



City of Columbia Heights | *Administration*

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June 2, 2026

VIA Electronic Mail

tom.hunt@anokacountymn.gov

Anoka County Elections
c/o Tom Hunt, Elections Director
Anoka County Government Center
2100 3rd Avenue
Anoka, MN 55303

RE: Notice of Transition to 18-Day Early Voting Administration

Mr. Hunt:

Pursuant to the authority provided under Minnesota election law as amended by HF 4240 / SF 4006, enacted during the 2026 Legislative Session and signed into law by Governor Tim Walz, the City of Columbia Heights hereby provides notice of its intent to transition local election administration to the 18-day early voting model for future elections as authorized under state statute.

Under this administrative structure, the City of Columbia Heights will conduct in-person early voting during the statutory 18-day early voting period at City Hall and will continue administering Election Day polling place operations.

Columbia Heights requests that Anoka County continue administration of the traditional 46-day absentee voting process, including absentee ballot applications, mailed absentee ballots, absentee ballot board functions, and in-person absentee voting services.

This transition reflects the demonstrated voting preferences of Columbia Heights residents. During the 2024 General Election, approximately 2,000 voters cast ballots during the early voting period at Columbia Heights City Hall between October 18, 2024 and November 4, 2024 by feeding ballots directly into voting equipment. Additionally, 414 voters cast ballots early at City Hall on November 4, 2024 alone. These participation trends indicate strong voter preference for accessible in-person early voting opportunities during the final weeks preceding Election Day.

The City believes this administrative model will:

- Maintain full voter access to absentee and early voting opportunities;
- Improve operational efficiency;
- Better align election resources with actual voter usage patterns; and
- Utilize existing county election infrastructure for administration of the 46-day absentee voting program.

The City of Columbia Heights is committed to voter engagement and outreach and will focus on three primary communication objectives via the city website, city newsletter and city social media platforms:

Reassure voters that voting access is not being reduced.

- Residents will still have access to absentee voting beginning 46 days before the election through Anoka County.
- Columbia Heights City Hall will continue offering in-person early voting during the high-demand 18-day period.

Explain the difference between absentee voting and early voting in simple terms.

- Many residents do not distinguish between the two systems.
- Communication will focus on voter experience rather than administrative terminology.

Highlight that the transition reflects actual Columbia Heights voter behavior

- The City is aligning services with how residents already prefer to vote.

Columbia Heights looks forward to continuing coordination with Anoka County regarding implementation procedures, voter communications, and any required administrative agreements necessary to facilitate this transition.

Please direct any questions or correspondence regarding this notice to the City Clerk's Office.

Sincerely,

Sara Ion
City Clerk