring/summer include Mandevilla, Angelonia, Gomphrena, Purlane, and Ipomoea. Additionally, staff is adding perennials to parks to restore the ecological function of the landscape and reduce mulchscapes.



Arbor Day will be celebrated on Wednesday, April 18 at 5:30 p.m. in the Sculpture Garden. This year, in addition to the Arbor Day celebration, Forest Releaf is donating over 100 trees to install along Shady Creek. A volunteer tree-planting event will begin at 3:30 p.m. on April 18.

Enjoy our New Park

In 2018 the City will get a new park. The Marshall Avenue Trailhead, 329 Marshall Avenue, will be a great place to begin your hike or ride on the Deer Creek Greenway, ride the pump track (a circuit of turns and features for cyclists), have a picnic, or just enjoy the scenery. In the summer of 2017, an agreement was signed among the City, Great Rivers Greenway (GRG), and Owen Ridge Associates for this new 3.3 acre park.

Owen Ridge completed the first phase of construction in the fall of

2017. This included the removal of the majority of the asphalt, and installation of bioretention areas to control storm water, a new roadway, and a small parking lot.

GRG starts their construction phase this spring which will include a pavilion, drinking fountain, connection to the Deer Creek Greenway trail, a bike fixing station, a pump track, creek bank stabilization, invasive species removal, and enhanced landscaping. The trailhead is anticipated to open during the summer of 2018.



Easier than Amazon Shopping

The City's Business Development Commission can be thanked for creating the \$10 gift certificate that has made gift giving so easy. With the coming season of showing appreciation to teachers and coaches, recognizing graduates, expressing our gratitude on Mother's and Father's Day, and attending parties and showers, the \$10 Webster Groves certificate is the perfect gift.

With these certificates you are supporting local businesses and giving the recipient the option of choosing to shop or dine at a favorite place. You can give a fistful or one.

Stop by City Hall to get your certificate(s) boxed and bowed or just go online to www.webstergroves.org/giftcertificate.



Planning for Capital Items

How does the City plan for and pay for large items such as an ambulance, street sweeper, replacement air conditioning units at the Recplex, or serious street repaving?

City staff have created and maintain a Capital Improvement Program (CIP) which is a long-term plan for the purchase of capital items.

The CIP is a guide that lays out the purchase and improvement of land, buildings, equipment, vehicles, and infrastructure for a 5-year period. This program is reviewed and updated annually with each budget. It is available on the City's website at

www.webstergroves.org/Budget.

Funding for the items in the CIP come from several City funds including the Capital Improvement Sales Tax Fund, Park Fund, Street Improvement Fund, Grant Fund, and Stormwater Fund.

The CIP allows the City to plan for items that are costly and to determine how and when to pay for them. For example, with the CIP we can anticipate when our ambulance



needs to be replaced, determine its approximate cost, and decide how to fund it. Knowing that hundreds of thousands of dollars will be needed in the future allows the City to make decisions that ensure money is available when needed.

Similar to an individual with a savings account, the City saves its money in reserves for future large expenditures. When those expenditures are made, those reserves are drawn down. It may appear that the City is in a deficit position in those funds when a major expenditure is made, just like an individual who is saving for a house or car and uses those funds.

The CIP has been a responsible planning tool for the past 16 years.

Good News - It's Time to 'Burn the Mortgage'

In 2002, \$4 million in TIF notes were issued to provide funds for the Shoppes at Old Webster. The site of the current office and retail building, the shops along Allen Avenue, and the parking deck and garage was an unsightly and rough industrial area.

The TIF notes provided funds to pay for some of the redevelopment costs associated with this project, such as the new parking.

Principal and interest payments on the \$4 million in TIF notes came from incremental additional revenue from taxes attributable to

the project site. The notes were due to mature in October 2021.

Due to a higher revenue stream than that projected when the TIF was negotiated, the notes were paid off in full on March 1, 2018 - 3.5 years ahead of schedule.

This is good news! With the TIF closed out, the funds that were used to pay off the notes will now go to the school district and other taxing entities.

Thanks to the developer of this particular project, Jonathan Browne, President of Novus Development, for a successful project and now new revenue.

Calendar of Events

Please go to the City's website at www.webstergroves.org or for information about the many events that we enjoy over the next few months.

Poetry Week

April 14 - April 22

[webstergroves.org/poetryweek](http://www.webstergroves.org/poetryweek)

Paint Webster

Saturday, May 12

www.webster-arts.org/paintwebster

Opera Theatre of St. Louis

May 19 - June 24

2018 Productions:

An American Soldier
Regina

Orfeo and Euridice

La traviata

www.opera-stl.org

Webster Art Fair

June 1-3

www.webster-arts.org/about-the-fair

Old Orchard Gazebo Music and Film Series

June 8, 15, 22, 29 and July 6, 13

Missouri Chamber Music Festival

June 11 - 16

www.mochambermusic.org/current-season.html

Old Webster Street Dance

June 16



Join the Arts Commission in Celebration of Poetry Week, April 14 - 22

April is National Poetry Month, one of the largest literary celebrations as poetry comes alive in schools, libraries, cafes, on sidewalks, and in other sites. Webster Groves joins the celebrations with its own Poetry Week.

The week in Webster opens with a children's poetry workshop on April 14 at the Recplex and continues during the week with Po-jazz and readings, Paint a Poem with Marilynne Bradley, chalk a poem on the sidewalk day, poetry readings at the library, and so much more to come.

Watch for all of the events of the week on the City's website webstergroves.org/poetryweek and enjoy the festivities.

Quiz answers: 1b, 2a, 3c, 4d, 5b, 6d, 7c, 8a, 9d

Did You Know?

The arts are an important economic base in Webster Groves providing employment and income and bringing visitors to our City. During May and June, audience members for Opera Theatre will come from our region as well as almost every state and some foreign countries to Webster Groves to enjoy performances. Opera Theatre is hosting a major national conference and attendees will spend time in our City dining at the various restaurants and appreciating all we have to offer.

Webster Groves City Council

Gerry Welch, Mayor
Matt Armstrong
Bud Bellomo
Ken Burns
Toni Hunt
Frank Janoski
Greg Mueller

Steve Wylie, City Manager
4 E. Lockwood
Webster Groves, MO 63119
Phone: 314-963-5300
www.webstergroves.org

Stay Connected to the City

- Webster Groves City website www.webstergroves.org
www.facebook.com/webstergrovescity
- **Community Connection** found monthly in the *Webster-Kirkwood Times* newspaper
- **INSIDE Webster Groves** Quarterly newsletter
- Sign up for email or text alerts for City events, services and Council Agendas.
www.webstergroves.org/notifyme
- Business website www.ExploreWebsterGroves.com
www.facebook.com/ExploreWebsterGroves
- Fire Department
www.facebook.com/webstergrovesfd
- Police Department
www.facebook.com/WGPDMO
- Webster Groves Parks and Recreation bi-annual brochure
www.facebook.com/webster.Parks.RecreationDepartment