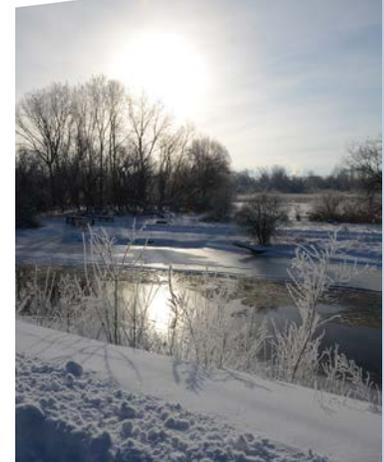
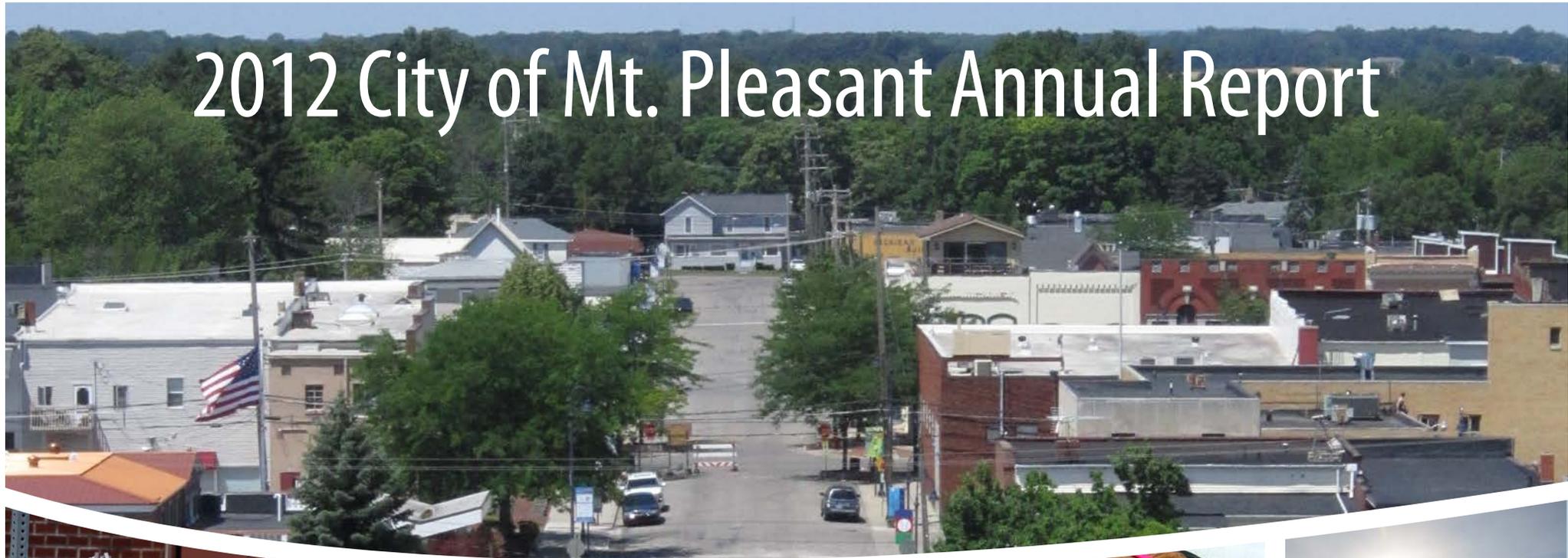


Great Expectations

Working today to build tomorrow

2012 City of Mt. Pleasant Annual Report



A Message From *your City Manager*

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

I am pleased to provide the 2012 Annual Report of the City of Mt. Pleasant to members of the City Commission, our residents and the business community.

It is with gratitude to each of the 120 employees of the City of Mt. Pleasant that I dedicate this report. Every day they demonstrate their commitment to the service, teamwork and constant improvement that sets them apart among their peers.



Each of us thank the volunteers who serve on the many boards and commissions and shoulder the difficult responsibility of moving an entire community forward. It is always easier to protect the status quo than risk the creation of a new destiny.

Every October the City Manager proposes an operating budget for the following year to the City Commission and the citizens of Mt. Pleasant. The annual operating budget allocates resources to meet the community's immediate needs and make some progress toward achieving a sustainable and vibrant future. All of Mt. Pleasant's budget decisions grow from the strategies and goals set by elected officials who have a sincere desire to make this city the most desirable and livable spot in mid-Michigan.

Once a budget is approved it is a promise, a contract, between the City and its stockholders that their hard-earned tax dollars will be used to improve the place they have chosen to live. After the budget year is completed those same investors, taxpayers, deserve information on how well the promise is being kept. The 2012 Annual Report of the City Mt. Pleasant is that accounting.

When I presented the 2012 Proposed Operating Budget to you in the fall of 2011, I began

with a pretty gloomy history of the financial hits Michigan communities had taken over the previous 10 years. While Mt. Pleasant fared better than some of its sister cities, we still lost millions in state shared revenue and experienced multiple years of flat property growth. To save our taxpayers from an added burden during the economic downturn, we cut service costs and personnel instead of increasing our millage rate.

Even with that reality, we committed to arranging 2012 resources (time, personnel, materials and money) in a way that expenditures were targeted to positive investments. We challenged the City's employees and our partners to use their energy and creativity to achieve outcomes that would assure Mt. Pleasant remained a vital community that would attract and retain residents and businesses.

I am proud to report we made progress and kept our word. We made significant headway in each of the eight strategic areas that describe a community that will survive and thrive into the 21st Century. I hope you will review this report and let us know how you felt we did.

A more detailed accounting of the performance and outcomes achieved through the 2012 fiscal year can be found on the City's website at www.mt-pleasant.org.

A handwritten signature in white ink on a dark blue background. The signature is cursive and reads "K. Grinzinger".

Kathie Grinzinger
Mt. Pleasant City Manager

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We will work together toward being a community...

Of safe and clean neighborhoods with low crime rates and low vacancy rates that are inhabited by multi-generational owner-occupants

Highlights

- ▶ **Reconstructed five blocks of Michigan Street**
- ▶ **Records management system upgraded to allow access to data in the field** *(see page 10 for more information)*
- ▶ **Began five-year review of City's Master Plan**
 - Scope endorsed by the Planning Commission and City Commission
 - Completed concept planning on Mission grid streets and access roads with stakeholders
 - Involved CMU geography class on development of updated demographics
- ▶ **Began analysis to define factors for neighborhoods at risk**
 - Initiated City department task force to ultimately create an effective targeted response and plan for proactive prevention and intervention
- ▶ **Completed sidewalk inventory, allowing for better planning to increase pedestrian access throughout the community**
 - Condition rating map developed using PASER

Spotlight on

The Master Plan Update

The five-year review of the City's Master Plan began in the fall of 2012. The Master Plan was completely updated in 2006, and while much of the plan remains valid, the Planning Commission and City Commission have determined that an update focusing on a few key issues is warranted. Over the course of the next year, the City will update the plan to include:

- Updated demographic information, to reflect the 2010 U.S. Census
- A continued focus on supporting new development and redevelopment of properties, as well as improved safety and access, along Mission Street
- Reviewing neighborhood priorities
- Integrating the priorities of the various groups that support the development of Downtown
- Planning for the future development of the Mt. Pleasant Center
- Consideration of the recommendations of the Greater Mt. Pleasant Non-Motorized Transportation Plan
- Identifying and prioritizing future ordinance amendments that will support the planned development of the City.

Planning will continue throughout 2013. A final draft of the updated plan is scheduled for completion in late 2013.



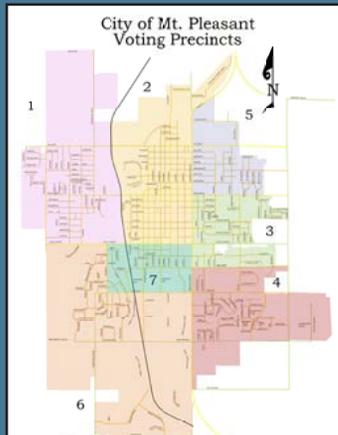
Planners presented Mission Street concepts to residents and other key stakeholders in fall 2012

We will work together toward being a community...

With stable funding from a diverse tax base to finance the governmental services citizens need

Highlights

- ▶ **Devised long-range budget projections and initiated plans to adjust to future changes in revenue sources**
 - Completed implementation of the Economic Vitality Incentive Program reporting requirements
 - An income tax study was recommended; the study conducted and results were presented to the City Commission and the public in October
- ▶ **The installation of 225 new energy-efficient LED light fixtures to replace metal halide street light fixtures completed in March**
- ▶ **Administered and created efficiencies in 2012 election process using e-poll books and receiving board**
 - Successfully executed 2012 elections
 - Implemented new redistricting plan



The redistricting of voting precincts within the City was rolled out to voters in 2012.

Spotlight on

Energy Efficiency

Energy efficiency in City facilities and processes was once again a high priority in 2012. The upgrade of 225 metal halide street light fixtures to energy efficient LED technology, a project that began in 2011, was completed in March of 2012. This effort provided for a significant reduction in operating costs.

At the waste water treatment plant, 21 horsepower pumps and pressure tanks were installed to replace 15 horsepower pumps, which provided significant energy savings.



The City applied for a grant to retrofit streetlighting throughout downtown with energy efficient LED fixtures

We will work together toward being a community...

Where commercial and retail sectors providing varied shopping opportunities thrive

Highlights

- ▶ **Identified and adopted economic development practices designed to grow the downtown tax base**
 - Six new businesses came to downtown Mt. Pleasant in 2012
 - The current vacancy rate is at 3.50%
- ▶ **Received a MEDC grant of \$583,000 to greatly enhance the Parking Lot #2 (Jockey Alley) reconstruction project**
- ▶ **Reviewed current standard of care for public spaces downtown and created a standard of care manual for downtown**
- ▶ **Recovered Parcel B through settlement of lawsuit, allowing the Economic Development Corporation to market the site for expansion of downtown business district**
- ▶ **Reconstructed Michigan Street to include a walkable and bikeable design**
 - An increased budget from the Economic Improvement Fund allowed for additional downtown amenities along the streetscape

New downtown businesses 2012

Crème de la Crème Cupcakes
Commercial Bank
A Scott Harris Salon
Ameriprise Advisors
Violets are Blue Photography
Mt. Pleasant Hot Yoga



Spotlight on *Michigan Street Reconstruction*

One of downtown Mt. Pleasant's most traveled streets, home to Sacred Heart Academy and several local businesses, received a much-needed face lift in 2012. Michigan Street between Fancher and Washington Streets was reconstructed beginning the week of June 18. The project included the removal of the existing pavement, curb and gutter; installation of new sanitary and storm sewer lines; reconstruction of the street; and paving of all drive approaches in the area from the street to the sidewalk. Bike route signage also was installed.



Michigan Street Reconstruction

We will work together toward being a community...

Where economic opportunity for business offering good wages for employees is readily available

Highlights

▶ Significant progress toward the creation of a plan for the redevelopment of the Mt. Pleasant Center. Activities in 2012:

- Auction for disposal of surplus property was completed, netting more than \$200,000
- Awarded a \$200,000 EPA cleanup grant
- Submitted DEQ pre-application materials for \$2 million in loans
- City, MMDC and Greater Gratiot applied for an environmental assessment grant
- The Division of Public Works initiated the removal of a copper piping and wiring removal effort
- Completed background data collection and interviews necessary to produce Highest and Best Use Study

▶ Efforts taken to improve and move the airport forward

- Conducted "best business practices" study
- Construction on the apron of the corporate hangar completed in the fall of 2012

▶ Created new Mt. Pleasant Economic Development Corporation downtown loan program

▶ New incentives led to several redevelopments

- McLaren Mission Street development
- Mission Mall rebuild
- CVS Pharmacy
- Dairy Queen/Biggby Coffee



Spotlight on The Mt. Pleasant Center Project

The Mt. Pleasant Center Project got off the ground and gained momentum throughout 2012. The project team, comprised of Spicer Group, AKT Peerless and CBRE, worked alongside City staff early in the year to set a course for the redevelopment of the property.

In the first stage, the City of Mt. Pleasant elected to remarket and repurpose remaining machinery, equipment and other assets through online auctions. The process began May 14 and continued through the first week in June. The auctions raised nearly \$221,500 to assist with vital maintenance and planning costs. Planning continued throughout the year with work on the Highest and Best Use Study, which included stakeholder meetings and other research completed by CBRE.



Economic Development

City's Economic Investment Proving Successful

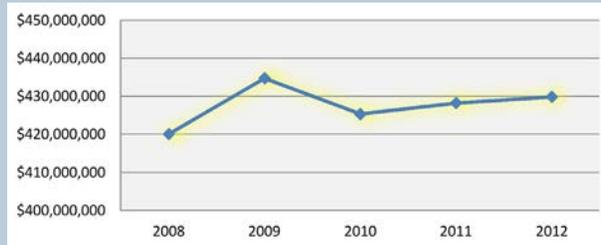
An economic action plan for the City of Mt. Pleasant was drafted in 2008 that provided a common vision for a more diversified and stronger economy. Steps were detailed to make this happen over the next several years. The framework for this action plan included:

1. A major focus on Mission Street
2. Being opportunistic relative to all economic development prospects
3. Clearly communicating that the City is open for business for good development
4. Being prepared when opportunity knocks
5. Emphasizing and encouraging redevelopment and major rehabilitation
6. Maintaining and enhancing prominence as the region's commerce and population center
7. Increasing the tax base with new positive growth and redevelopment
8. Maintaining and enhancing the City's image as a good place to live, work, play and visit

With projects such as CVS Pharmacy, the M-2 housing redevelopments (see article to the right), Taco Bell, Gingko Tree Inn, Firstbank and others, the positive impact of the City's economic investment is shining through.

In 2012, City staff conducted research on Mt. Pleasant's taxable value, finding that as taxable values within several other cities in Michigan has been on the decline, Mt. Pleasant's has begun to increase. When compared with other cities with a taxable value between \$400 and \$500 million, Mt. Pleasant was one of only two who had a percentage increase in values between 2010 and 2012. Much of this can likely be attributed to the new developments and rehabilitation projects.

City of Mt. Pleasant Taxable Value



Cities in Michigan with a Taxable Value Between \$400 million and \$500 million

% Taxable Value Change 2010-2012

St. Joseph	4.31%
Mt. Pleasant	+1.06%
Plymouth	-2.52%
Saline	-4.25%
New Baltimore	-5.26%
Brighton	-6.15%
South Lyon	-6.97%
Marysville	-9.42%
Fenton	-10.00%
Adrian	-11.58%
Ypsilanti	-11.88%
Farmington	-13.30%
Clawson	-13.95%
Mt. Clemens	-14.51%
Harper Woods	-23.63%

M-2 Housing Redevelopments Help to Improve Student Housing Areas

To facilitate the M-2 redevelopments, the Planning Commission worked with the Zoning Board of Appeals to develop written documentation of the review standards and procedures that were being utilized in the review of applications. The purpose of the documentation was to increase the opportunities for board and commission members, the general public, and the development community to be fully aware of the procedures and expectations.

The standards and procedures were approved by both boards in the spring of 2012. The boards were working on refinements to the documentation at the end of 2012 that are expected to be approved in early 2013.



With varied recreational opportunities funded by several sources and targeting children and teens

Highlights

- ▶ Repaved GKB Riverwalk Trail in Millpond Park and replaced wooden footbridge
- ▶ Completed Access to Adventure Trail Phase II Project at Chipp-A-Waters Park and held ribbon cutting and bridge-naming ceremony honoring Dr. Mary Ellen Brandell
- ▶ Improved entrance to Riverside Cemetery through the installation of a new sign and gate, along with the repair of the brick entrance façade
- ▶ Using the Recreation Needs Assessment, identified and implemented Yoga in the Park, Zumba in the Park and adult kickball



Zumba in the Park was one of the new recreation programs that began in 2012

Spotlight on

Access to Adventure Trail Phase II

The opening of an expansion to the Access Adventure Trail was celebrated at a ribbon cutting ceremony at Chipp-A-Waters Park on June 16. The event also dedicated a new bridge to the late Dr. Mary Ellen Brandell, who was instrumental in the creation of the Access Adventure Trail.

The Access Adventure Trail expansion, funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation via Midwest Community Foundations' Ventures, includes: the addition of a wetland loop along the southwest portion of the trail; installation of additional interpretive and directional signage; and the creation of a MP3 self-guided "Access Adventure" tour. The wetland loop features two additional scenic turnouts, along with a 116-foot boardwalk, constructed with a specially-designed fence barrier, extending to a pond.

The grant for the phase two expansion, which totaled \$80,000, was awarded to the Mt. Pleasant Area Community Foundation for the project in August 2011.

The Access Adventure Trail, which opened in 2010, is a universally-accessible trail through Chipp-A-Waters Park joining to a trail leading through five city parks. The paved trail is 10-feet wide and includes an 8-foot by 150-foot pedestrian bridge that crosses the Chippewa River, which includes a scenic turnout where visitors can view both sides of the Chippewa River at wheelchair height through 4-foot by 4-foot glass panels integrated into the bridge. An upland trail loop provides access to natural areas, and the trail also features universally-accessible scenic turnouts and fixed viewing scopes.



Former Mayor Bruce Kilmer leads the dedication of the Mary Ellen Brandell Bridge at Chipp-A-Waters Park

That finds logical solutions to the problems of traffic congestion

Highlights

- ▶ **East/west connector streets on Mission were studied to address traffic flow and safety**
 - Coordinated with the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) to find acceptable locations for cross streets
 - Three potential locations were identified; two of which are being actively pursued



Spotlight on

Mission Street Connector Streets

As part of the Master Plan Update, planners are focusing on supporting new development and redevelopment of properties along Mission Street. Improved safety and access along the Mission Street corridor also is critical to vehicular and pedestrian safety as well as business development.



Work began on planning for the redevelopment of South Mission Street in the fall of 2012. Planners visited Mt. Pleasant to meet with key stakeholders and put together a plan. The plan includes proposed connectors running both east to west and north to south as a way of alleviating Mission Street traffic.



Proposed connector streets along South Mission Street

Spotlight on

Law Enforcement



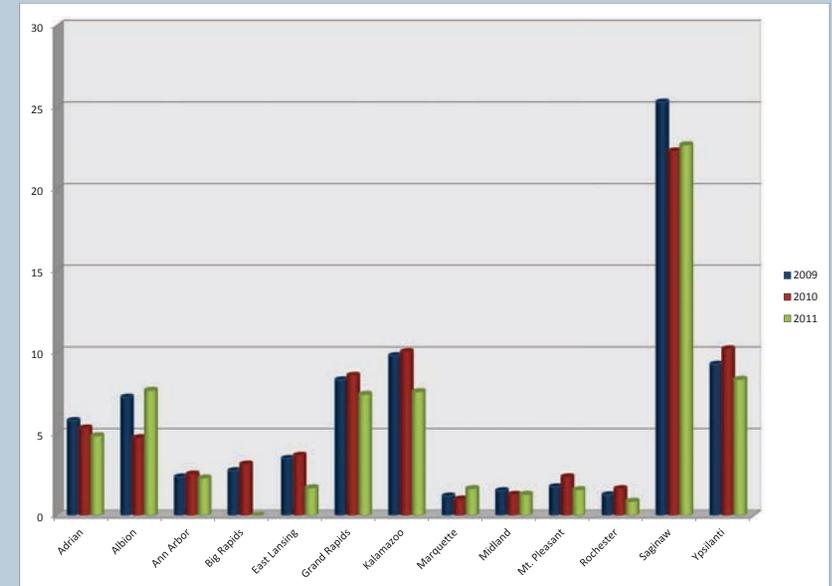
The Records Management System

A new records management system (RMS) was launched in June 2012. This system links three local police agencies together to provide officers with immediate access to valuable information. The RMS connects the Mt. Pleasant Police Department, the Isabella County Sheriff Department and the CMU Police through their dispatch centers to the same database using the same software. Every contact officers have with citizens will be stored in the database and can be shared among the agencies instantly.

The Mt. Pleasant Police Department led the efforts to customize, mold and build the system to meet the needs of their team, along with the other participating agencies in Isabella County. The system will allow officers to do many things electronically while on patrol, including electronic accident reports and paperless e-citations/traffic tickets

The police cars have all been updated with enhanced software to access the new system, which was primarily funded through grants. The system not only connects the three local agencies together, but also connects agencies statewide.

Violent Crime Rates - University Cities/Towns in Michigan



Police and the Community

Outside of reacting to crime in our community, the Mt. Pleasant Police Department regularly takes steps to connect with the community and build trust with citizens, with the hope of ultimately preventing future crime. Officers, led by the Youth and Community Services Unit, worked throughout 2012 to get to know citizens and connect with our youth through events such as Coneys for a Cause, the Youth Police Academy and Shop with a Cop. This unit also encompasses the school liaison officers, which work daily with the Mt. Pleasant Public Schools.



A MPPD officer helps a girl shop for gifts during Shop with a Cop



A cadet drives a golf cart while wearing the "drunk goggles" during the Youth Police Academy

Where regionalized solutions are sought for governmental issues

Highlights

- ▶ **Led the Isabella County Records Management System workgroup through training and implementation phase**
 - System installed and activated in MPPD; Isabella County Sheriff, Central Dispatch and CMU Public Safety
- ▶ **Engaged multiple organizations over many months in highly complicated and sophisticated public safety and communication plans to successfully manage more than 55,000 expected visitors on CMU/MSU football weekend**
- ▶ **City staff engaged with CMU in traffic safety issues and Mission Street grid system**
 - Joint efforts underway on Sherwin Williams and Special Olympics Michigan grid street location sites
 - City staff joined CMU Master Planning teams
 - CMU staff included as a stakeholder in the City's planning efforts



All local police cars have all been updated with enhanced software with the implementation of the new Records Management System. See page 10 for more details.

Spotlight on

MSU/CMU Game in Mt. Pleasant

For the first time in history, Central Michigan University's football team hosted Michigan State University in Kelly/Shorts Stadium. The event, which was held September 8, 2012, expected to bring more than 55,000 visitors to the City of Mt. Pleasant. This would have been the single most populated event ever held in the area. In order to plan for this event and successfully manage the expected crowd, City staff engaged multiple organizations over many months in highly complicated and sophisticated public safety and communication plans. One of the most time-consuming and complicated tasks was developing a traffic plan for vehicles leaving the stadium after the game. MPPD, along with other local law enforcement, worked together on the plan, which was designed to protect pedestrian traffic and provide efficiency for vehicle traffic.



Thousands of people enjoy the CMU/MSU football game (photo courtesy of CMU University Communications)

With an involved citizenry

Highlights

- ▶ **Engage and inform community on options for redevelopment of the Mt. Pleasant Center**
 - Created specific webpage to inform residents
 - Conducted public and media tours
 - Engaged many community partner organizations in the Highest and Best Use Study
- ▶ **With partners, redesigned City's web page to increase usability and functionality; updated image and appearance; and began process to create community-wide commonality**
- ▶ **With a highly-engaged community, drafted and passed a Human Rights Ordinance**



Mt. Pleasant Center Project website

Spotlight on

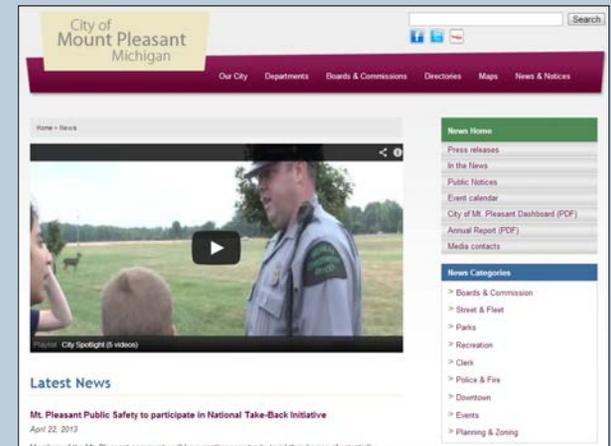
Communication

Communication with residents, visitors, business owners and many others in our community increased significantly in 2012. With the hiring of a staff member dedicated solely to communication, efforts throughout the year included:

- Reimplementation of the Connections newsletter
- Web page dedicated specifically to the Mt. Pleasant Center Project developed within the City's website
- Implementation of an e-newsletter for City staff
- Creation of an online newsroom to house all City news and other important information
- Improvement of the parks portion of the City's website to include interactive and printable maps of each park



The Connections newsletter was reimplemented in 2012



City's new online newsroom

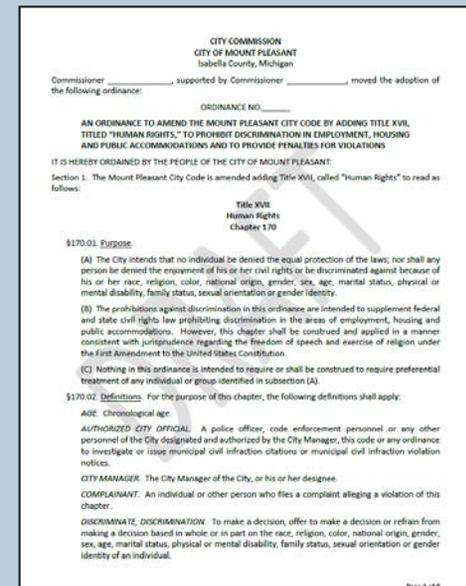
Citizen Involvement

Community Drives Adoption of Human Rights Ordinance

The City Commission received a request in late 2011 from local residents asking the City to consider review and passage of an anti-discrimination ordinance which would extend certain civil rights protections to classes of people beyond those currently cited in federal and state laws. The ordinance was drafted to supplement existing federal and state civil rights laws that protect race, national origin and religion. It expands the protected civil rights under federal law to include sexual orientation and gender identity as protected classifications.

Many questions were raised about unintended consequences that could come about as a result of the originally-proposed ordinance as it was written, and the City decided to revise the proposed ordinance. Over the course of several months, the Commissioners met in work sessions to discuss potential ordinance language. Several changes were proposed, altering the draft delivered by the constituent group. The City attorney crafted a revised draft ordinance and at the May 23, 2012, meeting, the City Commission agreed to present the modified language for a new city ordinance (Title XVII, Chapter 170 Human Rights) to the public for comment and suggestion.

A public hearing on the proposed ordinance was held on June 11, 2012, in which many residents and other community members and business owners expressed their support for or concern with the proposed ordinance. The ordinance was unanimously adopted by the City Commission on July 9, 2012.



Construction Project Updates Hit the Web

The 2012 construction season kicked off with several scheduled projects, including the reconstruction of a main portion of Michigan Street through downtown Mt. Pleasant. It became apparent something was needed to inform and involve citizens in these projects. A webpage dedicated to information and updates on construction projects was developed within the City's website, and one also was developed solely for the Michigan Street project. This allowed City staff to post regular updates on projects, providing community members with timely and easy-to-access information on projects important to them.



City of Mt. Pleasant

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