



Department Source: Housing & Neighborhood Services

To: City Council

From: City Manager & Staff

Council Meeting Date: November 18, 2024

Re: Annual Report of volunteer service to the City

## Executive Summary

Each year Volunteer Programs staff provide to Council a report of the efforts of City of Columbia volunteers. In FY24, volunteers shared 32,210 hours of service valued at more than \$1,078,710, consistent with service from the previous years.

## Discussion

Volunteer service for FY24 was at 95% of what was reported the previous fiscal year. Six City departments reported volunteer service of greater than 100 hours with City Utilities having the most support at 11,811 hours primarily due to the work done related to recycling, waste reduction and litter pickup. Volunteers supporting Parks & Recreation, logged 11,419 hours and Housing & Neighborhood Services reported 7,468 hours of service. Staff estimate that about 8,000 individuals provided volunteer service over the year.

Resident engagement has been identified as a priority for the City Manager; volunteering is an important element in this effort. By volunteering, our residents increase their connection with City staff and services in ways that are difficult to measure. Attached to this report is a graphic created by Sue Carter Kahl that shows the often unseen value of volunteers.

### Highlights for FY24:

- Columbia was one of 16 cities across the nation selected for a Love Your Block Grant funded by the Bloomberg Center for Public Innovation. The \$100,000 grant will fund a Fellow position and resources for neighborhood activities supported by volunteers.
- Two new programs were established in Parks & Recreation. The Stephens Lake Park Arboretum Volunteer Program started this summer with 20 volunteers participating in training to care for five sections of trees throughout the park. The Golf Course Marshal program also started to provide additional support to our two municipal golf courses, providing 172 hours of service. Both programs were initiated by staff who see volunteerism as a way to improve our parks and programs.
- Volunteers continue to help keep Columbia clean. Through participation in the Adopt-A-Spot program, Litter Team, group or individual eco cleanups and Cleanup Columbia, volunteers picked up 10,291 bags of litter along our roadways, in our parks and near our streams. Five groups joined the Adopt-A-Spot Litter program in FY24, which currently has 90 active adopters. The unfortunate reality of litter persists, but volunteers remain diligent about taking pride in our community helping to protect our environment and improve the appearance of our City.



# City of Columbia

701 East Broadway, Columbia, Missouri 65201

- Long standing programs continued to engage volunteers including Park Patrol with 40 participants, Adopt- A-Spot Beautification with 105 adopted locations and TreeKeepers with 25 active volunteers.
- The Recycling Ambassador Program enlisted nine new volunteers. Thirty-four active ambassadors worked 28 community events educating 933 citizens about waste reduction. This team also educates residents about waste reduction in their daily lives. The program collaborated with four larger, outside organizations training their internal volunteers and supporting waste reduction efforts through education and materials reaching thousands of Columbia residents. Outreach efforts touched more than 7,500 residents on roll cart implementation and recycling education.
- The home composting program continues to be popular. In addition to backyard composting, three specialty workshops have been added: Bokashi, vermicomposting and the Science of Composting. A team of six volunteer instructors conducted 14 workshop with a total of 223 participants.
- Household Hazardous Waste collections have a strong team of regular volunteers. In FY24, volunteers contributed 672 hours of service. Traffic volunteers are a valuable assets for community engagement answering questions and providing information on waste reduction and Solid Waste collection services.

In addition to the hours and service represented in this report, hundreds of volunteers share time on Boards & Commissions that advise the City council and staff

## Fiscal Impact

Short-Term Impact: \$1,078,710 – Value of volunteer service based on Independent Sector  
Long-Term Impact: Staff anticipants a similar impact in the future based on past activity.

## Strategic & Comprehensive Plan Impact

### Strategic Plan Impacts:

Primary Impact: Organizational Excellence, Secondary Impact: Not Applicable, Tertiary Impact: Not Applicable

### Comprehensive Plan Impacts:

Primary Impact: Not Applicable, Secondary Impact: Not applicable, Tertiary Impact: Not Applicable

## Legislative History

Date	Action
n/a	n/a

## Suggested Council Action

Acceptance of this report.