

CITY OF JACKSON

OFFICIAL CITY NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2025

EAST SIDE HOUSING BOOM



City staff, elected officials, business leaders, and developers at a groundbreaking event celebrating east side developments.

A housing boom is kicking off economic revitalization on Jackson's east side.

It's happening in the Health District, a neighborhood along E. Michigan Avenue between Downtown Jackson and Henry Ford Jackson Hospital.

A total of 94 new housing units are coming to the Health District.

These investments were celebrated with a groundbreaking event in Nov., bringing together residents, City staff, elected officials, developers, and business leaders.

"I've met some of the neighbors and they're ex-

cited to see the construction," said Ray Garcia of VMG Construction.

VMG bought vacant lots in the neighborhood from the City of Jackson and is building 20 new housing units, which will be a mix of duplexes and single-family homes.

Garcia says he was drawn to the Health District because of its revitalization potential and proximity to employment opportunities.

"It brings the value of everything up when you have so many new builds within a couple blocks," Garcia said.

Even more new home construction is planned in

the Health District.

Allen Edwin Homes intends to build seven rental homes in the area.

Greater Jackson Habitat for Humanity is constructing two affordable single-family homes at the intersection of Cooper and Trail streets.

The City of Jackson is investing in this neighborhood as well, planning two accessible homes for people with disabilities using a State grant.

Fannie Mae, the federal government-sponsored home financier, is building one new house to replace a foreclosed structure that was demolished.

INSIDE

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FIRE DEPARTMENT PARTNERSHIP SUCCESS

One year into an expanded partnership between fire departments in the City of Jackson and Summit Township, fire officials are finding many benefits.

In Aug. 2023, Jackson and Summit launched a collaboration that dispatches fire units to medical emergencies, fire alarms, and vehicle crashes outside their township or city limits if the call is closer to where they are stationed.

A partnership already existed for fire responses.

From Aug. 2023 to Aug. 2024, Jackson firefighters responded to 414 calls for service in Summit.

During that same time, Summit firefighters responded to 430 calls in Jackson.

The average response time from a Jackson crew to Summit was 4 minutes, while Summit's average response to Jackson was 3.5 minutes.

This balance in call volume and improved response times shows the expanded zones are utilizing both department's resources to improve service for the Jackson area.

"I am pleased to see that call volumes for both departments have been nearly identical to what they were before the new partnership and neither department is being overwhelmed," said Deputy Fire Chief Tim Gonzales of Jackson.

Looking at three Summit Township structure fires that happened over the past



Firefighters from the City of Jackson and Summit Township.

year, Jackson crews were able to reach the emergencies in an average of 2.5 minutes, while it took Summit firefighters an average of 6.1 minutes.

"When every second counts, an efficient response can save lives and improve patient outcomes,"

Gonzales said.

Reducing travel distances is bringing down expenses for the fire services.

From Dec. 2023 to April 2024, Jackson saw an approximate \$5,000 reduction in fuel costs for vehicles and Summit saved approximately \$6,000 on fuel.

PREPARING FOR WINTER WEATHER

When winter weather hits, 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 streets and emergency snow routes first, then clears neighborhood streets.

When there is a snow or ice 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 Winter Weather Emergency.

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

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

If streets are blocked by



Salt truck clears W. Michigan Avenue during a snow event.

downed trees and wires, the problems first before the City crews have to wait for utility companies to address street can receive attention.



MAYOR

Daniel Mahoney

COUNCIL

	Ward
Arlene Robinson	1
Freddie Dancy	2
Angelita V. Gunn	3
Conner Wood	4
Christy May Davis	5
Will Forgrave	6

CITY MANAGER

Jonathan Greene

IMPORTANT DATES & MEETINGS

Tuesday, Dec. 24 & Wednesday, Dec. 25

City Hall closed for Christmas

Wednesday, Jan. 1

City Hall closed for New Year's Day

JAN. 14 • 6:30 p.m.

City Council meeting

Monday, Jan. 20

City Hall closed for MLK Day

JAN. 28 • 6:30 p.m.

City Council meeting

FEB. 11 • 6:30 p.m.

City Council meeting

Monday, Feb. 17

City Hall closed for Presidents' Day

FEB. 25 • 6:30 p.m.

City Council meeting

MARCH 11 • 6:30 p.m.

City Council meeting

CARL BREEDING HONORED WITH STREET RENAMING

Milwaukee Street is now known as Carl Breeding Way.

This past fall, the City Council unanimously voted to rename the residential street on Jackson's south side after late City Councilmember Carl Breeding (1932-2012).

He was a community leader who represented Ward 1 on the City Council from 1997 to 2012.

In addition to a 28 year career as a math teacher at Jackson High School, Breeding was a member of Jackson's Human Relations Commission and served as the president of the Michigan NAACP and vice president of the national NAACP.



Carl Breeding

The City of Jackson proposed the renaming to commemorate Breeding's legacy and his advocacy for racial equality.

Breeding resided on this street during his time as a Councilmember.

The renaming was made official in Nov. with new street signs and resident notifications.

The City Charter allows the City Council to rename streets following a public hearing and a super majority of affirmative votes from the council.



NEW CITY COUNCILMEMBER

The Jackson City Council is starting 2025 with a new member.

Ward 5 held a special election in Nov. to fill its vacant council seat.

Christy May Davis was elected by voters to the Ward 5 position.

The new councilmember will fill out the remainder of the seat's original term, which ends in Nov. 2025.

New terms for City Council representatives in Wards 1, 3 and 5 will be decided in the Nov. 2025 election.



Christy May Davis, Ward 5 City Council





Message from the Mayor

**Daniel
Mahoney**

Dear Jackson Residents,

As we approach the year's end, I'm excited to share updates on our city's progress.

On Nov. 12, we broke ground on the East Side Housing Development, a project that will provide much-needed affordable housing and strengthen our community.

Housing is the foundation of opportunity, and this development is a big step forward for Jackson.

Collaboration remains a cornerstone of our work.

The new Summit/Jackson Fire Partnership improves fire protection across both communities, and the Vacation Watch Program from the Jackson Police Department gives residents peace of mind while traveling this holiday season.

We're also honoring our history by renaming Milwaukee Street to Carl Breeding Way, celebrating a leader who shaped Jackson's legacy.

Meanwhile, our Active Aging Program is helping residents 50+ stay engaged with fitness classes, events, and connections.

As winter approaches, the Department of Public Works is ready to keep streets clear.

Please assist by parking off-street and clearing your sidewalks.

Together, we're building safe neighborhoods, a thriving economy, and a welcoming city for all.

Thank you for being a part of Jackson's success.

Warm regards,
Daniel J. Mahoney
Mayor, City of Jackson

Continued: EAST SIDE HOUSING



New house under construction on N. Perrine Street.

Apartments are also coming to the neighborhood.

The former Allen Elementary School building, which has been vacant for more than 20 years, is being converted into 62 market-rate apartments and commercial space.

The renovation project named the Allen Lofts is located on E. Pearl Street directly across from the Henry Ford Jackson Hospital Campus.

Construction on the \$15 million investment from Design Build Detroit is set for Jan. 2025.

Garcia says seeing the success of other housing efforts, like the City's 100 Homes Program, further attracted him to Jackson.

"The City has been great. They make it easy to get everything done quickly. In less than two months, I had properties, site plans and permits in hand," Garcia said.

VMG's first round of properties will be complete in spring 2025.

Community Development Director Shane LaPorte says the amount of private investment is the result of the City of Jackson's business-friendly approaches.

"Developers are impressed with the ease of collaborating with City staff, and our neighborhoods, residents and local businesses are seeing the benefits of this work," LaPorte said.

Local leaders expect new residents coming to the east side will boost current businesses and bring new opportunities.

Ward 2 City Councilmember Freddie Dancy, who represents this neighborhood on the City Council, says investments in Loomis Park and the Boos Recreation Center from the City laid the groundwork for all of this new housing.

"We want to hear from residents about what other upgrades are needed so they are a part of this economic revitalization," Dancy said.

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

ACTIVE LIVING IN JACKSON REC PROGRAM KEEPS SENIORS ON THE MOVE

When lifelong Jackson residents Kathy and Mike Fausell were looking for ways to stay active, they didn't have to look far.

"The program is definitely approachable and affordable. Everyone really enjoys it," said Kathy Fausell.

The couple are familiar faces at the Parks and Recreation Department's Active Living Program, which holds its main activities at the Boos Recreation Center.

"It's great to spend time together and get exercise," Kathy said.

Active Living provides recreation activities for residents over 50 years old.

Program Coordinator Julie Weisbrod says when she started leading senior programs in 2021 there

were around 400 members. "There's nearly 1,000 people enrolled now. The program is growing and the word is getting out," Weisbrod said.

Weisbrod says the Senior Program name change to Active Living combats perceptions about older adults.

"We want the name to be uplifting. Some people believe that because you're a certain age you're no longer relevant. The program empowers participants to stay relevant and keep learning new things," Weisbrod said.

Active Living offers exercise classes, group activities, monthly luncheons and travel opportunities, taking participants on day, overnight and extended trips.

Recent outings include



Active Living Coordinator Julie Weisbrod (center) with participants Kathy and Mike Fausell.

visiting Nashville, Tenn., a play in Metro Detroit, and Kewadin Casinos in Michigan's Upper Peninsula.

"We've been on a few of the trips, which were lovely. It's so much fun to climb on a bus and go somewhere. And you don't have to drive," said Mike Fausell.

There's also Worth-a-Try events where members try out different activities like kayaking, pickleball, and painting.

"We try to bring in more active opportunities and if they like it they can continue on their own," Weisbrod said.

Getting out of the house and mingling with others is a big part of the program.

"For some, this might

be the only time they're around other people. The socialization is really appreciated," Mike said.

Annual membership for Active Living is \$10 a year.

Program costs are offset by the Jackson Recreation Millage, which was renewed by voters in the Aug. 2024 election.

There are additional costs for travel and luncheons.

With the 65 and over population rapidly growing, Weisbrod says it's important to keep them healthy and engaged.

"I see a big impact that this program makes for people. Come here and you'll find a lot of folks who are in the same boat you are," Weisbrod said.



Active Living exercise program at the Boos Recreation Center.

VACATION WATCH PROGRAM

Have peace of mind when you leave your home behind by participating in the Jackson Police Department's Vacation Watch Program.

By submitting a form through the City website, residents inform police about when they will be away so patrol officers can keep an extra eye on their residence.

The Vacation Watch Request Form has residents submit basic details about their home and other important information they want officers to know.

After verifying the submission with the homeowner, officers will periodically check on the house for signs of a problem.

The information remains confidential and can only be accessed by police.

Residents may also print the form from the City website for a mail or drop-off submission.

"We hope this program will be a simple thing officers can do to offer some extra peace of mind for residents traveling during the holiday season or any time of year," said Elmer Hitt, Director of Police and Fire Services.

Access sign up forms online by visiting cityofjackson.org/470/Vacation-Watch.



TRAIL CONSTRUCTION FUNDS



Residents Evan Hendershot (left) and Ian Wilson (right) enjoy new trail section near Fourth Street with dog Lleyton.

The effort to fully replace the MLK Equality Trail will wrap up in 2025.

The City's Parks and Recreation Department has secured the additional \$300,000 in State funding needed to complete the pedestrian trail replacement project.

In 2025, trail sections from Merri-man Street to S. MLK Drive and the

Optimist Rest Shelter to Weather-wax Drive will be reconstructed.

The trail's deteriorating asphalt is being replaced with a new 12 foot wide concrete surface that allows for safer sharing and is more accessible to people with disabilities.

The trail has been replaced in phases since 2023.

CITY BOARDS & COMMISSIONS

If you're looking to get more involved with the community, apply to serve on a City of Jackson board or commission!

These groups of resident volunteers assist City government with enforcing ordinances, resolving conflicts, initiating special projects and advising the City Council.

Each board/commission is focused on a particular area, such as police oversight, parks and recreation, public art, racial equity, the

environment, historic preservation, planning, affordable housing and more.

The board/commission application is available on the City website.

Scan the QR code with your device to taken to the application.

Applicants are selected by the Mayor, with final approval coming from the City Council.

