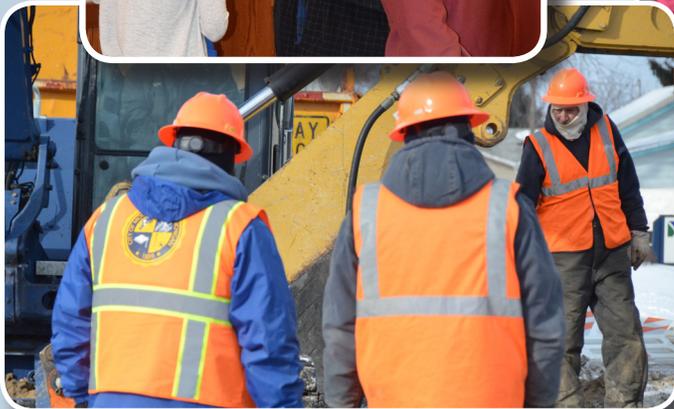


Success through Synergy

Interconnected, we achieve more

City of Mt. Pleasant 2015 Annual Report



A message from your City Manager



Dear Friends and Neighbors,

On behalf of City staff, I am happy to provide this annual report highlighting several 2015 accomplishments. The snapshots of these accomplishments are centered on the nine aspirational vision statements endorsed by the City Commission to guide and improve our City. The initiatives drive the budget process and prioritize how staff allocates their time during the year.

In addition to the items featured in this report, the staff takes pride in providing the day-to-day activities that run the City – many of which we tend to take for granted. Through the interconnectedness of the 118 regular staff, hundreds of seasonal employees, hundreds of volunteers, elected officials and numerous partners within our community, we are able to support daily city services while making strides in each of the nine vision categories.

Additionally, throughout the year, the City benefited from strong working relationships and collaborative opportunities with other units of government and non-profit partners. Many accomplishments in this report would not have been possible without those connections.

As we wrap up the report on 2015 new initiatives, I would like to thank:

- the City Commission for their support and challenging us to be better each day;
- the residents and businesses for entrusting us with your valuable resources;
- our partners for working so well together for the greater good;
- our volunteers for their countless hours of volunteer service;
- our staff for their dedication to protecting the City's assets and providing a multitude of services; and
- most of all, our residents for choosing to make Mt. Pleasant their home.

It takes all of these pieces to make the City of Mt. Pleasant the desirable place it is to live, work and play.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nancy Ridley".

Nancy Ridley
Mt. Pleasant City Manager



Table of Contents

We will work together toward being a community ...

- 4 That is safe, clean, healthy and environmentally conscious
- 5 With stable funding from a diverse tax base
- 6 Where economic opportunity for businesses offering competitive wages is readily available
- 7 Where shopping, dining and entertainment options thrive
- 8 With varied recreational and cultural activities
- 9 With well-maintained, liveable and desirable neighborhoods
- 10 With reliable and sustainable infrastructure
- 11 • *In the Spotlight: Chippewa River Preservation* •
- 12 Where services and opportunities are optimized by communicating, coordinating and cooperating with other entities and our citizens
- 13 Committed to recognizing, accepting and encouraging diversity.



We will work together toward being a community ...

That is safe, clean, healthy and environmentally conscious

Highlights

Adopted the Complete Streets ordinance to validate the City's commitment to provide safe and convenient transportation for everyone.

- Design approach considers all legal roadway users in all aspects of the design process.
- Furthers the vision of the Greater Mt. Pleasant Area Non-Motorized Transportation Plan.
- City is the 26th local government in Michigan to implement a Complete Streets ordinance.
- Added bike lanes and parking along West Campus Drive.
- Added bike lanes on Bellows Street.



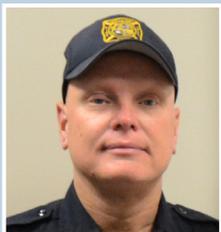
Quickly apprehended the suspect in a local homicide.

- City police and records staff worked diligently to conduct a thorough investigation and provide adequate documentation to the court system.

Converted Main and Washington from one-way streets to two-way to improve safety and traffic flow.

Continued partnership with Central Michigan University's Greek community in which students volunteer their time to clean up the campus neighborhoods.

- Known as "Greeks Clean the Streets," the partnership began in 2012.
- Close to 580 members of CMU's Greek fraternities and sororities have volunteered and approximately 300 bags of trash have been collected since the program's inception.



Conducted an internal search and hiring process to fill the position of fire chief.

- Internal promotion resulted in additional promotions and changes in job responsibilities throughout the fire department.

Rick Beltinck was named fire chief in 2015.

Featured

Pilot program expands curbside recycling services

In August 2015, the City Commission approved a one-year pilot program to extend curbside recycling pickup to rooming, multi-family and condo style homes located in the following areas:

- Bellows Street to High Street from the railroad tracks to Mission Street
- High Street to Michigan Street from the railroad tracks to Mission Street
- Downtown to Pickard Avenue from Island Park to Brown Street

Approximately 530 new collection locations were added as a result of the program.

"It's been a goal of the City to increase recycling," said John Zang, director of public works. "It lowers the cost of solid waste disposal and helps the environment."



Central Michigan University students participate in "Greeks Clean the Streets."

We will work together toward being a community ... With stable funding from a diverse tax base

Highlights

Utilizing the Mission Overlay Redevelopment Zone, Planning Commission approved the Campus Commons project.

- Includes both commercial and residential uses.
- A connector street is planned between Mission Street and East Campus Drive.

Awarded the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) for the 28th consecutive year.

- Presented by the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA).
- Highest form of recognition in the area of government accounting and financial reporting.

Increased efficiency while maintaining or increasing internal and external customer service to make better use of limited funds

- To maximize services, an extensive reorganization of the Administrative and Financial Services Division took place, changing the job duties of many employees.

Created and maintained affordable health care insurance plans in compliance with state and federal regulations for eligible employees and retirees, which are complimented by a work environment, focused on supporting overall personal wellness, healthy lifestyles and maintaining health care costs.

- Implemented necessary changes to comply with Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.
- Enrolled 78 employees in City wellness program.



Health Awareness Day 2015

Piloted a purchase buyback program for trucks in the motor pool fleet to decrease maintenance costs and increase resale value.

Featured

City adopts special assessment for principal shopping district (Downtown)

Throughout 2015, the City coordinated the process that resulted in the adoption of the 2016-2017 special assessment for the principal shopping district which ensures Downtown Mt. Pleasant remains inviting, well-maintained and accessible.

An ad-hoc committee was formed comprised of Downtown Development Board Members, Central Business TIFA Board Members, downtown business and property owners and City Commissioners. The committee evaluated all funding sources, prioritized the needs of Downtown and recommended adjustments to the special assessment accordingly.

The added funding will support powerwashing the sidewalks, purchasing hanging baskets and flowers, additional groundskeeping costs and additional special events.



We will work together toward being a community ...

Where economic opportunity for businesses offering competitive wages is readily available

Highlights

Recognized as a Five-Star Community in the annual eCities study for its work to foster entrepreneurial growth and economic development.

- Conducted by researchers at iLabs (University of Michigan-Dearborn's Center for Innovation Research), the study highlights how local governments are working strategically to invest in businesses and job development.



Welcomed new businesses:

- 120 South
- Century 21
- Fusion Fitness
- Gallagher Law
- Harbor Freight
- Helios Art Gallery
- Inspired Concepts
- McGuirk Sand and Gravel
- Narrativity
- Panda Express
- Planet Fitness
- Pleasant City Coffee
- The Encore Nightclub
- TTS Logistics

Hosted the Michigan Air Tour at the Mt. Pleasant Municipal Airport.

- Michigan Aviation Association members presented Mayor Holton with a proclamation from Governor Snyder acknowledging the direct economic impact of aviation to the City of Mt. Pleasant.



Mayor Jim Holton (left) and Michigan Aviation Association members.

Initiated discussions with other entities to identify partnership opportunities for oversight and funding of the airport.

- According to the State of Michigan and Department of Transportation Aeronautics, the airport adds \$3.9 million in economic activity to the area each year.



Featured

City begins certification program to become a 'Redevelopment Ready Community'

The City formally engaged in the Redevelopment Ready Communities (RRC) program in September 2015. Offered through the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC), RRC is a no-cost opportunity for municipalities to obtain input on their development related policies and procedures and work toward certification as a Redevelopment Ready Community. The RRC program includes multiple phases designed to help the community move toward best practices in the following areas:

1. Community Plans and Public Outreach;
2. Zoning Policy and Regulations;
3. Development Review Process;
4. Recruitment and Education;
5. Redevelopment Ready Sites®; and
6. Community Prosperity.

The benefits of participation in the program and eventual certification as a Redevelopment Ready Community are many, including but not limited to:

- Creating a fair and equitable process that both facilitates development and ensures robust participation by the public;
- Integrating recognized best practices into the way we do business as a City;
- Signaling to potential investors that the City is committed to a transparent, predictable and efficient development process;
- Getting priority for MEDC and MSHDA funding for development projects; and
- Receiving marketing support for up to three redevelopment ready sites

The certification process will continue in 2016.



We will work together toward being a community ... Where shopping, dining and entertainment options thrive

Highlights

Movies by Moonlight

- Outdoor summer film series drew the largest audiences in the event's history.
- Schedule included Cinderella, the Lego Movie and Singin' in the Rain.

More than 400 women attended Downtown Mt. Pleasant's Ladies' Night Out in November.

- Downtown stores remained open late and offered in-store giveaways, promotions and specials to all shoppers.
- Dinner and drink specials were offered at the local bars and restaurants.
- Local salons offered complimentary services.
- In its 11-year history, Ladies' Night Out has raised more than \$20,000 for the Women's Initiative Fund and the Women's Aid Service.

Thousands enjoyed the Max & Emily's Summer Concert Series in the heart of Downtown.

- Downtown Mt. Pleasant is an official sponsor of the event.
- Thousands attended the three concerts in 2015.

Added a community sing-along and tree lighting ceremony to the annual Mt. Pleasant Christmas Celebration.



Featured

Record number attend annual Pumpkin Promenade

More than 1,000 people from the Mt. Pleasant community and surrounding areas celebrated Halloween in Downtown Mt. Pleasant at the fourth annual Pumpkin Promenade.

Children ages 12 and under trick-or-treated at participating businesses, enjoyed cider and donuts provided by Papa's Pumpkin Patch, crafted at Art Reach and had their faces painted by local volunteers and Parks & Recreation staff.



We will work together toward being a community ... With varied recreational and cultural activities

Highlights

Partnered with the Chippewa River District Library to provide events year-round for the community's youth.

- International Games Day
- Candy Cane Lane
- Under the Big Top

Farmers' Market

- Increased vendor sales at Farmers' Market by offering shoppers debit/credit card sales option.
- Presented, "Market Fresh! Stories, Produce & Tasty Treats," with storyteller Eileen DeLorenzo in June, July and August.
- Welcomed Congressman John Moolenaar where he witnessed first-hand the benefits of the Double Up Food Bucks program.
- Expanded the patio area to accommodate additional vendors.

Offered a variety of team and individual athletic/recreation opportunities for adults and youth.

- Recreation opportunities for youth included basketball, dodgeball, flag football, golf, softball tournaments, tee-ball, tennis, volleyball and soccer.
- Opportunities for adults included coed kickball, sand volleyball, softball, tennis lessons and golf lessons.
- For children ages 3-5, Start Smart™ Program offerings included basketball, flag football, golf, soccer, tee-ball and tennis.
- Resurfaced softball fields.

Replaced four shelters at Island Park.



Provided additional programming opportunities for PEAK participants through renewed community partnerships.

- Collaborated with ArtReach, CMU, Mount Pleasant Public Schools, local businesses and agencies.
- Recommended fee changes for future sustainability of the program.

PEAK students learned how to film and edit their own movies using iPads with help from the CMU



International Games Day



Coed Adult Softball



Start Smart™ Basketball

Featured

Man vs Mountain 5K challenges participants to 'embrace the cold of winter'

In February 2015, the Parks & Recreation Department dared adventure-seekers to embrace the cold of winter while running, climbing, jumping and crawling their way to the finish line of a unique 5K race, Man vs Mountain.

The course, set through Mt. Pleasant's picturesque park system, was filled with strategically placed manmade obstacles that complemented the natural elements of Michigan winters, such as snow and cold temperatures. Each obstacle was designed to accommodate multiple skill levels.

"Man vs Mountain was created to provide an additional recreational opportunity during the winter months," said Recreation Coordinator Steve Hofer. "It was challenging, exhilarating and overall a lot of fun!"

The Man vs Mountain 5K will take place annually.



We will work together toward being a community ...

With well-maintained, livable and desirable neighborhoods

Highlights

Revised M-2 zoning ordinance, formalizing the process for the redevelopment of non-conforming properties in the student neighborhood north of CMU's campus.

- The required standards for future projects in the area were also amended.

Hired code enforcement officer for the neighborhood north of campus.

- Role was created to enforce ordinances, develop partnerships with renters and property owners, and establish neighborhood groups.
- The additional support to the code enforcement team allowed for each officer to dedicate more time to their respective areas.

Revised ordinance language to reduce the number of trash containers left curbside on days other than refuse collection days.

- Initial visual review of neighborhoods shows success of plan.

Implemented plan to improve appearance of City alleys by working with residents to remove trash, vegetation and encroachments.

Amended the overnight parking ordinance to prohibit parking along non-downtown streets from 2 to 5 a.m. from Dec. 1 to April 1.

- Previously, the ordinance prohibited parking in non-downtown areas from Sept. 1 to May 1. The regulation change provided more flexibility for residents and visitors.



Code Enforcement Officer Kris Crawford (left), joined the City in 2015.



Reevaluated snow plowing and salting routes to eliminate route overlap and optimize resources.

- Route changes resulted in a time savings of up to 2.5 hours per snow/ice event.

Implemented an online reporting system for code violations.

Featured

Achieving code compliance in neighborhoods

With a history of ordinance violations and increasing tension between owner-occupied properties and rentals in the M-2 zoning district area, a primary focus of the Neighborhood Resource Unit (NRU) is to develop and implement a plan to decrease disruptive behavior, improve relationships and better the city as a whole.

In addition to more stringent and consistent enforcement of ordinances by the Mt. Pleasant Police Department and Code Enforcement officers, Fire Lt. Mike Dunham and Police Capt. Paul Lauria met with several landlords in the M-2 district to assist them in setting expectations and holding their tenants accountable to the provisions in their lease.

As a result of those meetings, a process was implemented:

- The NRU reviews and follows up on calls regarding disruptive behavior daily.
- When a complaint is received or a citation is written, a letter is sent to the respective rental property owner.
- The property owner is responsible for addressing nuisance behavior with tenant according to what is outlined in the lease.

This team effort between the city and rental property owners is integral in the success of upholding community standards. "Achieving code compliance through cooperation and collaboration is usually more impactful and enduring than solely enforcing the ordinances," said Lt. Dunham.

Also, the City/CMU Student Liaison Committee was reactivated and met more regularly to discuss compliance issues.

The multi-year plan and partnership approach made a positive impact in 2015, especially during Central Michigan University's Homecoming weekend.

We will work together toward being a community ... With reliable and sustainable infrastructure

Highlights

Repared portions of Bellows and Livingston Streets with rubberized asphalt - a mix of asphalt and recycled rubber from scrap tires.

- Fifty percent of the project cost was funded by the Scrap Tire Market Development Grant from the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ).
- Added bike lanes on Bellows.



Improved efficiency in the water system by installing additional variable frequency drives, evaluating energy peaks and implementing a valve maintenance program.

Approved an increase in the monthly demand rates (also known as readiness-to-serve rates) for water and sewer services to maintain infrastructure.

- The first increase in demand rates since 2009.
- Despite the increase, when compared to five surrounding municipalities, the City of Mt. Pleasant has the second lowest average residential monthly bill for water and sewer services.

Added chains to plow truck tires to increase efficiency of snow plowing.

- Increased tire traction which resulted in reduced wear and tear on the plow trucks.
- Had no detrimental affect on the roadway.

Installed high efficiency motors in Wastewater High Service Pumps.

Researched and identified alley maintenance needs and developed long-term plan for improvements.

Featured

City saves millions using mudjacking sidewalk repair process

To repair damaged sidewalks throughout the City of Mt. Pleasant, the Division of Public Works utilized a process known as mudjacking, ultimately saving time and more than \$2 million.

“Cost is the biggest factor when choosing mudjacking instead of sidewalk replacement in areas where the process is applicable,” said City Engineering Technician Jennifer Flachs.



Mudjacking is a two-hour process that repairs trip hazards by lifting concrete slabs that have settled over time. During those two hours, four holes are drilled in the area of uneven sidewalk. Lime from the Water Department is used to make a grout mixture to fill the holes, which then lifts the concrete. Once the sidewalk has been leveled, the holes are plugged with concrete.

Research from the Engineering Department revealed the City has more than 110,000 linear feet (LFT) of sidewalk that can be improved through mudjacking. With sidewalk replacement costing \$25/ LFT, replacing 110,000 LFT of sidewalk would result in a \$2.75 million price tag. At \$3/LFT, mudjacking would total \$330,000, saving the City approximately \$2.4 million.

Additionally, “We get all the materials needed from the water plant,” said Flachs. “The lime is a waste product from the water process.”

According to Flachs, a large portion of the 2016 sidewalk budget will be spent on mudjacking. The money saved as a result will be used for other City infrastructure projects.

In the Spotlight:

Chippewa Riverbank Preservation

The Chippewa River is a tremendous resource as it flows through Mt. Pleasant. The City works diligently to protect the river corridor as it impacts roadways, various locations in City Parks and city-wide resources including bridge abutments, trails, dams, overlooks, sewer outfalls, culverts, wetlands and trees. Taking a proactive approach to protecting the Chippewa River's natural and man-made resources is paramount to keeping the river vibrant and healthy, as well as preserving strong infrastructure and leisure enjoyment well into the future. With a combination of grant funds, Tribal two-percent allocation and City funds, the following projects were accomplished to protect the river.

Broadway River Bank Restoration

Due to major flooding in 2013 and 2014, significant erosion had occurred along a large section of riverbank located beside the frequently-traveled Broadway Street in Downtown Mt. Pleasant. Failure to address the erosion would have eventually led to undermining of Broadway Street in that area.

Nearly 600 feet of riverbank impacted by the erosion was repaired and armored in the fall of 2015. A needed storm sewer manhole and outlet into the Chippewa River was also added. The project stabilized and protected the riverbank and Broadway Street, including sidewalk and fencing in the road right-of-way.

Broadway River Bank Restoration



Mill Pond Park Weir Repair

Mill Pond Park is a 90-acre park and wetland area centrally located within the City and bisected by the Chippewa River. In 2002, a series of metal sheet pilings were installed in the river at Mill Pond Park to slow the river flow after the original dam structure near that area was removed. The sheet piling was driven into the riverbed and natural stone was placed between and around the pilings. Stone reduces the scouring effects on the pilings and reduces erosion when placed along the shoreline.

Over time, high water levels, timber flows and significant human use caused the stones to shift or be removed from the site. This resulted in the exposure of the sheet piling and increased soil erosion along the shore bank. It became imperative that the stone be replaced and reengineered back to its original placement in order to fortify the existing weirs, manage river flows and reduce shoreline erosion.

Approximately 19 tons of new stone was used to reinforce the structure. The repaired weirs will help maintain natural water levels which protect and enhance the river ecosystem by:

- Managing river flow during high water events
- Maintaining critical water levels needed to protect Mill Pond's vast wetland area
- Opening over 60 miles of the Chippewa River to spawning fish
- Creating a series of recreational rapids for enjoyment of river users
- Enhancing natural river aesthetics through and in the river corridor
- Protecting the river corridor from massive sediment erosion
- Creating quality habitat for native birds, fish, turtles and other aquatic wildlife

Mill Pond Park Weir Repair



We will work together toward being a community ...

Where services and opportunities are optimized by communicating, coordinating and cooperating with other entities

Highlights

Formalized a pre-application process for potential developers to work collaboratively with City departments to review project ideas and resolve challenges prior to consideration by the Planning Commission.

- Created a summary development guide.

Launched Facebook and Twitter pages for the Department of Public Safety to increase communication with residents.

Co-hosted second annual Leaders Luncheon for elected leaders.

Collaborated with Central Michigan University facilities staff to compose one comprehensive agreement that documents the ownership, maintenance and protocols of all infrastructure in and around CMU's campus.

- Includes underground water, sewer, storm sewer, roads, lights, banners and right-of-ways.

Involved the community in the development of the 2016-2020 Parks and Recreation Master Plan and ADA Transition Plan.

- Sought public input regarding the future of parks and recreation in the City of Mt. Pleasant through an online survey and community open house.



A ribbon-cutting and dedication ceremony was held for the Mt. Pleasant Rotary Bridge.

With support from the Mt. Pleasant Rotary Club and Mt. Pleasant Area Community Foundation, the City replaced an outdated footbridge in Nelson Park with a universally accessible covered bridge.

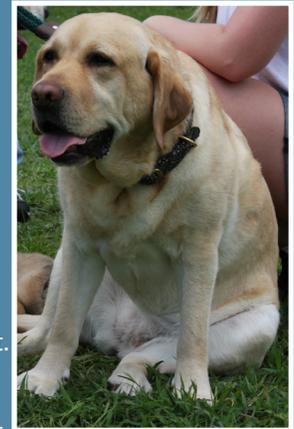
- The \$40,000 bridge project was made possible through a \$20,000 donation by the Mt. Pleasant Rotary Club and grant contribution of \$10,000 by the Mt. Pleasant Area Community Foundation Access to Recreation Fund.

Constructed a \$70,000 pavilion at Horizon Park in conjunction with the Mt. Pleasant Soccer Club.

- Soccer Club contributed \$17,000 which was matched by the Park Partnership Fund.

Featured

Hannah's Bark Park celebrates grand opening



The grand opening of Hannah's Bark Park was celebrated in July 2015. A collaborative effort among the City of Mt. Pleasant, Union Township, the Friends of the Dog Park and Isabella County, the 3.6-acre space was created in memory of Hannah Simons-Scalise - a Central Michigan University student and lifelong resident of Mt. Pleasant - whose last wish was to provide a place for people to run and play with their dogs. The park is supported by user fees, Union Township and the City.

Located within Mission Creek Park, Hannah's Bark Park offers registered members two separate fenced areas for dogs of varying sizes and an electric key-fob system to keep both park users and their pets safe. The dog park is open every day from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Additional features of Hannah's Bark Park include:

- Drinking fountains with dog bowls
- Dog waste bag stations
- Shade structures
- Grass areas
- Trash receptacles
- Seating



We will work together toward being a community ...

Committed to recognizing, accepting and encouraging diversity.

Highlights

Reviewed language in City employee health care insurance plans to ensure domestic partner and same-sex marriage spousal coverage is appropriately available.

Assisted Central Michigan University in the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Peace March from campus to downtown.

Celebrated the culture and value the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe adds to the community.

- Took part in the annual Day of Honoring, Remembering and Healing event at the Mt. Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School.
- Proclaimed the second Monday in October as Indigenous Peoples' Day.



Mt. Pleasant Police ensured the roads were clear of traffic for the participants in the CMU Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Peace March. (Photo Credit: Central Michigan University)



Tribal Chief Steve Pego and Mae Pego of the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe opened a City Commission meeting in October with a drum ceremony.

Featured

Mt. Pleasant honors 50 years of friendship with sister city Okaya, Japan



Mayor Jim Holton and City Commissioner Kathy Ling lead a delegation of 21 people to Mt. Pleasant's sister city of Okaya, Japan, to celebrate the 50-year anniversary of both cities' commitment to friendship and cultural exchange.

While on the trip, City representatives presented a 6-foot-tall, 450-pound sculpture designed to symbolize the friendship between Okaya and Mt. Pleasant. The sculpture was made of two trees - one native to Michigan and the other to Japan - in clear resin and aluminum. "The sculpture depicted two cross sections of trees," said Mayor Holton. "Each slice had 25 rings to symbolize our 50 years together."

A ceremony was held to unveil the sculpture and place it in Okaya's Friendship Park. "Many local residents attended and expressed their appreciation for both the sculpture and for the 50-year relationship between the two cities," said Commissioner Ling.

Sister Cities International was developed by President Eisenhower in 1956 in an effort to promote peace through mutual respect, understanding and cooperation.

"I believe our group represented the City of Mt. Pleasant with honor and respect," said Mayor Holton. "Our visit solidified President Eisenhower's mission and our friendship is deeper than ever."



City of Mt. Pleasant

320 W. Broadway

Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858

989-779-5300

www.mt-pleasant.org