

State of the City 2016

City of Dearborn



The City of Dearborn continues to manage change as we deliver a high level of service to our residents and customers. Working within the limits of ongoing financial realities, in 2015 city departments engaged in new initiatives, enhanced existing services, created greater value for taxpayers' dollars, applied technology, strengthened our business districts and improved the quality of life in our neighborhoods.

Residential Services Department

(Reorganized as Property Maintenance and Development Services Department in February 2016)

- The Residential Housing Inspection Programs continue to implement process improvements, striving to further enhance customer satisfaction.
- In 2015, 74 percent of property owners made required repairs when selling their homes rather than selling “as is” and needing to follow a Sales Compliance Agreement. This number has increased compared to 2014, when 69 percent of property owners made the required repairs.
- The department is proactive in ensuring that rental homes meet building codes and are safe. Certificates of occupancy (CofOs) are issued when requirements are achieved. CofOs issued to rental homes reached 1,442 in 2015 compared to 889 in 2014.
- Investment in Dearborn properties increased in 2015. The numbers of building permits issued in 2015 totaled 1,812, compared to 1,627 issued in 2014. The construction value for 2015 was \$20,198,003 compared to \$16,180,305 in 2014.
- More new homes are being built as well. Permits for 17 new single-family homes were issued in 2015, compared to 12 in 2014.

Neighborhood Services Division

- The city's business districts will get more attention with 35 trash receptacles and new benches that will be installed on Warren Avenue and in the Dix-Vernor Corridor.
- The division also has improved downtown districts by removing noxious weeds and unwanted vegetation from those areas and enforced hundreds of vehicle, property maintenance and sanitation violations. Neighborhood-based civic groups have also helped the business areas by hosting litter clean-up events.
- The Property Maintenance Appeals Committee was recently established to act as an independent review body for disputes over abatement invoices.



The Residential Services Department helps keep Dearborn neighborhoods attractive

Economic and Community Development

Commercial Development

- East and West Dearborn Downtown Development authorities are working together with the City on the “Main Street Michigan Avenue” initiative cited in the City’s 2030 Master Plan to improve image, identity and vitality for the backbone of Dearborn’s destination corridor.
- As the economy has surged, 20 new restaurants and retail businesses opened in the downtowns during 2015. With additional committed investments, both DDAs are expected to be 90 percent occupied by the end of 2016.
- Warren Avenue and Dix-Vernor Corridor authorities were formally established in December 2015. The authorities will allow local business owners to help shape these commercial areas into destination districts.
- Corporate facility investments by Ford Motor Company will update and transform its workplace of the future to position our global automaker as the leader in mobility and technology development worldwide.
- Additional place-making and downtown redevelopment strategies are being developed to improve walkability, increase density, add more housing and link non-motorized systems to attract Millennials, new families and more visitors to Dearborn. This includes the National Resource Network and Transit Oriented Development efforts in the west downtown and the parking system and urban design efforts in the east downtown.

Industrial and Logistics Development

- Ongoing investment at the Ford Rouge Complex continues to make it one of the most globally advanced manufacturing facilities in the world. The success of the new aluminum F-150, which is made in Dearborn, has driven Ford to record profits.
- Dearborn continues to work with



Representatives celebrate the John Dingell Transit Center receiving Silver Certification under LEED guidelines for environmentally-friendly building design.

local, regional, state and national partners to advance the Detroit Intermodal Freight Terminal (DIFT) on the border of both communities. International supply chain connectivity makes this an ideal site for additional logistics companies to locate and thrive.

Artisan and Form Based Zoning

- Dearborn is re-thinking its zoning approach to encourage more mixed-uses and innovative business development within the community. Examples include flexibility to attract artisan and entrepreneurial investment, and use of form-based zoning codes to increase the use of designing urban form as a significant determinant for new development. This will yield the mix and appearance of development desired for the Dearborn of the future.

Transportation Alternatives

- High-speed intercity service is being improved along the Detroit to Chicago rail corridor. MDOT has

purchased the Michigan Line from Dearborn to Kalamazoo, and AMTRAK passenger trains now have preference in the corridor across Michigan. As multiple improvements are made in double tracks, signals, sidings and passing areas, service will increase to 110 mph, reducing the trip between Detroit and Chicago from 5.5 hours to 4 hours. Dearborn to Chicago will eventually be about 3 hours 45 minutes.

- Commuter Rail Service between Ann Arbor and Detroit will commence as soon as remaining infrastructure improvements are completed and local funding is approved through the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) millage. RTA will be on the ballot in the fall of 2016. Dearborn will be one of five initial stops on this line, which will connect directly to the new M-1 rail in Downtown/Midtown Detroit (opening 2017) and will eventually connect to the northern Oakland County suburbs.

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Management Information Systems Department

Consolidated Dispatch Center

- MIS has actively managed the consolidated dispatch project. This initiative will serve multiple communities with improved 9-1-1 dispatch services, reduced costs, and a state of the art 800 MHz radio system.

Supporting department re-organization

- MIS project management expertise is being employed in merging commercial and residential services in 2016. The resulting department will use well-defined work flows and technology to provide consistent, responsive services.
- Increased use of mobile and wireless information

systems and technology are driving innovation, efficiency and collaboration efforts while enhancing customer service, public safety, neighborhood maintenance/revitalization and CSO monitoring.

Enhanced technologies

- The department is facilitating conversion to fiber optic technology for voice services as the city migrates toward a full VOIP environment.
- The department is facilitating conversion to electronic document management and storage citywide.
- Multiple radio repeater sites with wireless point-to-point infrastructure technology were implemented, enhancing public safety communications.

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- A Regional Bus Rapid Transit is under study by the RTA on three main radial highways originating in Detroit – Woodward, Michigan Avenue and Gratiot. The Michigan Avenue route is the most ambitious, connecting Detroit to Ann Arbor via Michigan and Washtenaw avenues. This service is also dependent on an affirmative vote for the RTA millage in November of 2016.
- Non-Motorized Systems are another cornerstone of Dearborn's future alternate transportation planning. The regional trail that connects the Rouge Gateway Greenway to Dearborn already provides more than 27 miles of linked greenways. Eventually, this system will connect the Rouge system to the Detroit River and the Detroit Riverwalk. A second connector running east-west along Michigan Avenue and the Michigan Line railroad, will provide the other essential spine to allow all of Dearborn's neighborhoods to access non-motorized (bikeways and pedestrian) systems. In the meantime, two current projects will connect the campuses of University of Michigan-Dearborn with new student housing, and the transit center to the Rouge Gateway to the West Downtown District. Both of these projects will be completed in 2016.

Environment and Sustainability

- The Rouge River runs through Dearborn as several branches, with their confluence near the Dingell Transit



Cyclists bike along Michigan Avenue near the Henry Ford Centennial Library during the first Healthy Dearborn event held in October 2015. The City of Dearborn is working to provide more hiking and biking options to residents and visitors.

Center. Important goals for the future enjoyment of the river include increased recreational use (canoeing, kayaking, paddle boarding), tour boats from the Detroit River to the Henry Ford and the Ford Fair Lane Estate, new development along the river's edge to bring people down to the river, and completion of the non-motorized system connecting the regional and local greenways to the river and the City's extensive park system.

- Alternative Energy Systems. The city is making progress on installing solar collectors, creating LEED Certified Buildings, and pursuing high-performing environmental systems like permeable pavement, rain gardens and sustainable storm water strategies.

Recreation and Parks Department

Citywide

- Recreation and Parks Department generated more than \$9 million in revenue Fiscal Year 2015, recovering 68 percent of the Department's costs.
- In 2015, the 2016-2020 Recreation and Parks Department Master Plan was created with input from the community, Dearborn Public Schools and the Department's partner organizations. The plan emphasizes cultural arts programs, activities and events; non-motorized trails and water trails; improved relationships between parks and neighborhoods; and overall safety and enjoyment of park amenities.
- A feasibility study for an indoor soccer facility is expected to be completed by March. The City Administration and City Council then will decide whether to proceed with this project. If so, construction would likely begin in fiscal year 2017.
- It is expected that construction of the Rouge River Gateway Trail Extension Project will continue with a modified design.

Parks

- A review panel was created for the proposed Ford Woods Pool complex. The department is pursuing quotes to provide conceptual designs and estimated costs for a 300-, 400-, and 500-person capacity pool complex.
- Dunworth's lap pool hull is being renovated to be ready for the 2016 swimming season. This is Phase 2 of the

Dunworth Pool complex repairs project, which includes installation of a PVC liner membrane and gutter refit/jet-line restoration.

- A splash pad has been proposed for Whitmore-Bolles Park as a result of the Wayne County Parks Millage Allocation grant in the amount of \$218,400. This would be the city's third splash pad. The free water features at Hemlock Park and Crowley Park have proven to be extremely popular with families with young children.
- The Recreation & Parks Department will continue the phased replacement of outdated playground equipment and the installation of ADA-compliant equipment at 23 of our City parks. The next parks planned for upgrade are Alber-Bingham, Canterbury, and Edison.
- Construction of a dog park for use by Dearborn residents is proposed behind the Henry Ford Centennial

Library. The plan calls for separate vinyl-coated fenced-in areas for large and small dogs, benches, picnic tables, access to running water, and a computerized entry/access system.

Camp Dearborn

- Fifty new temporary RV full hook-up sites (sewer, water and electric) will be added in TV1's K row. These full hook-up sites are in high demand and will improve Camp Dearborn's occupancy rate.
- Demand exceeds availability for Camp's 16 resort-style cabins. Construction of eight more cabins is proposed on the grounds of the Mystic Creek Golf Course.

Ford Community & Performing Arts Center

- Fitness center patrons are enjoying the replacement of the complete circuit of Selectorized strength equipment. The new equipment replaces machines purchased in 2001.
- The Hubbard Ballroom is undergoing renovations designed to make it more marketable for weddings, bridal showers, banquets, and other community events and family celebrations. The construction should be completed this spring.
- Planned improvements for the Michael A. Guido Theater include the installation of a digital line-array speaker/sound system for \$150,000. Grant funding in the amount of \$48,619 was secured from the Michigan Council for the Arts and Cultural Affairs.



Children enjoy opening day at the Crowley Park Splash Pad in May 2015.

Department of Public Works



City of Dearborn brought street sweeping services back in-house in 2015. Above is one of the City's new street sweepers.

Maintaining attractive streets

- To keep Dearborn's inviting tree canopy, the City subsidizes a tree-planting program to encourage more trees in residential areas and to replace trees lost during essential construction projects and due to natural causes. The 2015 tree planting programs, including City parks, accounted for 283 trees of 14 different varieties being planted in Dearborn last year. Dearborn has been a Tree City USA for almost 30 years.
- City crews in 2015 resumed the operation of street sweeping for the City, rather than having contractors perform the work. Crews swept streets once a month from late March through mid-October. Scheduling an early morning shift allowed for weekly sweeping of business districts and parking lots, along with county and state right of ways.

- Sections of the following residential streets were constructed or resurfaced in 2015: Banner, Bailey, Penn, Notre Dame, Homeplace, Burns, South Military, Nowlin, Olmstead, Campbell, Gertrude, Harding, Middlepointe, Tireman, Morrow Circle East, Kingsley and Emanon.
- The Public Services Division is exploring ways to increase leaf-removal crews either in-house or via a specialized contractor in the hopes of completing each leaf collection zone on its designated day in fall 2016.

Improving efficiency

- The City continues to install automated radio transmitters on water meters. When complete, this change will dramatically reduce the number of staff hours needed to read meters and will eliminate many billing delays. Installations should be completed during fiscal year 2018.

- The Public Works Division took several steps to improve energy efficiency. An outside study will look at the age and efficiency of the Powerhouse and central campus heating and cooling systems, which serve the Police Department and Henry Ford Centennial Library. A separate pilot study showed the effectiveness of switching from T8 fluorescent lamps to LED bulbs that use less than half the electricity in City buildings. Also, diesel trucks were equipped with automatic shut-offs to keep them from idling too long.

Pollution control and storm water management

- The City continues to be dedicated to constructing new infrastructure to prevent pollution from entering the Rouge River. The City's Combined Sewer Overflow Facilities went into operation 71 times in 2015 due to wet weather events such as heavy rainfall or snow melt. The caissons captured 261 million gallons of combined sewerage that was sent to Detroit Water and Sewerage Department for treatment. The CSO facilities also disinfected and screened 178 million gallons of additional wet weather sewerage prior to discharging it into the river in compliance with the City's federal discharge permit.
- Separating storm and sanitary sewers in neighborhoods continues, also part of the effort to prevent pollution from entering waterways. The area bounded by Telegraph Road, Dartmouth, Westwood and the railroad tracks saw the completion of Phase 1 of its separation project in 2015 and will welcome the end of Phase 2 in 2016. Separating sewers has the added benefit of providing new roads and water mains for residents in those areas.

Police Department

- The city saw a nearly 6 percent reduction in Part-A crimes for 2015. The department's goal is to have Dearborn declared a "Michigan Safe Community." The reduction includes a 7 percent decrease in motor vehicle thefts, 11 percent reduction in retail fraud (shoplifting), and 3 percent decrease in theft of motor vehicle parts.
- In the future, the Department hopes to provide enhanced/shared call center services to the region. A project manager was selected and hired for the consolidated dispatch project.
- The Dearborn Emergency Dispatch Center handled almost 213,000 calls for service, including 86,135 emergency 911 calls and 126,699 non-emergency calls.
- Dearborn Police Ordinance Officers partnered with Neighborhood Services to combat blight throughout the city. Through the partnership, 525 notices of violation were issued, and 89 percent of property owners voluntarily corrected the violation without further enforcement.
- The Dearborn Police Department was awarded a \$500,000 Department of Justice (DOJ) grant to hire four additional school resource officers. Seven school resource officers now are responsible for patrolling the nearly 50 schools in the City of Dearborn.
- The Dearborn Police Department received a \$60,000 DOJ grant to begin using body-worn cameras.
- The Dearborn Police Department was a top 10 finalist for the 2015 Webber Seavey Award, which recognizes innovative policing programs. The award topic was Operation Blue Light, a multi-jurisdictional approach to crime prevention involving more than 70 agencies. DOJ named this program an industry best practice.



Mayor John B. O'Reilly, Jr. and Chief Ronald Haddad and his leadership team welcomed new police officers to the department on Dec. 14, 2015.

Legal Department and City Plan Division

- The City is promoting larger residential lots by offering to sell its smaller parcels (lots less than 40 feet wide) to adjoining homeowners to use as side yards. Thirteen lots were sold to adjoining property owners in Fiscal Year 15, yielding more than \$43,900 in revenue for the City. In the previous fiscal year, 23 lots were sold. Larger lots make Dearborn more attractive to potential residents and homebuilders.
- The City has an aggressive program to acquire and demolish substandard homes to maintain high residential property values. During Fiscal Year 15, nine properties were sold for new construction generating more than \$227,700 in revenue for the City. In the previous fiscal year, 10 of the lots advertised for new construction were sold.
- The City Plan Division is updating and maintaining the Zoning Ordinance to make it more developer friendly, easier to enforce, and better aligned with the City's Master Plan.
- The division is collaborating with Michigan State University planning students to create a visioning and economic strategy for the Dix-Vernor Corridor.
- Implementing a bike-sharing program is being explored with the idea of increasing bike-ridership and the use of bicycles to connect the two Michigan Avenue downtowns.
- A Rouge River Corridor study will look at creating gathering places and possibly light commercial activities along stretches of the Rouge River.



Mayor John B. O'Reilly, Jr. and Police Chief Ronald Haddad recognized outstanding citizens in August.

Fire Department

- Despite a 13 percent increase of run volume from 2015 to 2016, the department still maintains response times under national standards for both fires and EMS calls.
- The Fire Department has continued its dedication to pursuing and securing grants to supplement taxpayers' dollars in Dearborn. The department acquired funding for training, rescue vehicles, facility updates, equipment upgrades and other costs associated with ensuring the safety of residents and firefighters. The department was awarded \$1.5 million in grant monies in 2015.
- As a leader in the improvement to the 800MHZ radio system upgrade, the Fire Department used a \$3.2 million grant that was received in 2014 to purchase new radio hardware for each police officer and firefighter in the City in 2015. The remaining funds continue to be put into work in conjunction with the Dispatch Consolidation Project.

Department of Assessment

The Department of Assessment moved the city forward in 2016 by following a 2015 directive of the Michigan State Tax Commission, which required an individual reappraisal of every residential property in Dearborn. This directive occurred as the City was nearing the end of a four-year internal process to update records for every residential parcel in preparation for a complete residential reappraisal.

Overall, the assessed value of residential properties in Dearborn increased by 6.7% from 2015 to 2016, although changes in individual assessed values varied significantly. The good news is this shows property values in Dearborn have increased.

And, while overall assessed value increased, the increase in taxable value will be negligible for homeowners. Taxable values can only climb 0.3 percent this year due to state limits on property tax increases.

If a property is sold or undergoes major improvements such as an addition, taxable value resets to the assessed value.



Residential property values are climbing.

Human Resources

- With a change of leadership in fall 2015, the department is embracing an opportunity to update City services to incorporate new ideas that focus on the balance between sustainability and transformation.
- Team Dearborn was developed through the merger of two employee committees. It brings employees together to strengthen wellness and healthful work and life balance initiatives, and it provides a productive environment for creativity and innovation.
- Original strategies are being forwarded, such as a new comprehensive hire initiative, an on-boarding program, a redesigned compensation system that emphasizes the impact of work on the success of the City, and the expansion of employee recognition programs.

Dearborn Historical Museum

- The Museum plans for the future by generating interest in the City's past. The Museum Pioneer School has been in place for 45 years. In 2015, more than 1,400 second-grade students participated, and 1,500 students are expected in 2016.



Kids enjoy the opening day of the Hemlock Park Splash Pad in May 2015.

Library

- The Dearborn Public Library offered a number of services that encouraged residents to learn new skills. Among these new services are a switch to digital downloads, new faster computers, laptops for loan, and reciprocity with Library Network Libraries.
- The Big Read program is bringing the community together to take part in activities and programs. This year's theme *Do You Know Poe?* focuses on 19th century poet and mystery and macabre writer Edgar Allan Poe.
- To enhance usage of the Henry Ford Centennial Library, new building improvements were made, including new sliding doors and a conversion to LED lamps.
- The HFCL's newly launched service upgrades include PC Wireless printing, better self-check service, catalog enhancements and library technology labs.
- Esper Branch Library installed energy efficient LED lights in the summer of 2015.

Public Information and CDTV

- The Department of Public Information in 2015 completed a significant overhaul of the City of Dearborn's website to improve content, usability, and mobile-friendliness.
- The Department also improved the functionality and appearance of the internal website for city employees. Providing employees with easy access to relevant information about their jobs improves customer service.
- DPI, along with Recreation and the Dearborn Community Fund, moved the Homecoming Festival forward in 2015 by working with new community partners to offer additional activities without additional City resources, while keeping the traditional atmosphere of the event. DPI will play a key role in the festival's evolution in 2016 as a way to market Dearborn to a wider regional audience, boost

community connections and introduce more healthy living components.

- All CDTV equipment for field shoots and in the City Council Chambers in the Dearborn Administrative Center was upgraded to digital format.

Finance Department and Purchasing Division

- The Purchasing Division of the Finance Department is reducing the need to store paper documents; bids are now distributed and submitted electronically.
- Finance is committed to using an imaging system to reduce the number of paper copies that need to be stored.



Free canoeing was a new healthy family option at Homecoming 2015.

City of Dearborn

Mayor John B. O'Reilly, Jr.



City Council

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