



# AGENDA

## Sustainability Commission Meeting

7:00 PM - Monday, December 14, 2020  
Zoom Meeting

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	Page
1. CALL TO ORDER	
2. ROLL CALL	
Commissioner Heine Commissioner Drennen Commissioner Bayha Commissioner Foley Commissioner Greenwald Commissioner Cannon Commissioner Gibbons Commissioner Collins Commissioner Simmons Commissioner Michalowski Councilmember Wilcoxon Director Akers	
3. PUBLIC COMMENT (3 MINUTES)	
4. AGENDA APPROVAL (5 MINUTES)	
5. INTRODUCTIONS	
6. PRESENTATIONS	
7. CONSENT AGENDA (2 MINUTES)	
7.1. Approval of minutes from November 9, 2020 <a href="#">Sustainability 11-9-2020 Reg Minutes</a>	3 - 4
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9.3. Annual report discussion <a href="#">SustainabilityCommissionAnnualReport2020_Draft1</a>	9 - 18
9.4. Public recycle bin update	
9.5. MGC Challenge update	
9.6. Penn Dam update	

- 9.7. Resilience hub pilot program discussion
  - UofM Ypsilanti Resilience Hub Project Follow Up
- 9.8. Recycling program expansion discussion
- 9.9. Renewable Energy discussion
- 9.10. Urban gardening and biodiversity discussion
- 9.11. Neighborhood groups/associations discussion 19  
[Neighborhoods Ypsilanti, MI](#)
- 9.12. Earth Day 2021 discussion
- 9.13. Water Street discussion
- 9.14. Municipal resolution on utility rates and delinquencies during COVID discussion 21 - 26  
[Fwd municipal resolution on utility rates and delinquencies during COVID](#)  
[Municipal resolution utility COVID response MPSC 20201116](#)
- 9.15. Outreach and education discussion
  - Ypsilanti sustainability mascot
- 10. COMMISSIONER REPORTS (20 MINUTES)
- 11. PUBLIC COMMENT (3 MINUTES)
- 12. PROPOSED BUSINESS (5 MINUTES)
- 13. ADJOURNMENT



# MINUTES

## City of Ypsilanti SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION MEETING Virtual Meeting

Monday, November 9, 2020  
7:00 P.M.

**I. CALL TO ORDER: 7:00 p.m.**

**II. ROLL CALL**

Keith Michalowski	Present	Katy Greenwald	Present
Nancy Heine	Present	Beth Gibbons	Present
Julia Bayha	Present	Christian Cannon	Absent
Bryan Foley	Present	Takunia Collins	Present
		Desirae Simmons	Present

Also Present: Staff Liaison Ron Akers, Public Services Director  
Commission Recording Secretary, Nancy Hare-Dickerson

Additional Staff Present: Bonnie Wessler, Public Services Project Manager (Zoom Meeting Host)

**III. PUBLIC COMMENT – none**

**IV. AGENDA APPROVAL**

**Heine (Second: Bayha) moved to approve the Agenda as submitted.**

**Roll Call Vote – Ayes:** Commissioners Michalowski, Heine, Bayha, Foley, Greenwald, Gibbons, Collins, Simmons

**Nays:** None

**Absent:** Commissioner Cannon

**V. INTRODUCTIONS**

Desirae Simmons, newly appointed commissioner, introduced herself and provided an overview of her background and interests.

**VI. PRESENTATIONS – none**

**VII. CONSENT AGENDA**

**1. Approval of September 14, 2020 minutes**

**Greenwald (Second: Heine) moved to approve the September 14, 2020 Minutes as submitted.**

**Roll Call Vote – Ayes:** Commissioners Michalowski, Heine, Bayha, Foley, Greenwald, Gibbons, Collins, Simmons

**Nays:** None

**Absent:** Commissioner Cannon

**Motion Carried**

**VIII. WORK SESSIONS**

Each commissioner shared their commission goals and presented proposal thoughts and ideas for projects they would like to see implemented and/or would like to pursue. Commissioner Michalowski composed a list of the various proposal ideas which he will email to commissioners to help assist them with choosing specific items that they would like to see worked on next. Continued discussion to occur at the next meeting.

**Heine (Second: Simmons) moved to close the work session.**

**Roll Call Vote – Ayes:** Commissioners Michalowski, Heine, Bayha, Foley, Greenwald, Gibbons, Collins, Simmons

**Nays:** None

**Absent:** Commissioner Cannon

**Motion Carried**

**IX. RESOLUTIONS/MOTIONS/DISCUSSIONS**

**1. Planning Commission/Sustainability Commission Joint Meeting**

Follow up discussion was had regarding the Joint meeting which occurred on October 5, 2020, in which the Sustainability Plan was discussed. Per commissioner query, Public Services Project Manager Bonnie Wessler explained that the next step for the Plan is to move on to the Planning Commission to be integrated into their Master Plan process.

**2. Native Plants Resolution**

Commissioner Michalowski shared follow-up commentary regarding the City Council meeting discussion of the Native Plants Resolution. Commission discussion followed.

**X. COMMISSIONER REPORTS - [heard during the work session]**

**XI. PUBLIC COMMENT - none**

**XII. PROPOSED BUSINESS**

Commissioner Michalowski discussed timelines for proposed agenda submissions.

**XIII. NEXT MEETING DATE**

Monday, December 14, 2020

**XIV. ADJOURNMENT: 8:52 p.m.**

**Collins (Second: Greenwald) moved to adjourn the meeting of the Sustainability Commission.**

**Voice Vote: Unanimous**

**Motion: Carried**



**City of Ypsilanti**  
**SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION**  
**One South Huron Street**  
**Ypsilanti, Michigan 48197**

**2021 Calendar of Meetings**

The regular meetings of the City of Ypsilanti **Sustainability Commission** for 2021 will typically be held on the **second Monday** of each month, at 7:00 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers (first floor) at One South Huron Street, Ypsilanti, Michigan.

Dates for 2021 meetings are as follows:

January 11	July 12
February 8	August 9
March 8	September 13
April 12	October 11
May 10	November 8
June 14	December 13

The City of Ypsilanti encourages persons with disabilities to participate and will provide necessary reasonable auxiliary aids and services, such as signers for the hearing impaired, Limited English Proficiency (LEP) services, and audios of printed materials being considered at the meeting. Individuals requiring auxiliary aids or services should provide two (2) days' notice to the City, and contact the City by writing or calling the following:

City Clerk's Office  
One South Huron Street  
Ypsilanti, Michigan 48197-5420  
(734) 483-1100

All persons are welcome to attend. For further information on the Sustainability Commission, contact the City Manager's Office at the above address, or 734-483-1810, or <http://cityofypsilanti.com/642/Sustainability-Commission>.





Resolution No. 2020-005  
14 Dec 2020

**RESOLVED BY THE SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION:**

WHEREAS, the Sustainability Commission of the City of Ypsilanti does hereby defines the 2021 goals of the Sustainability Commission as follows:

- Develop a resilience hub pilot program
- Expansion of the city recycling program
- Urban gardening and biodiversity promotion and education
- Continued commitment to renewable energy expansion
- Continued involvement in the removal of Penn Dam
- Increased outreach and educational efforts

OFFERED BY: \_\_\_\_\_

SUPPORTED BY: \_\_\_\_\_

YES:                      NO:                      ABSENT:                      VOTE:







**2020 Annual Report  
Sustainability Commission  
Ypsilanti, Michigan**

**INTRODUCTION**

The Sustainability Commission of the City of Ypsilanti is governed by the City of Ypsilanti's Code of Ordinances, Chapter 2, Section 171, allocates the following tasks to the Sustainability Commission:

- a. To create a model of sustainability through efforts to advocate, educate and promote the social, economic and environmental health of the community now and into the future.
- b. To broaden the lens and scope of energy and environmental needs in the future such as wind, solar, clean air, water and improving infrastructure.
- c. To recognize natural resources as chief assets of the City of Ypsilanti and encouraging responsible stewardship of these assets.
- d. To collaborate with citizens, employees, employers, service providers and other governmental agencies and educational agencies to share ideas.
- e. To create a Sustainability Plan.
- f. To review the City of Ypsilanti's Climate Action Plan, Alternate Fuel Policy, the Michigan Green Communities Challenge, and other plans and policies and to continue the work of said plans and policies.
- g. To prioritize sustainability policies.

In 2020, the Planning Commission's membership was as follows:

Keith Michaelowski (chair)  
Nancy Heine (vice-chair)  
Julia Bayha  
Christian Cannon  
Bryan Foley

Katy Greenwald  
Takunia Collins  
Beth Gibbons  
*Emily Drennen* (resigned **June?**)  
Desirae Simmons (appointed November)

**There were three vacant youth seats as of December 2020.**

As a best practice and per §2-174(e), the Commission shall provide an annual report to City Council. This report discusses,

1. The operations of the Commission during the past year
2. The status of any on-going activities, including the Michigan Green Communities Challenge
3. The progress towards the goals laid out in the Climate Action Plan and Energy Plan
4. Recommendations to the legislative body related to sustainability

**SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION OPERATIONS**

The Sustainability Commission held regular monthly meetings during 2020; these meetings were held virtually via Zoom after March due to the pandemic. The October regular meeting of the Commission was cancelled due to a short-notice issue with the Open Meetings Act with regards to the pandemic. In October, Sustainability Commission had a special joint meeting with Planning Commission for discussion of the draft Sustainability Plan.

**The Commission passed X resolutions and supported X projects/ideas, including A, B, and C. It also worked to draft the Sustainability Plan, which was submitted to the Planning Commission to be incorporated into the ongoing Master Plan update after a brief public review process in October.**

**Included in this year's annual report is the** draft implementation matrix from the draft Sustainability Plan.

**Plan Implementation Matrix**

These goals and their matrices are taken directly from the Climate Action Plan (2012) and Energy Plan (2018).  
*Capital Improvements Plan = CIP; Zoning Ordinance = ZO*

	Timeframe	Lead Party
<b>Sustainability Goals: Earth</b>		
GOAL: Eliminate new instances of soil contamination and responsibly deal with the legacy of existing polluted sites		
· Explore creation of an overlay zone, or other zoning or building regulations, to control the types of uses that may be permitted in areas with soils that would allow for easy transmission of contamination, or uses that have a high risk of contamination near ecologically sensitive areas, such as waterways.	Mid	CED
· Research and confirm existing sites of contamination with EGLE	MID	CED
· Use Brownfield TIF capture to fund remediation of sites that may be redeveloped.	ONGOING	CED
· Continue to work with the Washtenaw County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority to remediate sites.	ONGOING	CED
· Explore and pursue grant opportunities to remediate sites that may not be good candidates for commercial redevelopment or that pose an immediate threat.	ONGOING	CED
GOAL: Ensure buildings and infrastructure are constructed in a manner complementary to soil structure, slopes, and drainage.		
· Make soil information available to all, and directly provide information on soil structure to those who choose to build a new structure that requires a foundation.	ONGOING	CED
· Incorporate green infrastructure into planned capital improvement projects wherever possible, and identify potential sites for demonstration projects.	ONGOING	DPS
· Strengthen zoning protections to limit erosion in areas of steep slopes.	NEAR	CED
<b>Sustainability Goals: Water</b>		
GOAL: Protect the watershed from further contamination.		
· Consider a <b>sensitive features</b> overlay zone providing a buffer around the Huron River and <b>Paint Creek</b> that provides site and use regulations tailored to the proximity to these waterbodies	MID	CED
· Invest in consistent enforcement for compliance to the <b>sensitive feature overlay zoning district</b>	ONGOING	CED
· Continue to pursue updates to the zoning ordinance, such as tree protection regulations, that preserve and improve vegetation that can mitigate stormwater impacts.	ONGOING	CED
· Continue to support the work of the Washtenaw County Water Resources Commissioner and other partners to educate members of the public, particularly single-family homeowners, on stormwater issues.	ONGOING	

· Monitor adherence to the City's phosphorous fertilizer and tar sealcoat ordinances for effectiveness.	ONGOING	
· Work with Washtenaw County Environmental Health to research the status of remaining private wells and provide resources and recommendations for testing water quality to property owners	ONGOING	
GOAL: Preserve and expand the City's capacity to deal with heavy rainfall to mitigate negative effects on people and property.		
· Incorporate capacity upgrades for grey stormwater management into the CIP based on predictions for greater precipitation	ONGOING	DPS
· Update the flood maps, including FIRM, based on climate projections and changes to the river channel since the FIRM formulation in the 1970s	LONG	DPS
· Investigate an equitable stormwater fee schedule that encourages converting impervious to pervious surfaces and proper use of rain barrels or other detention/retention systems.	MID	COUNCIL/ DPS
· Consider banning basements or enforce floodplain standards in boundaries where the soil has limited capacity to handle stormwater	LONG	CED
· Develop a Stormwater Management Plan	MID	DPS
· Continue to pursue the removal of the Peninsular Dam	ONGOING	MANAGER
· Continue to maintain City lands that are in the flood zones and vacant for stormwater and floodwater mitigation.	ONGOING	VARIOUS
· Pursue GSI projects in the City parks, particularly in the flood zones.	ONGOING	DPS
· Pursue conservation &/or access easements along the Huron River.	ONGOING	CED
· Explore offering incentives to property owners to retrofit existing buildings and site improvements with stormwater-friendly infrastructure, including rain gardens.	LONG	
· Explore the potential to equitably enact a stormwater fee structure to encourage private retrofit stormwater infiltration and detention infrastructure	LONG	
GOAL: Promote resources for water conservation and testing to ensure access efficiency upgrades and clean water		
· Work with YCUA to develop home and business water efficiency financing programs	MID	
· Promote Great Lake Water Authority program WRAP to perform conservation audits and funds for repairs to help reduce low-income households reduce water bills	ONGOING	
· Collaborate with YCUA on water conservation and infrastructure improvement projects.	ONGOING	
<b>Sustainability Goals: Energy</b>		
GOAL: Decrease the community's emissions by 171,310 metric tons of CO <sub>2</sub> e by 2030.		
· Work with the City of Ann Arbor to investigate bulk buying of renewable energy through the	ONGOING	

Community Choice Aggregation Legislation.		
· Purchase renewable energy credits (RECs) for City operations.	LONG	
· Promote state policies, incentives, grants, and Community Energy Management programs that encourage energy efficiency and renewable energy to property owners.	ONGOING	
· Promote Washtenaw County’s weatherization program for low-income homeowners.	ONGOING	CED
· Work with community stakeholders to initiate an energy competition. The university and City can partner together to challenge another city and university to an energy reduction competition.	LONG	
· Implement an inter-departmental site plan review process with attention to sustainability-related strategies such as energy use and efficiency, generation and offsetting of emissions, on-site water management and infiltration, etc.	ONGOING	CED
· Investigate the feasibility of a microgrid.	LONG	
· Review and incorporate aspects of the International Dark Sky Model ordinance to reduce energy waste (i.e. motion activated lighting on municipal buildings)	MID	DPS
· Participate in or sign-on to regional, national, or international commitments to energy, climate, and sustainability including but not limited to the Paris Climate Agreement, the Sierra Club’s “Ready for 100” pledge, the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy.	SHORT	COUNCIL
· Develop an electric charging vehicle infrastructure strategy	MID	DPS
· Create a green rental certification program to encourage energy-efficient improvements	MID	CED
· Work with the HDC to incorporate historically compatible fixtures that are dark sky compliant	ONGOING	CED
· Continue to pursue policies and projects that improve nonmotorized transportation.	ONGOING	DPS/CED
· Continue to encourage solar energy installations throughout the City.	ONGOING	CED
· Partner with other agencies, such as YCUA , DTE, and MiSaves to provide education and incentives for energy use reductions, both residential and commercial.	ONGOING	
· Continue to participate in local, regional, national, and international efforts for climate mitigation and adaptation.	ONGOING	
· Continue membership in communities such as ICLEI that help support local efforts to combat and adapt to climate change.	ONGOING	
GOAL: Decrease government operation emission in support of attaining citywide net zero by 2030		
· Establish an Energy Manager position to be responsible for the following duties:	MID	MANAGER
o Improve knowledge of energy management among city staff and appointed officials among staff		
o Create a data-driven system that is replicable over time, and includes annual forecasts, benchmarks for energy use reductions, and an internal reporting protocol		
o Work with the Sustainability Commission to produce an annual report that highlights where emission reductions and procedural improvements have been made		

o Improve communications with facility managers, utility providers, and relevant contractors to resolve issues quickly		
o Increase outreach to and participation of industrial and commercial customers in renewable energy and energy efficiency projects		
o Research and utilize the most efficient equipment available		
· Continue to incorporate renewable energy into the energy portfolio of each government building including back-up generation	ONGOING	DPS
· Re-establish the City's revolving loan fund for energy efficiency projects.	MID	MANAGER
· Conduct a GHG inventory every 5 years using input from 2012 & 2018 findings in the ICLEI GHG framework	LONG	DPS
· Improve fleet fuel efficiency with clean diesel, alternative fuels, and electrification.	ONGOING	DPS
· Publicly report on progress made toward energy goals.	ONGOING	DPS/CED/MANAGER
· Continue to make energy-efficiency improvements to City owned facilities	ONGOING	DPS
<b>ENERGY: Reduce the amount of waste generated in Ypsilanti that enters landfills</b>		
· Conduct a waste audit to understand the baseline composition of the waste stream at the municipal operations and community level	SHORT	DPS
· Help publicize local re-use opportunities, such as the Buy Nothing Project and Freecycle.	ONGOING	CED
· Implement an educational campaign on existing recycling and composting options	SHORT	DPS
· Expand recycling to public spaces and all City facilities by placing artful, educational, and engaging waste sorting stations throughout the community	MID	DPS
· Create a coordinated recycling system that has a one stop for difficult-to-recycle materials including electronics and refrigerant management	LONG	DPS
· Increase access to curbside recycling services to multi-family units	MID	DPS
· Define Zero Waste for Ypsilanti using the Zero Waste hierarchy. Set a goal for City operations to be zero waste (excluding medical waste) by a specific date with annual benchmarks.	LONG	
· Require that any events with a City permit provide for recycling, compost, and provide a discount for Zero Waste events	LONG	
· Require government operations to use durable or compostable materials	MID	
· Implement a pilot program for a municipal kitchen compost system with high food-waste generators.	LONG	
· Investigate a partnership with a commercial-scale compost operation	MID	
· Pilot curbside community composting services for leftover food	LONG	
· Investigate funding sources to bring down the cost of a biodigester	MID	
· Permit onsite composting of mulched leaves	DONE	

· Continue to explore options to improve recycling and composting opportunities within the City and with partners.	ONGOING	DPS
<b>Sustainability Goals: Biodiversity</b>		
<b>GOAL: Expand and protect natural habitats</b>		
· Incorporate model language for rewilding landscaping into the city's ordinance	SHORT	
· Create informational materials for property owners on preferred and prohibited plants	SHORT	SUSTAINABILITY
· Rezone undeveloped land on Mansfield and on Clark to a more protective zoning district	MID	CED
· Continue to support the local food system	ONGOING	CED
· Support traffic calming and other infrastructure design that help reduce animal road crossing mortality	ONGOING	DPS/CED
· Promote "bird safe" designs and "lights out" programs during migratory season	SHORT	CED
· Consider programs for habitat improvement such as bat houses, pollinator gardens, and others as they develop		
· Train inspectors to spot wildlife-friendly plants to prevent their removal	ONGOING	CED
· Continue to monitor health of the city's wetlands and work with the Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation to protect them	ONGOING	
· Partner with the County to inventory land that could be nominated for NAPP		
· Encourage warm light to protect insects	ONGOING	CED
· Encourage use of native and climate-change adapted plants wherever possible	ONGOING	
· Work with DTE to provide warmer, more night-sky friendly public lighting.	ONGOING	DPS
· Review the existing lighting ordinance and update to explicitly permit motion-sensitive lighting.	SHORT	CED
· Review and incorporate aspects of the Dark Sky Model Lighting Ordinance to reduce negative effects on insects and migratory birds	MID	CED
<b>GOAL: To preserve and expand a resilient tree canopy</b>		
· Implement a tree preservation ordinance	MID	
· Plant additional street trees and trees in parks in accordance with the Urban Forest Management Plan, with a particular prioritization of those sites indicated by the Tree Equity map.	ONGOING	DPS
· Increase and diversify the public tree stock according to the Urban Forest Management Plan	ONGOING	DPS
· Invest in tree maintenance	ONGOING	COUNCIL
· Continue the City's Arbor Day Tree City USA designation	ONGOING	
· Coordinate tree planting efforts with sidewalk maintenance efforts and considerations.	ONGOING	
· Update street planting guidelines to prioritize tap roots species and vary pit size by species	SHORT	

<b>Sustainability Goals: Complete Neighborhoods</b>		
<b>GOAL: Maintain and expand transportation options including the development of bicycle, pedestrian, and sharing networks.</b>		
· Implement a parking cash-out alternative benefit option for City employees	SHORT	HR
· Prioritize transit-oriented development	ONGOING	CED
· Partner with the DDA and AATA to provide a discounted transit pass as an alternative to downtown parking permits	MID	DPS
· Encourage corporate sponsorship of transit passes and infrastructure to encourage employee bus and bikeshare ridership	MID	DPS
· Consider pursuing car, scooter, or bike-sharing programs with Eastern Michigan University as a partner.	ONGOING	CED
· Close sidewalk gaps	ONGOING	DPS
· Add bicycle lanes to major thoroughfares and trunklines	ONGOING	DPS
· Retain the mix of uses within each corridor but allow them throughout the area.	ONGOING	CED
· Restore two-way function to Cross, Huron, and Hamilton Streets.	LONG	DPS
· Separate Cross and Washtenaw for vehicle traffic.	LONG	DPS
· Restore Harriet Street as the Main Street of adjacent neighborhoods.	LONG	CED
· Prioritize pedestrians at crosswalks, and investigate where pedestrian walk signs can be made automatic	MID	DPS
· Work with MDOT to make state-owned roads more accessible to nonmotorized users	ONGOING	DPS
· Coordinate with Townships and WCPRC on Border to Border (B2B) trail development	ONGOING	DPS
· Encourage police enforcement and legislative support for bike and pedestrian safety	ONGOING	YPD
· Improve neighborhood walkability by improving sidewalk connectivity and conditions. Prioritize the improvement of nonmotorized connections that link neighborhoods and job centers.	ONGOING	DPS
· Continue to support the development of intercity and commuter rail	ONGOING	MANAGER
· Coordinate citizens to advocate for slower traffic speeds on state owned corridors	ONGOING	
<b>GOAL: Incentivize energy efficient and socially responsible development</b>		
· Consider density bonuses, particularly on transit and commercial corridors, in exchange for developers meeting criteria that achieve city goals	MID	CED
· Incentivize US Green Building Council's LEED for Neighborhood Development standard for new development	MID	CED
· Develop a Green Business/Neighborhood Certification program	LONG	CED
· Seek affordable housing development and identify parcels where it can locate near services	ONGOING	CED

· Continue to prioritize infill development	ONGOING	CED
· Continue to provide a variety of housing options, including affordable housing and missing middle housing.	ONGOING	CED
· Provide a Sustainability Commissioner liaison to a neighborhood interested in developing an eco-district	ONGOING	SUSTAINABILITY
<b>GOAL: Increase neighborhood resiliency during times of disruption.</b>		
Identify walkable/bikeable neighborhood resource centers throughout the City, such as community centers, churches, schools, or social clubs.	SHORT	
Work with these identified resources to increase their capacity to serve as emergency resource centers, including backup power generation, emergency shelter, and food and resource distribution.	MID	
Work with the Health Department and other partners to make resources available for community leaders who wish for their homes to serve as small-scale resources during disruptions.	ONGOING	
<b><i>Sustainability Goals: Communication</i></b>		
<b>GOAL: Play a leading role in educating Ypsilanti residents on sustainability topics.</b>		
· Implement an educational series about energy efficiency in different venues with a focus on teaching the most vulnerable populations about resources that help reduce their utility bills	ONGOING	SUSTAINABILITY
· Continue to work with sustainability-related organizations to develop and offer in school guest lectures, field trips, and other learning opportunities with local schools	ONGOING	SUSTAINABILITY
· Work with schools to reduce waste and incorporate reusable items on campus	ONGOING	SUSTAINABILITY
· Determine a designated point person on city staff to direct sustainability-related questions or comments to the correct department		
· Promote the city’s energy, climate, and sustainability vision through the established online newsletter and develop other municipal marketing materials to update residents on city efforts, key sustainability topics, and easy-to-follow tips at home	ONGOING	SUSTAINABILITY
· Organize competitions between municipal employees, business owners, and neighborhoods that promote sustainability-focused activities:	ONGOING	SUSTAINABILITY
· “Bring Your Green to Work,”		
· Energy treasure hunts,		
· Adopting catch basins or green infrastructure,		
· Zero waste days,		
· Smart commute weeks, and challenges to bike, walk, or take public transit to work.		
· Partner with Ypsilanti Community Schools on communication and education efforts.	ONGOING	
· Consider creating a Communications Specialist position to lead and coordinate communication and	MID	MANAGER



education efforts within the City.		
· Make critical public documents accessible and multilingual	ONGOING	MANAGER
· Publicize available efficiency and support programs, such as the County's weatherization program and YCUA's water assistance program.	ONGOING	
GOAL: Develop the datasets necessary to determine where disaster relief should be targeted		
· Conduct an Environmental Justice analysis that identifies vulnerable populations and structures that are disproportionately impacted by climate change	LONG	
· Work with SEMCOG and the County to expand local air quality monitoring system	SHORT	
· Investigate infrastructure materials that can weather extreme weather	ONGOING	
GOAL: Mitigate the damage inflicted on residents, infrastructure, and property from extreme weather.		
· Implement renewable backup power systems for areas of refuge and emergency facilities	ONGOING	DPS
· Collaborate with landlords, YCUA, and DTE to ensure that in a time of crisis essential water and gas/electricity are not shut off	ONGOING	CED/MANAGER
· Work with Washtenaw County to develop a Hazard Mitigation Plan.	MID	YPD/YFD/DPS
· Partner with Washtenaw County to expand emergency preparedness and communication tools including a multilingual and universally accessible plan that includes climate change predictions	MID	MANAGER
· Work with the County to identify additional accessible warming and cooling shelters	MID	
· Require occupied residential rental units to have one air-conditioned room	MID	CED
· Review response protocol and update where needed to respond to severe storm events	MID	MANAGER
· Continue to explore Resilience Hubs in coordination with local community partners and facilities.	MID	
· Publicize available utility assistance programs, such as THAW, leading into and during peak heating and cooling seasons.	ONGOING	
· Work with Washtenaw County and utility partners to ban utility shutoffs for nonpayment during states of emergency or extreme weather events.		
· Improve snow and ice response for sidewalks	ONGOING	DPS (PUBLIC) CED (PRIVATE)

## **LOOKING FORWARD**

At the end of 2020, these planning projects remain in progress.

- An update to the Master Plan is planned. 2019 goals include housing affordability and accessibility; traffic on Hamilton, Huron, and Washtenaw; the proposed train stop; Water Street; neighborhood updates for Bell-Kramer, and general implementation updates.
- Updates to the medical marijuana portion of the zoning ordinance, and potentially the addition of recreational marijuana provisions, as needed to further align with the state regulations.
- The Planning Commission will continue to provide review of the annual Capital Improvements Plan prior to adoption by City Council, per state act.

## **ACTION**

The Sustainability Commission adopted this report at its regular December 2018 meeting and approved transmittal to City Council

DRAFT

## Neighborhoods

Ypsilanti has many active neighborhood associations that provide opportunities for residents and property owners to organize social activities, neighborhood watches, or even political initiatives. Use the following map and links to find your neighborhood association - or contact your neighbors and start your own!

If you do not see your Neighborhood Association listed, please contact [ejekabson@cityofypsilanti.com](mailto:ejekabson@cityofypsilanti.com) to get listed!

### Local Neighborhood Associations

- [Bell and Kramer Neighborhood Association](#)
- [College Heights Neighborhood Association](#)
- [Downtown Association of Ypsilanti](#)
- [Historic Eastside Neighborhood Association](#)
- [Midtown Neighborhood Association](#)
- [Normal Park Neighborhood Association](#)
- [Ypsi Riverside Neighborhood Association](#)

Many residents connect to their neighborhoods on the Nextdoor App. Join one of the 26 Ypsilanti neighborhoods at the icon below!





Keith Michalowski &lt;kmichalowski@gmail.com&gt;

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**Fwd: municipal resolution on utility rates and delinquencies during COVID**

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**Nancy Heine** <heinen567@gmail.com>  
To: Keith <kmichalowski@gmail.com>

Thu, Nov 19, 2020 at 9:58 AM

Hi Keith. I'm forwarding this to you as well. Not sure of next steps for us? This is time sensitive it sounds like.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Rick Bunch** <[rick@mi-maui.org](mailto:rick@mi-maui.org)>

Date: Mon, Nov 16, 2020 at 4:47 PM

Subject: municipal resolution on utility rates and delinquencies during COVID

To: Nancy Heine <[heinen567@gmail.com](mailto:heinen567@gmail.com)>

Hi Nancy -

I hope you are well. I'm sharing with you a draft resolution we have developed for local governments to communicate to the Public Service Commission concern about how delinquent residential ratepayer accounts are handled during COVID, and asking the Commission to order DTE to use extra revenue it has collected during COVID to support vulnerable ratepayers.

City of Ann Arbor is turning this content into a letter from the mayor, and Missy Stults plans to submit it during the MPSC's meeting this Thursday, along with live public comment. Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners is going the official resolution route, and I'm not as sure of their timeline. A few other local governments in DTE's service region are looking at it, too, and we are reaching out as much as we can.

The reason for haste is that DTE's proposal is not being treated as a contested case, but rather one that the Commission will pass judgement on whenever it is ready. And that could be any time.

The resolution concerns a proposal (case U-20791) that DTE Energy has submitted to the MPSC proposing how it will allocate at least \$30 million in excess revenue, and how it will account for and collect higher delinquencies related to COVID (around \$230 million). We believe what DTE is proposing will make a bad situation worse for many ratepayers - not just low income and senior ratepayers, but also anybody working from home or with kids in remote schooling, for whom loss of utility service would be disastrous particularly over the winter. Aside from being bad for Ypsi residents, that would also put additional strain on safety-net programs operated by local governments, school districts and others.

I don't have a good contact on Ypsi city council now, nor the new mayor, but if you think that's the place to start with this issue, maybe you could help me get the right person's attention?

Many thanks!

Rick Bunch  
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**Municipal resolution utility COVID response MPSC 20201116.docx**  
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**Resolution Requesting the Michigan Public Service Commission Require DTE Electric to Apply Excess COVID-19 Related Revenue to Ensuring Access to Low-Income and Vulnerable Residents**

Whereas the COVID-19 pandemic is worsening as winter approaches, with the State of Michigan and Washtenaw County reporting record numbers of new cases on a daily basis;

Whereas economic impacts of the pandemic have been and continue to be severe, with unemployment rates in Washtenaw County rising from 2.2% before the pandemic to more than 6% today;

Whereas these economic impacts have fallen disproportionately on lower- and fixed-income households and individuals;

Whereas the capacity of lower- and fixed-income households to absorb financial losses related to COVID-19 has already been largely exhausted;

Whereas lower-income and fixed-income households have also suffered disproportionate health impacts from the pandemic;

Whereas more than 230,000 low-income or senior, and more than 637,000 total DTE Energy electric and gas ratepayers had delinquent accounts totaling more than \$116 million and more than \$244 million, respectively, according to the company's October 2020 report to the MPSC;<sup>1</sup>

Whereas, the amount of government aid for utility bills in recent years is not sufficient to prevent tens of thousands of eligible low-income households from losing their utility service, including households with school-age children in residence;

Whereas, funding available under the federal CARES Act to help vulnerable households struggling to afford utility bills during the COVID-19 pandemic has not been extended beyond calendar year 2020;

Whereas, DTE Energy issued almost 107,000 shutoff notices to residential gas and electric customers in October 2020, of which 10,691 were issued to ratepayers identified as senior or low-income;

Whereas, DTE Energy's COVID-19 moratorium on service shutoffs for all customers ended as of July 29, 2020;

**Commented [1]:** (Winter moratorium for seniors has kicked in now, hence the edit)

<sup>1</sup> MPSC case U-20757-0220, DTE Energy Company's Monthly Restoration of Service and Data Report for the Month of October 2020, p.1.



Whereas, large numbers of Washtenaw County residents are working, learning, and studying from home due to the COVID-19 pandemic;

Whereas the loss of utility service in a home may result in the inability of children to attend school and the loss of employment for working-age adults;

Whereas failure to attend school harms students' educational development and may result in removal of a child from their home, and inability to work caused by utility shutoffs may cause workers to lose their jobs and thus need a variety of other social services from their local and state governments;

Whereas individuals who are exposed to COVID-19 are urged to quarantine in their homes for an extended period, which is not likely to be safe during the pandemic without access to energy;

Whereas, DTE Energy projects more than \$30 million gross profit in excess of the amount approved by the MPSC, attributed to residential ratepayers using more energy at home during the COVID-19 pandemic, while commercial and industrial ratepayers have used less energy;<sup>2</sup>

Whereas DTE Energy proposes to "return" the excess gross margin by delaying its request for a rate increase from March 2021 to May 2021, even though it is not certain the Company would be permitted to raise its rates nor that the pandemic will be over;

Whereas, DTE Energy proposes to refund the gross margin across all rate classes, without regard to how much each rate class has contributed to creation of the gross margin;

Whereas, the Commission has granted DTE Energy authority to create a regulatory asset by deferring uncollectible expenses, which could allow the Company to recover current uncollectible accounts through future rate increases;

Whereas, other businesses that have suffered significant financial losses related to COVID-19 will have no ability or expectation to recover those losses by raising their prices in the future, nor likewise can they be expected to have financial capacity to absorb utility rate increases to help utilities recover COVID-19 related arrearages;

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<sup>2</sup> MPSC case U-20921-001





Whereas, residential ratepayers have also suffered significant financial and health impacts from COVID-19 and will not have capacity to pay off other ratepayers' delinquencies through future utility rate increases;

Whereas, given the economic dislocation of COVID-19 is expected to end at some point, and many individuals currently unable to meet their utility bills will be expected to be able to do so again in the future;

Whereas, Washtenaw County and the City of Ann Arbor have implemented various programs to support low- and fixed income and other vulnerable households;

Whereas, the ability of these County and City programs to serve targeted populations is constrained by the City and County's budget and by challenges identifying and engaging potential beneficiaries;

Whereas, DTE Energy has both ratepayer data and excess gross margin related to COVID-19 that could be used to help local governments and others identify and support low- income and senior households, including those with school-age children;

Therefore Be It Resolved, the City of Ann Arbor calls on the Michigan Public Service Commission to take several steps to identify and support residential utility ratepayers during the COVID-19 pandemic, including:

- Protecting workers, students, children, seniors and other customers of DTE Energy and other regulated utilities from health impacts, loss of employment and social connection, and access to education, by suspending all residential service shutoffs by regulated utilities, essentially implementing maximum delinquency forbearance, at a minimum through the winter of 2021;
- Reducing residential electric and gas rates, and taking all other available actions, to minimize shutoffs and the number of delinquent accounts that may otherwise receive shutoff notices when the winter shutoff moratorium for seniors ends on April 1, 2021, or whenever COVID-19 related shutoff restrictions are lifted;
- Directing DTE Energy, and other regulated utilities, to propose a plan to apply COVID-19 related excess gross margin to avert shutoffs of residential ratepayers, thus preventing both the societal costs of shutoffs and reducing the burden on all ratepayers of the costs of administering shutoffs and re-activation;



- Assuring that refunds of the \$30 million gross margin are proportionally beneficial to each rate class's original contribution to the margin, with a focus in the residential class of ensuring access to energy for low-income and senior populations;
- Directing DTE Energy, and other regulated utilities, to notify local governments of the number of shutoffs, shutoff notices and delinquencies, by zip code, on a monthly basis, starting immediately;
- Directing DTE Energy, and other regulated utilities, to provide ratepayers with delinquent accounts descriptions and contact details for programs that serve low-income, veteran, and senior populations;
- Declining to permit DTE Energy, and other regulated utilities, to reclassify delinquent accounts as regulatory assets to be recovered in future rates.
- Postponing any rate increase discussions until after the COVID-19 pandemic has subsided.

**Commented [2]:** There are special utility programs for vets.

Resolved, The Ann Arbor City Council direct the City Administrator to share this resolution directly with the Michigan Public Service Commission, with our State Representatives, State Senator, and all others individuals who may be able to help ensure the City's concerns are elevated with the Michigan Public Service Commission.