

City Manager's Report

OCTOBER 17, 2016

Grants Applied for and Received

Public Services' Wellhead Protection Grant Proposal was approved by the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ), awarding them \$70,000 for the next state fiscal year.

Community Planning & Development (CP&D)

➤ Planning

At the September 1, 2016, Planning Commission meeting, the Commission took the following actions:

1. Voted to recommend approval to the City Commission of a request to vacate a section of a public alley located between Southworth Terrace and Beacon Street.
2. Voted to recommend approval to the City Commission of a request to vacate a section of Amperssee Street north of E. Michigan Avenue plus a public alley north of 701 E. Michigan Avenue.

Three requests were received for the October meeting. A candidate to fill a vacancy on the Commission will be interviewed in the next few weeks.

Two site plan projects were processed as follows:

1. Add Verizon Wireless equipment on the cell tower at 4200 W. Main Street.
2. Replace the primary building for the Citgo gas station at 502 W. Michigan Avenue.

Three other site plan projects were submitted for review, but need additional information before they can be formally processed. The Lean Six Sigma review of the site plan review program is continuing. Several minor changes to the program are being reviewed and scheduled for implementation.

➤ Imagine Kalamazoo

A city-wide community meeting was held on September 27 at the Northside Association for Community Development. Over 160 people were in attendance from nearly every neighborhood in the city. The evening consisted of a background presentation of the Strategic Vision and Master Plan Update and what the workshop would accomplish. Residents were able to sit at tables with large neighborhood maps to talk about missing elements where they live, work, and play. Additional information was gathered at topic stations where residents voted on priorities for transportation, sustainable practices, downtown as a regional hub, vision and values, and shared prosperity. The results from the

meeting and Imagine Kalamazoo 2025 surveys will be used to inform goals for community members to prioritize at the next meeting on October 27 at St. Joseph's Church in the Edison Neighborhood.

➤ Zoning

At the September 8 Zoning Board of Appeals meeting, the Board took the following actions:

1. Cancelled an application for 912 Second Street located in Zone M-1, Manufacturing – Limited District. The owner requested a use variance to allow the conversion of commercial building into a residential unit. However, after failing to appear before the board to explain his request two months in a row, the Board cancelled the request.
2. Approved a use variance for owner Briggs MacGregor to allow an additional dwelling unit at 2321 Parkview Avenue in Zone RS-5, Residential – Single Dwelling District.
3. Granted an off-premises sign variance to allow Cytec Solvay to locate a freestanding sign on the adjacent property 2715 Miller Rd owned by Allnex Inc. The two businesses share a common entry drive off of Miller Road.
4. Approved an increase from 82% to 85% impervious cover for Aunt Millie's Bakery to add an ingredient storage building to the property at 2109 Portage Street, where in the Zone CC, Commercial – Community District, 80% is the maximum impervious cover.
5. Approved a use variance for 714 N. Burdick Street to allow for two apartments to be constructed on the ground floor level, where only commercial uses are allowed on the ground floor level in Zone CC, Commercial – Community District.

➤ Code Compliance

After a graffiti spree resulted in tagging on street signs and buildings throughout Vine neighborhood early on September 4, CP&D received inquiries from residents looking for ways to remove the graffiti. Fortunately, a graffiti removal program created in 2015 was already in place. This program allowed the City to purchase graffiti removal products and provide them to the neighborhood associations for distribution to residents victimized by graffiti. These graffiti removal kits were distributed by the Vine Neighborhood Association free of charge to facilitate quick clean-up of the tagging.

➤ Building & Trades

In September, there were 191 permits issued, representing \$4,295,061 in construction valuation. These figures brought year-to-date permits to 2537 representing year-to-date construction valuation of \$74,877,676.

➤ Community Development

Staff is currently working on 2017 General Fund Neighborhood Agreements.

Funding for the 2016 Program Year has been released from HUD. Programming will start after agreements are executed.

Economic Development (ED)

Economic Development (ED) staff expanded this month with the addition of a Neighborhood Business and Special Projects Coordinator and an Economic Development Coordinator. There will be more direct outreach to area businesses. Staff will continue to work with local developers on various redevelopment projects, both privately owned and properties owned by the Brownfield Redevelopment Authority (BRA).

The Exchange Project (155 W Michigan Ave) has made building design and use changes. Staff are working with developers to draft new agreements.

EnviroLogic completed an investigation to determine the source of a bubble that formed on Pond 2 at Davis Creek Business Park. They were able to determine that bubble is not from methane release. They will be submitting a proposal to fix the liner this month.

Staff has requested appraisal estimates from local agencies for five properties located in Riverfront and one in Edison.

Human Resources (HR)

Staff worked to support the transfer of Metro Transit from the City to the Central City Transportation Authority (CCTA). Staff collected employment forms, assisted employees with questions and did follow-up to get necessary employee forms prior to the October 1 transition date. A large majority of forms were submitted to HR, but continued follow-up is in process.

➤ HR Advisors

Staff processed Veteran Affairs forms for Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety veteran trainees.

Information Technology (I.T.)

Staff are working on the program which will allow the City to discontinue physically printing checks.

The OpenGov project is complete. All problems with the program have been worked out and it is functioning properly.

Staff continue to work toward getting the VoIP phone system at Public Safety deployed by November.

I.T. staff dealt with 654 unique requests for assistance last month while resolving 616.

Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety (KDPS)

Staff are working on a hit and run case where a male and female were struck by a vehicle on Sherwood Avenue. The suspect vehicle fled the scene. The female sustained critical injuries. The vehicle and a possible suspect have been identified, but not yet located.

Two individuals have both been brought up on federal charges due to their involvements in drug and gun charges they obtained in the City of Kalamazoo. Staff are working with the Task Force to shepherd these charges through the system, and remove violent offenders from the Kalamazoo streets.

Staff located a suspect in Lansing after attempting to hide from the police. This suspect has been implicated in a child pornography case. A full confession was obtained from the suspect. Charges are pending after full forensics are completed on the computer and cell phone.

Staff, along with the Prosecutor's Office, just received a guilty verdict in the Deveeta Walker child death case. Staff have spent many days and hours over the past months preparing for this trial.

Kalamazoo Valley Enforcement Team (KVET) continues the battle against drug trafficking in and about the city of Kalamazoo. KVET made 35 drug cases and seized 3 firearms in September.

KVET has investigated 26 meth labs so far for 2016.

Management Services

➤ CFO

Staff worked to finalize a pilot program for fleet management. This will ultimately produce new fleet without substantially increasing costs. This included the leasing of a handful of vehicles at a substantial savings to the City, as well as the proposal to lease another 3 dozen vehicles to cover immediate needs. Staff also worked with Michigan Municipal Service Authority (MMSA) to design an RFP to be issued through the MMSA that would give the City access to state-wide bids for fleet leasing, maintenance, and management. Staff anticipates MMSA issuing a bid this Fall for City disposition by the first quarter of 2017.

Staff worked on Priority Based Budgeting (PBB), including implementation of a new Resource Allocation Diagnostic (RAD) tool and the roll-out of PBB relative to FY 2017 Budget to City staff. Staff are also working to develop a suite of measurements that can be put in place in the fall of 2016 to produce one year of data for use in the FY 2018 Budget process.

Staff worked with other City departments to foster continuous improvement of utility billing processes. In September, staff specifically analyzed reducing meter re-reads as much as possible, as well as refreshing the process and communication around the acceptance of credit card payments for shut-off clients. Staff also worked with Gull Lake Sewer and Water Authority (GLSWA) personnel and assisted them in implementing a new billing structure for GLSWA customers.

➤ Assessor

Staff worked with Bronson 21st Century Fund Committee on procedures for stock donations. Staff also worked with Parks & Recreation (P&R) to set up donation procedures for the Bronson Restoration project. P&R staff and the fundraising committee will handle all the acknowledgement cards and track all donations.

The neighborhood reviews for the 2017 Assessment roll, neighborhood numbers 18, 24 and 57, are almost complete. These areas consist of the entire Winchell neighborhood in addition to a part of Edison near Miller Road. These three neighborhoods are keeping with our desire to review approximately ten percent of residential parcels every year.

The Michigan Tax Tribunal (MTT) sheet has been updated as of September 29. No additional cases are expected to come in at this late date. There are ten new full tribunal cases filed in 2016. There are four 2015 cases remaining to be heard. There is still one case from 2012 that has been in abeyance while a similar case is working through the Court of Appeals and Michigan Supreme Court. The MTT spreadsheet has been updated to reflect the new cases with estimated values in contention and anticipated refunds.

As of September 29, only 11 small claims tribunal cases are still open for 2016. Two of those cases are waiting for decisions. The other nine cases are either scheduled for hearings or waiting to be scheduled at this time.

➤ Accounting

The City converted tax procedures from a City budgetary basis to be in compliance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) with this year's tax bills on July 1. The City's Weekly Disbursement Routine (WDR) program has been updated and is in compliance with our new accounting procedures. Existing balances will be reconciled and converted to the GAAP balances, targeting to complete with month-end closing procedures by the end of this month. The accounting for the City's miscellaneous billings will be converted next to be in compliance with GAAP guidance.

Staff reviewed a software solution to potentially replace our existing spreadsheet system process for tracking capital project requests for budgeting and planning purposes. We are currently reviewing our procedures to determine if an implementation is feasible for this upcoming budget cycle.

➤ Budget

The 2017 budget process has started. Several departments have completed their budgets and technical review began on September 22 with the early submissions.

OpenGov is working with City staff to create sequel scripts for automatic upload of data. All information was entered on September 30.

The 2015 cost allocation plan has been finalized and the 2017 budget plan has been reviewed and updated.

➤ Purchasing

Staff is working collaboratively with City departments and bid documents were prepared and distributed through the City's website for four purchasing projects. As part of our vendor inclusion program 289 vendors, 33 of which are minority or women owned businesses, were notified of bidding opportunities.

Reviewed and set up 204 purchase orders and processed 48 change orders.

Purchasing staff are administering prevailing wages for six construction contracts.

➤ Treasury

Utility Billing – Utility Bills issued in July

14,024 Original Bills

768 Original Bills sent via email

3,767 Reminder Notices

2,574 Final (shut off) Notices

Parks and Recreation

➤ Recreation Division

After school programs started in September at the Youth Development Center, Oakwood Neighborhood Association, and Winchell. All programs are full.

Our annual volleyball managers meeting was held on September 26. Managers were given a presentation about the registration process for this year, along with addressing issues from last year. There was a good turn out and registration has run smoothly thus far with ActiveNet.com.

The wrap up meeting for softball was held on September 19. Staff met to discuss what went well this year and what we need to look at for 2017. The season was a success.

➤ Communication/Outreach

Fire Station #5 work is completed and our after school staff has met with staff from CP&D to tour the building. There will be an open house celebration in November. Staff plans to have an after school program there five afternoons per week starting in 2017.

Staff volunteered for the Imagine Kalamazoo 2025 event held at the Northside Association for Community Development on September 27. There was a great turn out from the neighborhoods and excellent ideas were voiced for the future of our community. Staff will be attending the next meeting in October.

Staff participated in a community meeting at the Northside Association for Community Development on September 28 to inform residents about the planning for improvements to Verburg Park and Harrison Park. This meeting was held in conjunction with the Roundabout plans and construction update. Input was given by the residents on planning for Verburg Park. Planning meetings will be held in the spring of 2017 to gather input on what ideas residents have for future improvements for Verburg Park.

➤ Parks Division

Winterizing of the Kik Pool was completed with the cover being installed and the building closed for the winter. Repairs to the pool bottom will be completed in the spring to prepare for the 2017 season.

Fall park clean up began at the end of September. Shelters and bathrooms will be prepared for winterizing.

Staff are preparing Bronson Park for two events being held this month. The Bronson Park Celebration event will be held to kick off fundraising efforts for the capital campaign. Our annual Safe Halloween will also be held in Bronson Park on October 29.

Public Services

➤ Administrative Services and Support Division

The purchase of plow truck bodies has been submitted to City Commission for their approval, based on bid results.

The water inventory bid will be awarded based on sections. In the upcoming year, the Water Engineer will review and evaluate specifications to update future bid documents.

➤ Traffic Operations Division

Staff met regarding the Harrison/Gull Road Roundabout and direction forward has been identified and public meetings have been scheduled.

Farmers Alley was closed September 19 for restoration and is anticipated to be open to traffic again on October 15. The site plan review process is being reviewed internally for efficiency.

➤ Wastewater

During September, the Water Reclamation Plant had an Effluent CBOD₅ exceedance of 13 mg/l on September 9 due to an increased loading, the daily limit is 10 mg/l. All reporting to the MDEQ was completed for this incident. Water Reclamation Plant staff have been analyzing the disinfection process.

Railroad trestle pieces and large rocks were pulled from the sanitary sewer; these manholes have been locked down to prevent future vandalism.

Laboratory staff have been working on additional sampling for water and wastewater programs. They have purchased a new auto analyzer to facilitate additional sampling in-house.

WKW Extrusion-Bowers Manufacturing Company had an accidental release of 1,000 gallons of 15% sulfuric acid on September 19. Staff has been working with the facility to address secondary containment and pH issues.

➤ Water

Fall hydrant flushing was completed by staff.

Several additional scheduled storm water outfall inspections and cross-connection inspections were completed.

The Lead & Copper Program Team continues to make good progress, including the collection of several daily water samples at residences for the Tri-Annual Lead and Copper Program, inspections of household plumbing for material type, removal of lead and galvanized pipe, and enhancements to the program planning and records management, resulting in the number of undefined service material types.

Staff performed chemical awareness training of thirty Public Safety Officers as part of the inter-departmental collaborative chemical inventory project.

Development of the new Water Resources Division continues to progress, identifying/assigning staff, organizing vehicles and equipment, a focus group meeting, and planning for locational changes.