

# Dearborn State of the City

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 2016 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.

## Property Maintenance and Development Services Department

### Registered Rental Program

- At the beginning of 2016, Dearborn had 5,086 registered rental properties, down 226 from a year earlier, reflecting that houses had returned to being owner-occupied dwellings.

### Permits

- The number of building permits climbed 4 percent in 2016 to 2,362 permits, and the bigger news is that permit values jumped an incredible 163 percent to \$208 million.
  - ◇ New commercial building value climbed six fold compared to 2015. This is largely due to Ford Motor Company's first steps in a 10-year, \$1.2 billion renovation plan for its headquarters, and its Research and Engineering facilities in Dearborn.
- Permits for new single-family homes also climbed in 2016, more than doubling to 36 permits for a value of almost \$10 million. The value of permits for home improvements nearly doubled to \$8 million.
- Twenty-four permits were issued for the demolition of single-family homes – eliminating neighborhood nuisances and making way for new construction or side yards for adjacent homes.
- More than 12,500 permit inspections were performed in 2016, protecting the quality of Dearborn's housing and building stock.

- Nearly 100,000 pages of construction documents were scanned and are available in electronic format. This includes 20 years of approved construction plans, which will make researching a property's history much more efficient.
- The City saw a continued reduction in the time it takes to review plans, although it experienced a 10 percent increase in the number of projects submitted.



*The Property Maintenance and Development Services Department helps keep Dearborn neighborhoods attractive and encourages residents to take care of their lawns and houses.*

### Inspections

- Residential- and commercial-inspection groups were consolidated into one unit. This allows for clear and concise supervision and increased efficiencies. Both sections are now fully staffed with four field staff each. A full-time clerical staff assists with phone calls and other communication.
- 142 certificates of occupancy for businesses were issued, representing new investment or reinvestment in Dearborn.

- The Commercial Interval Program is being restored, starting with inspections at apartment buildings and three and four-family homes. These cases are now tracked in databases that capture the site's history, requirements and expiration dates. An enforcement process ensures items cited on inspections are corrected.
- A fair and consistent enforcement process enacted in 2012 continues to produce favorable outcomes when enforcement becomes necessary. Only 6 percent of cases resulted in a Notice of Violation and less than 1 percent of cases received a ticket, demonstrating that more than 94 percent of all cases are voluntarily resolved by the property owner.
- Construction site maintenance now requires that a 4- to 6- foot chain link barricade be put around the site before a construction permit will be issued. Field staff also follow up on problem construction sites by weekly addressing safety and nuisance related items.



*Code enforcement helps keep all Dearborn neighborhoods looking nice. The City Beautiful Commission recognized these Springwells Park homeowners for the extra effort they put into maintaining their property.*

## Neighborhood Services

- Neighborhood Services inspectors handled 23,309 property maintenance cases in 2016, with 2,125 of these involving complaints from residents. Resident complaints were down 13 percent from 2015.
- Inspectors issued 475 tickets for nuisances such as prohibited vehicle storage and repeated violations of the tall grass and weed ordinance.
- The department was proactive in protecting the appearance and safety of neighborhoods. Immediate abatements were carried out in 1,416 cases at

930 properties. Immediate abatement includes issues such as tall grass, trash storage issues, litter, uncollected animal waste, and failure to shovel snow.

- Of the 1,927 ordinance-related abatements performed by the City, 147 abatement appeals were heard by the Property Maintenance Appeals Committee.
  - ◊ The committee fully waived 19 appeals, less than 1 percent of all abatements.
  - ◊ These numbers show that inspectors are applying professional judgment when determining the urgency of an abatement situation and the negative impact on surrounding neighbors.

## Department of Assessment

- Property values in Dearborn rose in every category: residential, commercial and industrial, and in every area of the city in 2016, continuing Dearborn's recovery from the Great Recession and strengthening the investments made by home and business owners.

## Economic and Community Development Department

- As part of the overall Ford Dearborn Campus Transformation project, Ford Land launched a significant effort in 2016 to develop a talent magnet for Ford recruiting in Dearborn's west downtown. Called Wagner Place, the \$60 million project is being realized in partnership with the City of Dearborn and the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC).
  - ◊ Wagner Place includes 12 downtown parcels. Work began with demolition of several obsolete buildings to make way for two new mixed-use retail/office structures. The new buildings will provide 50,000 square feet of retail/restaurant space and 100,000 square feet of offices.
  - ◊ Some 600 to 650 creative Ford employees will work in the buildings, which will offer a work/live/play environment similar to those developed by Google or Microsoft to attract Millennials.
  - ◊ Notably, the building that once had been the historic Wagner Hotel at Michigan and Monroe will be retained, restored and integrated with the rest of Wagner Place.





*The Wagner Place Project will house 600 Ford employees in 100,000 square feet of new office space and also create 50,000 square feet of retail and restaurant space.*

- ◇ Taking the Wagner Place development into consideration, downtown west Dearborn will have an occupancy rate of 96 percent when measured by square foot.
- Ford Motor Company announced in 2016 spectacular plans to make over and consolidate its headquarters and its Research and Engineering Center through the Dearborn Campus Transformation (DCT) project.
  - ◇ This investment will total more than \$1.2 billion and will bring Ford Motor Company facilities into the 21<sup>st</sup> century as it evolves from an auto company into a mobility company. These investments will provide state-of-the art facilities for the heart of the company and its 30,000 Dearborn leadership and creative staff.
  - ◇ The City has teamed up with Ford to assure these projects progress smoothly and efficiently toward their successful completion in the shortest possible timeframe.
- ECD worked closely with the owners of West Village Commons and the MEDC to develop a Neighborhood Enterprise Zone (NEZ) project. This effort will re-purpose the vacant second floors of two buildings on the former Jacobson’s site, now home to Famous Hamburgers and Bar Louie, among others.
  - ◇ Recently, the property owner saw a potential to convert the unused second floors into Luxe Lofts for people wanting to live, work and play in downtown west Dearborn. With the Wagner Place development occurring, the desirability of the lofts has increased.

- During 2016, both the Warren Avenue and Dix-Vernor Corridor authorities became active in developing plans and setting agendas for the future. Both boards will focus on improving the physical appearance of the corridors, the land use and development visions, and marketing and promotion.
- Dearborn is participating in the Redevelopment Ready Communities (RRC) Program via the MEDC and Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA). This program helps communities assure they provide transparency in the development processes, excellent development data, and promotion of available sites for reuse and redevelopment.
  - ◇ Dearborn and MEDC consultants also are working to replace traditional zoning with Form Based Zoning Code, where a district has detailed rules regarding appearance, density and walkability and is less rigid about land-use categories. Form Based Zoning for Dearborn’s west downtown District should be completed in 2017.
- Block grant funds continue to play an important role in City infrastructure and public safety improvements.
  - ◇ In the past year, more than \$2 million in block grant funds were used for road and water main improvements, along with \$500,000 for fire safety vehicles.
  - ◇ In addition, block grants helped fund public service activities including park management, community and school policing activities, vector control, and social service assistance.



*City Hall Artspace Lofts opened last year, preserving a historic Dearborn building while providing living and studio space for artists and their families, as well as galleries.*

## Police Department

- Crime is down 3 percent citywide. The Lock It or Lose It Campaign has contributed to a 10 percent reduction in larceny from vehicles reported in 2016.
- In 2016, the department increased the number of full-time School Resource Officers from three to seven.
  - ◇ The department also makes 2,500 park-and-walk visits each year, in addition to supporting schools' anti-bullying programs, reading months, Key Club driver safety initiatives, and Goodfellows events for challenged families.
- Use of force during police encounters continued to trend downward. With 70,000 calls for service, 40,000 violations issued, 6,000 arrests, 300 weapons taken off the streets, 3,300 car crashes and 2,500 school visits, Dearborn officers only deployed force 30 times.
  - ◇ Officers receive in-service training in de-escalation and online training in advanced use of force. Department members also attend a seven-week class at the University of Michigan-Dearborn on the alternatives to violent force. The Department is the first in the nation to provide such training.
- In fall 2016, the Department partnered with the Detroit Wayne Mental Health Authority and trained and equipped all officers with Naloxone-Opioid overdose kits in response to local drug trends.
  - ◇ In 2016, Dearborn saw 1,100 drug-related arrests, Police responded to 123 overdose



Mayor O'Reilly, joined by Police Chief Haddad, welcomed new police chaplains from Dearborn and other local communities.

- incidents with 10 deaths, and the Fire Department responded to 432 overdoses.
  - ◇ Recently, four lives were saved by responding officers trained to use the overdose kits.
- In a continuing effort to enhance citizen and officer safety, the Department implemented a special needs registry. Citizens can sign up to alert any emergency responders of family members with autism, Alzheimer's, Down's Syndrome or other conditions.
- For the first time in the Department's history, a team of inter-faith clergy was appointed as department chaplains.
- The department has 12 interns in an ongoing effort to develop future officers from within the community. Interns are paid and can receive 50 percent college reimbursement.



The Recreation and Parks Department last fall celebrated the opening of the Rouge River Gateway Trail Extension. The extension connects the trail to Ford Field Park via Brady Street.

## Recreation and Parks Department

### Notable achievements

- The Department's cost recovery was a remarkable 77 percent compared to the average municipal recovery of 29 percent, according to the National Recreation and Parks Association.
- The Rouge River Gateway Trail extension opened last fall allowing walkers, joggers, and bicyclists to connect to the trail from Ford Field Park. The new section connects the former trailhead behind Andiamo Restaurant with an elevated boardwalk and then proceeds alongside the river and out to the existing bike lane on Brady Street to Ford Field



Park. The project was funded, in part, by grants from the Michigan Department of Transportation (\$502,000) and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (\$280,000).

- Ranger coverage at Ford Woods, Hemlock, and Lapeer Parks expanded to seven days a week from 5 to 10 p.m. during the summer season (Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day weekend).
- Cameras were installed at Crowley, Ford Field, Ford Woods, Hemlock, Lapeer, and Levagood parks, along with a central monitoring station in the Recreation and Parks administration office. This system will reduce vandalism, improve visitor safety and assist with crime investigations. This project was made possible by a \$265,000 grant from Wayne County Parks Millage Allocation and Housing and Urban Development.

## Dearborn Ice Skating Center (DISC)

- Since the 2014 retirement of its debt for building renovations, the DISC has been self-sufficient with revenues exceeding expenditures.
- The DISC, along with the Dearborn Figure Skating Club, hosted the U.S. Figure Skating Association's 2016 Tri-State Competition and the 2016 Junior World Qualifier Synchronized Competition in February 2016, attracting teams from as far away as California.

## Ford Community and Performing Arts Center/Theater

- The Hubbard Ballroom at the Ford Community and Performing Arts Center underwent an extensive \$500,000 remodeling intended to make it more marketable for weddings, banquets and similar events. The investment has led to increased bookings.
- A new state-of-the-art sound system was installed in the Michael A. Guido Theater, thanks in part to a \$48,619 grant from the Michigan Council for the Arts & Cultural Affairs.
- A new app audio system in the fitness area allows patrons to listen to TV shows, enhancing their workout experience.



*Children enjoy the city's largest playscape, dedicated in Crowley Park in fall of 2016.*

## Parks

- An elaborate 3,300-square-foot playscape—with a \$150,000 price tag—was installed at Crowley Park.
- Traffic patterns have changed around Crowley Park. Access to the main parking lot for soccer and softball players is now from Gulley Road. This change will greatly reduce traffic through the neighborhood east of the park.
- A Wayne County Parks Millage Allocation grant of \$218,000 will fund the installation of a new splash pad at Whitmore-Bolles Park this spring. The project will also include restroom facilities.



*Mayor O'Reilly presents a citation to Camp Counselor Chloe Haag. Haag ushered children in her care out of the way of an errant vehicle that had jumped the curb near The Center. She sustained minor injuries.*

## Camp Dearborn/ Mystic Creek Golf Course

- Installation of a zip line is planned for the 2017 Camp season. This will carry riders over the main beach and lake.
- Camp Dearborn's resort-style cabins continued to be popular, boasting a more than 80 percent occupancy rate. An additional eight cabins opened last summer, complete with air conditioning and heat.



*The Walking Club is just one of many City services geared to helping seniors stay involved and maintain a healthy, active lifestyle.*

## Senior Services

- Thanks to a SMART grant, Dearborn Senior Services was able to replace five aging vans with new vehicles in spring 2016, ensuring that Dearborn seniors continue to have access to affordable and convenient transportation.
- Elderfest, Dearborn's free autumn celebration for area senior citizens, remained popular, attracting nearly 300 participants.

## Dearborn Hills Golf Course

- During 2016, the golf course and inclusive banquet facilities hosted 20 leagues, 37 golf outings, and 65 social gatherings such as wedding receptions and bridal showers.

## Legal and City Plan Department

### Property sales and activities in support of development

- The Legal Department developed an agreement with Ford Motor Land Development Corporation for the purchase and demolition of buildings on Michigan Avenue; construction of Wagner Place, a three-story mixed use catalytic project; and the City's construction of a new public parking deck in west downtown.
- Numerous property sales occurred including 22 buildable lots for new construction resulting in \$415,562 in revenue and one rehabilitated house for \$118,000. All 23 parcels were also returned to the tax rolls. In other sales, 22039 and 22041 Michigan Avenue were sold to Ford Land for \$200,000.
- The City sold 29 side yard lots, generating \$93,177 in revenue. This also created larger residential lot sizes that are more appealing to modern home buyers, and potentially allow for the construction of garages or driveways to reduce the number of parked vehicles on the street. The sales also put parcels back on the tax rolls.
- In April 2016, new Land Sale Guidelines were adopted that require the installation of off-street parking and offer a refund of up to \$1,000 if the installation takes place within five years of the side-yard purchase. In December 2016, the first such refund was issued for a Barclay Street property.



*The two-block Wagner Place Project will also provide wider sidewalks and more green space and outdoor gathering areas in Dearborn's west downtown.*



- The City is working with LSL Planning consultants to create and implement a Form-Based Code for the west downtown district. The code will be implemented this fall and transition to the east downtown district by spring 2018.
- The Department collaborated with urban planning students from Wayne State and Michigan State universities to create the Dix-Vernor Business Corridor Vision Plan, the Warren Avenue Business Corridor Vision Plan and the Rediscovering the Rouge River vision plan. The studies are used as guides for grant writing, project planning and implementation.
- The Planning Division in 2016 began updating its record-keeping and filing structure. This initiative includes putting all 3,900 Planning Commission cases into a searchable database for quick access. Record storage has moved from paper to electronic format to save space, be more efficient and reduce the need to print.



*Dearborn is encouraging biking through weekly group rides during warm weather, the creation of a non-motorized transportation plan, and updated ordinances that keep biking in mind.*

## Litigation and legal proceedings

- The Department successfully obtained the dismissal of 17 lawsuits against the City.
- In 2016, 18 commercial property tax appeals were dismissed, which protected more than \$16 million in taxable value. That translates to \$1.2 million in continued tax revenue for the City.
  - ◊ The largest of the dismissed appeals was for Fairlane Mall, which resulted in the continuation of \$8.8 million in taxable value.
- Public hearings were scheduled or began that resulted in the preemptive closing of Liv Lounge and Nar Bar.

- A Nuisance Abatement Board was created to address all nuisance businesses, including bars.
- City prosecutors continued to modernize and digitize in-court presentations for juries and judges. This included using laptops, tablets and courtroom monitors to present visual evidence such as pictures, videos and maps. Technology was also used to edit video evidence for admissibility in court and to present PowerPoint presentations for opening and closing arguments.
- As a result of changes made in 2015 to traffic court procedures, prosecutors resolved most traffic infractions before formal hearings. During 2016, prosecutors adjudicated 777 more pre-formal hearings than in the same period in 2014. This saved hundreds of civilian witnesses from interrupting their schedules to testify at hearings and saved the cost of paying officers overtime for testifying on their days off.

## Actions in support of bicycling, non-motorized transportation

- Work continued on the planning and promotion of a connected pedestrian and bicycle network throughout the city.
  - ◊ That includes drafting an ordinance for bicycle parking requirements for new businesses, pursuing private funding for the Non-Motorized Transportation Plan, planning three primary bike routes to connect many City neighborhoods to local and regional assets, and submitting two bicycle infrastructure projects for the Capital Improvement Plan.

## Department of Public Works

### Preserving our tree canopy

- Dearborn is working to maintain its Tree City designation through an aggressive effort to replace natural and construction-related tree loss.
  - ◊ Having a lush tree canopy adds to neighborhood appeal, increases property values, combats global and local warming, reduces dust and other pollutants, and improves overall air quality.
  - ◊ However, a large number of Dearborn trees are reaching the end of their life expectancy and many more have been removed for construction projects.

- ◇ The new program is expected to result in more than 1,000 new trees planted, more than triple the previous number.
- ◇ The city's reforestation program allows all homeowners within a city construction zone to get a free tree on their easement if they do not already have one. Residents also can get a free replacement easement tree if theirs is removed for other reasons.
- ◇ A subsidy also continues that allows other homeowners to order an easement tree for half price.

- Dearborn now participates in the Water Residential Assistance Program, which provides financial assistance with water bills to income-qualified residents.

## CSO projects reduce water pollution; provide new roads, water lines, sewers

- Dearborn continues an extensive project to separate sanitary and storm sewers wherever feasible. More than a decade ago, regulators cited the City and communities around the region because their Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) system released untreated water into the Rouge River during periods of heavy water runoff. Now, Dearborn is working to separate the storm and sanitary sewers so only runoff is released back into the environment. The approach allows the City to build new roads, water lines and sanitary sewers in areas served by the former CSO system. The cost is lower than the previous approach of building capture and treatment facilities to hold and process the excessive water.
  - ◇ In 2016, the Engineering Division administered the \$14.5 million Phase 2 of the Sewer Separation Project for the area bounded by Telegraph Road, Dartmouth, Westwood and the railroad track.
  - ◇ Engineering also administered Phase I of the Sewer Separation project on Ternes from Colson to Alber, a \$7 million project. Phase 2 of this part of the project involves construction within Ford Woods Park and on Yinger and Donald streets and is scheduled for 2017. More work will continue in 2018-2020.



*Dearborn continues to be a Tree City USA with programs to protect existing trees and encourage more to be planted. Henry Ford Elementary selected this maple tree in honor of Arbor Day.*

## Water quality and other issues

- The quality of drinking water is on everyone's minds these days.
  - ◇ The City of Dearborn initiates an aggressive flushing and sampling program to ensure the safety of drinking water whenever it performs any work that may disturb water service lines containing lead.
  - ◇ Testing in the City has generally found lead results below the action level of 15 parts per billion.
  - ◇ Dearborn gets its water from the Great Lakes Water Authority, which uses corrosion inhibitors to reduce the risk of lead in service lines leaching into the water.
- A major effort continues reduce flood hazards by inspecting and repairing sanitary sewers across the City. Increased inspection has resulted in early detection and elimination of potential sewer deficiencies.

## Roads and other infrastructure work

- Sections of the following streets were re-constructed or resurfaced in 2016 with water main replacements and new storm sewers where necessary: Appoline, Argyle, Bailey, Bingham, Boldt, Brainard, Carlisle, Cherry, Cooke, Cornell, Dunning, Haggerty, Harvard, Hemlock, Hickory, Homeplace, Industrial, Lloyd Court, Long Blvd, Oxford, Polk, Princeton, Schaefer Road, Scott, Ternes, Wellesley and West Point.
- In 2016, Public Works constructed 21,845 linear feet of storm sewer; 9,687 linear feet of sanitary sewer and 33,238 linear feet of water mains.
- Public Works reconstructed 4.3 miles and resurfaced 3.8 miles of roads; performed 59,702 square yards of pavement repairs; and replaced 316,119 square feet of sidewalk.



## Department of Public Information

- The Department continued to successfully communicate via social media, exceeding 5,000 followers on the official Facebook page and routinely reaching 2,000 people with daily posts and as many as 14,000 with information of special significance. The Department also started beneficial interactions with residents via NextDoor.
- DPI organized the meaningful and memorable ceremony dedicating the landmark Veterans Park and War Memorial in September, including preparing extensive information on U.S. conflicts and military branches of service, and coordinating guests, participants and media coverage.
- With a new route and new ending location, DPI oversaw the transition of the 92nd Memorial Day Parade and ceremony, determining new staging and dispersement areas, and communicating clear instructions to all participants and the audience.
- DPI co-chairs the annual Homecoming festival, which in 2016 began a transition to focus more on Healthy Dearborn initiatives. DPI also assisted Healthy Dearborn with promotion of its annual family bike ride and weekly Walk and Roll events, and amplified its wellness messages via the City's printed Calendar and other means.
- CDTV successfully transferred its on-demand programming to a new website that is much more user-friendly and visually appealing. As always,

this programming can be accessed from the City of Dearborn's website and allows viewers to enjoy CDTV shows on their own schedule and without a cable TV subscription.

- CDTV took the lead to improve the audio system in the City Council Chambers to better accommodate the many city, and community and business groups that regularly meet at the Dearborn Administrative Center.
- DPI assisted the Economic and Community Development Department with creating an online comprehensive guide directing entrepreneurs and companies about how to open a business in Dearborn. This special website section on [www.cityofdearborn.org](http://www.cityofdearborn.org) is an integral part of Dearborn efforts to be certified as a Michigan Redevelopment Ready Community.



*A dedication ceremony for the new Veterans Park and War Memorial in front of Henry Ford Centennial Library was held September 24, 2016.*



*Dearborn firefighters participate in community events, like the Memorial Day parade, throughout our city.*

## Fire Department

### Dearborn ranked in elite class

- Dearborn's ISO Public Protection Classification rose to a Class 2 in August of 2016 – putting the city with only four other Michigan communities to earn this status. Class 2 means the Dearborn Fire Department ranks in the top 2 percent of all U.S. fire departments.
- Insurance companies use a community's ISO rating to help set property insurance rates, so it is expected this elite ranking will lower rates.
- Among the reasons for the improved classification, reviewers cited the department's consolidation with the former Melvindale Fire Department, the establishment of a Fire Department Training Academy,

infrastructure improvements in water distribution, and technology upgrades related to the Consolidated Dispatch Project.



*The new Dearborn Fire Training Academy will provide firefighters a controlled environment while giving them important practical experience, such as breaching a roof.*

## Creation of new Fire Training Academy

- The Fire Department is in the final stages of opening its new state-of-the-art Fire Training Academy, one of the most comprehensive facilities in Michigan.
- The department received almost \$1 million from a highly-competitive federal grant to help fund the project, including buying a driver's simulator, a Class A burn chamber, vehicle and dumpster burn props, computer simulated EMS mannequins and other special operation equipment.
- The training academy was created in previously underutilized space in the Dearborn Sewer Building for minimal remodeling costs. Ultimately, improved training for firefighters will lead to a reduction in injuries and improved efficiency at emergency events by allowing firefighters to experience real-life scenarios in a controlled environment.

## Consolidated Dispatch Center

- Construction is underway on the new Dispatch Center and Emergency Operations Center. The facility will provide dispatchers and emergency personnel with new radio hardware, computer systems and monitors linked to various locations through the City.
- The project is funded in part by a \$3.5 million state grant the Fire Department received in 2014. Of that, \$2.2 million was used to upgrade Dearborn's emergency radio system to 800 MHz.
- The grant requires that consolidation occur between Dearborn and at least one other community.

- Ford Motor Company and other private sector sponsors have also helped support the new dispatch center.
- Management Information Systems (MIS) department is also playing a critical role in the development of the Dispatch Center and Emergency Operations Center.

## Heart Association Award

- In July, the American Heart Association recognized the department with its Mission Lifeline Silver Award.
- The Dearborn Fire Department was awarded for its care specifically related to the identification of potentially lethal heart conditions, the timeliness of treatment, and the ability to transport a patient to a cardiac catheterization center without delay. Faster catheterization times significantly reduce the negative health effects related to heart attacks.

## Smoke alarm installation program

- Thanks to a federal grant, the department in 2016 installed more than 1,900 smoke alarms in more than 490 residences, all free of charge to homeowners. The department received another grant to extend the program for at least two years.



*About 500 homes received new smoke alarms from the Dearborn Fire Department in a prevention program funded by the federal government.*

## Specialized training

- Using grant funding, the Dearborn Fire Department established a Special Operations Team.
  - ◊ These 20 firefighters are trained in technical rescue activities such as high angle and low angle rope rescue, confined space rescue and water rescue.
- FEMA awarded the department a \$164,586 grant for additional training to certify firefighters as Fire Officer 1 and Fire Officer 2 under NFPA standards.



## Human Resources Department

- Employee engagement, wellness, and recognition were a focus during 2016. A wellness program brought employees together for health screens, simulations, activities and information.



*A summer walking program for City of Dearborn employees resulted in 3,791 miles tracked – enough to get from Detroit to Dallas, Texas and back again.*

- To ensure that the City of Dearborn is able to attract and retain the talented employees needed to serve our customers at the highest level, and to initiate and implement innovative programs that will push our community forward, an extensive compensation study was undertaken for the first time in 16 years.
- An awards program honored 175 employees celebrating milestones, including 26 who have served our citizens for more than 25 years. Our part-time employees are critical to the success of the City and comprised nearly one-third of the honorees.

## Management Information Systems Department

- The City is implementing a new system to allow for online applications and payments for permits, plans and license renewals and will involve the City Clerk, the Property Maintenance and Development Services Department, and the Economic and Community Development Department. It is set to launch in late 2017.
  - ◇ In conjunction with the new online filing system, the City will add specialized software that will facilitate timely plan reviews, which is essential to our community business partners, including Ford Motor Company.

## Dearborn Public Library

- In 2016, Dearborn Public Library launched an on-going and free program to encourage reading to young children. Parents or grandparents of children from newborn up to the start of kindergarten participate by reading books to their little ones and logging the titles. Children receive incentives and prizes as they reach milestones on their way to experiencing 1,000 books. Studies show that reading to young children provides a huge boost in literacy and makes them better prepared for kindergarten.
- The library used its second Big Read grant to initiate community conversations and positive activities in early 2016 while focusing on the literary works of Edgar Allan Poe. The initiative also strengthened community partnerships between the library, public schools, local institutions and businesses. The Library hopes to again receive National Endowment for the Arts funding for another Big Read in 2018.
- Book groups now can browse titles of book club kits online and reserve kits for a particular date through a service called Kitkeeper. Book club kits provide several copies of a book, and materials to help facilitate a discussion.
- The first Little Free Library in the Dearborn Public Library system was dedicated in November at the John D. Dingell Transit Center. The unit with a steam-engine theme was designed and built by Boy Scout Brendan Hay of Troop 1147 as an Eagle Scout Project. Library volunteers monitor and exchange



*“Do You Know Poe?” was the focus of the Dearborn Public Library’s second Big Read program, which was supported by a federal grant and local groups. The library provided free copies of works by Edgar Allan Poe and hosted dozens of events related to the author and his writings.*

materials on a regular basis. The “take a book, leave a book” concept welcomes visitors to use the library as they pass through the station.

- Visitors of all Dearborn Public Libraries can now take advantage of free and open wi-fi.
- During December, Henry Ford Centennial Library celebrated the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the groundbreaking for the building. The Library acknowledged the anniversary by welcoming people back with a two-week amnesty period allowing people to clean their slate from old fines and fees.

## Historical Museum

- The museum continues to gain more volunteers for the project to inventory its collection. In 2016, staff and volunteers entered more than 4,000 items into the museum’s PastPerfect database. An estimated 45 minutes is spent per item.
- Nearly 200 people attended the annual Victorian Tea at the Commandant’s Quarters. This included a large group of Japanese exchange students.
- Attendance was up at the annual Party at the Museum held in September. This fundraiser provides guests a fun night of drinks, food and live entertainment.

## Green Initiatives

- The City has worked with the Dearborn Public Schools on a recycling program that is now in more than a dozen schools, with eight more expected in early 2017.
- Kayaking and canoeing are now available on the Rouge River.
- The downtown west Dearborn parking decks are lit with LED lights.
- Healthy Dearborn has reached more than 500 bicyclists with its weekly Walk and Roll events which began in summer 2016 and complement non-motorized transportation initiatives advocated by Healthy Dearborn.
- The City enlisted the help of residents when it launched a voluntary reporting system to gather more information about its tree stock on city easements.
- Dearborn was recognized as a Gold-level city through the Michigan Green Communities Network.



*The City of Dearborn and Dearborn Public Schools in 2016 expanded a joint effort to increase recycling in the district’s buildings and to help students recycle more at home.*

## City of Dearborn



**John B. O'Reilly, Jr.**  
*Mayor*

### City Council

President Susan Dabaja  
President Pro Tem Thomas Tafelski  
Michael T. Sareini  
Brian O'Donnell  
David Bazy  
Robert Abraham  
Mark Shooshanian



[www.cityofdearborn.org](http://www.cityofdearborn.org)