

Committee of the Whole
Monday, December 6, 2021 6:00 PM
Council Chambers
1369 25 Avenue
Columbus, NE 68601

1. **Statement of compliance with Open Meetings Act and roll call.**

Open Meetings Act

Neb. Rev. Stat. § 84-1407. Act, how cited.

Sections 84-1407 to 84-1414 shall be known and may be cited as the Open Meetings Act.

Neb. Rev. Stat. § 84-1408. Declaration of intent; meetings open to public.

It is hereby declared to be the policy of this state that the formation of public policy is public business and may not be conducted in secret.

Every meeting of a public body shall be open to the public in order that citizens may exercise their democratic privilege of attending and speaking at meetings of public bodies, except as otherwise provided by the Constitution of Nebraska, federal statutes, and the Open Meetings Act.

Neb. Rev. Stat. § 84-1409. Terms, defined.

For purposes of the Open Meetings Act, unless the context otherwise requires:

(1)(a) Public body means (i) governing bodies of all political subdivisions of the State of Nebraska, (ii) governing bodies of all agencies, created by the Constitution of Nebraska, statute, or otherwise pursuant to law, of the executive department of the State of Nebraska, (iii) all independent boards, commissions, bureaus, committees, councils, subunits, or any other bodies created by the Constitution of Nebraska, statute, or otherwise pursuant to law, (iv) all study or advisory committees of the executive department of the State of Nebraska whether having continuing existence or appointed as special committees with limited existence, (v) advisory committees of the bodies referred to in subdivisions (i), (ii), and (iii) of this subdivision, and (vi) instrumentalities exercising essentially public functions; and

(b) Public body does not include (i) subcommittees of such bodies unless a quorum of the public body attends a subcommittee meeting or unless such subcommittees are holding hearings, making policy, or taking formal action on behalf of their parent body, except that all meetings of any subcommittee established under section 81-15,175 are subject to the Open Meetings Act, and (ii) entities conducting judicial proceedings unless a court or other judicial body is exercising rulemaking authority, deliberating, or deciding upon the issuance of administrative orders;

(2) Meeting means all regular, special, or called meetings, formal or informal, of any public body for the purposes of briefing, discussion of public business, formation of tentative policy, or the taking of any action of the public body; and

(3) Virtual conferencing means conducting or participating in a meeting electronically or telephonically with interaction among the participants subject to subsection (2) of section 84-1412.

Neb. Rev. Stat. § 84-1410. Closed session; when; purpose; reasons listed; procedure; right to challenge; prohibited acts; chance meetings, conventions, or workshops.

(1) Any public body may hold a closed session by the affirmative vote of a majority of its voting members if a closed session is clearly necessary for the protection of the public interest or for the prevention of needless injury to the reputation of an individual and if such

individual has not requested a public meeting. The subject matter and the reason necessitating the closed session shall be identified in the motion to close. Closed sessions may be held for, but shall not be limited to, such reasons as:

(a) Strategy sessions with respect to collective bargaining, real estate purchases, pending litigation, or litigation which is imminent as evidenced by communication of a claim or threat of litigation to or by the public body;

(b) Discussion regarding deployment of security personnel or devices;

(c) Investigative proceedings regarding allegations of criminal misconduct;

(d) Evaluation of the job performance of a person when necessary to prevent needless injury to the reputation of a person and if such person has not requested a public meeting;

(e) For the Community Trust created under section 81-1801.02, discussion regarding the amounts to be paid to individuals who have suffered from a tragedy of violence or natural disaster; or

(f) For public hospitals, governing board peer review activities, professional review activities, review and discussion of medical staff investigations or disciplinary actions, and any strategy session concerning transactional negotiations with any referral source that is required by federal law to be conducted at arms length.

Nothing in this section shall permit a closed meeting for discussion of the appointment or election of a new member to any public body.

(2) The vote to hold a closed session shall be taken in open session. The entire motion, the vote of each member on the question of holding a closed session, and the time when the closed session commenced and concluded shall be recorded in the minutes. If the motion to close passes, then the presiding officer immediately prior to the closed session shall restate on the record the limitation of the subject matter of the closed session. The public body holding such a closed session shall restrict its consideration of matters during the closed portions to only those purposes set forth in the motion to close as the reason for the closed session. The meeting shall be reconvened in open session before any formal action may be taken. For purposes of this section, formal action shall mean a collective decision or a collective commitment or promise to make a decision on any question, motion, proposal, resolution, order, or ordinance or formation of a position or policy but shall not include negotiating guidance given by members of the public body to legal counsel or other negotiators in closed sessions authorized under subdivision (1)(a) of this section.

(3) Any member of any public body shall have the right to challenge the continuation of a closed session if the member determines that the session has exceeded the reason stated in the original motion to hold a closed session or if the member contends that the closed session is neither clearly necessary for (a) the protection of the public interest or (b) the prevention of needless injury to the reputation of an individual. Such challenge shall be overruled only by a majority vote of the

members of the public body. Such challenge and its disposition shall be recorded in the minutes.

(4) Nothing in this section shall be construed to require that any meeting be closed to the public. No person or public body shall fail to invite a portion of its members to a meeting, and no public body shall designate itself a subcommittee of the whole body for the purpose of circumventing the Open Meetings Act. No closed session, informal meeting, chance meeting, social gathering, email, fax, or other electronic communication shall be used for the purpose of circumventing the requirements of the act.

(5) The act does not apply to chance meetings or to attendance at or travel to conventions or workshops of members of a public body at which there is no meeting of the body then intentionally convened, if there is no vote or other action taken regarding any matter over which the public body has supervision, control, jurisdiction, or advisory power.

Neb. Rev. Stat. § 84-1411. Meetings of public body; notice; method; contents; when available; right to modify; duties concerning notice; virtual meetings authorized; emergency meeting without notice; appearance before public body.

(1)(a) Each public body shall give reasonable advance publicized notice of the time and place of each meeting as provided in this subsection. Such notice shall be transmitted to all members of the public body and to the public.

(b)(i) Except as provided in subdivision (1)(b)(ii) of this section, in the case of a public body described in subdivision (1)(a)(i) of section 84-1409 or such body's advisory committee, such notice shall be published in a newspaper of general circulation within the public body's jurisdiction and, if available, on such newspaper's web site.

(ii) In the case of the governing body of a city of the second class or village or such body's advisory committee, such notice shall be published by:

(A) Publication in a newspaper of general circulation within the public body's jurisdiction and, if available, on such newspaper's web site; or

(B) Posting written notice in three conspicuous public places in such city or village. Such notice shall be posted in the same three places for each meeting.

(iii) In the case of a public body not described in subdivision (1)(b)(i) or (ii) of this section, such notice shall be given by a method designated by the public body.

(c) In addition to a method of notice required by subdivision (1)(b)(i) or (ii) of this section, such notice may also be provided by any other appropriate method designated by such public body or such advisory committee.

(d) Each public body shall record the methods and dates of such notice in its minutes.

(e) Such notice shall contain an agenda of subjects known at the time of the publicized notice or a statement that the agenda, which shall be kept continually current, shall be readily available for public inspection at the principal office of the public body during normal business hours. Agenda items shall be sufficiently descriptive to give the public reasonable notice of the matters to be considered at the

meeting. Except for items of an emergency nature, the agenda shall not be altered later than (i) twenty-four hours before the scheduled commencement of the meeting or (ii) forty-eight hours before the scheduled commencement of a meeting of a city council or village board scheduled outside the corporate limits of the municipality. The public body shall have the right to modify the agenda to include items of an emergency nature only at such public meeting.

(2)(a) The following entities may hold a meeting by means of virtual conferencing if the requirements of subdivision (2)(b) of this section are met:

(i) A state agency, state board, state commission, state council, or state committee, or an advisory committee of any such state entity;

(ii) An organization, including the governing body, created under the Interlocal Cooperation Act, the Joint Public Agency Act, or the Municipal Cooperative Financing Act;

(iii) The governing body of a public power district having a chartered territory of more than one county in this state;

(iv) The governing body of a public power and irrigation district having a chartered territory of more than one county in this state;

(v) An educational service unit;

(vi) The Educational Service Unit Coordinating Council;

(vii) An organization, including the governing body, of a risk management pool or its advisory committees organized in accordance with the Intergovernmental Risk Management Act;

(viii) A community college board of governors;

(ix) The Nebraska Brand Committee;

(x) A local public health department;

(xi) A metropolitan utilities district;

(xii) A regional metropolitan transit authority;

(xiii) A natural resources district; and

(xiv) The Judicial Resources Commission.

(b) The requirements for holding a meeting by means of virtual conferencing are as follows:

(i) Reasonable advance publicized notice is given as provided in subsection (1) of this section, including providing access to a dial-in number or link to the virtual conference;

(ii) In addition to the public's right to participate by virtual conferencing, reasonable arrangements are made to accommodate the public's right to attend at a physical site and participate as provided in section 84-1412, including reasonable seating, in at least one designated site in a building open to the public and identified in the notice, with: At least one member of the entity holding such meeting, or his or her designee, present at each site; a recording of the hearing by audio or visual recording devices; and a reasonable opportunity for input, such as public comment or questions, is provided to at least the same extent as

would be provided if virtual conferencing was not used;

(iii) At least one copy of all documents being considered at the meeting is available at any physical site open to the public where individuals may attend the virtual conference. The public body shall also provide links to an electronic copy of the agenda, all documents being considered at the meeting, and the current version of the Open Meetings Act; and

(iv) Except as otherwise provided in this subdivision or subsection (4) of section 79-2204, no more than one-half of the meetings of the state entities, advisory committees, boards, councils, organizations, or governing bodies are held by virtual conferencing in a calendar year. In the case of an organization created under the Interlocal Cooperation Act that sells electricity or natural gas at wholesale on a multistate basis or an organization created under the Municipal Cooperative Financing Act, the organization may hold more than one-half of its meetings by virtual conferencing if such organization holds at least one meeting each calendar year that is not by virtual conferencing. The governing body of a risk management pool that meets at least quarterly and the advisory committees of the governing body may each hold more than one-half of its meetings by virtual conferencing if the governing body's quarterly meetings are not held by virtual conferencing.

(3) Virtual conferencing, emails, faxes, or other electronic communication shall not be used to circumvent any of the public government purposes established in the Open Meetings Act.

(4) The secretary or other designee of each public body shall maintain a list of the news media requesting notification of meetings and shall make reasonable efforts to provide advance notification to them of the time and place of each meeting and the subjects to be discussed at that meeting.

(5) When it is necessary to hold an emergency meeting without reasonable advance public notice, the nature of the emergency shall be stated in the minutes and any formal action taken in such meeting shall pertain only to the emergency. Such emergency meetings may be held by virtual conferencing. The provisions of subsection (4) of this section shall be complied with in conducting emergency meetings. Complete minutes of such emergency meetings specifying the nature of the emergency and any formal action taken at the meeting shall be made available to the public by no later than the end of the next regular business day.

(6) A public body may allow a member of the public or any other witness to appear before the public body by means of virtual conferencing.

(7)(a) Notwithstanding subsections (2) and (5) of this section, if an emergency is declared by the Governor pursuant to the Emergency Management Act as defined in section 81-829.39, a public body the territorial jurisdiction of which is included in the emergency declaration, in whole or in part, may hold a meeting by virtual conferencing during such emergency if the public body gives reasonable advance publicized notice as described in subsection (1) of this section. The notice shall include information regarding access for the public and news media. In addition to any formal action taken pertaining to the emergency, the public body may hold such meeting for the purpose of briefing, discussion of public business, formation of tentative policy, or the taking of any action by the public body.

(b) The public body shall provide access by providing a dial-in
Open Meetings Act

number or a link to the virtual conference. The public body shall also provide links to an electronic copy of the agenda, all documents being considered at the meeting, and the current version of the Open Meetings Act. Reasonable arrangements shall be made to accommodate the public's right to hear and speak at the meeting and record the meeting. Subsection (4) of this section shall be complied with in conducting such meetings.

(c) The nature of the emergency shall be stated in the minutes. Complete minutes of such meeting specifying the nature of the emergency and any formal action taken at the meeting shall be made available for inspection as provided in subsections (5) and (6) of section 84-1413.

Neb. Rev. Stat. § 84-1412. Meetings of public body; rights of public; public body; powers and duties.

(1) Subject to the Open Meetings Act, the public has the right to attend and the right to speak at meetings of public bodies, and all or any part of a meeting of a public body, except for closed sessions called pursuant to section 84-1410, may be videotaped, televised, photographed, broadcast, or recorded by any person in attendance by means of a tape recorder, a camera, video equipment, or any other means of pictorial or sonic reproduction or in writing.

(2) It shall not be a violation of subsection (1) of this section for any public body to make and enforce reasonable rules and regulations regarding the conduct of persons attending, speaking at, videotaping, televising, photographing, broadcasting, or recording its meetings, including meetings held by virtual conferencing. A body may not be required to allow citizens to speak at each meeting, but it may not forbid public participation at all meetings.

(3) No public body shall require members of the public to identify themselves as a condition for admission to the meeting nor shall such body require that the name of any member of the public be placed on the agenda prior to such meeting in order to speak about items on the agenda. The body shall require any member of the public desiring to address the body to identify himself or herself, including an address and the name of any organization represented by such person unless the address requirement is waived to protect the security of the individual.

(4) No public body shall, for the purpose of circumventing the Open Meetings Act, hold a meeting in a place known by the body to be too small to accommodate the anticipated audience.

(5) No public body shall be deemed in violation of this section if it holds its meeting in its traditional meeting place which is located in this state.

(6) No public body shall be deemed in violation of this section if it holds a meeting outside of this state if, but only if:

(a) A member entity of the public body is located outside of this state and the meeting is in that member's jurisdiction;

(b) All out-of-state locations identified in the notice are located within public buildings used by members of the entity or at a place which will accommodate the anticipated audience;

(c) Reasonable arrangements are made to accommodate the public's right to attend, hear, and speak at the meeting, including making virtual conferencing available at an in-state location to members, the public, or the press, if requested twenty-four hours in advance;

(d) No more than twenty-five percent of the public body's meetings in a calendar year are held out-of-state;

(e) Out-of-state meetings are not used to circumvent any of the public government purposes established in the Open Meetings Act; and

(f) The public body publishes notice of the out-of-state meeting at least twenty-one days before the date of the meeting in a legal newspaper of statewide circulation.

(7) Each public body shall, upon request, make a reasonable effort to accommodate the public's right to hear the discussion and testimony presented at a meeting.

(8) Public bodies shall make available at the meeting or the in-state location for virtual conferencing as required by subdivision (6)(c) of this section, for examination and copying by members of the public, at least one copy of all reproducible written material to be discussed at an open meeting, either in paper or electronic form. Public bodies shall make available at least one current copy of the Open Meetings Act posted in the meeting room at a location accessible to members of the public. At the beginning of the meeting, the public shall be informed about the location of the posted information.

Neb. Rev. Stat. § 84-1413. Meetings; minutes; roll call vote; secret ballot; when.

(1) Each public body shall keep minutes of all meetings showing the time, place, members present and absent, and the substance of all matters discussed.

(2) Any action taken on any question or motion duly moved and seconded shall be by roll call vote of the public body in open session, and the record shall state how each member voted or if the member was absent or not voting. The requirements of a roll call or viva voce vote shall be satisfied by a public body which utilizes an electronic voting device which allows the yeas and nays of each member of such public body to be readily seen by the public.

(3) The vote to elect leadership within a public body may be taken by secret ballot, but the total number of votes for each candidate shall be recorded in the minutes.

(4) The minutes of all meetings and evidence and documentation received or disclosed in open session shall be public records and open to public inspection during normal business hours.

(5) Minutes shall be written, except as provided in subsection (6) of this section, and available for inspection within ten working days or prior to the next convened meeting, whichever occurs earlier, except that cities of the second class and villages may have an additional ten working days if the employee responsible for writing the minutes is absent due to a serious illness or emergency.

(6) Minutes of the meetings of the board of a school district or educational service unit may be kept as an electronic record.

(7) Beginning July 31, 2022, the governing body of a natural resources district, the city council of a city of the metropolitan class, the city council of a city of the primary class, the city council of a city of the first class, the county board of a county with a population greater than twenty-five thousand inhabitants, and the school board of a school district shall make available on such entity's public web site the agenda and minutes of any meeting of the governing body. The agenda shall be placed on the web site at least twenty-four hours before the meeting of

the governing body. Minutes shall be placed on the web site at such time as the minutes are available for inspection as provided in subsection (5) of this section. This information shall be available on the public web site for at least six months.

Neb. Rev. Stat. § 84-1414. Unlawful action by public body; declared void or voidable by district court; when; duty to enforce open meeting laws; citizen's suit; procedure; violations; penalties.

(1) Any motion, resolution, rule, regulation, ordinance, or formal action of a public body made or taken in violation of the Open Meetings Act shall be declared void by the district court if the suit is commenced within one hundred twenty days of the meeting of the public body at which the alleged violation occurred. Any motion, resolution, rule, regulation, ordinance, or formal action of a public body made or taken in substantial violation of the Open Meetings Act shall be voidable by the district court if the suit is commenced more than one hundred twenty days after but within one year of the meeting of the public body in which the alleged violation occurred. A suit to void any final action shall be commenced within one year of the action.

(2) The Attorney General and the county attorney of the county in which the public body ordinarily meets shall enforce the Open Meetings Act.

(3) Any citizen of this state may commence a suit in the district court of the county in which the public body ordinarily meets or in which the plaintiff resides for the purpose of requiring compliance with or preventing violations of the Open Meetings Act, for the purpose of declaring an action of a public body void, or for the purpose of determining the applicability of the act to discussions or decisions of the public body. It shall not be a defense that the citizen attended the meeting and failed to object at such time. The court may order payment of reasonable attorney's fees and court costs to a successful plaintiff in a suit brought under this section.

(4) Any member of a public body who knowingly violates or conspires to violate or who attends or remains at a meeting knowing that the public body is in violation of any provision of the Open Meetings Act shall be guilty of a Class IV misdemeanor for a first offense and a Class III misdemeanor for a second or subsequent offense.

Neb. Rev. Stat. § 84-1415. Open Meetings Act; requirements; waiver; validity of action.

No motion, resolution, rule, regulation, ordinance, or formal action made, adopted, passed, or taken at a meeting as defined in section 84-1409 of a public body as defined in such section shall be invalidated because such motion, resolution, rule, regulation, ordinance, or formal action was made, adopted, passed, or taken at a meeting or meetings on or after March 17, 2020, and on or before April 30, 2021, pursuant to a Governor's Executive Order which waived certain requirements of the Open Meetings Act.

2. **Ward redistricting.**



The City of Columbus

RESPONSIBLE • RESPONSIVE • REPUTABLE

Administration Office (402) 562-4232

Fax (402) 563-1380

memorandum

DATE: December 1, 2021
TO: Mayor and City Council and City Council
FROM: Tara Vasicek, City Administrator *TV*
RE: Redistricting of Wards

RECOMMENDATION:

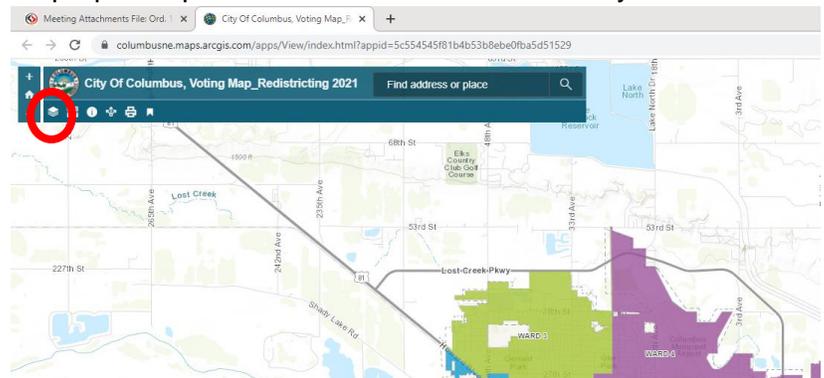
Recommend to the Mayor and City Council that the redistricting be approved as presented.

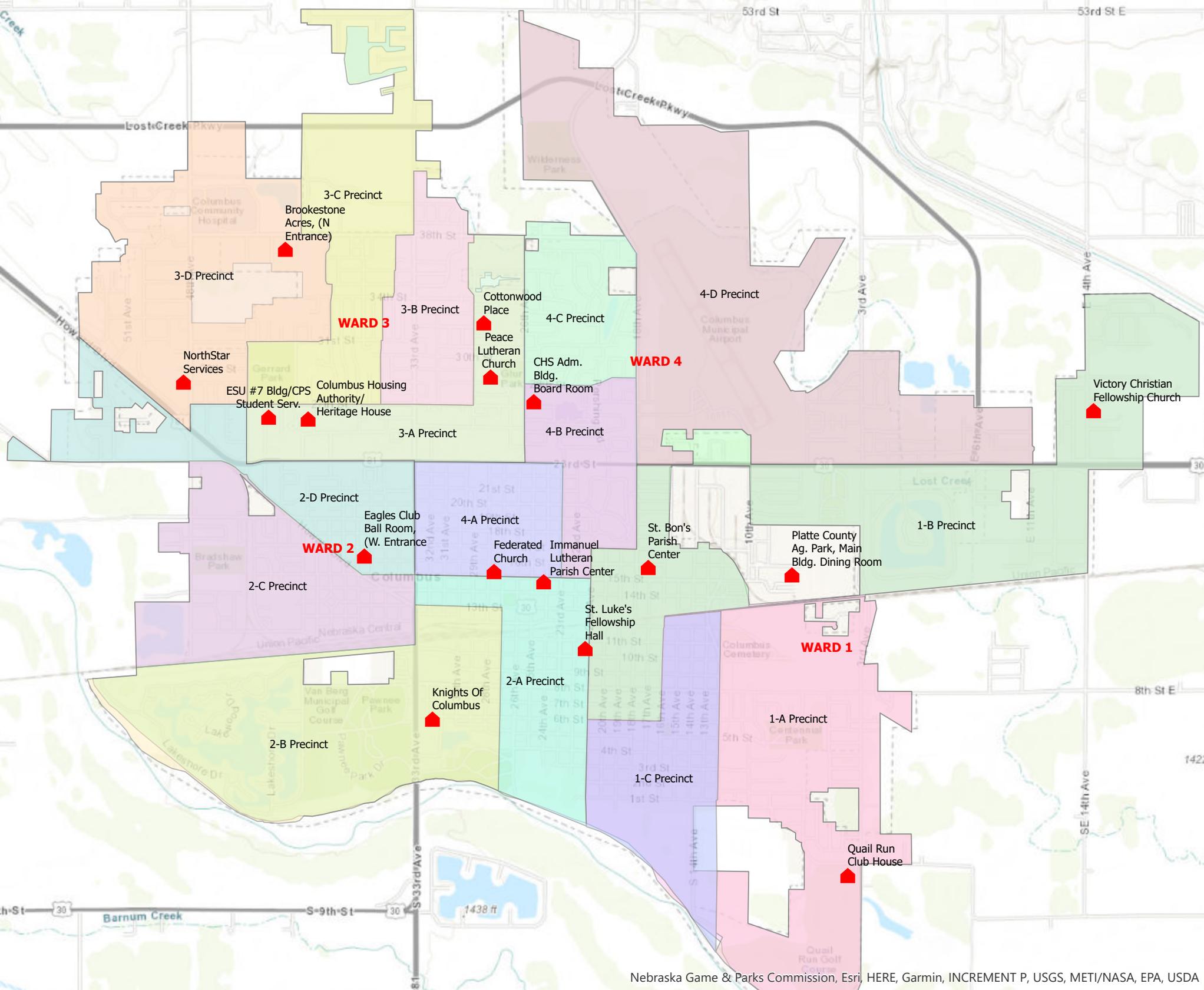
DISCUSSION:

After each decennial census, redistricting takes place. The 2020 census was significantly delayed by the Coronavirus pandemic at the federal level, which caused delays in the state of Nebraska’s process. The Nebraska Legislature passed LB285 to address issues created by these delays and the effects they have had on the State, Counties and local governing bodies. After the legislature approved their Districts, the 93 counties in Nebraska were given the census and state boundaries to redraw precinct boundaries. That information was due and delivered to the City on November 1st. Over the past month, the City’s Engineering Department has been working to establish the new ward boundaries. Every effort was made to reduce changes to the ward boundaries, but as the community grows, so does the distribution of population. The ward boundaries are to follow precinct lines whenever possible. Only 2 precincts per ward are permitted worst case scenario. The population in the wards also must be balanced. The City has until December 30th to complete the redistricting of city wards and provide that information to the Platte County election commissioner.

[CLICK HERE](#) to access maps of the current and proposed precincts and wards within the City of Columbus.

Once you are in the map, you can click on the icon circled in red to turn on and off the different maps ‘layers’ to see how the boundaries have changed. You can also zoom in & out to get a closer view at any area.





3-C Precinct
Brookstone Acres, (N Entrance)
3-D Precinct
NorthStar Services
ESU #7 Bldg/CPS Student Serv.
Columbus Housing Authority/Heritage House

WARD 3

3-B Precinct
Cottonwood Place
Peace Lutheran Church
3-A Precinct
4-B Precinct
CHS Adm. Bldg. Board Room

WARD 4

2-D Precinct
Eagles Club Ball Room, (W. Entrance)

WARD 2

4-A Precinct
Federated Church
Immanuel Lutheran Parish Center

St. Bon's Parish Center

Platte County Ag. Park, Main Bldg. Dining Room

1-B Precinct

2-C Precinct
2-B Precinct
Knights Of Columbus

2-A Precinct

St. Luke's Fellowship Hall

WARD 1

1-C Precinct

1-A Precinct

Quail Run Club House

DIVISION INTO WARDS: The City is hereby divided into four (4) wards as hereinafter designated.

(A) *FIRST WARD.* All that part of the City of Columbus lying South and East of a line described as follows: Commencing at a point where the West Right-of-Way line of East 14th Avenue intersects the North Corporate Limits of the City; thence Southerly on the West Right-of-Way line of East 14th Avenue to its intersection with the Easterly extension of the North line of Nick Luchsinger Addition; thence Westerly on said North line to the Northwest corner said Addition; thence Southerly and on the West line said Addition to the Southwest corner said Addition; thence Westerly, and on the Easterly extension of the North line Thiele 4th Subdivision to the Northwest corner said Thiele 4th Subdivision; thence Southerly and on the West line Thiele 2nd, 3rd, 4th Subdivision to its intersection with the centerline 23rd Street; thence Westerly and on the centerline 23rd Street to its intersection with the Southerly extension of the East Right-of-Way line 10th Avenue; thence northerly on said East Right-of-Way line to its intersection with the North Corporate Limits line; thence Westerly on the North Corporate Limits line to its intersection with the West Right-of-Way line 10th Ave; thence Northwesterly and Westerly on the North Corporate Limits of the City line North Vishay Dale Electronics Property to its intersection with Three Eagles Subdivision; thence Southerly on the East line said Subdivision to its intersection with the North Right-of-Way line 25th Street; thence Westerly on the North Right-of-Way line 25th Street to the Southeast corner Sands 2nd Subdivision; thence Northerly on the East line Sands 2nd Subdivision to the Northeast Corner said Subdivision; thence Westerly and on the North line Sands 2nd Subdivision and Industrial Site Subdivision to the Northwest corner Industrial Site Subdivision; thence Southerly and on the West line said Subdivision to the Southwest corner Lot 7 said Subdivision; thence Easterly and on the Easterly extension of the South line Lot 7 to its intersection with the East Right-of-Way line 16th Avenue; thence Southerly and on said East line to the Southwest corner Lot 17, Industrial Site Subdivision; thence Easterly and on the Easterly extension of the South line Lot 17 to its intersection with the East Right-of-Way line 14th Avenue; thence Southerly and on said East line to its intersection with the centerline 23rd Street; thence Westerly and on said centerline to its intersection with the centerline 18th Avenue; thence Southerly and on said centerline its intersection with the centerline 17th Street; thence Westerly on said centerline to its intersection with the centerline 21st Avenue; thence Southerly on the extension said centerline to its intersection with the South Corporate Limits of the City, shall constitute and be known as the First Ward.

(B) *SECOND WARD.* All that part of the City of Columbus lying South and West of a line described as follows: Commencing at a point where the centerline Howard Boulevard (US Hwy 81) intersects the West Corporate Limits of the City; thence southeasterly and on said centerline to its intersection with the centerline 48th Avenue; thence Northerly and on said centerline to its intersection with the centerline 27th Streets; thence Easterly and on said centerline to its intersection with the centerline 45th Avenue; thence Southerly and on said centerline to its intersection with the centerline 23rd Street; thence Easterly and on said centerline to its intersection with the centerline 33rd Avenue; thence Southerly and on said centerline to its intersection with the centerline 15th Street; thence Easterly and on said centerline to its intersection with the centerline 21st Avenue; thence southerly on the extension said centerline to its intersection with the South Corporate Limits of the City, shall constitute and be known as the Second Ward.

(C) *THIRD WARD.* All that part of the City of Columbus lying North and West of a line described as follows: Commencing at a point where the centerline Howard Boulevard (US Hwy 81) intersects the West Corporate Limits of the City; thence Southeasterly and on said centerline to its intersection with the centerline 48th Avenue; thence Northerly and on said centerline to its intersection with the centerline 27th Street; thence Easterly and on said centerline to its intersection with the centerline 45th Avenue; thence Southerly and on said centerline to its intersection with the centerline 23rd Street; thence Easterly and on said centerline to its intersection with the Southerly extension of the centerline 26th Avenue; thence Northerly on

said centerline to its intersection with the North Right-of-Way line 38th Street; thence Westerly on said Right-of-Way line to its intersection with the East line Maple Park 3rd Addition; thence Northerly on said East line to its intersection with the Northeasterly line Maple Park 3rd Addition; thence Northwesterly on said Northeasterly line to its intersection with the North line Maple Park 3rd Addition; thence Westerly on North line Maple Park 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Additions to a point 310.00 East of its intersection with the East Right-of-Way line 33rd Avenue; thence Northerly and parallel to the East Right-of-Way line 33rd Avenue to its intersection with the South line Off properties Addition; thence Easterly on said South line to the Southeast corner Off Properties Addition; thence Northerly on the East line said Addition to the Northeast corner Off Properties Addition; thence westerly on the North line said Addition to its intersection with the East Right-of-Way line 33rd Avenue; thence Northerly and on said Right-of-Way line to its intersection with the South Right-of-Way line Lost Creek Parkway; thence Easterly and on said South line to its intersection with the Southerly extension of the East line Jim Hellbusch First Subdivision; thence Northerly and on said East line to its intersection with the North Right-of-Way line 47th Street; thence Westerly and on the North line said Right-of-Way to its intersection with the centerline 33rd Avenue; thence Northerly on said centerline to its intersection with the North Corporate Limits of the City, shall constitute and be known as the Third Ward.

(D) *FOURTH WARD.* All that part of the City of Columbus lying North and East of a line described as follows: Commencing at a point where the centerline East 11th Avenue intersects the centerline 23rd Street; thence Westerly on the centerline 23rd Street to its intersection with the Southerly extension of the East Right-of-Way line 10th Avenue; thence Northerly on said Right-of-Way line to its intersection with the North line Corporate Limits; thence Westerly on the North Corporate limits line to its intersection with the West Right-of-Way line 10th Avenue; thence Northwesterly and Westerly on the North Corporate Limits line of City north line Vishay Dale Electronics property to its intersection with the East line Three Eagles Subdivision; thence Southerly on the East line said Subdivision to its intersection with the North Right-of-Way line 25th Street; thence Westerly on the North Right-of-Way line 25th Street to the Southeast corner Sands 2nd Subdivision; thence Northerly on the East line Sands 2nd Subdivision to the Northeast corner said Subdivision; thence Westerly and on the North line Sands 2nd Subdivision and Industrial Site Subdivision to the Northwest corner Industrial Site Subdivision; thence Southerly and on the West line said Subdivision to the Southeast corner Lot 7, said Subdivision; thence Easterly and on the Easterly extension of the South line Lot 7 to its intersection with the East Right-of-Way line 16th Avenue; thence Southerly and on said East line to the Southwest corner Lot 17, Industrial Site Subdivision; thence Easterly and on the Easterly extension of the South line Lot 17 to its intersection with the East Right-of-Way line 14th Avenue; thence Southerly and on said East line to its intersection with the centerline 23rd Street; thence Westerly and on said centerline to its intersection with the centerline 18th Avenue; thence Southerly and on said centerline to its intersection with the centerline 17th Street; thence Westerly and on said centerline to its intersection with the centerline 21st Avenue; thence Southerly and on said centerline to its intersection with the centerline 15th Street; thence Westerly and on said centerline to its intersection with the centerline 33rd Avenue; thence Northerly and on said centerline to its intersection with the centerline 23rd Street; thence Easterly and on said centerline to its intersection with the Southerly extension of the center line 26th Avenue; thence Northerly on said centerline to its intersection with the Westerly extension of the North line Deerfield Park 1st Addition; thence Easterly and on the North line said addition to the Northeast corner Deerfield Park 1st Addition; thence Southerly and on the East line said Subdivision to its intersection with the North Right-of-Way line 38th Street; thence Easterly and on said North Right-of-Way line to its intersection with the West Right-of-Way line Wilderness Drive (18th Avenue); thence Northwesterly and on said Right-of-Way line to its intersection with the South line Wilderness Park; thence Westerly and on the South line said Park to its intersection with the Northerly extension centerline 26th Avenue; thence Northerly and on said Northerly extension to its intersection with the centerline 53rd Street, shall constitute and be known as the Fourth Ward.

3. Presentation by RDG Planning & Design on housing study.



Columbus Housing Study

November 26th, 2021



Amy Haase, AICP
Stephanie Rouse, AICP

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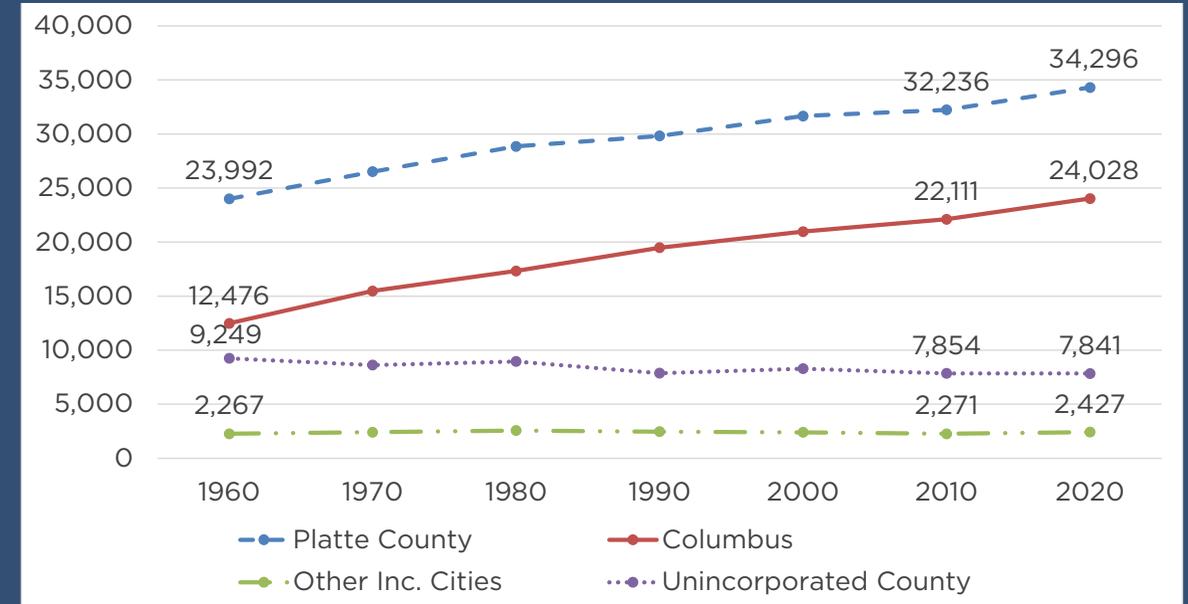
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A special thank you to the NeighborWorks Northeast Nebraska, the City of Columbus, Columbus Chamber of Commerce, and the residents of Columbus for providing their insights and passion for Columbus.



Market Analysis

Population Change by Decade



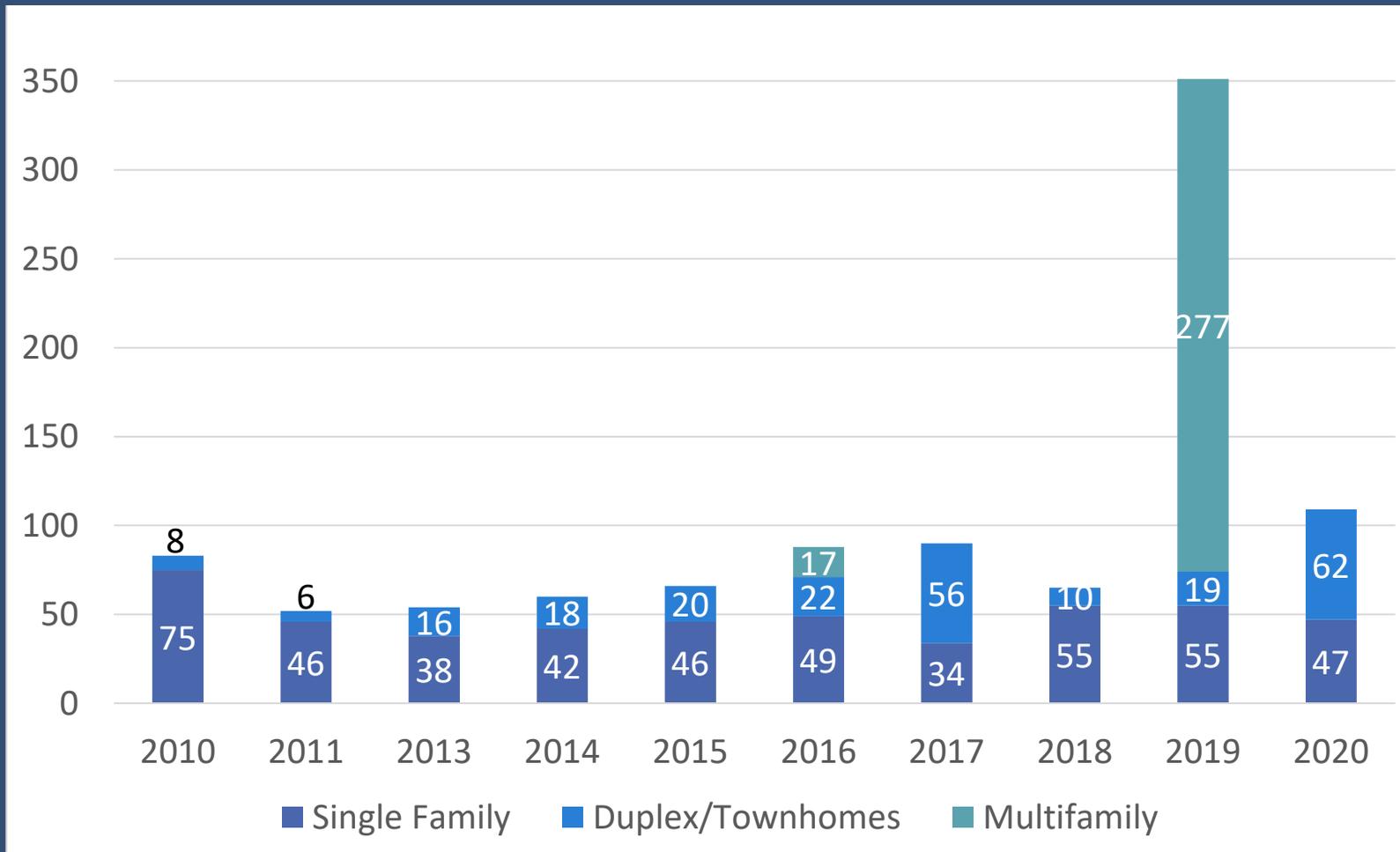
Source: U.S. Census Bureau

	Population	Population Change from Previous Decade	% Change During Decade	Annual Rate
1960	12,476			
1970	15,471	2,995	24.0%	2.17%
1980	17,328	1,857	12.0%	1.14%
1990	19,480	2,152	12.4%	1.18%
2000	20,971	1,491	7.7%	0.74%
2010	22,111	1,140	5.4%	0.53%
2020	24,028	1,917	8.7%	0.83%
2000-2020		3,057	0.7%	0.12%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

- » Columbus has experienced steady population increases since the 1990s.
- » A healthy job market has supported strong growth in Columbus and stabilized populations in surrounding smaller communities.

Construction Activity



Source: City of Columbus

- » While construction activity has been strong in the last few years only 2019 and 2020 saw rates above 100 units
- » The 2017 housing study identified a need for greater housing variety which began to be addressed in the last two years

Regional & Aspirational Peer Cities

	2000	2010	2020	Difference 2010-2020	% Change
Columbus	20,971	22,111	24,028	1,917	8.67%
Fremont	25,174	26,397	27,141	744	2.82%
Kearney	27,431	30,787	33,790	3,003	9.75%
Norfolk	23,516	24,210	24,955	745	3.08%
North Platte	23,878	24,733	23,390	-1,343	-5.43%
Lincoln	225,581	258,379	291,082	32,703	12.66%
Omaha	390,007	408,958	486,051	77,093	18.85%

- » **Columbus’ business mix and available jobs support much stronger growth patterns than Fremont, Norfolk, or North Platte.**
- » **Much of Nebraska’s growth occurred in the urban centers along Interstate 80 and in the smaller urban centers in the eastern portion of the state.**

2030 Population Scenarios

Growth Rate	2020	2025	2030
0.5% (2000-2010 rate)	24,028	24,672	25,334
0.8% (2010-2020 rate)	24,028	25,048	26,111
1.00%	24,028	25,254	26,542

Source: RDG Planning & Design

- » **While Columbus has grown in the past two decades the number of available jobs would indicate that even stronger growth is possible.**
- » **Despite slower development patterns coming out of the recession, Columbus grew by almost 1%.**
- » **With a continued focus on housing development and employee recruitment Columbus should grow to almost 26,500 by 2030.**

Occupancy Changes

	2010	2020	Change 2010-2020
Total Units	9,322	9,963	641
Occupied Units	8,874	9,477	603
Total Vacant	448	486	38
Vacancy rate	4.8%	4.9%	

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

- » **The Census has not yet released the split between owner and renter occupancy.**
- » **The number of vacant units has increased but is still low. Vacant units are needed in a healthy housing market to offer options to those looking for a house to meet their current life situation or to move into the community.**
- » **Columbus will need to continue to add units to meet both pent up demand and future growth.**

The Demand Projection Process



- » **The population forecast, recent construction activity and assumptions about people per household generates a ten-year overall housing demand.**
- » **Distribution of household income in a community is important.**
- » **Income ranges were matched with affordability price points, based on housing costs equal to 30% of gross income.**
- » **Price breakouts were defined for new housing demand, based on the assumption that new construction should ideally be affordable to the existing household income distribution.**

Development Projection

	2020	2025	2030	TOTAL
Population at End of Period	24,028	25,254	26,542	
Household Population at End of Period	23,623	24,828	26,094	
Average People Per Household	2.45	2.45	2.45	
Household Demand at End of Period	9,642	10,134	10,651	
Projected Vacancy Rate	4.9%	5.4%	5.9%	
Unit Needs at End of Period	10,136	10,710	11,316	
Replacement Need (total lost units)		40	50	90
Cumulative Need During Period		613	656	1,269
Annual Need		153	131	141

Source: RDG

- » Over the past few years Columbus has experienced much stronger housing construction activity; however, it has not been enough to address the housing shortage.
- » To address the pent up demand in the market the vacancy rate should increase to nearly 6%.
- » To meet much of the city's pent up demand nearly 127 units annually should be constructed.
- » The city also has approximately 2,000 job openings today and the potential for employment growth is strong with a number of businesses just noting their immediate need. *If Columbus captured 1/3 of those jobs as need residents they would have an immediate need for nearly 670 units.*

Income Distributions and Housing Affordability Ranges

(2019 estimates)

Income Range	# HHs in Each Range	Affordable Range for Owner Units	# of Owner Units	Affordable Range for Renter Units	# of Renter Units	Total Affordable Units	Balance
\$0-25,000	1,594	>\$60,000	308	\$0-499	925	1,233	-361
\$25,000-49,999	2,364	\$60,000-124,999	2,057	\$500-999	1,881	3,938	1,574
\$50,000-74,999	1,847	\$125,000-199,999	2,209	\$1,000-1,499	167	2,376	529
\$75-99,999	1,638	\$200,000-249,999	529	\$1,500-1,999	23	552	-1,086
\$100-150,000	1,205	\$250,000-399,999	971	\$2,000-2,999	0	971	-234
\$150,000+	621	\$400,000+	150	\$3000+	49	199	-422

* HH = Households

Source: U.S. Census, 2019; RDG Planning & Design

» This analysis evaluates the availability of affordable housing and compares the quantity of housing affordable to each income group.

» These estimates are from 2019 and do not reflect recent price inflations.

» The city likely continued to have a large supply of housing priced under \$200,000 and rents below \$1,000, but these units are filled and not available

» Note: these numbers should not be taken as demand that will need to be filled but where opportunities and issues may exist.

Comparative Regional Affordability

	Median Household Income	Median House Value	Value / Income Ratio	Median Contract Rent
Columbus	\$60,110	\$145,500	2.42	\$628
Fremont	\$49,474	\$132,700	2.68	\$615
Kearney	\$57,064	\$178,900	3.14	\$639
Norfolk	\$49,372	\$145,400	2.94	\$548
North Platte	\$54,357	\$118,900	2.19	\$635
Lincoln	\$57,746	\$169,800	2.94	\$730
Omaha	\$60,092	\$159,700	2.66	\$762

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

» Columbus has the highest median income among peer cities and despite inflation should continue to be able to support new construction that will free up existing housing for the households making at or below the median.

» An affordable, self-sustaining housing market, with adequate value or revenues to support market rate new construction, typically has a value to income ratio between 2.5 and 3.

» Ratios above 3.0 exhibit affordability issues.

» Ratios below 2.0 are significantly undervalued relative to income and make it difficult to support new construction costs.

» Despite new construction, Columbus' rental rates remain comparable

Housing Development Program

	2025	2030	TOTAL
Total Owner Occupied			
Affordable Low: <\$200,000	168	180	348
Moderate Market: \$200-250,000	65	70	135
Market: \$250-350,000	48	52	100
High Market: Over \$350,000	25	27	51
	307	328	635
Total Renter Occupied			
Low: Less than \$500	66	70	136
Affordable: \$500-1,000	97	104	202
Market: \$1,000-1,500	76	81	158
High Market: \$1,500+	67	72	140
	307	328	635
Total Need	614	656	1,270

- » This analysis assumes a split of 50% owner-occupied and renter-occupied. This is to address the need for variety in the market.
- » New construction will cost \$200,000 or more, causing demand for lower-cost units to be met either by existing housing units or heavily subsidized construction. Creating more variety in housing types can motivate households to place their \$180,000 or less home on the market.

Source: RDG Planning & Design



Themes

The following section is based on listening sessions completed in October 2021 and the market analysis.

Opportunities and Challenges



- » **Builder Capacity**
- » **Lot Shortage**
- » **Lack of Housing Variety**
- » **For Sale Shortage**
- » **Downtown Opportunities**
- » **Infill and Redevelopment Sites**
- » **Strong Economy**
- » **Appetite for New Products**

Opportunities and Challenges

- » *Builder Capacity*
- » Lot Shortage
- » Lack of Housing Variety
- » For Sale Shortage
- » Downtown Opportunities
- » Infill and Redevelopment Sites
- » Strong Economy
- » Appetite for New Products

The 2017 housing study noted builder capacity was one of the key issues facing the city. Over the past four years this issue has continued. While construction has increased the city has \$3.5 million in Workforce Housing funding and no builders that have accepted the opportunity.

The construction trades still need to be part of any community workforce development strategy to build capacity for both housing construction and business expansion. This will likely take a partnership with Central Community College, specifically in finding the space for the program.



Opportunities and Challenges

» **Builder Capacity**

» ***Lot Shortage***

» **Lack of Housing Variety**

» **For Sale Shortage**

» **Downtown Opportunities**

» **Infill and Redevelopment Sites**

» **Strong Economy**

» **Appetite for New Products**

A strong ag economy has resulted in continued increasing land prices. At the same time the available opportunities inside city limits for new lot development is limited. Finding new opportunities, thinking about sites in new ways, and building partnerships with surrounding property owners will all be important.

Most importantly is making sure that land is used in the most efficient way possible. Very low density developments cannot be supported inside the city limits. New development patterns and product types will be essential to using land and infrastructure to the highest degree. The more units on a site also lowers the lot cost per unit.

Opportunities and Challenges

» **Builder Capacity**

» **Lot Shortage**

» ***Lack of Housing Variety***

» **For Sale Shortage**

» **Downtown Opportunities**

» **Infill and Redevelopment Sites**

» **Strong Economy**

» **Appetite for New Products**

Since 2016 Columbus has had more rental housing built than in the past 20 years. These units, along with the townhomes that have been built, have filled quickly. The very low vacancy rate that remains among these units continues to illustrate the shortage of housing variety.

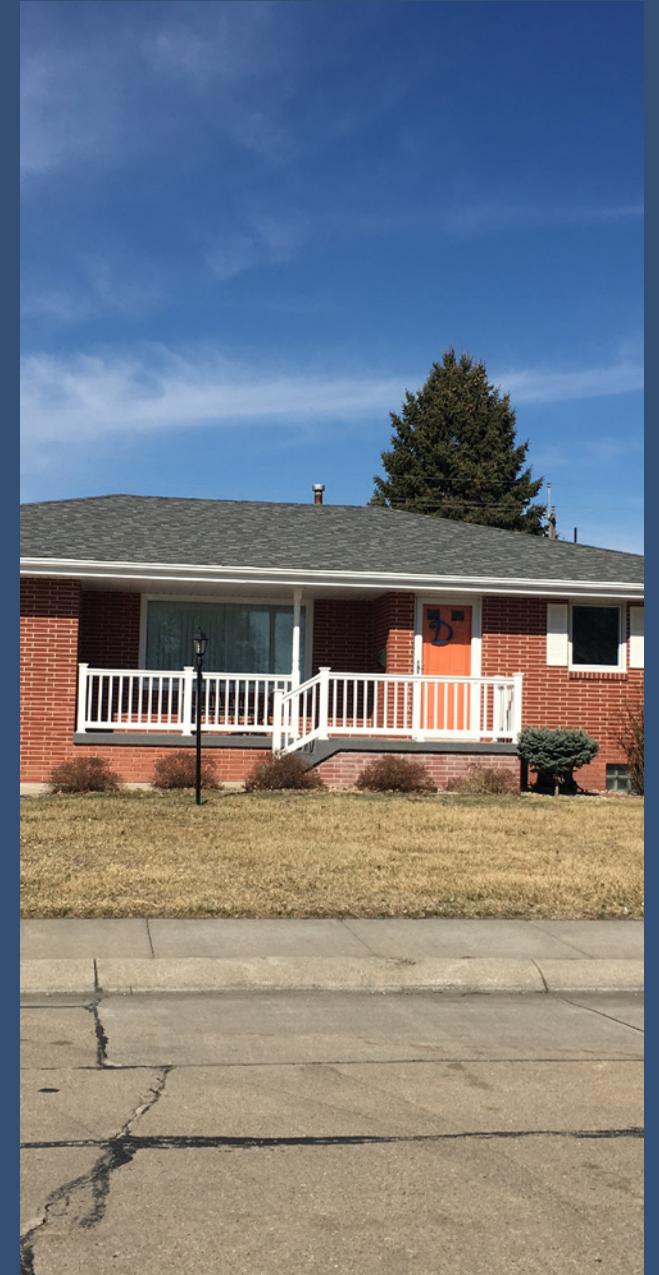
Maintenance free or lower maintenance options for empty-nesters and retirees remains limited. For many of these households they remain in units that no longer fit their needs or end up moving to one of the surrounding communities and commuting to Columbus. Development of these units can be an essential strategy for bringing the homes below \$200,000 to market.

Opportunities and Challenges

- » **Builder Capacity**
- » **Lot Shortage**
- » **Lack of Housing Variety**
- » ***For Sale Shortage***
- » **Downtown Opportunities**
- » **Infill and Redevelopment Sites**
- » **Strong Economy**
- » **Appetite for New Products**

In 2017 Columbus was experiencing a shortage of for-sale homes that has only become an even greater issue in 2021. Since 2020 the issue is no longer localized but a national issue for several reasons.

- » **Low interest rates have allowed many to purchase.**
- » **Lack of variety of product types has resulted in older households remaining in their units and many households choosing to renovate existing homes rather than moving.**
- » **COVID-19 resulting in fewer people putting their homes on the market while the demand remains high. At the time of this report there were fewer than 50 units listed for sale. Despite the pandemic individuals are still moving and need to fill local jobs.**



Opportunities and Challenges

- » **Builder Capacity**
- » **Lot Shortage**
- » **Lack of Housing Variety**
- » **For Sale Shortage**
- » ***Downtown Opportunities***
- » **Infill and Redevelopment Sites**
- » **Strong Economy**
- » **Appetite for New Products**

Unlike many of Columbus' peer communities, housing has been slow to come to downtown. At the same time the district has thrived despite the Pandemic. The interest and opportunities for additional housing remain strong. Like every district issues around building codes, parking, and accessibility will need to be addressed but other similar districts have resolved these issues, they are not unique to Columbus.

Life safety and adequate parking are a must in a downtown, but a healthy district should also be one where parking is challenging.

Opportunities and Challenges

- » **Builder Capacity**
- » **Lot Shortage**
- » **Lack of Housing Variety**
- » **For Sale Shortage**
- » **Downtown Opportunities**
- » ***Infill and Redevelopment Sites***
- » **Strong Economy**
- » **Appetite for New Products**

As noted earlier, Columbus has a limited number of available lots and a shortage of locations to develop new on greenfield* sites. However, there are a number of growing opportunities within the city. Many cities are looking to their older commercial corridors to provide housing opportunities, especially higher density housing.

Even before the Pandemic, retail was changing and many smaller box retailers were going out of business. These sites can be locations for new development. La Vista is a great example of this, where hundreds of units and new, smaller commercial spaces have been developed on the former sites of a Walmart and Hobby Lobby.

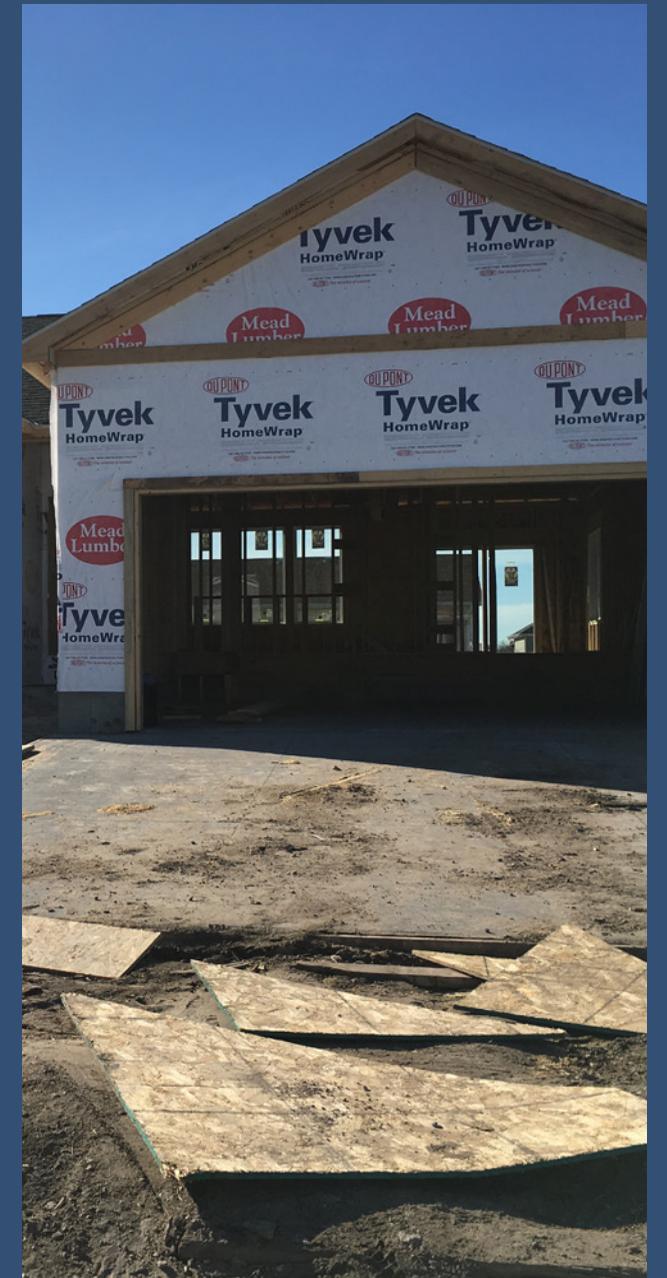
***Greenfield sites are any sites that have been previously undeveloped, often agricultural land in the Midwest.**

Opportunities and Challenges

- » **Builder Capacity**
- » **Lot Shortage**
- » **Lack of Housing Variety**
- » **For Sale Shortage**
- » **Downtown Opportunities**
- » **Infill and Redevelopment Sites**
- » ***Strong Economy***
- » **Appetite for New Products**

Columbus is currently experiencing record unemployment and hundreds of job openings. This is a great sign for the city, indicating continued opportunity for growth. However, if these workers cannot find adequate housing they are less likely to accept jobs or to move on more quickly.

The strong economy should be leveraged to bring more partners to the table to help with gap financing, workforce development, and site opportunities.



Opportunities and Challenges

- » **Builder Capacity**
- » **Lot Shortage**
- » **Lack of Housing Variety**
- » **For Sale Shortage**
- » **Downtown Opportunities**
- » **Infill and Redevelopment Sites**
- » **Strong Economy**
- » ***Appetite for New Products***

The previous study noted the survey results and growing number of households entering retirement years as evidence of Columbus' strong appetite for a variety of new housing products. This appetite has been further demonstrated by the success that several new projects have experienced.

The need for more modern rentals remains strong along with townhomes, small lot single-family, and downtown opportunities.





Directions Forward

Following is a set of strategic objectives to help guide the city and its partners in setting priorities and taking action to support the growth of the housing market.

Strategic Objectives

Columbus has made progress in addressing the housing issues identified in the 2017 plan. These include significant new rental housing and upticks in single-family units. New tools have been implemented to facilitate these projects and innovative approaches are being explored. At the same time businesses continue to grow and demand more workers.

Despite all of this work the undersupply in housing remains. Record low numbers of homes for sale are leaving many out of the ownership market. At the same time new residents looking to rent cannot find the units that are appropriate to their stage of life. In addition, existing vacant positions and potential employment growth are being held back by both a labor and housing shortage which only adds further stress to the regional housing market.

Strategic Objectives

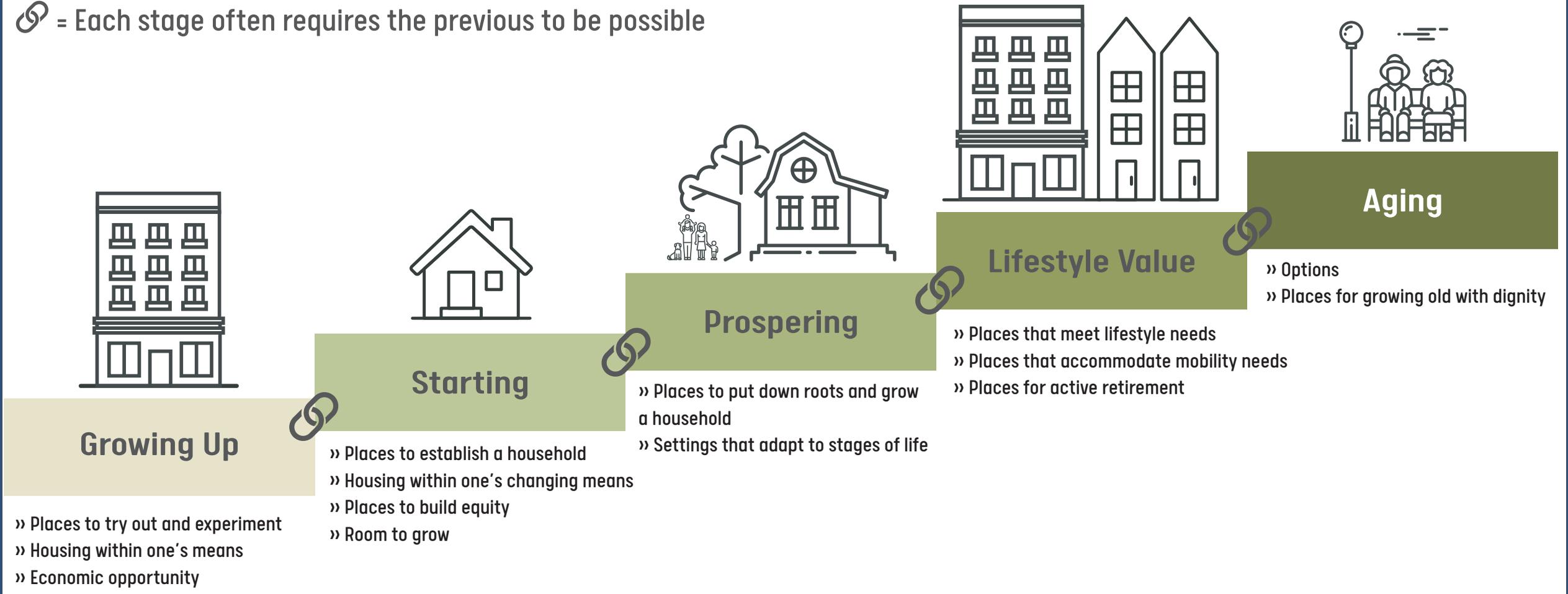
As the area continues to address housing challenges, we recommend the following strategic objectives:

- A. Provide a range of housing environments by offering housing types that meet housing needs for households at different points in their *life cycle*.
- B. Add *lots in a variety of locations and sizes* to accommodate a wider range of housing types and ensure that zoning supports new innovative approaches.
- C. Use *strategic rehabilitation and housing conservation* to meet the need for housing priced below \$200,000 and preserve moderate priced housing.
- D. Continue a focus on *downtown residential* growth as both a rental housing solution and a downtown revitalization tool.

Lifecycle Housing (A & B)

Housing Stages

🔗 = Each stage often requires the previous to be possible



Housing Diversity (A & B)

Increase mobility through housing diversity:

The low supply of “for-sale” or “for-rent” units that meet buyers expectations or price points is a significant challenge for new employees to the area and for current residents looking to move within the community. *Low mobility rates among existing households is the key issue for available units.* Traditionally, as households earn more they would look to purchase larger homes. This trend is changing in many places, with more homeowners staying in housing longer instead of looking for products that fit their lifestyles. This includes retirees who are leaving jobs but not their housing units. *A variety of housing products are needed to increase mobility and provide options for individuals transitioning into the community.* For empty-nesters, this may be lower maintenance units that will allow them to easily transition into their retirement years.

- » Increase the number of rentals
- » Assemble lots for the production of affordable housing
- » Use tools like TIF
- » Rehab programs
- » Rural Workforce Housing Fund

Housing Diversity (A & B)

Examples of Housing Diversity:

- » Townhomes and duplexes
- » Multi-family structures
- » Small lot single-family
- » Accessory dwelling units (ADU's)
- » Manufactured & modular housing
- » Downtown units



Accessory Dwelling Unit



Townhomes on the edge of a downtown

Housing Diversity (A & B) Examples



Historically attached units seamlessly fit into single-family neighborhoods



Small Lot Single-Family Detached with alley loaded garages



Infill development on a former Wal-Mart site



Cottage Court Single-Family Detached with shared maintenance

Housing Diversity (A & B)



Increase the number of rentals

Despite construction of the largest number of rentals in two decades the need for these units at all price points remains strong. To address this issue the community will need to:

- » Expand perceptions of *sites suitable* for higher-density housing to include traditional commercial areas.
- » Consider *advance acquisition of sites* (cities have done this for industrial sites).
- » Create *development partnerships* including businesses and institutions with similar recruitment needs.
- » *Recruit* developers interested in producing multi-family housing. If local interest or capacity does not quickly respond then recruitment of those working in the larger region or state may be needed.
- » Encourage *downtown housing*, including both adaptive reuse and new construction on underused sites adjacent to downtown.

Housing Diversity (A, D)



Downtown Living

Residential living in downtown Columbus offers great opportunities for satisfying housing diversity needs and creating lively and appealing city centers. To alleviate concerns the community should:

- » *Assembly a “how to guide”* on how to do downtown housing rehabilitation. This may include bringing in speakers from Hastings with examples of how they completed projects.
- » *Form business improvement district (BID)* to manage projects and support beautification efforts.

Additionally, programs like historic tax credits, TIF, and the Value Improvement Program (VIP) can be used to offset costs.

Lot & Site Development (A & B)

Assemble Lots for Greater Housing Options:

The policies and strategies for lot development is directly impacted by a community's absorption rate. Rural communities have several options for lot development.

- » ***Assemble lots.*** Development of a Land Bank may help with securing lots. These efforts not only use infrastructure resources more efficiently, but they stabilize values of surrounding properties.

Lot & Site Development (A & B)

Example: Lot Development & Housing Financing

Newton, Iowa population 15,000, used a bond initiative to assist with subdivision development and incentivizing housing construction after the Maytag closing resulted in a loss in confidence by the development community. Lots were offered at a heavily discounted price and an additional closing cost incentive provided.

Assemble Lots for Greater Housing Options:

New Lots. Finding sites for new lots is one of Columbus' biggest challenges. Potential options include:

- » Look to sites not previously considered, like ***older commercial corridors***
- » Push for ***medium to higher densities***, especially in redevelopment areas to maximize the land that is available
- » ***Work with employers*** to identify adjacent property that may be available for development
- » ***Assemble partnerships***, like industrial groups of the past, to purchase land and share the risk

Ultimately a partnership may need to consider nearly giving away the lots to incentive builders; however, those lots should not be the traditional larger lots but need to meet the need for variety.

Housing Conservation (C)

The existing housing stock within Columbus today is the best source of affordable housing. Preservation of this housing is essential to having a supply of diverse affordable housing.

Rising costs is making it more difficult to “flip” homes due to the initial purchase price being higher.

A targeted approach should continue to identify strategies that will elevate the overall values of neighborhoods and communities. Programs should include:

» **Purchase-Rehab-Resale Program**

» **Demolition of Dilapidated Structures**

Housing Conservation (C)

Purchase-Rehab-Resale Program:

- » This highly successful NeighborWorks Northeast Nebraska program should continue to be supported. In this program a home is purchased, rehabbed, and sold to a qualified buyer.
- » The lack of for sale homes is challenging this program like any other buyer.
 - » This could be *combined with a senior oriented development* that allows the senior to move into more appropriate housing and creating a supply of homes for the program.
 - » The formation of *land bank* could also help but many of those homes may require more repair than the program can traditionally afford.



Housing Conservation (C)

Demolition Programs:

- » The city must continue to fund removal of dilapidated housing *after all means to preserve and restore the house have been exhausted*. This may include a program that offers salvageable units to those willing to rehab the property.
- » Once a house is removed the lot should transition to a buyer willing to develop new housing or a land bank for future development.



Housing Conservation (C)



Housing rehab programs are usually limited to funding through CDBG. Expansion of these programs should focus on:

- » **Basic repair and maintenance and the avoidance of band-aid projects**
- » **Improving the energy efficiency of units and lower overall cost of housing**
- » **Rehab of both owner and renter occupied units**

This should be combined with continued enforcement of existing codes and the funding necessary for enforcement.

Workforce Development (A, B, C)



The workforce shortage within the building trades is a national issue, therefore finding ways to retain those trained in this field will be important.

Local training can be very important to the process. Finding a space for Central Community College to hold building trades classes in would be a first step.

However, there is no guarantee that graduates remain in the area. Community leaders should consider:

- » *Sponsorship of students* within this programs with the requirement they remain in Columbus or Platte County after completing their program
- » Outreach to current trade businesses to assist with *succession planning*
- » Greater *encouragement of students* into these programs

Employer Assistance (A)



Credit: Omaha World Herald

Streck Inc, a biotech company in La Vista, announced in October that they would be building an 84 units apartment building adjacent to their Sarpy County facility. The units will be rented to their employees at a discounted.

https://omaha.com/business/local/streck-sweetens-the-pot-for-new-workers-by-building-apartments-for-them/article_883f89ba-3350-11ec-afdf-9ff62d207829.html

Employers can play an important role in addressing housing needs through a variety of initiatives:

- » **Funding of housing development programs that target income ranges of their employees.**
- » **Donation of excess property for housing development.**
- » **Sharing the risk of new developments, such as pledging to rent a unit or cover rents if units are not filled.**
- » **Direct development of rental housing or subdivisions.**

Every employer may have a different comfort level but traditional programs like moving costs and down payment assistance have little impact when the unit is nearly impossible to find.

4. Presentation on snow removal policy.



Snow Plowing Procedures

Snow Plowing

Keeping the community mobile is a top priority for the City and we take a serious approach to the problems associated with snow and ice control. Street Department crews are responsible for the snow and ice control on all city streets within the city limits, as well as the Lost Creek Parkway.

During winter storm events, city crews are dispatched to their individual snow routes to begin the task of clearing the streets. A snow and ice control policy has been adopted by the department. Thoroughfares, collector streets, and emergency routes are given first priority, crews then proceed into residential neighborhoods. Depending on the severity of the storm, the department strives to have all streets cleared of snow within 12 to 24 hours of the event.

See the [Snow Plowing/Removal Brochure \(PDF\)](#) for more information.



QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT SNOW PLOWING / REMOVAL

What do crews do if there is not enough snow to plow, but the streets are icy?

Pre-treatment of roads begin when conditions warrant. During light snowfalls and/or when streets are icy, street crews will spread a brine mixture on major arterials, downtown, and at intersections with traffic signals and stop signs.

When does snow plowing begin?

When enough snow has accumulated (2-6"), crews will begin to plow the streets. After major streets and avenues have been plowed, work will begin on residential streets.

Which streets are cleared by the City Street Department?

The City Street Division plows snow from all streets within the City Limits of Columbus. It is also their responsibility to remove snow from Highways 30 and 81, and Lost Creek Parkway. These streets are plowed as often as needed to keep them clear.

When will my street be plowed?

Depending on the severity of the snowstorm, residential streets are usually plowed within 24 hours after the storm ends. Of course, it may take longer to clear all city streets in case of a blizzard or equipment failure.

Will my cul-de-sac be plowed?

Cul-de-sacs will be cleared with a front-end loader because other equipment is too large for these areas. Do not park in center of Cul-de-sac where snow is piled.

Should we move our cars from the residential streets?

During residential plowing, it is very helpful if cars are moved into the driveway or a street

that has been cleared.

Upon the removal or moving of snow by the City of Columbus, from streets or avenues and the creation of any windrows, or piles of snow left around or upon a vehicle, said vehicle must be moved within twelve (12) hours (6:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m.) from the date of the creation of the windrow or pile of snow to a location at least 100' from the nearest windrow located upon the portion of public right-of-way used for vehicular traffic, or to be moved upon privately owned property.

What about my alley?

All residential alleys are cleared last.

What about driveways and sidewalks?

When plowing snow on your street, crews have no place to push the snow except to the curb. This creates the unavoidable problem of already cleared sidewalks and driveways becoming covered with snow. Unfortunately, the City does not have the funds or personnel to clean sidewalks and driveways. The City Street Division asks your cooperation in removing the snow again. We all need to work together to keep our city safe, including clearing sidewalks of snow.

The City Code further states that no person shall deposit, throw, blow, or otherwise dispose of any snow, ice, or hard packed snow on any public property, street, alley, or other public way except for the sidewalks in the downtown area, as defined in the Snow and Ice Control Policy, which snow shall be returned to the curb-line dividing the streets and sidewalks in said designated area.

What about snow removal in the downtown business district?

It is not practical to try to clear the streets of snow during daytime hours due to the amount of traffic and parked vehicles. The snow removal in the business district is usually done the night following the snowstorm. Depending on the time

and amount of snow, the business district is generally windrowed to the center of the streets and avenues, and hauled out. If necessary, parallel parking is only allowed on streets that have been windrowed, until the snow has been removed.

What if my mailbox becomes covered with snow?

Again, because crews have no place to put the snow, curbside mailboxes may become blocked. Since the City does not have the personnel to remove snow from the mailbox area, we ask that you clear the snow from your mailbox to allow the Post Office to deliver your mail.

What is meant by a "snow emergency"?

When the Mayor or Public Works Director declares a snow emergency, it simply means no vehicles may be parked on streets where you see emergency route signs. These routes are posted on the following page. If necessary, the snow emergency may be extended to prohibit or restrict parking on arterial and residential streets. Typically a Snow Emergency is based on wind, ice, and snowfall forecast of 8" or more. Should a snow emergency be declared, notice will be given by radio, television, and, if feasible, in the newspaper.

If I have an emergency, what should I do?

Call the Police Dispatch at 911.

How many lane miles does the City have to plow?

The City of Columbus conducts snow operations on 502 lane miles of streets.

What if I have questions about snow plowing or removal?

If you have questions, you may call the City Public Works Director at 402-562-4260 or the City Street Division at 402-562-4253.

Revised 12/29/20



§ 72.52 SNOW EMERGENCY ROUTES.

- (A) *Definition.* The term ***SNOW EMERGENCY ROUTES***, as used in this subchapter, shall mean those streets established as such in accordance with the provisions of this subchapter.
- ('63 Code, § 9-10-1)
- (B) *Establishment of routes.* The Mayor or Public Works Director is hereby authorized to establish snow emergency routes upon any street or highway of the City and may place appropriate signs, marks, lines, signals or other traffic-control devices indicating the existence of the snow emergency routes. The designation of any street, highway or portion thereof as a snow emergency route shall in no way affect any previous designation of that street or highway as an arterial or other road designation.

§ 92.30 REMOVAL OF SNOW AND ICE REQUIRED.

- (A) (1) It shall be unlawful for the owner or occupant of any lot to permit snow, ice or hard-packed snow to accumulate or remain on the sidewalk contiguous thereto. The sidewalks shall be cleaned within 24 hours after the cessation of any storm or fall of snow.



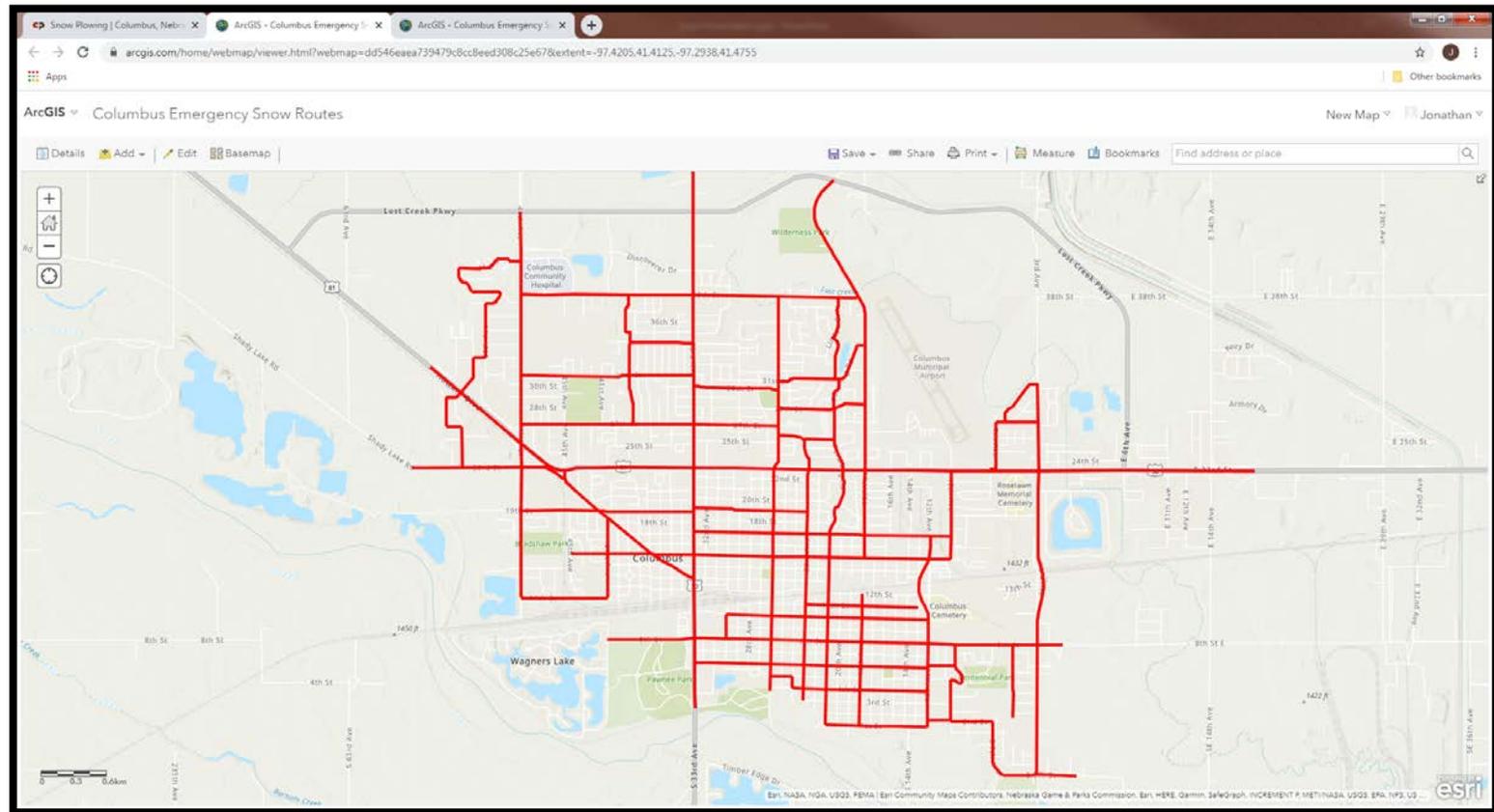
Emergency Snow Routes for City of Columbus, NE

STREETS	AVENUES
Lost Creek Parkway	54th Avenue
41st Street, 54th Ave to 48th Ave	53rd Avenue
38th Street	51st Avenue, Hwy 81 to 27th St
34th Street, 39th Ave to 33rd Ave	
33rd Street, 51st Ave to 48th Ave	48th Avenue
31st Street, 26th Ave to 18th Ave	41st Avenue, 11th St to Howard Blvd
30th Street, 33rd Ave to 26th Ave	39th Avenue, 27th St to 38th St
28th Street, 26th Ave to 18th Ave	33rd Avenue, 2nd St to 53rd St
27th Street, 48th Ave to 26th Ave	30th Avenue, 8th St to 10th St
27th Street, 7th Ave to 3rd Ave	
26th Street, 26th Ave to Pershing Rd.	26th Avenue
23rd Street HWY 81/30	23rd Avenue
19th Street, 48th Ave to 26th Ave	21st Avenue
17th Street, 33rd Ave to 10th Ave	Pershing Road
	18th Avenue
15th Street, 45th Ave to 10th Ave	12th Avenue
11th Street, 21st Ave to 13th Ave	10th Avenue
10th Street, 30th Ave to 12th Ave	9th Avenue
	8th Avenue, 5th St to 8th St
8th Street, Wagner's to 1st Ave	7th Avenue, 23rd St to 27th St
6th Street, 33rd Ave to 9th Ave	Air-Vista Drive
5th Street, 26th Ave to 24th Ave	5th Avenue, 3rd St to 8th St
4th Street, 24th Ave to 12th Ave	
2nd Street, 12th Ave to 7th Ave	
1st Street, 21st Ave to 12th Ave	
South 5th Street, 7th Ave to 1st Ave	

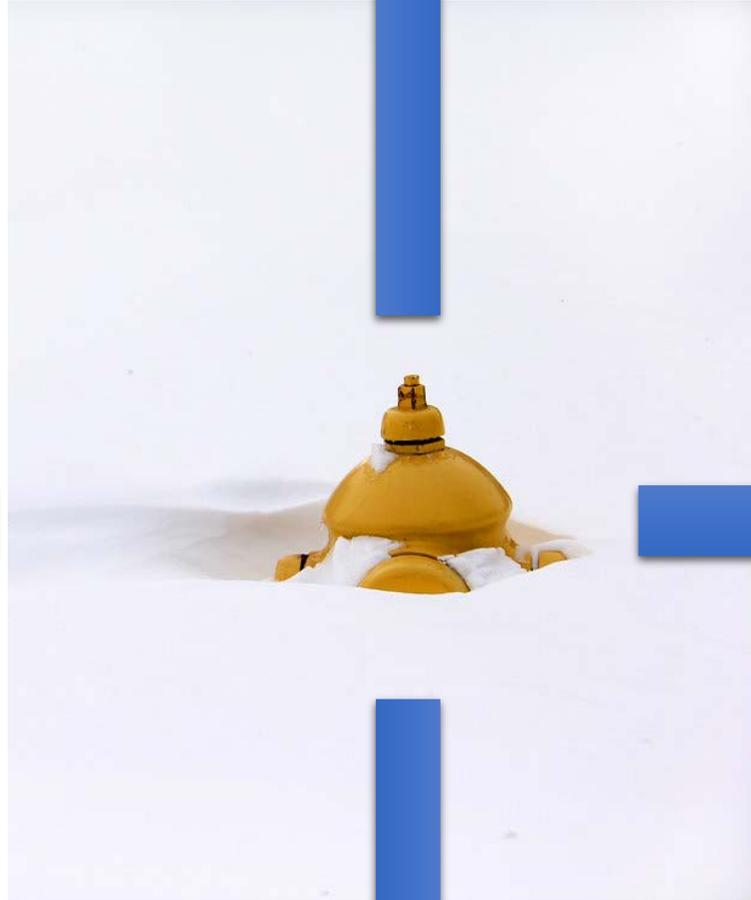


Web Map

- View the interactive online GIS map:
 - <https://arcg.is/1nKD44>
- Or access it online at the City of Columbus website.
 - Departments > Transportation > Streets > Snow Plowing



3 feet behind hydrant



3 feet

3 feet

Clear snow to the street

5. Adjournment.