

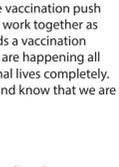


THE CITY OF YPSILANTI NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2021

FROM THE DESK OF THE CITY MANAGER

Greetings from the City Manager's Office. It is likely that someone in your family is returning to school this week. I know my own grandchildren are looking forward to seeing their friends and teachers again. It can be such an exciting time for many of us as the summer winds to an end and cooler temperatures mark the beginning of changing leaves. It's not been an easy summer for many of us as our community is still reeling from the dramatic upheaval in our daily lives caused by COVID-19.



It is so important now that we continue to support one another by getting vaccinated and following state and county guidance to reduce the spread of the virus. The State of Michigan has been fortunate compared to the rest of the country, but we need to continue the vaccination push to prevent the Delta variant from ravaging our community. It is so important that we work together as a community to keep one another safe and if there is anyone out there who still needs a vaccination appointment and cannot find one please do not hesitate to reach out. Pop up clinics are happening all around us and only together we can reach the targets that allow us to return to normal lives completely. City Hall has returned to normal business hours so please do not hesitate to stop in and know that we are here to help. I am wishing you all a beautiful and safe Autumn season.

220 N. PARK

I also wanted to thank folks who participated in the public engagement sessions regarding the development at 220 N Park. City Council has recently approved an agreement with Renovare to begin the due diligence and site control work needed to proceed in the coming months with a purchase agreement. The City has a ton of information to share about site plan, conceptual illustrations, and frequently asked questions.

[Please visit our website](#) to learn more and please do not hesitate to reach us with questions or comments about the proposed development by emailing feedback@cityofypsilanti.com

COVID-19 AND PUBLIC SAFETY UPDATE

For the most updated information regarding mask guidance please visit: [Michigan.gov Face Covering FAQs](https://Michigan.gov/FaceCoveringFAQs)

FROG ISLAND JAZZ SERIES

Lastly, I would like to thank John E. Lawrence and his team for the wonderful Frog Island Jazz Series over the past several weeks. This event has brought thousands of people to our community safely and responsibly and I appreciate all the work that has gone into following mask and social distancing requirements and making this a high-quality production. John and his team have gone above and beyond this summer.

Staying connected,
Frances McMullan

FROM THE DESK OF MAYOR LOIS ALLEN RICHARDSON

Hello Residents,

It always seems that summer goes too fast, especially after enduring a challenging winter and spring. Unfortunately, the Delta variant's spread in our region demonstrates the struggle with Covid-19 is not over. Delta is more contagious and likely to cause more severe illness. Even worse, it infects more young people than previous strains, resulting in significantly more hospitalizations for unvaccinated ones. We ask everyone to remain vigilant with all CDC recommendations to keep Ypsilanti protected, healthy, and strong. We also encourage you to get your vaccine if you haven't and if you have, to get your booster vaccine when you are eligible.



"A well-educated mind will always have more questions than answers," wrote Helen Keller. For all our children returning to school, we hope for wise leadership, guidance, and safety. May they learn in good health and grow strong in body and mind. Most of all, may their education infuse them with a love of learning, engage their curiosity, and enrich their imaginations. They are the leaders of the next generation, with much to do and hopefully much to enjoy.

Ypsilanti Community Schools began Monday, August 30, 2021, the first start before Labor Day, ever! Preschoolers will begin on September 8, 2021. Please check all media outlets for updates on policy, openings, and closings as well as your schools' academic calendars.

EMU classes began earlier than usual on August 30. Many difficult issues face administrators, faculty, and students as they adapt to teach and to learn while living with Covid. They are not alone in facing these challenges. Whether times are harder or easier, the City of Ypsilanti always stands ready to be in partnership with EMU.

We are monitoring and attentive to the gun violence happening in the city. The police are on the job but need the community's help. It takes all of us collaborating together to stop violence and ensure public safety. We need everyone to be willing to anonymously call 911 when they see any activity related to violence. If you have more detailed information to relay to the authorities, call the anonymous tip line at 734-292-5429. It cannot be emphasized enough that your anonymity will be protected to safeguard you, so please step up to help us make our neighborhoods safer.

The Frog Island Jazz Series is said to have the most down to earth, cool, easy-going people in the park and we cannot agree more. The Ypsilanti Frog Island Jazz Series sponsored by Ypsilanti's own, John E. Lawrence, has been a joy for all. Some of the biggest jazz artists in the world have graced the stage to name a few: Straight Ahead, Rayse Biggs, Kimmie Horne, Charles and Gwen Scales, Dave McMurray, Gerard Gibbs, Yancy, and more.

May the rest of your summer be enjoyable and safe!

Love is the answer,
Mayor Lois

CITY UPDATES

BOARDS & COMMISSIONS VACANCIES

Arts Commission
Commissioner
Two Youth Members

Parks & Recreation Commission
Two Commissioners
Three Youth Members

Dangerous Bldgs
Dangerous Buildings Officer

Sustainability Commission
Commissioner
Two Youth Members

Historic District Commission
Commissioner

YDDA

One Board Member

Human Relations Commission
Two Commissioners
Two Youth Members

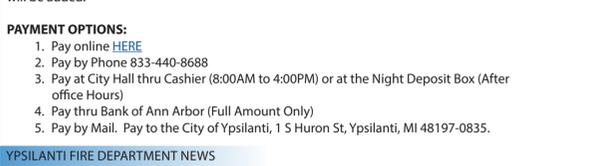
Zoning Board of Appeals
Two Commissioners

Police Advisory Commission
Commissioner
Two Youth Members

Fill out this [online form](#) if you are interested in the City of Ypsilanti Boards and Commissions.

YPSILANTI THROWBACK

Check out this view looking at the southwest corner of Michigan and Huron in the 1930s! All four buildings pictured were erected ca. 1860 and are examples of the commercial Italianate-style, each featuring arched windows with ornamental hoods and an ornamental cornice. All of these buildings have undergone various changes and restorations. Check it out next time you're downtown!



PENINSULAR DAM REMOVAL PUBLIC MEETING REMINDER

Friday afternoon was a beautiful opportunity to paddle the Huron River through Ypsilanti. Four friends and I put in below Pen Dam and paddled through town past the put in/take out at Frog Island, under the Tridge, past Riverside Park (where the stage for Jazz Festival was being constructed), past the former Ford plant, around North Bay of Ford Lake, and returning to the take out at Spring Street. Along the way we encountered several Great Blue Herons and an Osprey. This was a great reminder of what a great river the Huron is through Ypsilanti.

I want to invite folks to attend the upcoming Townhall for the Pen Dam Removal Public Engagement. This meeting was designed to get input from the community regarding how it interacts with the river and visions for restoring the river, banks, and Pen Park in the eventuality that Pen Dam is removed. There were three focus group meetings for landowners (Aug 18), recreationists (Aug 25), and residents in general (Sept 8). A report will be synthesized from the input from these meetings and distributed. A subsequent Townhall (Oct 6) is an opportunity to allow for feedback on the report and additional comments. City staff created a [landing page for Peninsular Dam](#). This contains the schedule and access links for the upcoming Workshops and Townhalls and for the Public Engagement Committee meetings. The presentation from the first focus group meeting with impoundment landowners is posted here. This is where project updates will be posted in the future. A comment form has been created on this page for those who are not able to attend the virtual meetings. FAQ about the river and dam removal will be updated periodically through this project.

I look forward to seeing folks at the meetings and out on the river. The Huron River is a natural treasure that deserves our best efforts for improving its health. Our community deserves a healthy river.

Peace.

Steve Wilcoxen
City Council, Ward 2

MAJOR NON-MOTORIZED IMPROVEMENTS ON THE HORIZON IN YPSILANTI

Huron, Hamilton and Washtenaw – In 2022, portions of these roads that fall under Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) control will see repaving along with pedestrian, disabled and bicycle improvements including sidewalk ramps, bike lanes, safety signage and traffic calming. This MDOT project will also address the need for a safe non-motorized crossing of Huron Street over the I-94 bridge.

Public input sessions on the Huron, Hamilton, Washtenaw project in mid-August at the Ypsilanti City Hall and Ypsilanti Township Civic Center. The Ypsilanti presentation was [livestreamed by the City here](#), and the PowerPoint presentation is [available here](#). Additional project information can be found [here](#).

FROM THE CITY TREASURER

SUMMER PROPERTY TAXES: All payments must be received in the Treasurer's Office no later than 4pm of Sept 14. Postmarks will not be accepted. On February 15, a penalty of 3% plus .5% monthly interest will be added.

PAYMENT OPTIONS:

1. Pay online [HERE](#)
2. Pay by Phone 833-440-8688
3. Pay at City Hall thru Cashier (8:00AM to 4:00PM) or at the Night Deposit Box (After office Hours)
4. Pay thru Bank of Ann Arbor (Full Amount Only)
5. Pay by Mail. Pay to the City of Ypsilanti, 1 S Huron St, Ypsilanti, MI 48197-0835.

YPSILANTI FIRE DEPARTMENT NEWS

From the desk of Fire Chief Ken Hobbs

Captain Barnabo has advised me of his intent to retire. Most likely his last day on the floor will Tuesday, October 7th. His retirement will result in Lt. Loria being promoted to Captain and Firefighter Gissendanner being promoted to Lt. We will be also in hiring of 2 additional Firefighters to bring us to full staffing.

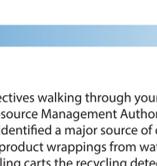
With Captain Barnabo's retirement, YFD is losing his leadership, knowledge, and abilities. We will do our best to take advantage of our time left with him and we congratulate him for his service. Congratulations also to Mike and Drew on their pending promotions.

A newly hired firefighter is on probation for a year. They earn their badge once they have fulfilled certain requirements and when the commanding officer has confidence in their ability to work alone.

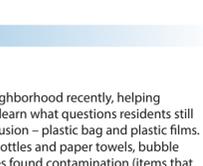
During the one year probationary period a new firefighter isn't just given a badge, they have to earn it.



Fire Fighter Chad Nelson receiving his badge.



Fire Fighter Leonard Ray receiving his badge.



Fire fighter Cameron Lieffers receiving his badge.

OTHER UPDATES

SEPTEMBER IS NATIONAL VOTER REGISTRATION MONTH

Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson celebrated the start of National Voter Registration Month today, encouraging eligible Michigan citizens to register in September.

"Our democracy is at its best when everyone has a seat at the table," said Secretary Benson. "Michigan's now have more options than ever before to simply and safely register and cast their ballots. National Voter Registration Month is the perfect time to take the first step in exercising your constitutional right by registering to vote and learning more about how to participate in our elections."

The National Association of Secretaries of State (NASS) established September as National Voter Registration Month in 2002 as a nonpartisan means of encouraging voter participation and increasing awareness about state requirements. September 28 is National Voter Registration Day.

In Michigan, residents can register to vote in person up to 8 p.m. on Election Day at their city or township clerk's office. Residents can also register online at Michigan.gov/Vote or by mail at least 15 days prior to an election. In the 14 days leading up to an election and on Election Day, voters must register in person to vote in the election.

To be eligible to register to vote you must be:

- A Michigan resident (at the time you register) and a resident of your city or township for at least 30 days (when you vote)
- A United States citizen
- At least 18 years of age (when you vote)
- Not currently serving a sentence in jail or prison

Residents must provide proof of eligibility and residency to register if registering in the 14 days prior to an election, including Election Day. Documents submitted as proof of residency must include the voter's name and current address. Digital copies of documents are accepted. Such documents can include:

- Michigan driver's license or state ID
- Current utility bill
- Bank statement
- Paycheck or government check
- Other government document

Local election officials as well as the Michigan Department of State are the most trusted sources for election information. Residents can find registration information, including the location of their clerk's office and steps to complete registration, at the Michigan Voter Information Center at Michigan.gov/Vote. To report incorrect election information, please contact misinformation@michigan.gov.

In addition, canivote.org is a nonpartisan tool created by NASS in conjunction with state election officials to help eligible voters learn how and where to go vote.

GOV. WHITMER PROCLAIMS SEPTEMBER AS HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

LANSING, Mich. – Governor Whitmer is celebrating Michigan's Hispanic population by proclaiming September 2021 as Hispanic Heritage Month.

"Michigan's Hispanic and Latino residents are an essential part of our state's cultural and economic fabric," said Governor Whitmer. "I am proud to proclaim September as Hispanic Heritage month and celebrate alongside a community filled with rich tradition as we continue to ensure that Michigan is a welcoming and inclusive place for all."

"Governor Whitmer's proclamation establishing September as Hispanic Heritage Month is very exciting! Michigan's Hispanic population is dedicated to building Michigan's future, and we are honored to have a Month of official celebration," said Jesse Venegas, Chair, Michigan Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. "We will take this opportunity to continue to celebrate the contributions of Hispanics in Arts, Sciences, Labor, Agriculture, Business, and Civil Rights. The Hispanic and Latino community in Michigan is woven with many threads from many nations and cultures, but we all stand together as Michiganders! Adelante!"

"The West Michigan Hispanic Chamber of Commerce applauds the efforts of our state government to proclaim September Hispanic Heritage Month," said Guillermo Cisneros, President and CEO, West Michigan Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. "This is a great recognition from our government to the hundreds of thousands of Latinos that are in Michigan contributing to the economy and making an impact in the community."

"Hispanic/Latinos have a long history of contributions in all areas, cultural, economics and art, science, and technology to this great state of Michigan," said Monica Reyes, Executive Director, Great Lakes Bay Hispanic Leadership Institute. "It is only fitting that we celebrate the generations of Hispanic Latino families that continue to contribute and enrich our state beyond measure."

The month of September recognizes and celebrates the contributions of Hispanic and Latinos in Michigan and the United States. Michigan's Hispanic and Latino population has grown from 2010 to 2020, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. According to the 2020 U.S. Census, Hispanics and Latinos make up 5.6% of the state's residents, up from 4.4% in 2010.

[View the full proclamation here.](#)

PLASTIC BAG & FILM RECYCLING

Rena McRoy, WRRMA Intern

You may have seen the recycling detectives walking through your neighborhood recently, helping WRRMA (the Washtenaw Regional Resource Management Authority) learn what questions residents still have about recycling. The detectives identified a major source of confusion – plastic bag and plastic films. Plastic films are items like air pillows, product wrappings from water bottles and paper towels, items that wrap, and produce bags. Of the recycling carts the recycling detectives found contamination (items that are not recyclable) in, 89% of them had plastic bags or plastic film!

Plastic bags and plastic film are recyclable, but not in your curbside cart. Plastic bags and plastic film tangle in the machines at the recycling sorting facilities, which slows operations down and creates a safety risk for workers as they stop the processing lines to cut the tangled bags and film out of the machine. One facility recently told us that for each working shift they need to shut down processing for two hours and use six workers just to clean out the tangles! This is one of the many reasons cleaner recycling helps ensure the materials you work hard to recycle are ultimately able to be recycled.

The best option to combat the problems presented by plastic films is to avoid them where you can, which is a difficult task since they are seemingly everywhere. You can reduce plastic films by choosing reusable substitutes over single-use plastics when possible or saving and reusing items like plastic grocery bags to get the most out of the material. Even after reducing and reusing, you may still have plastic bags or plastic film you need to dispose of – do it responsibly by recycling them at drop-off locations.

Plastic bags and plastic film can be recycled at various drop-off bins around your community. Many grocery stores and some large retailers, such as Meijer, Kroger, Target, and Wal-Mart, maintain plastic bag and plastic film recycling bins in their front entrance. PlasticFilmRecycling.org has an online directory for finding nearby drop-off locations like these, as well as educational resources to learn more. The Washtenaw Regional Resource Management Authority has a Waste Wizard recycling search at WRRMA.org that shows your local drop-off stations and Recycle Ann Arbor also runs a network of drop-off bins throughout the county as part of their Plastic Pollution Solution program.

Even after you've reduced and reused your plastic bag and plastic film as much as possible, you'll probably still have some remaining. It's important that you then make the effort to dispose of it responsibly. When they are recycled properly – they can be repurposed into useful items like composite lumber instead of ending up in a landfill, polluting the environment, or causing problems at recycling facilities.

RECYCLE empty, clean & dry plastic bags & wraps at store drop-offs

NOT in Curbside Recycling



Produce Bags



Plastic Shipping Envelopes



Bread Bags



Dry Cleaning Bags



Case Wrap



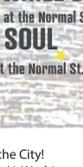
Air Pillows



Bubble Wrap



Newspaper Bags



Food Storage Bags



Product Overwrap

Also look for any packaging with this  label

Recycle if Clean & Dry

Store Drop-off

PLASTIC WRAP

how2recycle.info



Carryout bags too!

Find drop-off locations at PlasticFilmRecycling.org/drop-off



PlasticFilm Recycling

FROM THE DDA

ydda outdoor movie series

Sept 16 - 8pm - Frog Island Park - Bring a blanket or chair

WALKING WHILE BLACK L.O.V.E. Is The Answer

Oct 7 - 7:30pm - Drive-in at the Normal St. Lot by the Water Tower

DISNEY'S SOUL

Oct 28 - 7pm - Drive-in at the Normal St. Lot by the Water Tower

CASPER

The DDA has been installing Cafe lights around the City! In addition to the Cafe lights on Ninde St. and on N. Washington Street, we have installed cafe lighting at the Depot Town Plaza, both alleyways on N. Washington Street, and lights down S. Washington. Enjoy!

New Cafe Lights at the Depot Town Plaza

NEWS AROUND TOWN

SOLAR YPSI

Thanks to an anonymous donor and facilitation by local grassroots organization Solar Ypsi, several churches and nonprofits in Ypsilanti have received or will soon receive new solar installations.

The effort began in 2020, when Solar Ypsi founder Dave Strenski received an email out of the blue from a man in San Diego who wanted to fund a solar installation in all 50 states in a project he was calling the Solar Moonshot Program. He wanted Strenski's help getting one installed in Michigan. The Solar Moonshot Program is funded by Left Coast Fund and managed by [Hammond Climate Solutions](https://HammondClimateSolutions.com).

In 2020, Strenski helped facilitate a solar project at Second Baptist Church in Ypsilanti, as well as connecting Solar Moonshot to contractors and nonprofits in Illinois and New Mexico for solar projects there.

This year, the list of Ypsi solar projects is growing, with five organizations having already been awarded \$25,000 grants from Solar Moonshot. Projects are already completed at the [Growing Hope](https://GrowingHope.org) offices on Michigan Avenue, the Ypsilanti Housing Commission's Hamilton Crossing apartment complex, and [Rivside Arts Center](https://RivsideArtsCenter.com) (RAC) in downtown Ypsi. Additionally, early childhood educational foundation [HighScope](https://HighScope.org) has received funds, and construction kicked off last week. And finally, Metropolitan Memorial Baptist Church in Ypsilanti has received funds, with installation to come soon. For more information, please check out the recent article in Concentrate:

[Solar Moonshot Program funds numerous solar installations for Ypsi nonprofits and churches](https://secondwavemedia.com)

THE RIDE RESUMES FULL-SERVICE LEVELS

TheRide welcomes the community back as full-service levels resumed on August 29. As a reminder, per federal law, face masks are required until further notice. Safety continues to be TheRide's priority, and many safety precautions are in place to ensure vehicles are clean and ready to welcome riders back. All routes and services have been updated, so be sure to plan your trip and check out the most up to date schedules at TheRide.org or by calling 734-996-0400. Due to the changing nature of the COVID-19 pandemic and workforce availability, service adjustments may be made. Get the most up to date information and sign up for TheRide's Service Alerts at TheRide.org.

Do you have something happening in the city you'd like to share here? Email your article to cjacobs@cityofypsilanti.com