

CITY OF  
**JACKSON**   
MICHIGAN



**ANNUAL  
REPORT 2020**



Jonathan Greene was officially hired as City Manager in Aug. 2020 after serving as the Interim Manager for six months prior.

## A Message from the CITY MANAGER

City of Jackson officials and staff are pleased to present you with the 2020 Annual Report. When we look back at 2020 years from now, I am sure we will all recall a year of hardships brought on by the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) pandemic. But before we put 2020 in the history books, I'd like to reflect on what we were able to accomplish during a time of great difficulties.

Despite a months-long City Hall shutdown, remote work, virtual meetings, and budget concerns, our dedicated leadership and staff never stopped working to serve residents and improve Jackson.

During these unprecedented times, streets were repaved, racial equity initiatives began, a record-setting election was held, families participated in safe recreation programs, and an effort to revitalize commercial corridors in the south side neighborhood was started. In fall 2020, I proudly watched as the ribbon was cut at the Martin Luther King Jr. Recreation Center, ending a renovation project years in the making.

The City also helped lead the way during the pandemic. In March 2020, Mayor Derek Dobies signed our first-ever Local State of Emergency. This quick and thoughtful declaration prompted the activation of Jackson County's emergency operation plan, directed community resources, and made City government more flexible for a response.

Throughout 2020, City staff worked alongside other community organizations in the Jackson COVID-19 Action Network (JCAN) to make sure residents had accurate information, resources, food, and basic need items. The Boos Recreation Center was put into use as a distribution center for much-needed supplies. By end of the year, more than 1 million pounds of food had been distributed to the community with the help of the City.

While many challenges await us in the coming years, I am comforted knowing the resolve of our City government and resiliency of Jackson will continue to lead us into a brighter future.

**Jonathan Greene**  
City Manager



Mayor Derek Dobies leads the first virtual Jackson City Council meeting in March.



State of Michigan orders closed City Hall to staff and residents from March to July.



City and United Way staff working at the community distribution center at Boos Center.



New service windows with protective glass were installed in every City department that interacts with residents in person.



Drop boxes became essential to City government during the pandemic. Pictured is a drop box outside City Hall's front entrance.

## TREASURER & INCOME TAX OFFICE

Martin Griffin serves as both the **CITY TREASURER** and **INCOME TAX** Administrator. He was elected to a four year term by residents in 2019.

Payments for property taxes, income taxes, water bills, special assessments and parking violations are made through this office or using the City website. Online services and new City Hall drop boxes were utilized in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The City of Jackson has had an income tax since 1970. All residents with an income of \$600 or more are required to file a tax return each year. The tax rate for residents on all income is 1%. All non-residents working in the City are responsible for .5% income tax on all wages earned in Jackson. The income tax filing deadline for 2020 was extended from April 15 to July 15 due to the pandemic.

Efforts are ongoing to get taxpayers who have not paid income tax into compliance with the City so the municipality collects the taxes its owed.

## CITY CLERK'S OFFICE

**CITY CLERK** Andrea Muray says her office experienced a "perfect storm" in 2020 by dealing with several high-profile elections during the pandemic. Highlights of the year include:

- Successfully completing three elections during the pandemic.
- 10% increase in number of registered voters in the City.
- 200% increase in number of voters on the Absent Voter Permanent List.
- 450% increase in the number of voters using an absentee ballot in the Nov. General Election.
- Secured \$20,000 in grants to update office infrastructure for the large increase in absentee ballots.
- Installed a 24 hour contact-free ballot return drop box outside of City Hall, as well as a mail slot inside City Hall.

In addition to operating the Election Division, the Clerk's Office issued business licenses, received payments to and from City departments, administered parking permits, certified resolutions and codified ordinances.

## ASSESSOR'S OFFICE

The **ASSESSOR'S OFFICE** is responsible for appraising and assessing all real and personal property in the City of Jackson. City Assessor Jason Yoakam and staff answer inquiries from residents, property owners, mortgage companies, prospective buyers, business owners, appraisers and government agencies.

Additionally, the Assessor's Office tracks and verifies principle residential exemptions, updates property ownership information, creates special assessment rolls, maintains property tax maps, collects and analyzes sale data, defends assessments before the State of Michigan Tax Tribunal, and maintains a computerized appraisal system.

The Assessor's Office says its services were not heavily impacted by the pandemic thanks to a dedicated staff who worked remotely and adhered to strict social distancing and safety protocols.

# CITY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

The **CITY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE** is a full service law office, delivering a complete range of legal services to the City's elected and appointed officials and departments. The legal department defends the City against lawsuits, works to resolve citizen complaints, drafts City ordinances, resolutions, contracts, and real estate documents. Other services include defending the City Assessor's Office in real and personal property tax cases filed with the State of Michigan Tax Tribunal and tracking legislation affecting the City. The City Attorney's Office is lead by Matthew Hagerty, who was appointed City Attorney in Dec. 2019.

The City Attorney's Office consists of two full-time attorneys, one part-time attorney, and two paralegals. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, staffing in the City Attorney's Office was reduced by both temporary furloughs and permanent layoffs. Remaining staff members were required to work remotely for most of the year to comply with Stay Home, Stay Safe executive orders. In spite of these challenges, the City Attorney's Office continued to provide top quality legal representation to the City of Jackson.

The following is a synopsis of matters that were handled in 2020 by the legal department:

- 1,064 criminal cases were prosecuted in the 12th District Court. Although trials were suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic, pretrials and hearings continued to be conducted utilizing the Zoom application.
- 373 police reports were reviewed for possible arrest warrants, and 254 of those resulted in criminal charges being filed in the District Court.
- 120 new zoning, housing, and other blight-related ordinance violations were prosecuted in the City's Administrative Hearings Bureau (AHB). During the five months that AHB hearings were suspended due to the COVID-19 executive orders, staff continued to work on previously filed AHB cases.
- Additional procedures were initiated to collect outstanding AHB judgments, including referring accounts to a court officer for execution of judgments. In addition, 102 cases were filed in Small Claims Court against property owners who failed to comply with their judgments. Outstanding judgments with smaller balances were referred to a collection agency.

- 31 insurance claims were processed for incidents ranging from flooding and tree limb damage to malicious destruction of property and theft.
- All pending civil litigation continued to be adjudicated despite COVID-19, including attendance at virtual depositions and hearings in both state and federal court as permitted by local administrative rules.
- Documents were gathered and sent in response to more than 300 Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests.

In addition to the foregoing matters, the City Attorney's Office continued to advise all City departments on a variety of legal matters affecting their operations, as well as the specific legislative and operational changes affecting various departments due to the pandemic. This included addressing issues such as water shutoffs; City Hall closure; the Freedom of Information Act; in-person gathering limitations; Open Meetings Act amendments; and review of Gubernatorial Executive Orders/State Health Department Orders, among others.



**Mask and social distancing signage appeared all over City facilities to help enforce COVID-19 safety guidelines.**

# DEPARTMENT OF NEIGHBORHOOD & ECONOMIC OPERATIONS

The **DEPARTMENT OF NEIGHBORHOOD and ECONOMIC OPERATIONS (NEO)** is instrumental in executing Jackson's overall economic stabilization program, which includes administration of building permits, dangerous building enforcement, building and housing inspections, planning and zoning administration, homeowner rehabilitation, housing code enforcement, Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME) funds, economic development, and blight ordinance enforcement. NEO also provides staffing for various boards and commissions, including the Historic District Commission, Jackson Brownfield Redevelopment Authority, Administrative Hearings Bureau, Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, and the Building Code Board of Examiners and Appeals.

The Building Division is responsible for enforcing the State Construction Code; inspectors also investigate and prosecute instances of work done without permits or improperly licensed persons performing work. Staff reviews building and site plans, issues permits, conducts inspections, issues certificates of occupancy, enforces the sign and zoning ordinances, and condemns dangerous properties throughout the City. During calendar year 2020, NEO issued 515 building permits with an estimated construction value of \$21.8 million. In addition, 478 electrical, 451 mechanical, and 287 plumbing permits were issued and inspected. NEO staff also oversaw the demolition of 45 housing units (33 residential structures), four garages, and nine commercial buildings.

NEO provided approximately \$235,000 in rehabilitation loans to complete one full rehabilitation and seven emergency hazard projects for low-to moderate-income homeowners. In an effort to assist more low-income homeowners, the City Council revised the rehabilitation policy in Aug. 2020, adding the ability to replace a home's major systems that have reached their useful life cycle and before they create an emergency situation. Inspectors wrote 494 garbage violation citations, 162 inoperable/unlicensed vehicle citations, 65 tree/noxious weed violation citations, 52 instances of working without a permit, and 93 zoning violation citations. Over 1,200 non-owner housing units were inspected by NEO, as well as investigating 27 individual complaints reported by tenants.



Homes on Harwood Street in Jackson.

In March 2020, the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act was enacted by the federal government. As a CDBG entitlement community, the City of Jackson received \$945,445 to prevent, prepare for, and respond to COVID-19. Three activities designed to prevent homelessness were started; water shutoff protection, foreclosure prevention, and eviction protection. Through the end of October 2020, 65 renter households avoided eviction, 16 homeowners escaped tax foreclosure, and 26 households retained their water accounts.

Inspections were halted for several months due to the pandemic. They later resumed with inspectors wearing personal protective equipment and reducing the number of daily inspections. Extensions were also granted for several programs to give property owners more time to adjust to COVID-19 restrictions and financial strains.



The Albert Kahn Apartments under construction on S. Jackson Street.

# DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

The **DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (DDA)** is responsible for creating a vibrant downtown for all residents and visitors to enjoy. The DDA plans numerous downtown events (car shows, food truck events, art walks, sidewalk sales) and coordinates with businesses to increase foot traffic. The DDA works to bring new businesses and apartments into the downtown area, communicating closely with local leaders. The DDA also runs the Grand River Farmers Market, sells gift certificates featuring almost all downtown businesses, and manages the special event application process for the City of Jackson.



Outdoor dining was a way for restaurants to serve customers during the pandemic. The DDA worked with businesses to obtain sidewalk access in the downtown area for outdoor dining.

The COVID-19 pandemic forced the cancellation of all downtown events and created a difficult situation for many downtown businesses. The DDA is proud its efforts to support downtown businesses in 2020 through outreach, advertising, and assistance with various statewide loan/grant opportunities. Generous support from Consumers Energy allowed the DDA to sell a large number of downtown gift certificates, which provided a direct cash-infusion for many businesses. The farmers market remained open, providing top-quality fresh produce and other food/craft items to Jackson residents. Efforts to safely promote businesses and events will continue in 2021.

## HUMAN RESOURCES DIVISION

The **HUMAN RESOURCES DIVISION** serves the City's workforce and job-seeking public. The division is responsible for policy administration, public relations, recruitment, on-boarding, new employee orientation, compensation, benefits administration, unemployment and workers' compensation, promotional testing, personnel records retention, retiree benefit administration, employee law compliance, and employee and labor relations for the City's four unions and the nonunion workforce.

Staffing numbers fluctuated due to the COVID-19 pandemic. By the end of 2020, there were 204 City employees; 189 working full time and 15 part time employees. There were 28 new hires this year, 14 promotions and two transfers. The pandemic created different working situations and budget constraints on departments. There were 14 resignations, 10 retirements, and nine positions eliminated.



The LGBTQ pride flag flew in Horace Blackman Park over the summer to recognize Jackson's LGBTQ community.

During the City Hall closure, staff who could do their jobs remotely worked at home. Despite the huge challenges the pandemic brought in 2020, the Human Resources Division remained a steadfast resource while efficiently managing the employee life cycle by handling across-the-board HR functions while imparting internal guidance, implementing policy in response to the pandemic, administering workforce reduction strategies, interpreting legislation, issuing employee communications, determining safety and compliance guidelines with local health authorities, tracking illness reporting, and administrating related federal paid leave policies.



A Black Lives Matter mural was painted in June on W. Washington Ave. by community activists with support from the City.

## DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

The **DEPARTMENT OF DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION (DEI)** was created by the Jackson City Council in Sept. 2020 to focus on racial equity efforts in the City of Jackson. This new department is run by John Willis, the City's Chief Equity Officer. DEI works with the City Manager to create, maintain and promote opportunities that enhance diversity, inclusion and equity within the City.

An initial effort of DEI was starting a Diversity Action Team. The team brings together City employees from various departments to talk about diversity and examine the City's work through an equity lens. DEI also administers the Racial Equity Commission and Youth Council, which were created alongside the new department in late 2020. Racial equity initiatives came to the forefront following Black Lives Matter protests over the summer and the City Council declaring racism a public health crisis in the City.

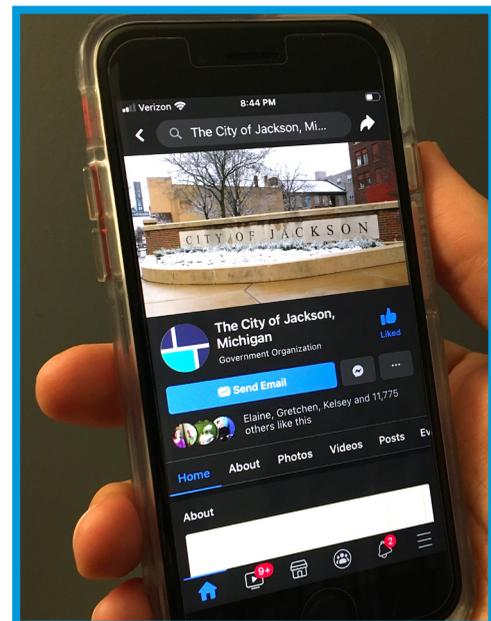


John Willis became the City's first Chief Equity Officer in 2020.

## COMMUNICATIONS

The City's **COMMUNICATIONS** section is run Public Information Officer Aaron Dimick under the direction of the City Manager. Daily communications became more important than ever during the COVID-19 pandemic, with updates about the City's response reaching residents through local media outlets, social media, the City website, newsletters and the CodeRED mass communication system. Communications highlights from 2020 included:

- Dispersed 93 news releases to local media outlets.
- Grew social media accounts to include 12,809 Facebook followers, 2,149 Twitter followers and 1,517 Instagram likes.
- Continued launch of redesigned City website and new online resident complaint system.
- Utilized CodeRED phone, email and text messages to reach residents for messages regarding the 2020 Census, COVID-19 information, and City services.
- Mailed four seasonal newsletters to residents and businesses using expanded mailing list.
- Created digital infrastructure to live stream virtual City Council meetings on Facebook and City website.



# POLICE DEPARTMENT

The **JACKSON POLICE DEPARTMENT (JPD)** saw major upheaval in many of its procedures in 2020 and had to pivot quickly to new methods and approaches. Even through the COVID-19 obstacles of shrinking budgets, reduced staffing, social distancing, and heightened safety precautions, the men and women of the department continued to show their professionalism and commitment to excellence in serving Jackson residents.



Face coverings became another piece of protective equipment for officers to use in 2020.

With national unrest throughout the summer months toward law enforcement, JPD saw an opportunity to increase transparency with the community and bolster efforts in use of force training for officers. As the focus of in-service training, the department reviewed its use of force policy changes, along with studying defensive tactics, deescalation, and role-playing scenarios.

In the fall, JPD implemented a new program to better serve residents who have difficulty communicating. The Take Me Home program allows parents and caregivers of those living with Autism, Alzheimer's, Dementia, Down Syndrome or other developmental disabilities to create an online profile through the City website. The secured database contains descriptive profiles and a photo of the person at risk. Law enforcement personnel can quickly access this information in the event an individual is lost and needs to be taken home.

Toward the end of the year, the department launched a new program with the Aware Shelter to integrate sexual assault advocates into responses to sexual assault crimes. This brings an added level of support not previously available to sexual assault survivors in the community.

The pandemic and social distancing guidelines impacted JPD's overall calls for service with a decrease of nearly 14% from the previous year. The department was mindful of COVID-19 protocols when officers interacted with residents. Face coverings became part of uniforms and social distancing was enacted when possible.

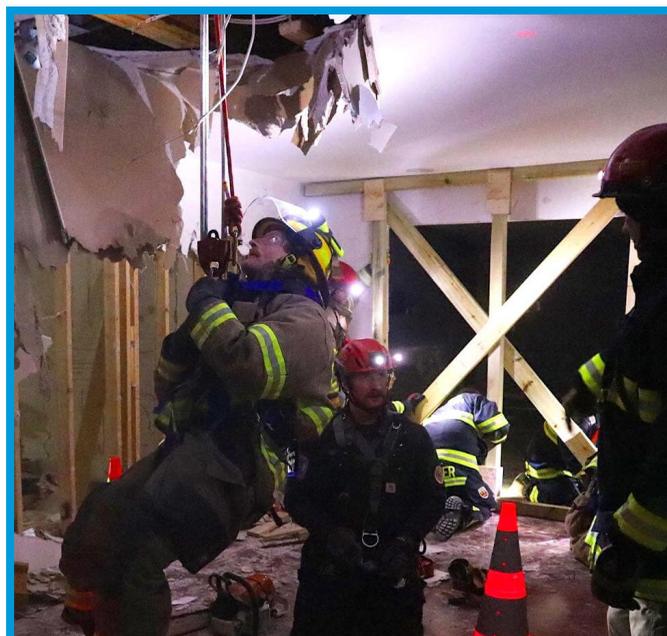
# FIRE DEPARTMENT

COVID-19 provided many challenges for the **JACKSON FIRE DEPARTMENT (JFD)** in 2020. It caused the department to review the use of personal protective equipment more effectively, along with updating protocols and policies.

When the pandemic started, JFD assembled a special COVID-19 unit with the Summit Township Fire Department. Firefighters from this unit worked out of their own station and responded to COVID-related emergencies.

The department ran a total of 4,866 calls for service in 2020, which amounts to about 400 less calls for service compared to the previous year. JFD was saddened by the loss of three residents in two separate fatal fires.

JFD saw two substantial retirements in 2020. Richard Terrell retired after 23 years with the department, and Todd Weaver retired with 25 years of service. Toward the end of the year, nine new firefighters were hired. Training efforts for the new crews will continue through 2021.



Jackson firefighters had a unique opportunity to perform rescue training inside a mansion slated for demolition.

# PARKS, RECREATION & CEMETERIES DEPARTMENT

The **PARKS, RECREATION AND CEMETERIES DEPARTMENT** consists of 27 parks, two cemeteries, three recreation facilities, the oldest public golf course in the county, and several miles of multi-trail systems.

**PARKS AND RECREATION:** Full schedules of programs were canceled throughout the year due to COVID-19 health restrictions. Indoor and outdoor recreation facilities, such as playgrounds, the golf course, water park and recreation centers, were also closed for long periods. Despite the hardships, the following was accomplished during the year:

- Tobacco ban enacted in all public parks.
- \$1.9 million renovation of the Martin Luther King Jr. Recreation Center.
- New basketball court, lighting, and walking path in Loomis Park.
- New roof for the Boos Recreation Center.
- Worker’s Memorial Park became the City’s first new public park in several years. It makes use of a playground and green space surrounding the former McCulloch Elementary School on S. MLK Drive. Its name honors residents killed in workplace accidents and COVID-19 workers.
- New lighting installed at Exchange and Rotary parks.
- Boos Recreation Center served as the distribution site for the community’s basic needs response to COVID-19. Recreation staff were instrumental in distribution efforts.
- Planned the City’s first dog park for 2021.

**TRAILS:** The City’s main pedestrian and biking trail runs from Downtown Jackson to Weatherwax Drive and is part of the Michigan Iron Belle Trail System. Another sizable trail runs along Fourth Street to Park Road, cutting through Ella Sharp Park. Trails were essential to the community’s health in 2020 due to the closure of fitness centers. They also offered safe ways for residents to leave the confines of homes.

**CEMETERIES:** The City of Jackson owns and operates Mt. Evergreen Cemetery and Woodland Cemetery. Both are considered historic landmarks. The cemeteries are fully operational and typically perform around 100 funerals annually.



Playgrounds and outdoor recreation facilities were closed for several months due to the first COVID-19 shutdown.



With fitness centers closed, parks and trails became essential to the community’s health in 2020.



Vice Mayor Arlene Robinson cuts a ribbon marking the completion of the MLK Center renovation project in Oct. 2020.



Loomis Park received a new basketball court, lighting and walking path in late 2020.

# FINANCE DEPARTMENT

The City's **FINANCE DEPARTMENT** handles all centralized accounting and finance functions of the City. These include responsibilities relating to the preparation of budgets, financial statements and audit schedules on a monthly and annual basis. In addition, the Finance Department processes payroll, accounts payable and accounts receivable on a regularly scheduled basis.

The department also serves as administrative staff for the City's three pension plans whose net assets currently exceed \$89 million. The finance department also acts in an administrative oversight capacity for the City's Management Information Systems Department as well as the Water and Sewer Billing/Public Works fiscal staff. Finance Director Phil Hones also acts as the City's Purchasing Agent. A summary of activity during the year is as follows:

- Processed payroll for approximately 560 different employees (200 full time and 360 part-time) for a total payroll of approximately \$16.1 million.
- Maintained records for approximately 385 pensioners with benefit payments of over \$10 million.
- Issued over 4,700 accounts payable checks to vendors totaling nearly \$83 million.
- Processed approximately 1,300 invoices for various City charges totaling approximately \$6.3 million.

The City of Jackson received the "Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting" for its comprehensive annual financial report for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2019. This Certificate of Achievement is a prestigious national award recognizing conformance with the highest standards for preparation of state and local government financial

reports. In order to be awarded a Certificate of Achievement, a government unit must publish an easily readable and efficiently organized comprehensive annual financial report, whose contents conform to program standards. The City has received this award for 28 straight years.

In December 2012, Standard & Poor's affirmed the City's "A-" rating on the City's general obligation bonds and upgraded the City's outlook from "stable" to "positive". In February 2013, the City was again upgraded to "A+" with a "stable" outlook on all of its general obligation debt. This more recent upgrade was largely the result of the City's commitment to financial stability through the adoption of a fund balance policy in late 2012 and the City's commitment to reduce health and pension costs. This ratings upgrade, along with improved market rate conditions, has allowed the City to save nearly \$4 million in interest in bond issues and refinancings since that time.

The City's income taxes, its largest single source of revenue, were significantly impacted during the COVID-19 pandemic. Non-residents are only required to pay income tax based on where they work. If they are required to work from home, and live outside the City, they can allocate their wages and the City will not be due any income taxes.

The City estimates that roughly one-half of the non-resident income tax revenue will be lost as a result of working from home. This would amount to approximately \$1.25 million per year. Actual declines will not be known until after April 30, 2021 when City income tax returns are due. If the work from home trend becomes standard for a large amount of workplaces, City income taxes could be permanently impacted.

Pictured: Ella Sharp Home in the Ella Sharp Museum complex.

# FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2020

	Revenues	Expenditures
<b>GENERAL FUND</b>	<b>\$26,513,009</b>	<b>\$27,469,789</b>
<b>Special Revenue Funds:</b>		
Major Street Fund	10,288,079	9,154,244
Local Street Fund	1,345,731	1,961,385
Ella W. Sharp Park Operating Fund	682,039	667,532
Public Improvement Fund	1,201,877	851,489
Cortland St. Redevelopment Projects Fund	1,073,881	1,073,881
Building Department Fund	592,753	610,672
Housing Code Enforcement Fund	955,540	1,000,227
Building Demolitions Fund	117,396	319,995
Drug Law Enforcement Fund	24,328	22,236
SAFER Grant Fund	162,633	162,633
Police/Fire Grant Funds-Variou	84,405	84,405
Community Development Block Grant Funds	1,247,925	1,247,925
CESF Program Fund	93,522	93,522
Lead Hazard Control Grant Fund	157,698	157,698
Recreation Activity Fund	166,384	159,250
Recreation Millage Program Fund	630,737	616,529
	<b>\$18,824,928</b>	<b>\$18,183,623</b>
<b>Debt Service Funds:</b>		
City Hall Refunding Debt Service Fund	881,706	802,801
2016-18 Capital Improvement Bond Debt Service Funds	1,573,238	1,573,238
2017 Michigan Transportation Bond Fund	759,186	759,186
DDA TIF Debt Service Funds	8,276,398	8,275,868
BRA TIF Debt Service Funds	1,174,637	1,174,637
	<b>\$12,665,165</b>	<b>\$12,585,730</b>
<b>Capital Project Funds:</b>		
Capital Projects Fund	203,456	273,918
Brownfield Redevelopment Authority Fund	1,356,420	1,351,687
Downtown Development Authority Project Fund	3,042,332	2,561,398
2017 Michigan Transportation Bonds Construction	30,632	1,352,947
2018 Capital Improvement Bond Construction	341,352	7,841,526
2020 Capital Improvement Bond Construction	2,067,250	1,144,684
Special Assessment Capital Project Fund	1,026,392	1,507,040
	<b>\$8,067,834</b>	<b>\$16,033,200</b>
<b>Enterprise Funds</b>		
Ella W. Sharp Park Golf Practice Center Fund	16,749	42,304
Automobile Parking System Fund	696,557	272,983
Parking Assessment Fund	281,016	223,137
Parking Deck Fund	19,564	279,319
Sewage Fund	9,523,569	5,687,734
Water Fund	14,908,820	7,181,715
	<b>\$25,446,275</b>	<b>\$13,687,192</b>
<b>TOTAL OPERATING FUNDS</b>	<b>\$91,517,211</b>	<b>\$87,959,534</b>

-Operating Funds do not include Internal Service or Trust & Agency Funds.  
-Above amounts include transfers to and from other funds.

# DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

The **DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS (DPW)** maintains the City's streets, sewers, and catch basins year round. During autumn, the department provides a leaf collection program. In winter, snow and ice removal is the priority.

The Public Works **FISCAL SERVICES AND UTILITY BILLING** staff sent out 71,010 bills in 2020 for water and sanitary sewer service for a total amount of \$13,922,434.03. The **WATER METER SERVICES** division completed over 7,200 calls for service. These calls include but are not limited to: emergency turn offs, water turn ons, investigations for disruption of service, low pressure and leaks.

The City of Jackson **WATER AND WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANTS** are operated 24 hours per day, seven days per week by certified operators and maintenance staff. The Water Treatment Plant treats and softens the drinking water that is supplied to over 50,000 residents and businesses of the City of Jackson and Blackman Township. In 2019-20, the Water Treatment Plant produced and delivered 2.38 billion gallons of safe drinking water to customers. The water is tested daily in the City's certified testing laboratory according to Environmental Protection Agency and State regulations. The Wastewater Treatment Plant provides service to over 85,000 residents and businesses in the City, surrounding townships, and State Prison of Southern Michigan. The wastewater coming to the plant in the fiscal year 2019-20 averaged approximately 11.1 million gallons per day, or 4.1 billion gallons treated during the year. Pollutants are removed from the wastewater as it passes through the treatment process, with the clean water returned to the environment through a regulated outfall to the Grand River.

The Public Works maintenance crews through the **STREETS, SANITARY SEWERS, WATER DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM, FORESTRY & MOTOR POOL** are responsible for maintaining 100 miles of local streets, 54 miles of major streets, and eight miles of state highways in the City. Maintenance activities include street maintenance and repairs, including over 1,716 tons of asphalt patching, snow and ice removal, forestry services that include tree trimming and removal, street sign repair and replacements, storm sewer maintenance and repairs, as well as sanitary sewer collection system repair and maintenance. The water distribution staff is responsible for maintaining 244 miles of water main, 1,670 hydrants and 2,412 valves. This past year crews repaired 21 water main breaks, exercised 535 water main valves, replaced 11 water main valves, repaired 181 hydrants, replaced 10 hydrants, installed 24 new water services

(nine of them were full lead line replacements), repaired 20 service line leaks, replaced 31 curb stop valves, and retired seven water mains and water services.

Operations for **PUBLIC WORKS IN 2020** provided many challenges, but the DPW was able to provide the same high level of service to residents. All DPW workers were considered "essential workers" so public services could be maintained. A moratorium on water shutoffs started in March and lasted throughout the year to aid public health during the pandemic. \$246,000 in federal COVID-19 relief funds were allocated to a water shutoff protection program to help residents with unpaid water bills.

The Wastewater Plant underwent several equipment upgrades to increase plant efficiency and maintain reliability. These included a new bar screen and several modernized pumping systems. A dehumidification system was installed at the Water Treatment Plant to protect valve and piping assets.

Loose leaf collection was a gleaming success this year and was accomplished on time with the help of more leaf vacuum equipment and a revised collection schedule.

The new DPW Operations Center on Water Street was completed in the fall. The old building was nearly 100 years old and did not have enough space for equipment storage and training.



The new DPW Operations Center was completed in fall 2020.

# ENGINEERING DIVISION



Aerial view of a new traffic circle that was constructed surrounding Austin Blair Park.

The **ENGINEERING DIVISION** bid and managed 14 projects in fiscal year 2019-2020 totaling over \$5.7 million.

Construction projects included:

- Greenwood Avenue and Jackson Street Reconstruction: From Morrell Street to Franklin Street with a concrete traffic circle around Austin Blair Park, new traffic signal at Greenwood and Morrell, new decorative lights and water main replacement on Greenwood.
- Michigan Avenue Reconstruction: First Street to Blackstone Street with angle parking and new streetscape.
- Steward Avenue Mill and Repave: Wildwood Avenue to the railroad crossing with water main replacement and new decorative lights.
- Homecrest Road Reconstruction: Louis Glick Highway to Van Buren Street with water main replacement.
- Continued West Side Local Street Resurfacing: Higby, Durand and Thompson Streets from Michigan Avenue to Wildwood Avenue/Daniel Road.
- Installed lighting in Exchange Park and Loomis Park.

Design projects included:

- A new pedestrian trail along Elmdale Drive in Ella Sharp Park.
- Reconstruction of Morrell Street from Greenwood Avenue to Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive.
- Resurfacing on Steward Avenue from railroad crossing to Ganson Street.
- Revised traffic signals on Wisner Street.
- Water main design for a number of upcoming projects.

Pandemic impacts:

With outdoor construction projects allowed to continue during the pandemic, Jackson's infrastructure projects remained on schedule.

There was a minor delay when a contractor employee was positive for COVID-19 and the entire crew had to be tested.

Engineering staff continued working on projects, but the division's parking staff was laid off during the City Hall shutdown due to less demand for parking in the downtown area.



Resurfacing on N. Higby Street.

# AROUND THE CITY



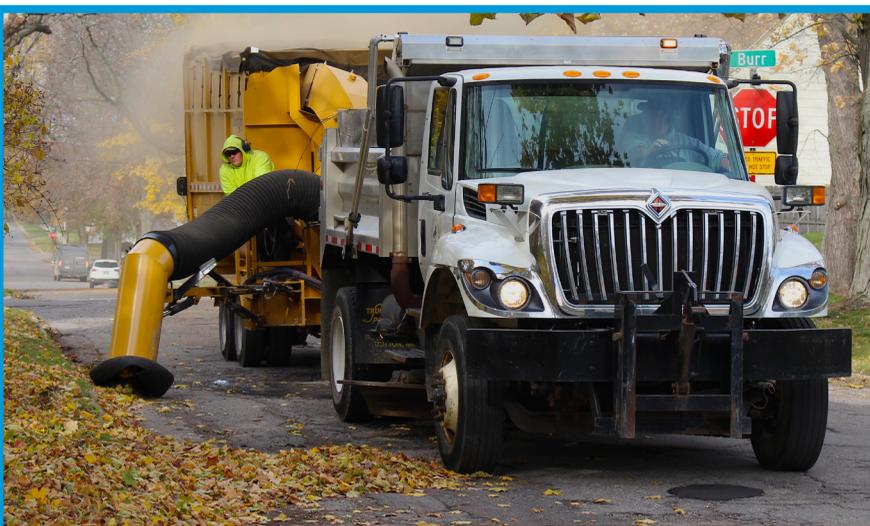
Mayor Derek Dobies delivered the 3rd Annual State of the City Address at the Michigan Theatre in Feb.



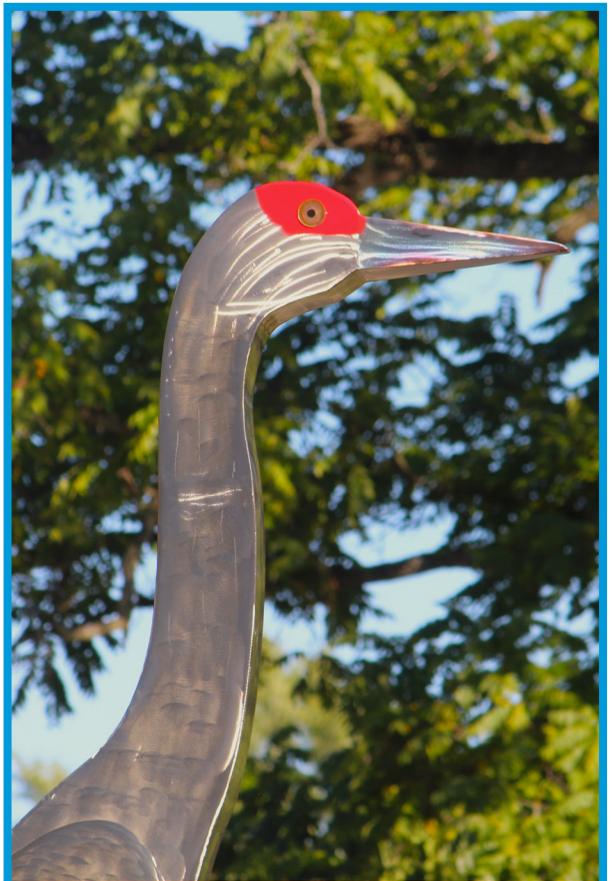
A new State of Michigan Historical Marker for Bucky Harris Park was unveiled in Oct. The marker recognizes Michigan's first anti-slavery newspaper, which was located in a building that once stood where the park is located in Downtown Jackson.



The Bright Walls Mural Festival continued in Sept. with scaled back events and fewer murals. This mural was painted at Henry Ford Allegiance Health.



Loose leaf collection was a success in 2020 thanks to an improved schedule and more leaf vacuum equipment.



New sculptures depicting sandhill cranes were installed in the Ella Sharp Park roundabout in Jan.

# AROUND THE CITY



The Nov. General Election brought a record turnout to the City.



Officers show support for Black Lives Matter protesters.



The Francis Senior Lofts opened in the summer on S. MLK Drive. The complex offers affordable apartments to senior citizens.



Despite economic strains brought on by the pandemic, Downtown Jackson continued to grow and attract new businesses.



The Jackson Fire Department and other local agencies came together for a first responder parade past Henry Ford Allegiance Health in April to show support for COVID-19 patients and health care workers. A video of the parade was the most popular post on the City's social media platforms in 2020, with 77,000 video views on Facebook.

# MAYOR & COUNCILMEMBERS



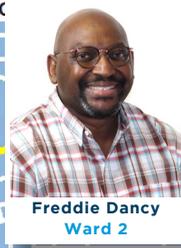
Laura Dwyer Schlecte  
Ward 4



Karen Bunnell  
Ward 5



Jeremy Alexander  
Ward 3



Freddie Dancy  
Ward 2



Will Forgrave  
Ward 6



Arlene Robinson  
Ward 1



Derek Dobies  
Mayor