

Mon., July 27 th	Planning Commission Meeting	5:30 PM	Click HERE to view Agenda and Zoom Access
Wed., Aug. 5 th	Social & Economic Justice Advisory Committee	8:30 AM	Click HERE to view Agenda and Zoom Access
Wed., Aug. 5 th	Homelessness Task Force	11:30 AM	Click HERE to view Agenda and Zoom Access
Wed., Aug. 12 th	City Council Meeting	6:30 PM	Click HERE to view Agenda and Zoom Access



Public Health and Safety

DOWNTOWN TRASH BARRELS

Many people have observed that trash has often been overflowing in downtown trash barrels. This is partly due to reduced DPW staffing and resources. The budget called for us to eliminate our contracted service and perform the work with city staff, which added two new people. With COVID we have furloughed existing staff and frozen the new positions but had also cancelled the contract. We have lined up a new contractor for the time being who will begin on Monday. This will address the immediate situation.

The other major factor, though, is that we have discovered a proliferation of home garbage being dumped in the street cans. This has not been a problem in the past. People who are financially challenged right now may see this as an alternative to paying for collection. It also may be a way to avoid mandatory composting. We will be taking steps to prevent this practice.

CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) CITY OF MONTPELIER RESPONSE UPDATE

In general, the month of July has shown increasing case numbers of COVID-19 in other parts of the United States. While Vermont's mitigation efforts have been critical to slowing the virus' spread, the national trend shows that our progress can slide backwards at any time. The State wants to make sure we all do our part in keeping Vermont healthy and open, and for that to happen we need everyone to continue to take prevention seriously.

To that end, the most important weekly update is that the Governor has signed a Mandatory Mask Mandate, where starting August 1st: The State will require that masks are worn in public spaces (indoors & outdoors) when social distancing is not possible. This order applies to everyone over the age of 2, with a few health exceptions.

State Updates:

- **July 21st, 2020:** The Governor held a press conference where he discussed the following:
 - Reminder that we, as Vermonter's, need to keep our guard up, as the National Trends on COVID-19 rates are concerning.
 - The possibility of a state-wide mask mandate. Gov. Scott mentioned that "with college students returning in September, and people heading inside as summer ends, and if it looks like the infection rate is rising, an expanded mask policy will be part of the mix" regarding Vermont's response.

- **July 22nd, 2020:** The State released the following announcement:
 - The first economic recovery grant payments are being sent to Vermont businesses as of July 22, 2020. Applications are continuing to be processed, and there is still money available. Funds are available to Vermont businesses who can demonstrate a revenue decline of at least 50% in any one-month period from March 1, 2020 to August 31, 2020, when compared with the same month in 2019. [The Economic Recovery Grants](#) landing page has full details, including eligibility requirements, document preparation instructions, and a series of FAQs to assist businesses in completing the application.

- **July 24th, 2020:** The Governor held a press conference where he discussed the following:
 - Positive Case Trends: Yesterday, there were over 4million reported COVID-19 cases in the US, and regional data shows that there is a steady rise of cases in the North East, and ongoing forecasts are trending high regarding case growth in our region. Vermont data shows that our trends are holding steady, and we have a low positive case rate. However, the regional forecasts are worrying and should give us pause for concern.
 - **Starting August 1st: The State will require that masks are worn in public spaces (indoors & outdoors) when social distancing is not possible.** This order applies to everyone over the age of 2.
 - Masks will not be required when eating or drinking, doing strenuous activity, and for those who have health or mental conditions that may be aggravated by masks
 - The Governor reminded folks that businesses can refuse to serve folks who are not wearing masks
 - The Governor asked all Vermonters to see the mask mandate as a step to keep moving us forward, and that it is a step intended to help protect other's health and safety. He asks us all to wear a mask “not just because it’s mandated, but because it’s the right thing to do for our seniors, for our kids, for own health, and for our economy”.

General City Updates:

- City Hall Reopening:
 - The City Hall building is open 8:00am-4:30pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Appointments are highly suggested, masks and physical distancing are required.
 - The porta-johns behind City Hall and the Senior Center will remain until we are able to open City Hall full-time.

City Council’s Mask Ordinance:

- UPDATES: City Council adopted an [Emergency Order](#) requiring the wearing of masks inside public Montpelier business establishments that went into effect Thursday June 4th.
 - This Order shall remain in effect until the Montpelier City Council amends, rescinds, or suspends this Order or until the Governor declares an end to the COVID-19 State of Emergency in Vermont, whichever occurs first, which is currently **AUGUST 15th**, unless the Governor amends that order.
- Masks have been donated for businesses and the general public and are currently being stored at Splash Naturals, 68 Main St, Montpelier, VT 05602.
- This ordinance is supported and superseded by the Governor’s State-wide Mask Mandate.

Regional Aid Groups Update:

- The City is maintaining a list of situational updates and regional resources for those who may need them on the COVID-19 Response page on the website here: <https://www.montpelier-vt.org/1155/Coronavirus-Response>
- The Community Call Center is still functioning:
 - Community Call Center hours will be 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM, open weekdays. You may call or text (802) 636-2025.
- The Capital Area Neighborhoods (CAN) contact information:
 - MontpelierCAN@gmail.com and (802) 828-7375
- Open Meal Sites and their locations are being tracked and posted on the Montpelier Mutual Aid website: www.MontpelierMutualAid.org



Responsive and Responsible Government

PARKING

We are actively planning to bring back our parking personnel from furlough on August 4th. They will be splitting their time between parking management and other duties (cleaning, etc.) We will turn the meters on as of August 3rd but not issue tickets until August 17th as an education period. This allows the Council to formally vote on the 12th to reinstate parking enforcement/management. Our current thinking is to enforce only street meters for the first month, leaving all parking lots free. This will give us an idea of how many people are currently using the streets for all day parking vs. how many people are shoppers and short term parkers. That may be something we discuss with you for a final decision on August 12th.

If it appears that there is sufficient parking demand we will start charging in all lots in mid-September. We are cognizant that as long as State employees are not working in their offices the State parking lots are wide open for anyone to use. If there is not much parking demand, we will have to reassess whether to continue enforcement if it is costing us more money than it's generating.

We are also moving forward with implementing the ParkMobile parking app. This allows people to pay for parking with their smart phones without touching the meters. It's a widely used app – Burlington has used it for a couple of years and Barre is starting up with it as well – and is a good way to manage parking. Our goal is to have this up and running by end of September.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL/PARK AVENUE

Due to Department of Education COVID-19 requirements, the schools need to check in each student individually every day with temperature readings and health questions. They need an assembly area where they can process these 430 students. Therefore they are seeking to close Park Avenue again, similar to the way it was done two years ago for the playground construction. They have already reached out to the one directly effected neighbor and will connect with other residents of the street. If you recall, the street was closed from Loomis to near the beginning of the playground while Park Ave was temporarily made two way at the Hubbard St end to provide access for residents. The one property that is completely blocked was provided reserved parking spaces on Loomis St.

The school needs to move forward with active planning for this arrangement and communication with staff and families about this arrangement. This plan, of course, requires street closure approval from the council. It can wait until the 12th if there is no big problem. If the Council would like a more full discussion of this (or the parking plan) earlier than we would need to schedule a special meeting.

TEMPORARY PARKLET APPROVALS

City Council has enacted a temporary parklet ordinance for the purpose of providing additional business expansion opportunities during the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic.

- [Temporary Parklet Application](#) (All applications will be submitted to the City Manager’s Office at jlamb@montpelier-vt.org)
- [Temporary Parklet Ordinance](#)

This temporary ordinance is in place through October 25, 2020.

Approved Temporary Parklets:

- The North Branch Café (currently opting not to use it)
- Three Penny Taproom
- Julio's Cantina



Inclusive, Equitable and Engaged Community

DEMONSTRATION AT STATE HOUSE

A group of people have obtained a permit to hold a demonstration/rally on the State House lawn in support of police. They have been very active in informing their people that they want a peaceful and orderly event, masks worn, etc. We also have information that a group of “Defund the Police” people may be planning to actively counter protest.

MPD has coordinated with the Capital Police and VSP with the goal of keeping everyone safe. We have no idea about the expected size of either group. Hopefully both groups will be small and well behaved.

MONTPELIER SENIOR ACTIVITY CENTER REPORT

FEAST Senior Meals To Go! Served outside Tuesdays and Fridays, 12:00-12:30

- Served in our beautifully landscaped courtyard in front of 58 Barre Street. Requires mask-wearing and six feet distancing in line. **Meals for Over 60**, by suggested donation of \$5 – 10 with completed Annual Nutritional Survey; **Under 60, fee of \$7-10**. Reservations appreciated, and/or request vegetarian by calling **262-6288** by the previous day. All meals include milk. Next week’s menu below; July month menu [here](#).
- **Tuesday, July 28:** Ginger Beef with Rice Pilaf & Dessert
- **Friday, July 31:** Glazed Ham, Sweet Potatoes, Green Beans & Dessert

Senior Activity Center is Hiring! New Americorps position to start September 9: Aging in Place Coordinator! This Americorps member has the opportunity to support our thriving FEAST meal program, plus develop and implement exciting new offerings that will take MSAC’s programs beyond the brick walls of our building to build volunteerism with the Village and other partners to support Aging in Place. Aging services experience is not required, only the motivation to learn and a passion to serve others. View [position description here](#), and [apply or get more information](#)

[about the VHCB Americorps benefits and program here](#). We are offering a rental subsidy, too.

Community Services Department (Recreation, Parks, Senior Activity Center) is Hiring! New VISTA position to start August 31: Youth and Intergenerational Initiatives Assistant

The VISTA member will develop resources and systems to make our department more effective, efficient, and able to engage and serve more people. This VISTA member will be expected to build our capacity in the following ways:

1. Research and develop a plan for the feasibility of universal child care in Montpelier, a goal of City Council.
2. Develop expanded programming to fill the spaces made available when we renovate our downtown recreation building.
3. Expand our inter-generational programming offerings for all three divisions of the City's Community Services Department (Parks & Trees, Recreation, and Senior Activity Center).
4. Support fundraising and volunteer efforts around these initiatives, as well as special fundraising events.

This full-time position is part of Washington County Youth Service Bureau's "[Vermont Youth Tomorrow](#)" VISTA Program and has great benefits, including a rental subsidy. To apply, [click here](#).

LANGDON STREET

Steel barricades have been placed along the upper half of the street! It's important to note that traffic will be able to enter Langdon Street from Main Street and exit onto Elm Street, as usual. The only difference is *where* the travel lane for cars will exist.

Thus far, only one restaurant has taken advantage of this new configuration. If the restaurants require less space, Public Works can remove the fencing and allow some parking spaces to return on the right side of the street. We'll monitor and work with businesses to test and adapt so that we maintain safety and explore opportunities for local businesses.

ORCA MEDIA

ORCA Media supports the City of Montpelier by live streaming videos to local TV and on YouTube. Recently, Comcast changed the government channel to 1085.

- Click here to access City Council Meetings: <https://www.orcamedia.net/series/montpelier-city-council>
- Click here for Live Stream Events: <https://www.orcamedia.net/series/live-stream-events>



Sustainable Infrastructure

BARRE STREET CLOSURE UPDATE

Due to unexpected conditions, Barre Street will remain closed to thru traffic at the intersection of Gin lane until the end of next week. The required utility work is anticipated to be complete by the middle of next week immediately followed by the installation of the new rail crossing. Thank you for your patience as we work to complete this project.

PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT REPORT

The Planning Commission held its public hearing on Monday regarding two potential zoning changes. The first was about the long awaited revision to the design review rules. This includes a complete rewrite of section 2201 to update the rules to make them clearer and more predictable which will also make decisions more defensible in court. Some procedural changes will exempt certain projects from review all together as well as making other projects administrative permits (not requiring a hearing but still needing to meet some rules). Earlier this year the Planning Commission reviewed the boundary of the design review district and made some changes to better follow neighborhood boundaries so that it was less arbitrary than the one we currently use. The amendment was prepared by the Historic Preservation Commission and revised through severable public hearing before the Covid-19 shutdown. The Commission voted unanimously to approve the changes and send them to City Council for consideration.

The second hearing topic was a zoning change proposed for some properties bounded by Pioneer Street, River Street and the Winooski River. This is where the Lazerwash car wash and self-store units are found. A few options were discussed but ultimately the Commission deadlocked on two alternatives; each with a 3-3 vote when 4 votes are needed to pass. They continued the hearing to July 27th where the votes of two Commission members who were not present can be considered.

DON'T FLUSH THAT

Due to the public health crisis, not only is our city seeing a shortage on toilet paper, but many communities are as well. Department of Public Works would like to remind everyone what should NOT be flushed. Flushing items listed below could cause sewer blockages, in which could cause plugged and overflowing toilets, poorly draining sinks and showers, raw sewage backing up through floor drains, manholes overflowing onto the ground or into nearby surface waters, health hazards and nuisance odors, increases in the City's maintenance costs and costly maintenance and repair bills for YOU.

- Paper towels
- Baby wipes
- Moist towelettes
- Cosmetics and cosmetic wipes
- Cloth or paper napkins
- Shop towels
- Condoms
- Tampons and pads
- Diapers
- Cat litter
- Cigarette butts
- Dental floss
- Latex gloves
- Hypodermic needles
- Facial tissues
- Fats, oils or grease
- Clothing or rags
- Medications (pills or liquid)
- Bandages
- Cotton balls
- Food scraps
- Swiffer pads
- Plastic of any kind



William Fraser
City Manager

Upcoming Agenda Items (TENTATIVE)

8/12	Equity Action Plan implementation Stormwater Master Plan Street Painting Policy Personnel Plan Parking Reinstatement Park Ave Street Closure Design Review COVID-19 Update Withdraw from EC Fiber Personnel Plan	8/26	Community Policing Discussion Homelessness Task Force COVID-19 Update
9/9	Net Zero 2030 Plan Public restrooms COVID-19 Update	9/23	New Budget Process Special Election Warning (if needed) COVID-19
10/14	Strategic Plan Progress Update Review 1 st quarter Budget status	10/28	Legislative Priorities 2021
11/11	Veteran's Day– may need to change date) Childcare Option Study	11/25	(Thanksgiving Eve – may need to change date) Preliminary Budget Discussion
12/9	Implement Housing Initiatives Budget	12/23	(near Christmas, may need to change date) Budget
1/13/21	Budget Public Hearing Strategic Plan Progress Update Review 2 nd quarter budget status	1/28/21 Thursday	Budget Public Hearing Warning Public Hearing Approve Warning Review/Approve Petitions
2/10/21	City Manager Review	2/24/21	TBD
3/2/21	Annual Meeting Election	3/10/21	Organizational Meeting

REPORTS DUE:

Universal Recycling Law – Periodic updates

MDC/MA Partnerships – Periodic updates

Protect, Maintain and Improve Built Infrastructure – Update in October

Supporting the Community in Rebound from COVID 19 – Regular updates