

1. Council Agenda

Documents:

[12-1-16 AGENDA.PDF](#)

2. Council Packet

Documents:

[COUNCIL PACKET 12-1-16.PDF](#)



**CITY OF YPSILANTI  
COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA  
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
ONE SOUTH HURON STREET, YPSILANTI, MI 48197  
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2016  
7:00 P.M.**

**I. CALL TO ORDER -**

**II. ROLL CALL -**

Mayor Pro-Tem Brown	P A	Council Member Robb	P A
Council Member Bashert	P A	Council Member Vogt	P A
Council Member Murdock	P A	Mayor Edmonds	P A
Council Member Richardson	P A		

**III. INVOCATION -**

**IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE -**

"I pledge allegiance to the flag, of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

**V. INTRODUCTIONS -**

**VI. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION -**

**VII. REMARKS BY THE MAYOR -**

**VIII. CLOSED SESSION -**

Closed Session to review City Manager Applicant Resumes.

**IX. ADJOURNMENT -**



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michigan municipal league

MEMO

1675 Green Road  
Ann Arbor, MI 48105

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to	Mayor Amanda Edmonds and Members of the Ypsilanti City Council	from	Kathie S. Grinzinger, Lead Search Facilitator Michigan Municipal League
cc	Frances McMullen, Interim City Manager	date	November 19, 2016
		subject	<b>City Manager Search / Short List</b>

Thank you for all your efforts to identify notable qualifiers about your community and to build the preferred profile for the next Ypsilanti City Manager. We also appreciate the assistance Interim Manager McMullen and other staff members in providing photos, additional demographic information and critical input on the narrative that accompanied our outreach process.

We are now preparing to move into the next phase of your selection process: determining who the Council wishes to interview for the open position.

Our various recruitment efforts encouraged 22 applicants to express a desire to be considered for employment in Ypsilanti. We are pleased with the response and the quality of the interest shown.

So that you can better prepare for our scheduled meeting on Thursday December 1, at 7:00 pm, I have attached some information with this memorandum.

You will find a copy of the brochure we produced and used during the recruitment of applicants so you can re-familiarize yourself with the requirements, skills and qualities we told potential managers we were seeking. You will also find a copy of the notes I compiled from the conversations I had with you, your staff and members of the community. The "profile" outline will serve as our guide for assessing the qualifications and attributes of applicants as we move into this next phase of our selection process.

**On Thursday, December 1<sup>st</sup> at 7:00pm**, I will be prepared to share a recommended short list of potential interviewees with you.

Because applicants we will be talking about in depth requested confidentiality, as allowed by Michigan law, the discussion will need to occur in a closed session. Your Agenda for that evening's meeting, therefore, should contain an item requesting a vote to move into closed session to discuss potential candidates for interviews who have requested confidentiality.

Let me prepare you for the conduct of that session.



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### Thursday, December 1<sup>st</sup> Closed Session

#### A. Applicant Information

You should assume sufficient time will need to be taken by the Council during this meeting for members to adequately review all the materials. It is not unusual for this important analysis and discussion to exceed two hours.

As we spoke of previously, I will provide you with a matrix in the upcoming meeting comparing some of the primary knowledge, skills and attributes of the applicants. The matrix identifies applicants only by number which assures a distance is maintained between you and non-job related identifying information of the applicants. We find it critical to incorporate, in the process, mechanisms that protect the elected officials from even the appearance of discrimination or favoritism.

Once you have received and reviewed the matrix, I will provide you with a second document that summarizes information collected during the screening of several applicants who initially appeared to have met many of your basic requirements. That document will contain specific data about the applicants which would make it possible to identify individuals who have formally requested confidentiality.

Finally, I will also distribute copies of resumes from applicants whom I recommend you consider as candidates or potential interviewees.

To continue to honor the law's requirement for confidentiality, the screening report and resumes will be retrieved by me before the meeting ends so they will not remain in your possession and be considered public documents. Remember, too, that because we are discussing confidential candidates in a closed session, no information about that session can be shared in any way outside the meeting.

I will have with me information about all the resumes received in the case members have questions about the matrix and/or other respondents. Resumes of individuals, however, who do not meet the minimums for this position or who otherwise may not yet be suited for a position such as you are offering, will not be distributed.



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### B. Decisions/Actions Anticipated

#### 1. Determine Candidate List

Once you have adequate time to review and compare the resumes provided, it is hoped you can reach a general consensus as to whom you may wish to interview. Discussion leading to a determination of potential candidates can occur in closed session, but, the final decision to select candidates, enacted by a vote, must take place when the Council returns to open/public session.

Once the Council returns to open session a motion will need to be offered to invite applicants to interview. Assuming your desired candidates are those who have requested confidentiality the motion can identify the candidates by number or simply state, "**Direct the MML Facilitator to contact a short list of candidates to determine their interest in interviewing. The candidates will be identified by name on the Agenda for the interview meeting.**" As an alternative the motion could be, **Direct the MML Facilitator to contact applicants numbers                     to determine their interest in interviewing. The candidates will be identified by name on the Agenda for the interview meeting**".

Applicants do not become candidates nor can the names or resumes of those who have requested confidentiality be released or shared until after an invitation to interview has been accepted.

#### 2. Set Interview Meeting Date

To move into the interview stage, the Council will need to formally set the interview date as a special meeting of the Board.

As a second motion in open/public session the Council may consider "**Set December 17, 2016 as the date for a special meeting for the purpose of interviewing candidates for City Manager with the meeting to begin at                      and the first interview be held at                      am.**"

The motion is worded as such to provide time for me to meet with the Council for about 30 minutes prior to the first interview to be certain we all understand our responsibilities under the law and to disseminate and adequately discuss the questions each of you will ask. Therefore the meeting is to be set to begin one-half hour before the first interview is scheduled.

While I never suggest communities select how many candidates to interview based on the time they wish spend, please note that interviews are generally set at 90 minute intervals, meaning five discussions (with a brief meal break) equals an eight-hour day at minimum.



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### I. Next Steps

#### A. Interview Process

I will arrange and schedule the interviews with the identified candidates. Depending on the home base of chosen interviewees, the community can be expected to be responsible for travel expenses.

The City will likely be in communication with the candidates as well to arrange for hotel reservations or answer any questions about the city or arrange for any tours of municipal facilities you may wish to include in the process. A single point of contact is best.

Based on the profile set at our very first meeting, I will produce a series of questions for the Council to ask on Interview day. A draft of those questions will be provided to you in advance of interview day so feedback regarding alterations can be made.

Once all interviews have taken place, it is expected the Council will engage in **public discussion** on Saturday with the goal to select one of the candidates for a "conditional offer".

#### B. Conditional Offer

Before the final stage of the hiring process can be executed a motion would be offered to make a "conditional" offer of employment to the candidate who secures the majority of support from Council members.

That the offer is "conditional" is critical to allow other due diligence steps to occur and to enable withdrawal of the offer depending on the results of that research. The motion should approximate, "**On behalf of the City of Ypsilanti, the League Facilitator shall extend a conditional offer of employment to \_\_\_\_\_ for the position of City Manager**".

The due diligence steps include a background investigation, a physical, drug and alcohol screening (arranged by the City **if** that is a standard operating procedure used by the City) and additional reference checks. The League will conduct a background investigation of your primary candidate through a third-party professional firm. The investigation will include college transcript verification; criminal history, civil court case history; lien and driving record check, credit/financial record review and social security number trace. Because of the invasiveness of the background check only the top candidate moves through this phase.

We can talk more about the conduct of reference checking when we are together.



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### C. Contract Negotiation

To save time, negotiations between the individual and the City can commence simultaneously which would ultimately lead to an employment agreement and a start date. If, for some reason, the candidate does not successfully complete the final background hurdle, negotiations can be halted and the conditional offer withdrawn.

We suggest a single point person be named to head negotiations with the candidate. (We can certainly assist in providing information but we do not advocate for either the City or the candidate during this phase.) Generally the City Attorney is the most appropriate person to begin conversations about the parameters that will be acceptable to the Council.

We will provide your lead negotiator an employment agreement template which provides multiple options for terms as compiled by ICMA or the former Manager's contract can be used as a starting point.

This process can be initiated through a second motion similar to, "**Request \_\_\_\_\_ to begin discussions with \_\_\_\_\_ pursuant to an employment agreement suitable for formal approval by the Board at an upcoming meeting.**"

## City of Ypsilanti City Manager

Profiling Sessions	Aug 23 and Sept 27, 2016	three sessions
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Council  
Community Stakeholders (community descriptors added)  
Department Directors (community descriptors added)  
Facilitator clarification; adds

### **Community Profile/Culture**

Data (to be collected) [city-data.com](http://city-data.com)

- Most Compiled by City under separate cover
- Median HH \$33,748 (2013), (was \$28,610 in 2000); Mich \$48,273
- 60% residential property rental
- 4.52 square miles
- Population; 19,435 (2010); 20,081 (2014)

### **Community Culture/Attributes**

- "Best kept secret in south-east Michigan"
- "An older urban manufacturing center transitioning to a new future" (used to be county's primary tax base); "Blue collar town in transition"; unsure of what new future looks like
- **"Ypsi Real";**
- "pride of the underdog"
- "Right on the cusp of turning the corner (but, sometimes the corner gets moved down the street)"
- "Wonderful place to live, work, play and pray"
- Resilient; resourceful
- Free-Spirited
- Unique
- Progressive thinkers
- Determined; feisty
- Down-to-earth
- Relaxed
- Creative entrepreneurial spirit
- Becoming more connected to academic influence
- Small historic city with \_\_\_\_ urban vibe
- Strong faith-based community (church on every corner)
- Great location
  - ✓ Easy access to world class job market in education, transportation, public services, health, communication
  - ✓ Primary Highway access
  - ✓ Hospitals

## Ypsilanti

- ✓ Close to Airports and Rail
- ✓ Just outside of Ann Arbor
- ✓ Under 30 miles from downtown Detroit
- ✓ 3 hour car ride to Chicago
- Not deep “multi-generational” roots; much transition in population; out migration occurs when children reach school age (school system?)
- Population mix
  - Highly diverse community in terms of race, age and income levels (60% white)
  - Growing Latino community; 30% African-American
  - Mix of temporary, permanent, transient and life-long residents
  - Growing population in the 18 to 34 year range: more affordable path to home ownership in Ypsilanti vs. other local communities
  - Growing “creative class”: entrepreneurs, invested in community and putting down roots
  - Rising senior population
  - Majority low to medium-high income levels
  - High school diploma and above: 89.1%; Bachelor's Degree or higher: nearly 36%
- Residents/neighbors
  - Great **community pride** in diversity and heritage
  - Vocal and involved
    - ✓ Large on-line presence
  - Effective and involved volunteers; strong issue supporters:
    - ✓ Community pool
    - ✓ Freight house
    - ✓ Senior center
    - ✓ Youth center
  - Well attended council meetings
  - People come together to meet a need when called upon
  - Friendly
  - Proud of their city
  - Detrimental division among sectors of the community
  - Nearly 40% Bachelor's degree or higher
- Historic Architecture; historic district
  - ✓ Second largest contiguous historic district in the state
  - ✓ Exceptional historic architecture
- High number of unemployed and underemployed (data does not necessarily support)
  - 3.3% in 9/2015 vs. Michigan 4.7%
- History of Founding
  - Located where an old Native American trail crossed the Huron River
  - First white settlement around a trading post in 1809
  - Platted in 1825
  - Depot Town, the city's oldest commercial district grew up alongside the railroad depot; most of the structures still standing in this area were built in the in the last three decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century
  - Eastern Michigan was established in 1849
  - Charter
  - Incorporated as a city in 1858
- Neighborhoods
  - Friendly; open

## Ypsilanti

- Affordable
- People walk their neighborhoods; meet and greet each other
- Historic, Some established prior to the Civil War
- Diverse; Multi-ethnic
- Primary Employers/Wage levels
  - Many out-commuters
  - Primary employer (Eastern Michigan University) tax exempt
  - Hospital
  - Many semi-skilled and para-pro jobs
  - Professors
  - Medical professionals
  - Mid-level incomes
- Downtown
  - 2 "downtowns" supported by DDA; historically preserved (commercial, shopping and entertainment districts)
  - Community gathering spots; minutes apart
  - Night Life in Depot Town : young hip, small compact
  - Innovative and locally inspired businesses (CVB)

## Activities/Attractions

- Housing
  - Affordable
  - Housing available in several price points and varying neighborhoods
  - Median house vale \$128,746 (2013), median detached price \$138,033
  - Housing market on up-tick, beginning to boom
  - Older stock
    - good housing stock
    - Lack of senior options
    - Missing the "middle"
    - Many renters both students and families
- Schools
  - Failing high school
    - Several public, private, and charter options (high schools below)
    - ✓ Lincoln Senior High
    - ✓ Stemm Academy
    - ✓ Arbor Prep
    - ✓ WSC Academy
    - ✓ Ypsilanti New Tech
    - ✓ Acttech High School
    - ✓ Forest School
    - ✓ Early College Alliance
    - ✓ Washtenaw International High School
- Recreation
  - Olmsted designed city park
  - Excellent park system (numbers and names, acreage??)
  - Sited on the banks Huron River: canoeing, kayaking, fishing; wildlife
  - neighboring 23,000 acres of public park and recreation areas inviting hiking, mountain biking and cross-country skiing;

## Ypsilanti

- Eastern side of the Washtenaw County Border to Broder trail, part of Michigan's Iron Belle Hiking Trail
  - Community Center
  - Senior Center
- Culture and Arts (Washtenaw County)
  - Eastern Michigan University
    - ✓ 23,000 students
    - ✓ Award-winning College of Business
    - ✓ NCAA and MAC Championship Athletic Teams, Division I football; Performing arts
  - Home of Washtenaw Community College
  - Strong arts and culture environment; Riverside arts Center  
<http://www.riversidearts.org/>
  - Museums: Ypsilanti Historical Museum, Michigan Firehouse Museum and Ypsilanti Automotive Heritage Museum, National Hudson Motor Car Company Museum
  - Agri-tourism
  - Family out-door recreation
  - County home to bigger cities (Ann Arbor) and smaller villages
  - Immediate access to multiple Universities (within 20 miles)
    - ✓ EMU, U of M Ann Arbor; Washtenaw Community College, Madonna University, Schoolcraft College, Henry Ford Community College, U of M Dearborn, Baker College
- Events (most organized by independent organizations some profit-makers); Most every week
  - Michigan Brewer's Guild Summer Beer Festival
  - Heritage festival
  - Car shows (Orphan Car Show, Antique Truck show, Michigan Camaro Superfest, Annual Fire Truck Muster, Depot Town Cruise Nights)
  - Michigan Elvisfest
  - Color Run
  - Air Fest
  - Neighborhood Festivals

## Challenges

- History of conflict in relationships with nearby townships;
- "Under siege from other units/jurisdictions/sources trying to paint negative and inaccurate picture of Ypsi"
- Turmoil within county government (may not be ours to repair)
- Under-utilized property
- Un-developed downtown Property "water Street"; city carrying debt
- Financial
  - Tax base: high millage rates with low values
  - Uncollected bills and ticket revenue
  - State reimbursement for fire protection at only 60%
  - Slow growth in taxable value (Proposal A)
  - Debt on Water Street
- Built-out
- Need for new housing and business development

## Ypsilanti

- Failing schools
- High unemployment (?)
- Lack of opportunities: activities, recreation, jobs for youth population
- Empty auto plant, brownfield contamination
- Lack of positive relationship with media sources
- Disconnect between community perception of local government and reality (finances, services, potential ???)
- Lack of single "unity" ( identity/unifying force ?); between sectors/areas of the community; disparity; lack of cooperation between sectors
- Elected officials' lack of accountability
- Need to find the right mix between building partnerships and preserving a unique identity
- Employee lawsuit
- Infrastructure updates like street lighting

## Opportunities

- Career builder for candidate (not related to community opportunities; may be able to move into other section of copy)
- "Have all the right ingredients; just don't know the right mix yet"
- Real estate market experiencing a turn-around
- Historic architecture downtown
- Council and staff committed to place-making
- Available vacant land; parcel to expand downtown
- Positive relationship with Eastern Michigan University
- Strong local-based business community
- Passenger rail service on horizon
- Award Winning Master Plan
- Totally connected City: free wireless connectivity throughout entire community

## Immediate Goals

- Water Street redevelopment (likely unrealistic 12 month "immediate")
- Partner to complete passenger rail service line
- Reach sustainable balanced budget
- Develop public communication strategy
- Build solid executive and administrative teams

## **Corporate Culture**

- 91 full-time; 27 part-time:
- Labor unions
  - AFSCME
  - POAM
  - IAFF
  - Administration non-union

## Workplace Culture

- Employees affected by many years of financial stress (restrictions began in early 2000's) and lack of policy/agreement on direction

- *Demo'd Water Street blight in 1998, contaminated, created debt; then state cut-backs and recession*
  - Closure/withdrawal of city hall support to pool, senior center, recreation
  - Cut back in services
  - Constriction in workforce (e.g. P.D. down to 30 from 60)
  - High stress level: high demands and high work load
  - High turn-over rate in employees; suppressed wages
  - Doom and gloom atmosphere
  - Lack of security
- Lean staffing has aided in creation of strong team-based environment; operate with family-oriented support; Can disagree but very protective of each other
- Very connected; don't compete over the limited resources
- Devoted to organization
- "One of the best groups of people in all of municipal government"
- Responsive to citizen requests and complaints
  - Very few citizen complaints
  - Citizens have seen very little change
- Employees close; work very well together
- Very easy communication between departments
- Very forward-looking and resourceful
- Do what needs to do to get things done
- Very knowledgeable Directors; understand the "big picture" and the challenges community faces
- Leader in many areas of municipal service provision
- Police highly respected by residents
- Creative: Combined departments, transferred functions and cross trained employees
  - Police Department manages community events
  - Community Development expanded role
  - Use interns and minimum wage seasonal to fill gaps
  - Share jobs
- Regular post-council meetings expectations
  - Share all information from electeds, council decisions and each other
  - Efficient, structured
  - Interactive
  - Solicit input, review potential impacts and added value
  - Solve issues, get to recommendations together
  - Out-come-based with a plan for accountability

### Expectations for Executive Leader/Manager

- Skill Set
  - Must support charter and council/manager form of local government, understand the varied roles and responsibility and can balance needs of council and organization
  - Experience with limited resource circumstance
  - Must be a "working manager"; no depth in support/clerk services
  - Solid financial skills; adept at forecasting and recommending sustainable solutions
  - Economic development skills to grow tax base
  - Strong listening skills

- Comfort with technology
- Grant success
- Contract Negotiations and Labor relations skills
- Proven administrative/management skills
- Strong interpersonal communicator; can share vision and goals with all members of staff and community
- Can build, maintain team
- Facilitator
- Must be effective working with elected officials
  - ✓ Must listen and be able to read signals
  - ✓ Can help council build consensus on most agreeable/acceptable direction
  - ✓ Ability to tactfully assist council to work together
- Attributes
  - Seek, listen to and consider input from staff; counts on experience of managers; "why buy a dog and bark yourself"
  - Shares credit
  - Optimistic; encourages and supports positive environment
  - Respectful of others
  - Trust in the loyalty of the staff to the community and organization
  - Accessible; approachable; open door
  - Integrated member of the team
  - Strong leadership characteristics; want someone can look up to; Engenders respect
  - Decisive; Will need to make tough decisions; not afraid to say no; makes decisions based on what is best for the most
  - Can manage and sort out new controversial issues
  - Treats all employees fairly and equitably
  - Efficient; Uses everyone's time effectively
  - Does the right thing; ethical
  - Creative; can get the mileage out of limited resources
  - Visionary; can see next steps to progress/success
  - Honest; straightforward; tells everyone the same thing
  - Accepts mistakes and moves forward (Allows risks?)
  - Good sense of humor; "we laugh a lot here"

## **Candidate Profile**

### **Knowledge and Minimums**

- Masters Degree in Public Administration or field directly related to position such as urban planning, finance, etc. required
- Minimum of five years professional experience as city manager, assistant city manager or village or township chief executive; Equivalent executive work history in a major organization as a Department Director with significant span of control or responsibility for budgets, personnel and variety of functions and service areas **may** be considered as meeting experience comparables
- Membership in good-standing in ICMA, MME or other state-wide professional association

## Ypsilanti

- Other combinations of experience, education, certifications and/or training may be considered as equivalents

### Skills

- Financial acumen and municipal budget management knowledge
- Labor relations skills including contract negotiation and implementation history
- Human Resources capability: ability to recruit, develop and evaluate talent
- Build effective working teams with staff, elected officials
- Securing alternative resources including grant funds
- Facilitation skills at setting goals, objectives and measureables
- Project Management skills
- Ability to partner and build agreements with other local jurisdictions
- Strong economic development skills
- Skilled communicator: able to build city's message and move it out; create and maintain board relationships; interpersonal strength with staff
- Familiarity with emerging municipal concerns and understanding of sustainability issues and alternatives (may wish to move to knowledge)

### Character and Personal Attributes

- Life-long learner
- Congenial
- Balanced personality (both internally aware and externally focused) is this what you meant by balanced??
- Can cast a vision (inspirational?)
- Responsive
- Out-come based with ability to prioritize
- Customer service oriented
- Ability to foster sense of community from top down
- Dedicated to an accountability culture
- High Emotional intelligence
- Planner
- Creative, resourceful, open to alternative methods of getting things done
- A relationship builder, able to leverage contacts
- Collaborative
- Consensus builder
- Focused
- Remains calm under stressful situations
- Objective
- Principled
- Adaptable (with resourceful)
- Driven and energetic
- Able to maintain control among divisiveness (check "control")

### Expectations of Community Stakeholders

- Skills
  - Excellent understanding of municipal budgeting and revenue; must know how to target money/spending to true priorities
  - Strong interpersonal communication skills

## Ypsilanti

- Can lead, develop and build staff
- Can build team (encourage unity among departments)
- Able to carry message of Ypsi's value; promote the community; assist CVB with vision
- Competent
- Tech Savvy; understands use of social media communication tools
- 
- Attributes
  - Willing to reach out-do it yourself
  - Approachable; Accessible
  - Transparent
  - Visible
  - Visionary
  - Can instill passion
  - Energetic
  - Humble
  - Partnership Builder; Committed to partnering with the community; EMU
  - Not afraid of (intimidated) by others' competency
  - Can answer the tough questions
  - Courageous
  - Customer-service orientation: city hall should be a warm and welcoming place
  - Brings new perspective (fresh eyes)
  - Can face adversity and still move forward;
  - Doesn't personalize
  - Has street cred

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

# City Manager

City of Ypsilanti



# City Manager

## CITY OF YPSILANTI

To develop great places, true community builders focus on growing the proven assets of vibrant 21st Century Communities: walkability; green initiatives; cultural and economic development; entrepreneurship; diversity; messaging & technology, transit and education.

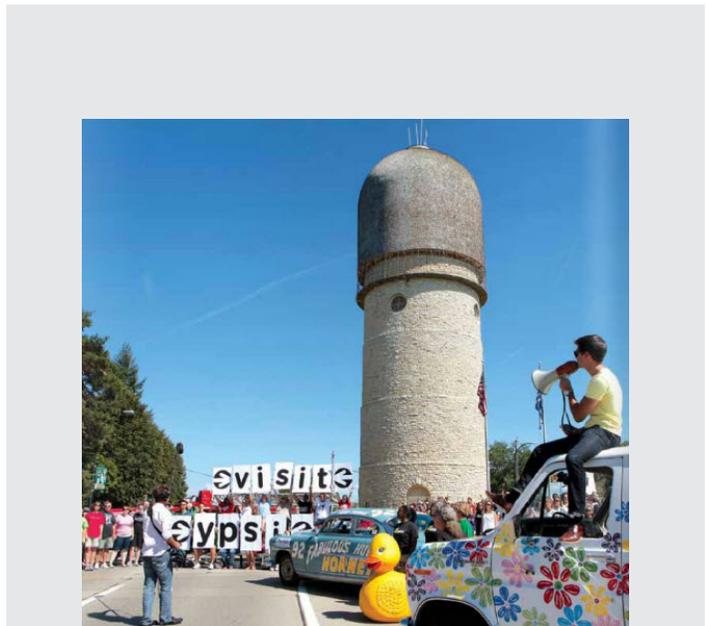
What if you could find most all those ingredients already in place in a community extending an invitation to bring your creative, resourceful approach to the position of city manager?

Ypsilanti, the home of Eastern Michigan University, is a proud ethnically, racially and religiously diverse community of around 20,000 people clustered in an historic 4.51 square miles in southeast Michigan. Just 30 miles from Detroit, and 15 minutes from Ann Arbor's University of Michigan, Ypsilanti possesses a unique and solidly authentic urban vibe.

Ypsilanti, Michigan is looking for its third City Manager in 20 years and will consider only visionary, approachable, enthusiastic relationship-builders who can thrive in a highly diverse, innovative community which is transitioning to an education and entrepreneurial economy.

The 2016-17 proposed General Fund Budget was set at \$14.59 million with a GF Fund Balance of \$5 million. The total budget is \$32.43 million.

A competitive benefit package with life and health insurances including a city contribution into a HCS Account and enrollment into a MERS defined benefit retirement plan will be offered. A starting salary range of between \$80,000 and \$100,000 will be negotiated depending upon experience, qualifications and skill set.



▶ **POPULATION**  
20,061

▶ **SIZE**  
4.51 SQ MI

▶ **BUDGET**  
\$32.43 MILLION

▶ **SALARY RANGE**  
\$80,000 - \$100,000

## ► THE COMMUNITY

One part manufacturing past, one part university town and all parts free-spirited, unique city, Ypsilanti is the home of Eastern Michigan University and sits in Michigan's southeast region, 30 miles from downtown Detroit, a four-hour car ride from Chicago and 15 minutes away from the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor.

Its residents, like the community they rally around, are friendly, progressive thinkers, down-to-earth and creative. Check YpsiReal (<http://visitypsinow.com/ypsireal/>), the banner of a connected movement to define, share and spread all that is real about earthy, authentic and unfiltered Ypsilanti.

And, it has been this way from the beginning. Resilience and resourcefulness have forged Ypsi's personality from its birth. Local speak pronounces it "ip-see." In 1809, three French explorers built a log structure on the west bank of the Huron River at the site of a Native American trading post where an old trail crossed the river. Within 15 years the city was platted and by the late 1830's the railroads were already connecting Ypsilanti to cities east and west. Today, the site of the original train stations is known as Depot Town and many of the buildings still occupied date back to late 1800's.

In the 1930's, area community leaders looked around at their natural resources and built a lake to generate hydroelectric power, recruit new manufacturing and welcome Henry Ford to Washtenaw County. When WW II intervened Ford chose to establish the Willow Run Bomber Plant in neighboring Ypsilanti Township. He brought in 100,000 workers including Rose Will Monroe. Rosie the Riveter's strength and determination are still part of this city's personal legacy.

Ypsilanti honors the foundations from which it rose including strong faith-based roots evidenced by the wealth of worship centers and the voice of an in-



involved African-American church community.

A true urban environment with tight neighborhoods, great green spaces and parks, public art and compact walkable downtown districts, Ypsilanti is mix of temporary and permanent residents; renters and owners; college students and seniors. It is outspokenly proud of its ethnic, racial and religious diversity and is welcoming and tolerant of newcomers.

Its affordable and funky commercial spaces have attracted a growing creative class of entrepreneurs investing in the community and putting down roots. The millennial-plus population is increasing as they find the reasonably priced housing stock an attractive path to home ownership or unique leased space.

A great range in housing stock exists where some neighborhoods date back to before the Civil War or reflect the Victorian Era while others were built to support the railroad and auto plant employees. Built around a grid system, most neighborhoods are walkable and homes are available at several price points.

And, about those other markers of great places. . . Ypsilanti competes with urban areas many times its 20,000 population size.

Ypsilanti is home to two central business districts filled with historic architecture (Depot Town and Downtown) both populated by home-grown, independent businesses. Ypsi's central gathering places are true mirrors of the varied faces of this distinctive community. A 100 year-old hardware store, the cobbler, barber and hair-braiding shops prosper next to creative top-notch restaurateurs, craft beer brewers and innovative retailers. Add in the affordable lease rates and a burgeoning indie music and arts scene thrives.

Committed to green initiatives, Ypsilanti has switched over its streetlights to LEDs and uses solar panels to produce energy. An expansion of the curbside pick-up program allows for recycling of textiles.

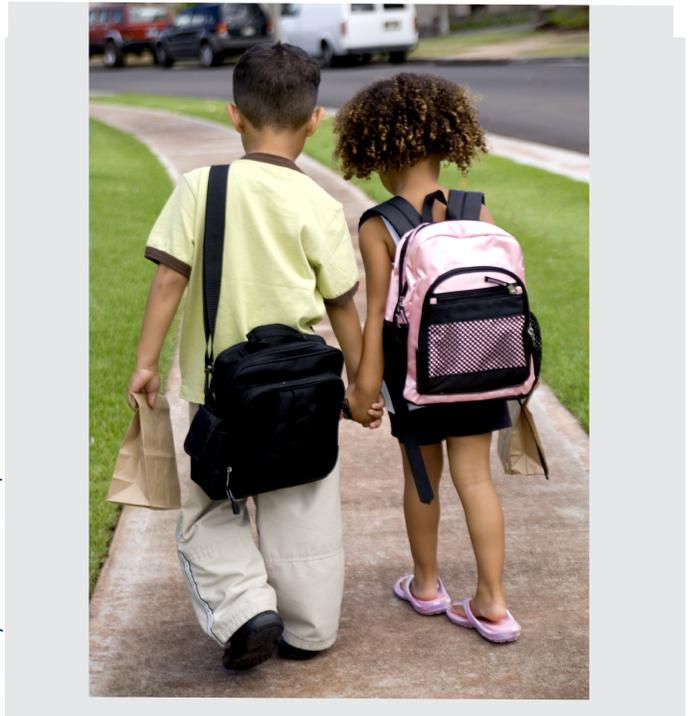
Even as Ypsi nurtures an organic artistic community, classic cultural and historic amenities remain well supported in this nearly 200 year old community. Home to the Riverside Arts Center (<http://www.riversidearts.org/>) four museums, including the National Hudson Motor Car Company Museum, and the second longest contiguous historic district in all of Michigan, Ypsilanti takes its conservancy seriously and celebrates it with passion.

Ypsilanti's nonprofits, business partners and volunteers bring the personality of this unique assemblage to light, festival after festival, weekend after weekend. You can pay homage to the manufacture of the WW II B-24 at the old Willow Run Plant during Thunder over Michigan, the largest flying performance of warbirds in the country, or get your historic machine fix at Depot Cruise Night every Thursday in the summer.

If you would rather celebrate craft brew or channel your blue suede groove, Ypsilanti gives you the Michigan Brewer's Guild Summer Beer Festival and the Annual Michigan ElvisFest. The "Happiest 5K on the Planet" (The Color Run); The Annual Firetruck Muster; Heritage Festival; and Michigan Camaro Superfest are scheduled with dozens of other parties year-round. <http://visitypsinow.com/events/>

As the first Michigan community to ensure all its residents, businesses and visitors were connected immediately for free via community-developed **Wireless Ypsilanti**, Ypsilanti long ago embraced technological strides in communication.

All the region's cultural, sports and entertainment attractions as well as a world-class job market in education, health and medicine, communication and transportation are within easy reach. An agreement with neighboring Ann Arbor assures Ypsi and all Washtenaw County are served by public transportation through "TheRide". Working with many regional jurisdictions, state and private partners, Ypsilanti will soon be linked to expanded Amtrak passen-



ger rail service and is focused on the potential of commuter rail service, the Regional Transit Authority. The City sits on major highways, is 15 minutes from Detroit International Airport and connects to non-motorized trails, including the Border to Border Trail, part of Michigan's Iron Belle Hiking Trail) which will reach through multiple SE Michigan counties upon completion.

The city's location places it front and center of a major education economy. Eastern Michigan University with its 23,000 students, award-winning College of Business and NCAA and MAC championship athletic teams is the largest employer in Ypsilanti. Washtenaw Community College is near the City's northwest corner and six other colleges and universities are within 20 miles. Nearly 90% of Ypsi's residents are educated above the high school level and almost 40% have a bachelors' degree or greater. Several public, private and charter school options are available to Ypsilanti's children including nine high school alternatives some with targeted curricula.

Residents will tell you, "We have all the ingredients in place. We are just not quite sure what the mix needs to be."

Competing with the Ypsilanti's desire to create its next future, is its financial position. The death of manufacturing jobs, the real estate recession of the last decade, and changes in state funding for municipalities shifted the economic fortunes of this proud and feisty city. The debt connected to an abandoned development project downtown from the late 1990's (Water Street) remains a very real burden.

For the new City Manager, community members prioritize the need for an administrator skilled in finding financial solutions with the ability to match spending with true priorities and a talented communicator able to lead and develop a staff team and build unity throughout the community. They desire a visionary, energetic and humble leader who can courageously face tough issues and will bring a fresh perspective to the table. Ypsilanti's new manager will fit well here if he or she has street cred, is unafraid of seeking input from competent allies, and can face adversity and comfortably move forward.



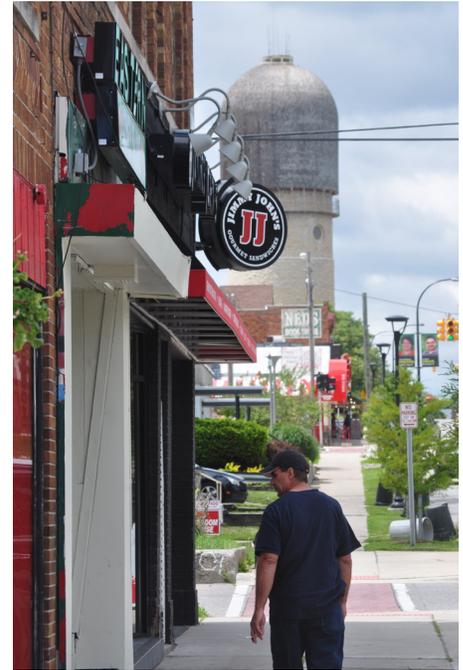
## ▶ OPPORTUNITIES

Ypsilanti has much to build upon and many of the assets of great livable places are primed. An award winning Master Plan and a city council and staff supportive of next generation place-making efforts make that path achievable.

Community advocates, employees and elected officials appear equally committed to progressive goal setting with a willingness to investigate alternatives once a path of fiscal stability is found.

In addition, the local business community is entrepreneurial, self-sowing, healthy and expanding. Land, facilities, historic properties and wireless connectivity are available to recruit new companies.

The real estate market is experiencing a turn-around and housing prices are moving upwards. Passenger rail service is on the horizon.



## ▶ CHALLENGES

Ypsilanti is facing financial and tax base obstacles. Slow growth in taxable values even as the economy rebounds coupled with unused and underutilized property thwarts revenue streams. An almost empty auto plant, some residual brownfields and the debt connected to a highly visible undeveloped and contaminated near-downtown property (Water Street) are poster children of the difficulties.

To continue down the path of economic health, Ypsilanti may need new housing stock for the working middleclass and increased employment options with solid wages. The landlocked community is nearly built-out.

Old divisions between neighboring jurisdictions will need continued healing to forge partnerships for mutual gains.

Lack of a consistent, concentrated communication and engagement strategy has left many residents disconnected from city hall, the truth of its financial situation and uninvolved in finding solutions.



## ► IMMEDIATE PRIORITIES

For the community to meet its challenges and take advantage of its prospects, Ypsilanti's City Council will expect the new Manager to immediately prioritize team-building with both the elected officials and administrative staff.

It will be critical to reach a balanced and sustainable budget and to develop an interactive and public communication strategy that can be used to engage the residents.

Finally, the Manager must solidify the regional and area partnerships necessary to the progress of completion of the passenger rail service.



## ▶ THE ORGANIZATION

Ypsilanti is a full-service city chartered as a Council-Manager form of local government. Legislative responsibility, policy and direction, and approval of budgets and major expenditures rest with the seven-member city council who appoint a professional executive, the city manager. All Department Directors, excepting the City Clerk and City Attorney, are hired by and report to the manager who is responsible for day-to-day operations of the city and executing policy initiatives of the Council.

Six council members are elected for four-year staggered terms, two from each of the City's three wards. The mayor is elected at-large and also serves a four-year term.

Ypsilanti's citizens are served by 91 full-time employees and 27 part-timers reporting from seven primary departments (<http://cityofypsilanti.com/508/organization-chart>). Three unions represent hourly staff members: AFSCME, POAM and IAFF.

Department Directors, without exception, are passionate about Ypsilanti, devoted to the organization and well-connected to each other. Some have been with the City for decades, others are relatively recent



hires. All have solid experience in their particular field of expertise and express an unusual level of commitment to being part of the solution for tackling the big issues. One more recent, but, experienced addition to the ranks said, "This is one of the best groups of people in all of municipal government".

For over a decade Ypsilanti shrunk its work force and reconfigured and/or eliminated services to respond to reductions in revenue. The uncertainty rising from sustained constriction led to periods of high-stress in the ranks, a pessimistic atmosphere and employee turnover.

Directors describe a culture incorporating winning values born from that period. Administrators define the organization as a team-based operation working in a family atmosphere. Employees are close-knit, work-well together and communicate easily in all directions. Problem solving discussions may be spirited, but all members are supported. An understanding of the obligation to the success of the whole keeps competition over limited resources at a minimum.

The base touchstones of creativity, forward-thinking and a resourceful drive to "do what needs to be done"



has led Ypsilanti to be seen as a leader in several areas of municipal service provision. Department functions have been combined, employees cross-trained to report to several work areas and job sharing increases connections and knowledge base throughout City Hall. Within the reconfigurations, for example, the Police Department became responsible for managing special events keeping officers in close touch with businesses, neighbors, nonprofits and volunteers.

To function at peak effectiveness this administrative team must be well-informed. Post-council team meetings of the Manager and Directors are expected to be efficient and structured but interactive. Information on council expectations and progress from all participants is shared, input is solicited, impacts are considered and recommendations for next steps are weighed for greatest value. Anticipated outcomes are set and accountability for progress expected.

Directors are looking for a new manager who is proficient at building consensus and assisting administrators and policy makers to work together by relying on each's respective strengths, balancing needs and perspectives. The new leader will need to have vision mixed with creativity to get the most mileage out of the resources available.

This team will be well-served with a strong, straight-forward leader who engenders respect and inspiration and can make tough decisions based on what is right and best for the many. He or she will listen, count on team-members' expertise, share credit, and treat all employees fairly and equitably. "We laugh a lot around here," so a good sense of humor will be welcome.



## ▶ THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

To be considered as the next city manager in Ypsilanti, applicants must be life-long learners. They will be adept at tackling today's local government and community challenges using 21<sup>st</sup> Century best practices in organizational sustainability and the most innovative tools and methodologies. To be considered a qualified applicant, respondents must have attained, and will specify in the accompanying cover letter or resume, the following:

- A Master's Degree in Public Administration or a field directly related to this managerial position such as urban planning, finance, human resources, etc.
- Five years' experience as a city manager, assistant city manager or chief administrative officer in a city, village or township. Work history in a major governmental organization as a department director with significant span of control and/or responsibility for budgets, personnel and a variety of functions and public service areas **may** be considered as meeting the experience requirement.
- Familiarity with emerging municipal concerns and grasp of the means to reach long-term sustainability
- Membership in good-standing in ICMA, MME or other state-wide professional association incorporating a code of professional ethics
- Other combinations of experience, education, certifications and/or training **may** be considered as equivalents

Any applicant who moves to the level of candidate will be a talented, comfortable and an instinctive communicator possessing well-honed listening, interpersonal, and presentation skills. He or she must be a creative and adaptable administrator able find alternatives to meet priorities in an environment of lean resources. Candidates must illustrate:

- Keen financial acumen with municipal budget management knowledge in matching spending to highest value priorities
- Capability in supporting the growth of the human resource capital, primarily history in recruiting, developing and evaluating talent
- Well-developed labor relations skills including negotiation and contract implementation history
- Ability to apply strategies to build effective working teams with employees, elected officials, and appointed boards and commissions
- Facilitation skills used to reach agreements around direction, goals, objectives and measureables
- Effective economic and community development achievements
- Proven project management skills
- Highly accomplished in building partnerships and securing agreements with other jurisdictions and entities
- Success in securing and managing alternative sources of project funding including grants
- Significant skill in all communication arenas including the ability to define and cast the city's vision, deliver the message and promote Ypsilanti to all sectors and partners
- Tech Savvy and comfortable will multiple tools

The new City Manager in Ypsilanti will be a congenial and approachable relationship builder reaching out to strengthen and build partnerships within community, across jurisdictions and with the institutions who can shape Ypsilanti's future. He or she will possess a passion for citizen/customer service and an inherent sense of optimism. To succeed in this community and with its elected officials, the Manager must be:

- Responsive, visible and transparent
- Collaborative
- Consensus Builder
- Able to build a sense of community both inside the organization and out
- Possessing high emotional intelligence; can read the signals
- Able to verbalize and cast a vision
- Focused on outcomes with the ability to plan and prioritize
- Dedicated to a culture of accountability
- Objective
- Principled
- Balanced
- Tolerant of diverse opinions and calm-natured with divisiveness



# ▶ APPLICATION PROCESS

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**APPLY BY CLOSE OF BUSINESS NOVEMBER 15, 2016**

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Please submit resume, cover letter, salary history, consent form, and five professional references to:

execsearch@mml.org, Subject Line: Ypsilanti Search  
OR mail to: Michigan Municipal League,  
ATTN: Ypsilanti Search  
1675 Green Road  
Ann Arbor, MI 48105

Questions can be directed to MML Lead Executive Recruiter Kathie S. Grinzinger at [kgrinzinger@mml.org](mailto:kgrinzinger@mml.org) or (989) 289-1084.

Candidates desiring confidentiality of their interest, as allowed for and provided by Michigan law, must indicate such in a separate subject line above the body of the cover letter.

This search is conducted by an Equal Opportunity Employer.

