



# *Columbia Heights Police Department*

*Scott Nadeau, Chief of Police*



## **Columbia Heights Police now offering “Safe Exchange Zone”**

In 2015, the Anoka County Sheriff's Office, located in northern Anoka County, added a Safe Exchange Zone to their parking lot. Citizens in or near Columbia Heights now have a designated area for public transactions. The public is always welcome to use the Columbia Heights Public Safety Lobby for exchanges during business hours, but now there is a designated area in the parking lot for exchanges that need to take place after normal hours. The zone is under 24 hour surveillance but is not actively watched by somebody. The zone is identified by two “Safe Exchange Zone” signs.

The public is encouraged to use the Safe Exchange Zone to conduct a variety of exchanges. Those exchanges may include but are not limited to; child-custody exchanges, Craigslist purchases, or any other legal transactions that take place with a stranger. The parking lot is well lit and in plain sight of anyone nearby. If the need arises there is a phone in the lobby of the public safety building that can be used to call 911.

There has been at least one theft in Columbia Heights that occurred when someone met at a service station to make a Craigslist exchange. The Columbia Heights Police Department is aiming to reduce the possibility of similar incidents. “We want to give our citizens a sense of security when making exchanges that they would not feel completely comfortable doing elsewhere”, says Columbia Heights Police Chief Scott Nadeau.

