

COUNCIL INFORMATION LETTER
September 2024



OCTOBER 2, 2024

City of Ypsilanti
Andrew Hellenga, City Manager



City Manager's Office

- Department Heads have been meeting with the selected City Attorney to provide a smooth transition in the new year.
- Health insurance rates for current employees and retirees will be appearing on the October 15th agenda for approval. The rates have increased slightly for the PPO (1%), with a larger increase to the HMO plan (14%). The city provides a high deductible plan and front loads a variable amount to assist an employee with meeting their deductible.
- Staff recently attended the Michigan Municipal League conference. Take aways from this conference were understanding the city's connection to its stakeholder and how to strengthen those connections. Secondly, a presentation on AI provided information on how better to fill gaps in the city and better use data.
- Currently reviewing the Community Benefits Ordinance internally, staff is waiting for the results of the board and commission review of the ordinance. Data received will be compiled and provided to Council.

City Clerk

Training

- We held online training, at no extra cost, with CivicPlus for agenda and meeting management training for all staff members who create agendas and minutes.
- In conjunction with HR, staff from Clerk's, Finance and Building participated in 2 Customer Service training sessions.

Elections

- The City Clerk was interviewed by the EMU Echo for an article about the Charter Amendment petitions that didn't make it on the November ballot.
- The City Clerk met with several voting groups, including Voters Not Politicians and the Michigan Democratic Party, to discuss plans and concerns for November, as well as ways these organizations can help the office.
- The Clerk's office mailed out over 2,500 absentee ballots, with the help of city staff (thank you Tom Koch and Rachel Frye), and the contract election staff.
- Since the August Primary, we have registered over 600 voters, processing a pile of over 1,000 applications with many duplicates.

Boards and Commissions

- Deputy Thomas coordinated a workshop for commissions with Attorney Barr to give more guidance on process and procedure. Deputy Thomas recorded the meeting so those not in attendance could view it, as well as being able to share it with new commissioners as they are appointed.

Boards & Commissions Vacancies

(as of September 24th, 2024)

	Membership Type	Last Name
Ethics	Board Member	VACANT
Ethics	Board Member	VACANT
Ethics	Board Member	VACANT

Ethics	Board Member	VACANT
Ethics	Board Member	VACANT
Fire and Police Pension	Trustee	VACANT
Fire and Police Pension	Trustee	VACANT
Fire Civil Service Commission	Commissioner	VACANT
Human Relations	Commissioner	VACANT
Human Relations	Youth Member	VACANT
Human Relations	Youth Member	VACANT
Planning	Commissioner	VACANT
Police Advisory	Commissioner	VACANT
Police Advisory	Commissioner	VACANT
Police Advisory	Vice-Chair	VACANT Youth
Police Advisory	Youth Member	VACANT Youth
Parks & Arts	Commissioner	VACANT
Sustainability	Youth Member (1 year)	VACANT
Sustainability	Youth Member (1 year)	VACANT
Zoning Board of Appeals	Commissioner	VACANT
Zoning Board of Appeals	Commissioner	VACANT

Finance Department

Accounting and Finance

- Processed all FY 23-24 invoices in preparation for closing the Fiscal Year.
- Prepared all year-end entries
- Met with Dewpoint for the monthly IT service check-in
- Met with BS&A transition and upgrade team for our Financial, HR and Building system upgrade

Assessing

- Preparing for the upcoming PA 660 audit
- Working on organizing field checks and permits during 2024
- Putting together the land study for 2025

Treasury

- Attended the Fire and Police Pension Meeting. A new representative has volunteered to join the board.

Human Resources

- Filled Part-Time Project Manager positions
- Conducted interviews for Firefighter/EMT, Equipment Operator and Temporary (Seasonal) Laborer positions
- Recruiting for Firefighter, Police Officer, Equipment Operator, Temporary (Seasonal) Laborer and School Crossing Guard positions
- Recruited at the Washtenaw Community Resource Fair-Bridging the Gaps

New Hire Summary:

- Isabelle Brogna – Part-Time Project Manager

Internal Promotions:

- Zachary Plymale – Police Officer

New Hire Summary - September 2024



Zach Plymale
Ypsilanti Police Department

Isabelle Brogna
Part-Time Project Manager
Department of Public Services

Planning, Community & Economic Development

August

- Reviewed two special land use proposals and three site plan proposals ahead of September's Planning Commission Meeting.
- Reviewed an Adaptive Reuse PUD ahead of the August Planning Commission Meeting.
- Reviewed 28 applications ranging from signs, food trucks, residential dwellings, etc.

September

- The City Planner attended the Michigan Association of Planning Conference in Grand Rapids.
- The City Planner reviewed 12 applications ranging from signs, food trucks, residential dwellings, etc.

Planning Commission

August

- The Planning Commission hosted a new public hearing for EMBs and approved the proposed language to move forward for City Council deliberation. The language is proposed to be on Council's September 17th agenda.
- The Planning Commission hosted a public hearing and deliberated on an adaptive reuse planned unit development at 202, 206, and 218 E. Forest. The Planning Commission recommended approval

with conditions for the adaptive reuse PUD at this location, and the project is proposed to be on Council's agenda on September 17th.

September

- The Planning Commission reviews a temporary sign permit for the Downtown Library's reopening.
- The Planning Commission approved a site plan for a truck storage and repair use at 612 S. Mansfield.
- The Planning Commission approved a special use and site plan for Planet Jane's transition from a microbusiness to a retailer.
- The Planning Commission approved a special use and site plan for a mixed-use, 8-unit building at 201 N. Park.

Zoning Board of Appeals

August and September

The Zoning Board of Appeals did not meet.

Business and Development Milestones August & September

Water Street

- Working with Carlisle Wortman to schedule community engagement sessions in conjunction with excavation. Carlisle Wortman is also working with staff to update the Water Street portion of the city website.
- Met with AKT Peerless and planning an October 15 presentation for the City Council

Peninsular Dam

- Invited to present virtually the Peninsular Dam project for the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Coastal Resilience Program on September 17, 2024
- Hosted an RFP Q&A session with interested parties for the design phase of the removal of the dam. Received four proposals.

Dorsey Estates

- On 8/26, the team at Dorsey Estates began removing soil from the site, activating the \$1M Michigan Department of Environment \$1M Michigan Department of environment, Great Lakes and Energy (EGLE) Grant.
- Attended six+ homebuyer sessions with the Renovare team with residents who are potential homebuyers at Dorsey Estates.

Other

- Met with City of Ann Arbor staff and HUD to review the PRO Housing Grant that the City of Ypsilanti was sub-recipient and partnered with the City of Ann Arbor.
- Working with Dan Kelly and staff at St. Luke's to begin work on plans for the winter daytime and overnight shelter plans in Ypsilanti.
- Met with your Youth Arts Alliance to review their Proforma for development at 326 Michigan Ave.
- Met with MEDC and development team to issue pre-development funds for a long vacant property in Depot Town.
- Attended Michigan Housing Alliance Landlord Advisory Group Meeting with Annie Sommerville and Jeff Irwin.
- Attended the M-17 PEL Local Agency Group Meeting – Washtenaw Area Transportation Study – Reimagine Washtenaw.

Historic Preservation

- Preservation planner approved 3 applications administratively in August and 7 in September for work in the district.

- Historic District Commission approved 7 applications in August and 2 in September for work in the district.
- Historic District Commission postponed 2 applications for more information in August. One of these was approved in September and one is still awaiting more information.
- Newest commissioner was oriented and has had their first meeting. Commission is fully appointed.
- Grant-funded resurvey work in the district is underway. The recording of the July info session is available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KFLAKI1Dy9Y>.
- Preservation planner visited Ypsilanti Historical Society and EMU to advance research on the Powerhouse Building at Peninsular Dam.

Downtown Development Authority

DDA Board of Directors Meeting

The DDA Board took their scheduled break in August.

September 19th :

The DDA Board Approved:

- The Intergovernmental agreement with the City of Ypsilanti.
- Amended the DDA's internal purchasing policy.
- Contract Amendments with Fishbeck for the Freighthouse Plaza Redesign.
- Moved for the Grants Committee to review all future Special Events Sponsorships.
- A contract with DJ's landscaping for 4-season landscaping maintenance, salting, plowing for the Maple Street Parking lot.
- A Holiday Lighting Plan. The City is responsible for decorating the light poles on Michigan Ave in Downtown, and E. Cross Street in Depot Town. A contractor will decorate 7 full trees in Depot Town, and 38 Trees bases Downtown. A second contractor will be repairing the Depot Town Christmas Tree lights, decorating 40 streetlights from S. Huron up W. Cross Street, and 8 new streetlights on N. Washington Street. Holiday Decor for the Michigan Ave Center Medians and the Depot Town Tridge were outside of the budget this year.

Other Notable DDA Updates

- Danya Youssef-Agha was hired as the DDA Coordinator, filling a position that has been vacant for a year. She has already been an incredible asset to the DDA and the City.
- Malissa Gillett stepped down from the DDA Board. I want to thank her for her decade of dedication to small businesses in Ypsilanti, running various small business Saturday events, and taking over First Fridays Ypsilanti after the pandemic.
- ExploreYpsi was launched on August 25th. The DDA partnered with Engage@EMU and GameAbove to put \$10 gift cards to all new EMU Students, Faculty and Staff. These gift cards can be redeemed at any participating business within the DDA. <https://app.yiftee.com/gift-card/exploreypsi>
- New Street lights have been installed on N. Washington Street.
- The DDA has designed and sent into production, "Welcome to Depot Town Banners" and are sponsoring three banners that celebrate the Ypsilanti Food Co-Ops 50th anniversary.
- Staff is ramping up a social media campaign for new Downtown Businesses.
- Depot Town Clock has been repainted.
- The Depot Town Mural has been installed.
- The Depot Town Drinking fountain is shipping this week. Installation will be scheduled shortly. The DDA has officially received the CTAP grant from Destination Ann Arbor for this project.
- Contracted weeding of the sidewalks all the way up Cross Street from River St. to the Water Tower.
- New business orientations with Cold Comfort, Putt-r-Round, Beara Bakes, Haabs Barrelhouse, and Find and Shine Antiques.
- Rumble of The Bumble, and the Corresponding First Fridays Event was a huge success.

- Staff gave a Downtown tour for the MEDC Technical Assistance Team on 9/12/24.
- Staff participated in the Chapel Hill Intercity Tour in partnership with the City and A2YChamber.
- The Maple Street Lot is a free parking lot as of September 15, 2024. New signage has been ordered.
- Scheduled West Cross District work: Replanting of a flower garden at Perrin and W. Cross, Street tree replacement and repair along W. Cross St., concrete stamping work for a problem weed area.
- Scheduled Depot Town work: Weed Barrier and Stone installation along Freighthouse lot, sidewalk power-washing along E. Cross Street.

Department of Public Services

Operations/Admin

- Supported Sustainability and Parks & Arts Commissions.
- Working with CS dept on grant application strategies
- Director and supervisor attended the Michigan Public Service Institute in September. First year of a three-year program.
- Please note: AT&T will be doing significant fiber work in the general area of the College Heights neighborhood. This will involve them using *private utility easements* (not alleys) that run behind and between peoples' homes; this will involve overhead work as well as underground/directional bore. This work is in the area bounded by Hewitt, the Border-to-Border Trail, Courtland, and Washtenaw. Ward 2 representatives, please be aware that we have confirmed that AT&T is using existing private utility easements as marked on the initial plat of the area.
- Personnel updates:
 - 3 open Equipment Operator positions
 - 1 Equipment Operator on FMLA
 - 3 open Laborer positions

Facilities

- Moving forward with Fire Station and Police Station concrete, retaining wall, and basement wall projects; Fire dept electric project, DPS programming & stabilization.
 - Stabilization program went out to bid; no bids received by due date 9/30. Will rebid first week of October.
- Moving forward with replacing portions of City Hall HVAC
- Developing RFPs for facility condition assessments, Freighthouse floor refinishing
- Continuing to work with 2030 district on energy auditing
- Reached out to Solar Ypsi to evaluate efficacy of existing solar panels; discovered issues that we will work to resolve with SY assistance.
- Working with Parkridge Community Center to understand and resolve capacity/usage issues

Forestry

- Tree removals and significant prunes continue as staffing permits; approximately 10 trees removed in September.
- Exploring upcoming grant opportunities to update urban forestry plan

Streets

- 14 right of way permit applications granted.
- Sinkhole in intersection of Hamilton/Michigan in process of being addressed with MDOT; appears to be a compaction issue with no visible failures of storm or sanitary.
- Working with DTE to resolve ongoing right-of-way work issues.
 - Working with DTE streetlighting to upgrade remaining MV & HPS lights to LED
 - DTE gas main work ongoing in the Superior/Huron River Drive area as well as Emerick/Grove area, N Huron planned as well.

- Cross St bridge has been awarded \$3.2m for its rehabilitation by MDOT via its regional bridge and big bridge competitive grant process. Although awarded technical assistance grant from SEMCOG to aid in applying for a federal grant for the balance (\$4.5m), TA program has changed and no longer being offered. Allocation application submitted to Stabenow's office.
- 30% design plans received for Harriet (First to Hawkins) and TAP grant submitted.
- Bridge load rating inspections performed. *Anticipate closing center lanes (two of four) on Prospect Bridge indefinitely.*
- Swept (August):
 - Trunklines: Ecorse, N Hamilton, Michigan Ave, W Cross,
 - Area 1 (Mon pickup): Louise, N Mansfield, Mark, Roosevelt, University Ct, Whittier
 - Area 2 (Tue pickup): N Adams, College Pl, N Congress, Elm, Emmett, Grant, Hiawatha, Pearl, Sheridan, N Washington, Westmooreland
 - Area 3 (Wed pickup): W Forest, Florence, N Huron, Jarvis, Jenness, Lowell, Olive, Ann, St John
 - Area 4 (Thu pickup): S Washington
 - Area 5 (Fri pickup): none.

Patched (September):

Congress/Normal intersection; Holmes, Mansfield, Maple Ct, Normal, Spring.

Solid Waste

- Continued work with WRRMA
- Renewed Recycle Ann Arbor Drop-Off Station contract
- Working to renew Recycle Ann Arbor MRF contract (curbside recycling disposal)
- Clerk's office Issued compost drop-off passes to residents/property owners & Recycle Ann Arbor passes
- Working to finalize content for mailer for distribution after the 11/6 election.

Stormwater

- 46 compromised catchbasins or structures and two significant under-road voids were addressed using a contractor and new-to-Ypsi technology.
- 3 catchbasins/structures were rebuilt using traditional masonry.
- Working with the Environmental Policy Innovation Center on federal grant assistance for funding for foundational stormwater work
- Outfall/MS4 report received and being reviewed.
- Worked with Advanced Underground, and YCUA on investigation of storm infrastructure failures. Diagnosis and potential repairs identified, as well as areas where more information is needed; working with OHM on bid documents. Currently approximately 25+ locations in the City requiring significant near-term repair.
- Repaired sinkhole/undermining at Normal/Congress; on "the list" for YCUA contractor to make full surface repair. Intergovernmental cooperation!

Parking

- Meeting with parking kiosk vendor to relocate Maple kiosk and repair existing; no longer partnering with Harvey Electronics as local vendor/maintenance contractor
- Working to obtain quote for kiosk to replace meters in N Adams lot
- Divested from Maple Street Parking Lot.

Parks and Special Events

- Working with Events Coordinator and other partners (CS, DDA, PD, FD) to draft updates to Events policies.
- Working with DDA on Market Plaza concept designs, ownership issues, maintenance issues.
- Working with partners to move north end Frog Island project forward.
- Working with Events Coordinator on events as they are scheduled.

- Continuing to work with Fall River Day organizers.
- Moving forward with repairing/replacing five of the power/water access points in Riverside Park due to vandalism
- Developing RFPs for Parks & Recreation Master Plan update and Prospect Park archaeology study
- Getting quote to convert Riverside Park lighting to LED.

Police Department



Activity:

Statistics for the current period reflected by the past three months.

	July	August	September
Arrests	9	19	15
CFS	1595	1542	1747
Reports	133	140	169
Tickets	165	127	147
Warnings	21	14	40

Personnel:

- Actively recruiting for lateral police officers for YPD.
- Zachary Plymale began on September 16th and too their Oath of Office.
- Held a going-away event for Records Clerk Breann Urbani on September 29th.
- Records Division was closed for training on September 18th & 19th.

Events

- Ypsilanti Police Department will hold an Open House on October 5th from 11 AM to 3 PM at both the Police & Fire Station.
- Ypsilanti Police Department will be participating in a Drug Takeback event on October 26th at the Depot Town Famers Market.

Updates:

- Maintaining the 24-hour Call logs separating them by month going forward see here: <https://cityofypsilanti.com/925/24-Hour-Call-Logs>

Fire Department

September 30th, 2024



City of Ypsilanti Fire Department Activity Report:

	July 2024	August 2024	September 2024
Fire and EMS Calls	243	262	239
Inspections	22	15	15
Non-emergency requests	2	5	1

The following training/classes occurred during the month of September:

- Blue Card-all personnel
- Friction Loss
- HAAS Alert
- Hydrant hook-up, residual and intake pressures.

Apparatus/Building Update:

- 07/18 Tower 2-1 out of service until further notice.
- Dishwasher OOS beyond repair, replaced.
- Panic hardware installed lobby entry door.
- On September 23rd Shift's 3 refrigerator quit working. All refrigerators are at least 10 years old and all 3 were replaced as part of capital improvement.

Personnel:

- Additional applications will be submitted to HR to begin the hiring process to fill 1 position.
- Candidate interviews are continuing, currently 2 applicants going through background checks.

Notes:

- U of M continues to hold car seat installations at YFD every third Tuesday.

Overall Department Status Update:

- Actively working on approved Fire Station Capital Improvements.
- Continuing carpet installation and painted captains' dorm.
- All personnel count toward staffing.