

CITY OF JACKSON

OFFICIAL CITY NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2023

KEEPING KIDS SAFE IN CARS NEW CAR SEAT INSPECTION PROGRAM IN CITY

Jackson area families wanting to make sure their children travel safely can take advantage of a new program from the Jackson Fire Department (JFD).

This past fall, firefighters launched the Car Seat Inspection Program.

“With no other certified inspection program in Jackson County, we realized this would be a vital service to offer parents and guardians in the area,” said Firefighter Matt Jabkiewicz.

Jackson Police Reserve Officer Gavin Fowler and Jabkiewicz are currently the only two public safety personnel certified to do these checks.

JFD held four inspection events in 2022 and look forward to continuing the program in 2023.

Checks are done at the Central Fire Station on N. Jackson Street.

Crews look to make sure the car seat is in



Firefighter Matt Jabkiewicz and Reserve Officer Gavin Fowler leading car seat inspections.

proper working order, fastened to the vehicle correctly, and is a safe fit for the child.

A limited number of car seat replacements are available for free if the seat is found to be unsafe.

“A lot of parents may be surprised to learn their child’s car seat is not installed properly or could be dangerous in a crash,” Jabkiewicz said.

“This is a simple thing we can do to make sure children are as safe as possible while on the road.”

Information about 2023 inspections will be posted in the fire department section of the City website, cityofjackson.org/fire.

Residents can also call the Central Fire Station at 517-788-4150 with questions about the program.

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NEW EFFORT TO REDUCE GUN VIOLENCE

A new effort that aims to reduce gun violence through community collaboration is underway.

The Jackson Police Department's Group Violence Intervention Strategy (also called GVI) is getting off the ground with the hiring of Cheryl Ragland, the City's first GVI Coordinator.

Police have been working with the National Network for Safe Communities at John Jay College to implement a group violence reduction strategy specific to Jackson.

Under this new plan, law enforcement, social services, and the community

work together to directly approach those most at risk of gun violence and look for direct solutions to stopping them from participating in this destructive behavior.

The police department says a community-based approach has been shown to reduce gun violence in cities across the country.

Ragland is already a familiar face in Jackson, known for her work with several local organizations, including the City's Human Relations Commission.

"The offer of help and assistance is real and gives people an opportunity to change the trajectory of



Group Violence Intervention Coordinator Cheryl Ragland.

their lives because ultimately, GVI is law enforcement and our communities standing and acting together to lower gun violence within the community itself," Ragland said.

Ragland organized the City's first-ever Turkey Drive-Thru event in Nov., which had Jackson officers distributing 150 free turkeys to residents ahead of Thanksgiving.

PREPARING FOR CITY SNOW EMERGENCIES

When winter weather hits Jackson, crews from the Department of Public Works (DPW) are out in salt and plow trucks making sure streets are safe for drivers.

The DPW targets major roads and emergency snow routes first, then start clearing neighborhood streets.

When there is a winter weather event, the City of Jackson asks residents to please remove parked vehicles from streets so crews have enough space to safely clear roadways.

Residents should also be

prepared for a City Snow Emergency.

An official Snow Emergency declaration from the City means residents are asked to remove parked vehicles, or in some extreme cases, stay off streets entirely until they can be cleared.

The City will inform residents about these emergencies through local media outlets, the City website, social media, and the CodeRED mass communication system.



Jackson salt trucks clearing streets during a snow event.



MAYOR

Daniel Mahoney

COUNCIL

Ward

Arlene Robinson	1
Freddie Dancy	2
Angelita V. Gunn	3
Laura Dwyer Schlecte	4
Karen Bunnell	5
Will Forgrave	6

CITY MANAGER

Jonathan Greene

MEETINGS & IMPORTANT DATES

Friday, Dec. 23 & Monday, Dec. 26
City Hall closed for Christmas

Monday, Jan. 2

City Hall closed for New Year's Day

JAN. 10 • 6:30 p.m.

City Council Meeting

Monday, Jan. 16

City Hall closed for MLK Day

JAN. 24 • 6:30 p.m.

City Council Meeting

FEB. 7 • 6:30 p.m.

City Council Meeting

Monday, Feb. 20

City Hall closed for Presidents Day

FEB. 21 • 6:30 p.m.

City Council Meeting

MARCH 7 • 6:30 p.m.

City Council Meeting

CITY RECEIVES \$16.5 MILLION FROM STATE TO IMPROVE WATER INFRASTRUCTURE



Lead service line replacements on E. Michigan Avenue in Nov.

Ongoing work to improve Jackson's water infrastructure is getting a big boost, following a \$16.5 million funding allocation from the State of Michigan.

Plans call for using \$9 million of the funding for lead service line replacements.

With the City working toward replacing more than 11,000 service lines over the next 30 years, the money will help accelerate the replacement effort and lower the overall cost burden on the City.

City administration has set aside the remaining \$7.5 million for water main replacements and upgrades to Jackson's water treatment and wastewater systems.

The majority of the funds come from grants, meaning the City is only responsible for paying back a \$4.1 million low-interest loan over 20

years.

The City of Jackson qualified for these infrastructure funds due to its status as a disadvantaged community with a large number of lead service lines.

City Manager Jonathan Greene thanks City staff for securing these funds.

"Thoughtful work from our staff has resulted in this big game changer for our lead service line replacements," Greene said.

"Getting this funding means improved water quality for everyone in Jackson and residents will be paying less money over time."

City staff are currently finalizing plans for implementing the funds.

Of the 11,339 lead service lines known in the City of Jackson, 421 have been replaced as of this fall, leaving 10,918 yet to be replaced.





Message from the Mayor

Daniel Mahoney

The start of 2023 marks a little over one year since I was sworn-in as Mayor of Jackson.

This has been a remarkable year for myself and the City of Jackson.

After presiding over 21 City Council meetings, I'm certain 2022 will be remembered as a year where we worked to meet the various needs of our residents.

Improving fire department response times, fixing roads, water infrastructure upgrades and new investment for Loomis Park are just a few of the positive actions we saw this year.

In the next half of my first term as your mayor, I want to do as much as possible to continue this progress.

I'm looking forward to seeing the Hayes Hotel revitalization and the food service projects at the City Center (formerly Masonic Temple) take shape in 2023.

Just like in the past year, creating more safe and affordable housing will continue to be a priority for our City government.

I'm encouraged by conversations we're having with the community to understand what we can do to help those without a stable place to live.

Two developments planned on Blackstone Street and Greenwood Avenue are also bolstering prospects for bringing more affordable housing into our neighborhoods.

While government cannot solve every complex issue we have, I believe if we have the resources to help, we have a responsibility to act.

I'm looking forward to all we can accomplish together over the next year and wish you a happy new year.

Sincerely,
Daniel Mahoney



Meet "Jackson Frost", one of five plow/salt trucks to receive names from residents in an online poll. With cities across the country having fun naming efforts like this for plows, the City sought Jackson-specific names. Cold Air Jubilee, Cooper Scooper, Cas-Blades, Grand Shiver and Jackson Frost were the top five names. Thanks for voting!

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Here are phone numbers to community resources that could be useful if you're experiencing a life crisis.

Non-Emergency Medical Care

Henry Ford Health (517) 205-4800

Center for Family Health (517) 748-5500

St. Luke's Clinic (517) 783-1117

Mental Health

Henry Ford Health (800) 531-3728

LifeWays 24-Hour Crisis Hotline (800) 284-8288

Center for Family Health (517) 748-5500

Utilities

Community Action Agency (517) 784-4800

Jackson County MDHHS (517) 780-7400

True North Community Services (231) 355-5880

The Heat and Warmth Fund (800) 866-8429

St. Vincent de Paul Society (517-788-3424

Rental Assistance

Community Action Agency (517) 784-4800

Jackson County MDHHS (517) 780-7400

Emergency Shelters

Jackson Interfaith Shelter (517) 789-8735

Aware Shelter 24-Hour Crisis Hotline (517) 783-2861

Animal Control

Jackson County Animal Control provides animal control services in the City of Jackson. Contact them by calling 911.

Dial 211 to get more information on available services in Jackson.

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

MLK CORRIDOR AUTHORITY WORKING TO IMPROVE SOUTH SIDE NEIGHBORHOOD

Growing up on Jackson's south side, Anthony Parker says he witnessed his neighborhood deteriorate.

"I've lived it. And now to be a part of its revitalization is highly important to me," Parker said.

Parker is Board Chair of the MLK Corridor Improvement Authority (also called MLKCIA).

The board consists of residents, business leaders, and local officials who oversee all aspects of the authority.

The MLKCIA is made up of properties along the entire length of Prospect Street, MLK Drive south of downtown, and select properties along the MLK Equality Trail and S. Cooper Street.

In addition to \$4.5 million in funding from the

City, the authority will use a portion of existing tax dollars captured from these areas to reinvest in the neighborhood.

This does not bring any new taxes.

Parker says authorities like the MLKCIA have been successful in bringing economic booms to cities across the country.

"While the format is not unique, we are looking for unique solutions to improve Jackson," Parker said.

Formed in spring 2021, the authority spent its first year and a half getting resident feedback and collecting data on neighborhood needs.

Board meetings were moved from City Hall to the MLK Recreation Center in 2022 to make them more accessible to



MLKCIA Board members (left to right) Thaddaus Williams, George Brown, Arlene Robinson, Philicia Richmond, Mindy Bradish-Orta and Anthony Parker. Not pictured: Diane Washington, Daniel Mahoney, James Johnson and John Willis.

residents.

"There's a misconception that we're only focused on certain pet projects. The work we do will really be based on resident desires. That's why it's so important for our neighbors to be involved," Parker said.

While there have been conversations about the MLKCIA bringing a

grocery store and more housing to the neighborhood, the board intends to start with smaller improvements in 2023.

"I expect residents will see smaller projects that make a big impact over the next year, such as a facade improvement program for homes and businesses, more lighting, and better connectivity," Parker said.

If you'd like to get involved or learn more, meetings are generally held at the MLK Center, 1107 Adrian St., on the fourth Thursday of every month at 5:30 p.m.

"When you build up a neighborhood that's been torn down, the entire community benefits." Parker said.



Concept graphic of possible improvements coming to S. MLK Drive near E. High Street.

FIREFIGHTERS “FILL THE BOOT” WITH \$16K FOR MDA

When they're not putting out fires or going on emergency calls, Jackson fire crews have been pitching in for a good cause.

Firefighters from the City of Jackson and Summit Township raised \$16,015 this fall for the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA) through several “Fill the Boot” fundraisers.

This fundraiser has crews stationed at busy intersections with firefighter boots that they fill with cash donated by passing drivers and pedestrians.

Firefighters were seen at the intersection of W. Michigan Avenue and S. Brown Street in Oct. doing their fundraiser.

The funds will help individuals and families impacted by muscular dystrophy in Mid-Michigan.

This was the second biggest fundraiser for MDA of any fire department in the state.



Jackson firefighters Will Ballentine and Dan Peterson collect funds for MDA in Oct.

GROUP LIGHTS UP PARKS FOR HOLIDAY SEASON



Light display at Betsy Butterfield Park on S. West Avenue.

Five neighborhood parks are looking “merry and bright” this holiday season thanks to a local non-profit organization.

People for the Parks and Trails (PPT) worked with the City of Jackson to install lights in Betsy Butterfield Park, Elnora Moorman Plaza, Ganson Street Park, Austin Blair Park and Kiwanis Park.

Volunteers installed lights with the permission of the Parks and Recreation Department in Nov., with the displays turning on after Thanksgiving.

PPT collaborated with the Kiwanis Club of Jackson to put up lights and holiday decor at Kiwanis Park off N. Elm Avenue.

The non-profit is focused on improving Jackson's parks and trails through volunteering, fundraising

and advocacy.

2022 was a busy year for PPT, with the group completing volunteer projects at seven parks, two pedestrian trails and one cemetery.

Volunteers expanded the number of light projects they did this year after lighting up two parks in 2021.

A Christmas in July fundraiser was held in the summer so PPT could purchase lights for the parks.

“We thank everyone who has helped make such a positive project happen for the community,” said PPT President Aaron Dimick.

“These lights add a lot of holiday cheer to our neighborhoods and shows everyone that Jackson is a welcoming community that cares about our public spaces.”

PPT plans on leaving the lights on through the first week of Jan.