NEIGHBORHOODS

The City of Dearborn prides itself on clean and safe neighborhoods that keep house values high and residents proud to call Dearborn “home.” The City took the following actions in 2018 to continue making Dearborn a great place to live.

- Residential property values increased at an overall average rate of 4.8 percent. Individual neighborhoods increased in value from 2 percent to 8 percent.

- More than 1,000 trees were planted in 2018.

- Residents continued to invest in their homes and neighborhoods in 2018. The City granted more than 1,800 residential building permits — 100 more than in 2017, for a value of $22.6 million. Fifty-nine permits were issued for home additions — up from 43 permits in 2017.

- Thirty-two homes were built in the City in 2018, following 63 in 2017 and 31 in 2016.

- Swimmers of all ages had even more summer fun after a dual water slide was installed at Dunworth Pool at Levagood Park.

- New playground equipment was approved for Carlyle-Raymond, Freda-Blesser, Gary, Martha-Myrtle, Riverdale and Tannahill neighborhood parks.

- A new park on Graham Street in east Dearborn will be erected in 2019 on vacant land and feature soccer elements, improving the livability and attractiveness of the neighborhood.

- Property owners take their responsibilities seriously and the City has a 99.54-percent compliance rate when notices of building violations are given.

- To keep neighborhoods attractive, more than 20,000 property code enforcement cases were administered. More than 2,500 cases involved the City responding to resident complaints, which dropped 9 percent from 2017.

- Property owners in Dearborn want to follow the rules and keep their lawns looking nice, and generally respond quickly when notified of problems. Of the 10,995 immediate abatement nuisances addressed by Neighborhood Services, 92 percent were voluntarily resolved by residents in 2018. These cases were for excessively tall grass, inappropriate trash storage, and litter.

- More than 800 prohibited vehicles were removed from residential properties through City action. This is a 27-percent decrease from 2017, which means prohibited vehicles are staying out of neighborhoods. Nearly 5,000 junk, inoperable and other prohibited vehicles have been removed since 2013.
About $40.5 million was invested in neighborhood streets and other infrastructure, with 7.25 miles of roads reconstructed and .76 miles roads resurfaced, along with concrete road repairs and sidewalk and driveway apron replacement. Capital projects involved significant construction of water mains, sanitary sewers and storm sewers.

Police officers visited neighborhood schools more than 6,550 times in 2018. They also conducted more than 4,300 park-and-walk patrols, and followed through on more than 1,500 service requests.

Police engaged with the community at more than 100 neighborhood events, including neighborhood watch and crime prevention meetings.

Families are anticipating enjoying the new, more modern and expansive outdoor pool facility at Ford Woods Park that was under construction in 2018. When completed, residents will take advantage of the slides, shady spots, water sprays and zero-depth entry.

The City sold nine side yard lots and 11 rehabilitated homes. This puts those properties back on the tax roll, eliminates City maintenance costs and gives residents opportunities to improve neighborhoods.

Levagood Park users will see a comprehensive renovation and expansion of the comfort station in 2019, after approval in 2018. This follows a new, energy-efficient comfort station replacing an aging facility at Ford Field.

Players enjoyed two improved sand volleyball courts at Lapeer Park in southeast Dearborn, after crews added lights as well as drain tiles to alleviate flooding.

PUBLIC SAFETY

The City invests most of its tax dollars into the safety and welfare of Dearborn residents, businesses and visitors. That commitment is reflected in the following accomplishments.

- Dearborn experienced a 10-percent reduction in criminal activity in 2018, thanks to the Police Department Patrol Division’s use of an intelligence based, highly visible and proactive patrol strategy, which includes predictive analysis.

- The Police and Fire departments completed the first full year of operations in the new, state-of-the-art regional dispatch center, which includes serving the City of Melvindale. The dispatch center is moving toward potentially providing services to additional communities, a significant step for improving public safety response and capabilities for the residents of Dearborn and the region.

- The Fire Department continued its free smoke alarm installation program in 2018. To date, the department has installed more than 6,000 smoke alarms in over 1,500 residences across the city, funded through a grant. The program is expected to continue for two more years.

- The Police Department continued its global approach to community outreach through energetic engagement with residents, visitors, faith-based communities and businesses, as well as local, state and federal law enforcement partners. These initiatives have become an international model of community policing.

- With each significant snowfall, DPW crews keep the roadways safe by salting or plowing more than 267 miles of city streets, often within 14 hours, even following the most severe weather.
More than 14,700 residents have subscribed to the Police Department’s NIXLE system, which alerts residents about crime and other incidents in the City.

The Neighborhood Services Division worked with the Legal Department, the administration, and the City Council to decriminalize over 30 nuisances by defining them as civil infractions rather than misdemeanors. This allows residents a speedier form of due process and does not create a criminal record for minor property offenses.

The Legal Department did its part to address the changes in the state’s marijuana laws by working with police to understand the effects of the recently approved Michigan Regulation and Taxation of Marihuana Act and implement changes in police practices concerning marijuana-related enforcement.

The Legal Department, teamed with police and city building inspectors, took enforcement action against dangerous and dilapidated hotels, particularly America’s Best Value, the Victory Inn and the Edward Hotel.

The American Heart Association awarded the Fire Department once again with the Mission Lifeline Silver Award in July 2018. The award recognizes extensive training and effective responses to cardiac emergencies.

Dearborn firefighters participated in more than 30 different training courses in 2018.

The Fire Department focused its training exercises to prepare for a potential active shooter situation following models designated as best practices.

The Police Department continued its trend of reducing the number of “use of force” incidents. There was a 28-percent decrease in 2018 compared to 2017 and an 83-percent decrease since 2009.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

New businesses, restaurants, offices and housing options opened in Dearborn in 2018, and the City remains an attractive place for investment. Commercial areas with vitality strengthen neighborhoods and the entire community.

Dearborn was certified as a Redevelopment Ready Community (RRC), a recognition celebrated in early 2018. A special designation by the MEDC, the RRC label means that Dearborn offers investors predictable, transparent and comprehensive services supporting their success, as they seek to open businesses or build projects.

Mayor John B. O’Reilly, Jr. will expand upon partnerships with the Dearborn corporate community and downtown development organizations through his creation of an Economic Development Roundtable, which is scheduled to fully launch in 2019. The goal of this group is to ensure Dearborn’s long-term economic sustainability. Mayor O’Reilly chose Jim Parrelly to lead it.

Spearheaded by Downtown Dearborn, and supported by the City and community partners, a campaign to develop a compelling brand for Dearborn kicked off in 2018, and when completed, will be a powerful tool to attract home buyers, business investors and talented employees.
The City began updating its downtown zoning code in 2018 to a form-based code, a more modern and flexible approach to business development. The change is slated to be presented to the City Council for adoption in early 2019.

Dearborn’s commercial property values increased more than 3.3 percent. The industrial class of property grew by nearly 6 percent, largely due to the construction reinvestment of the Ford Motor Company.

Employees moved in and operations began at Ford Motor Company’s Wagner Place, even as construction continued for the final phases of the $85 million project in the west downtown along Michigan Avenue.

- Members of the Ford Skill Team moved into the upper two floors of the buildings in August 2018, bringing in 600-650 workers.
- New restaurants and retailers are scheduled to open on the first floors in 2019.
- A new public parking structure of 375 spaces built by the City, supported with state funding, opened in 2018.
- Two urban park spaces were built by Ford Land as part of the Wagner Place project to provide outdoor work and relaxation space for employees, residents and visitors.
- Also included is streetscaping around Monroe, Mason and West Village Drive. The streetscaping will allow West Village to accommodate special events in the downtown.
- Two other phases of streetscaping will take place in 2019 and 2020: the length of Michigan Avenue from Elm to Outer Drive; Howard, Mason and Monroe streets in conjunction with city sewer construction; and other city-funded streetscaping, with assistance from the Michigan Department of Transportation.

The west downtown experienced an additional $5 million in investment through 18 new businesses, restaurants and retail sites.

In the east downtown, the second phase of the $60 million Dearborn Town Center project at Michigan Avenue and Schaefer Road was completed in late 2018 and is a 77-unit independent Senior Housing apartment building with attractive amenities.

Seventeen new businesses opened in east downtown in 2018.

In addition, Dearborn continues its good work in the Warren Avenue Business Improvement District and the Dix-Vernor Business Improvement District. Revenue generated in the districts can be used for projects and promotions that benefit those commercial areas.

After years of sitting vacant and requiring extensive environmental restoration work, a recently remediated property at 3901 Wyoming is seeing new life as the City finalizes a deal that is expected to give way to a proposed automotive-supplier factory, potentially bringing in an estimated 400 manufacturing jobs to the city.
For the third year in a row, in 2018 Dearborn was recognized as a Gold Community through the Michigan Green Communities “Challenge” program, which honors cities that implement sustainable practices such as bike share system; green infrastructure projects; renewable energy projects; and track energy, waste, and water metrics.

Dearborn was recognized as a Tree City USA for the 28th year for its tree planting and maintenance programs.

The City secured funding for two canoe/kayak launches to be installed at the Dearborn Hills Golf Course and Ford Field Park.

The Kosch Family/Healthy Dearborn Bike Share system was enlarged with the addition of a new bike station at The Henry Ford.

The City Planning Division successfully secured a grant in 2018 from the Great Lakes Commission to provide rain gardens to residents through a 50/50 cost-sharing program. Rain gardens help preserve rain water for reuse.

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The City will begin exploring green storm-water infrastructure thanks to a new grant secured by the Planning Division. The technology could lead the City to reduce urban flooding.

Protecting the Rouge River from pollution, the City’s combined sewer wet weather treatment shafts provided primary treatment, screening, and disinfection to over 500 million gallons of wet weather sewage. They also captured more than 300 million gallons of additional wet weather sewer flows that were then sent for full treatment.

The City’s Building Services Division installed LED light fixtures at the two west Dearborn parking decks and the Dearborn Administrative Center parking lot. This upgrade produced energy savings and reduced maintenance costs. The division is also working on a LED upgrade to the municipal central campus, anticipated to begin in the spring.

The Recreation & Parks Department also replaced lights with new LED bulbs at the Dearborn Ice Skating Center, the pool area of the Ford Community & Performing Arts Center, and at Mystic Creek Golf Course.

The City is exploring the purchase of electric vehicles for its fleet, anticipating savings in maintenance and energy costs.
ADDITIONAL QUALITY OF LIFE ACHIEVEMENTS

The City continued offering and pursuing projects and services that provide residents with top-tier opportunities for recreation, health and wellness, neighborhood camaraderie and more to add to the community’s high quality of life.

Camp Dearborn boasts the longest continuous zip line in Michigan.

- Camp Dearborn added even more excitement to its recreational offerings when it opened Michigan’s longest continuous zip line in July. The new attraction takes patrons on a 1,400-foot ride over Lake #1 in about 30 seconds, and has two lines to accommodate patrons of all abilities.

- In response to requests from enthusiastic pet owners, Dearborn’s Dog Park became a year-round facility in late 2018.

- Swimmers and others will benefit from the extensive mechanical system and lighting renovation of the pool area at the Ford Community & Performing Arts Center.

- Golfers at Dearborn Hills Golf Course will see improved irrigation, turf quality and playing conditions after a pump station was installed.

- Exercisers had an easier time staying fit after the Ford Community & Performing Arts Center installed new stationary bikes, elliptical machines, arc trainers, treadmills and other equipment.

- Families were pleased with the outdoor pool facility at Camp Dearborn when a new pool liner and new deck area were completed.

- New outdoor courts for pickle ball, a popular sport with appeal across ages and skill levels, were started near the Ford Community and Performing Arts Center.

- The Dearborn Historical Museum expanded its public access research library to include the history of Arab Americans in Dearborn and new perspectives on Henry Ford’s contributions to the American suburb.

- Historical Museum archivists gave a series of lectures in 2018 on the origins of the City’s street names, including new information on the history of Telegraph Road.

- The Historical Museum’s social media following surpassed more than 5,000 followers.

- The Historical Museum added new exhibits on the history of Dearborn businesses and also started an oral history program that will air on CDTV.

- A new “seed library” was started at the Henry Ford Centennial Library, allowing patrons to take and give non-GMO seeds at their leisure.

- The Henry Ford Centennial Library completed renovations to its first-floor public restrooms.

- Dearborn Public Library presented its third community Big Read funded by the National Endowment for the Arts. Hundreds of books were given to residents. More than 3,800 people participated in programs throughout the city.

  • A feature-length video produced by CDTV enhanced the success of The Big Read project by telling the stories of Dearborn families who emigrated from other countries, which complemented the focus of the selected novel.
The City continues to invest in its three housing buildings for income qualified residents and two buildings for senior citizens, upgrading the overall facilities to assure they will be appealing for years to come. Among the projects are new carpeting, new elevators, new hallway lights and new trees.

- At Hubbard Manor East and Hubbard Manor West, bathroom and kitchen renovations are occurring to refresh individual units, and the kitchens in the common areas are also being redone.

To ensure senior residents know about the opportunity to enjoy safe, convenient and affordable housing, the City more actively marketed Hubbard Manor East and Hubbard Manor West in 2018, an effort that increased occupancy at Hubbard Manor East from 55 percent to 80 percent. All other city-operated housing buildings are at capacity.

The Police Department’s annual National Night Out on Crime event brought 3,000 residents to enjoy free food, ice cream, youth activities and displays from law enforcement agencies throughout metro Detroit.

Dearborn earned the prestigious Governor’s Fitness Award for Active Communities in 2018, in large part due to the advocacy and activities of the Healthy Dearborn initiative.

## CUSTOMER SERVICE

*The City of Dearborn strives to provide the best customer services to its residents. In 2018, the City was proactive to retain talented city employees, distribute more information, secure grant dollars and provide better services.*

- The City partnered with the Great Lakes Water Authority to establish more reliable estimates of non-revenue water purchases, which will result in reducing water costs to the City.

- More than 7,500 pieces of informational media was distributed directly to business owners and residents in 2018 to better educate and inform them of City ordinances and policies.

- More news was shared with residents through the addition of a third edition of the City’s printed and mailed newsletter, The Back Fence, in summer 2018. The fall 2018 edition of The Back Fence expanded to 12 pages to include extensive library information.

- Crews removed more than 24,110 cubic yards of leaves in neighborhoods in fall 2018. The Public Services Division also worked with the Department of Public Information to create leaf collection maps and provide more relevant information on the leaf hot line.

- The Department of Public Information boosted the city’s Facebook followers to 9,800, regularly reaching 20,000 people per week. It significantly increased its Instagram, Nextdoor and Twitter presence. Dynamic videos attracted even more social media fans.

- The library launched a new phone app that will allow library customers a more engaging experience. It is available on Google Play and the App Store for Apple devices.

- The Police Department patrol officers delivered nearly 700 “Welcome to Dearborn” informational packets to new residents.

Information about collecting loose leaves was even better in 2018.
The City settled all of its labor agreements, promoting stability and continuity in its employee pool to better serve residents.

The City placed a new emphasis on retaining skilled employees in 2018, partnering with local universities and colleges to offer discounted tuition for employees and their dependents.

To better serve residents with talented city employees, the City continued its use of new technology programs and recruitment strategies to attract the best applicants.

Thirteen lawsuits against the City were dismissed in 2018 without any payment by the City.

The Fire Department aggressively pursued and secured $1.1 million in federal and state grants in 2018, and $14 million since 2007, to offset operation costs and help replace equipment and apparatus to better serve residents.

The Finance Department continues to promote the use of electronic payment methods by encouraging and providing automatic payment methods to vendors and taxpayers. This convenience is one way that people can avoid standing in long lines at the Treasury counter on due dates, and in 2018, enrollment increased by 13 percent.

The city partnered with the University of Michigan-Dearborn and the Healthy Dearborn Coalition to host the Environmental Health Research to Action (EHRA), a youth program to build capacity in community science and policy advocacy to address environmental health inequities.

The Police Explorer Post participated in 145 community events, resulting in more than 12,200 hours of community service — a 10-percent increase from 2017. Reserve officers provided more than 6,200 hours of volunteer community service hours.

The Police Department continues its partnership with the University of Michigan – Dearborn to provide Alternatives to Violent Force (AVF) training to officers. The training consists of a series of workshops that cover topics such as “Use of Force and De-escalation,” “Arab American Culture and Religion,” “African American Culture” and “Assisting Mentally Unstable Residents.” To date, 72 percent of sworn officers have attended and completed AVF training.

Bus riders were more comfortable after the City partnered with SMART in 2018 to install state-of-the-art shelters around town.