

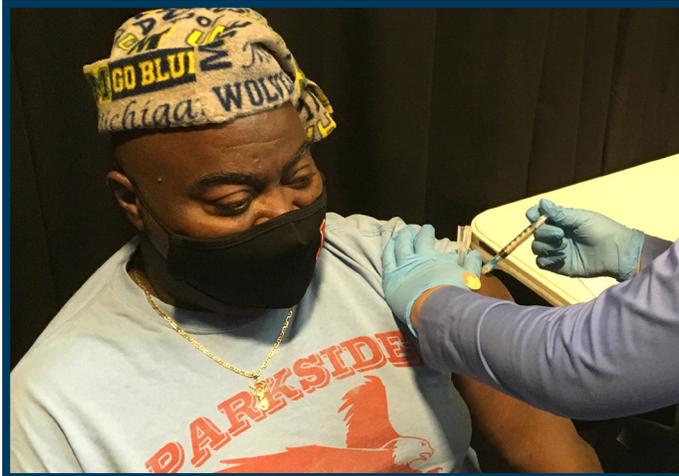
CITY OF JACKSON

OFFICIAL CITY NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2021

VACCINATING JACKSON

CITY'S MLK CENTER JOINS COVID-19 VACCINATION EFFORT



Jackson residents Ricky Hurst (left) and Amy Harvey (right) get their COVID-19 vaccinations at the MLK Center in March.

It's a shot in the arm for many Jackson residents, like Deborah Davis, who have been waiting for.

"It's a relief to get it. I'm impressed with the operation here," Davis said after getting her COVID-19 vaccination at the Martin Luther King Jr. Recreation Center.

Davis and dozens of other Jackson residents received shots on March 4 for Henry Ford Allegiance Health's first vaccine clinic at the City recreation center.

Opening a vaccination site at the MLK Center, which is located in the heart of Jackson's south side neighborhood, in-

creases vaccine access to Jackson's African American and low income residents.

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), there is increasing evidence that racial groups, such as African Americans, are being disproportionately affected by COVID-19.

To achieve greater health equity, the CDC says barriers must be removed so that everyone has a fair opportunity to be as healthy as possible.

Paula Autry, President and CEO of Henry Ford Allegiance Health, thanks the City and other local

health providers for this collaboration.

"Together, we can have a greater reach to ensure more of our most vulnerable neighbors are vaccinated against COVID-19. With every person vaccinated, we are another step closer to better protection and greater freedom for all of us," Autry said.

Jackson resident Ricky Hurst also got his COVID-19 vaccination at the first vaccine clinic.

He says offering vaccines at the center will encourage people to get vaccinated.

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CONTINUED: VACCINES AT THE MLK CENTER

“I think some people might be afraid to get the shot, but the more we show African Americans like me getting it, I believe more people in the community will be at ease,” Hurst said.

MLK Center Director Antonio Parker says he’s thankful for this partnership with the hospital.

“Seeing our neighbors come into the center to get vaccinated is a very powerful thing. The City is happy to provide this space for these front line workers to help Jackson beat the virus,” Parker said.

COVID-19 vaccines will be available every Thurs-

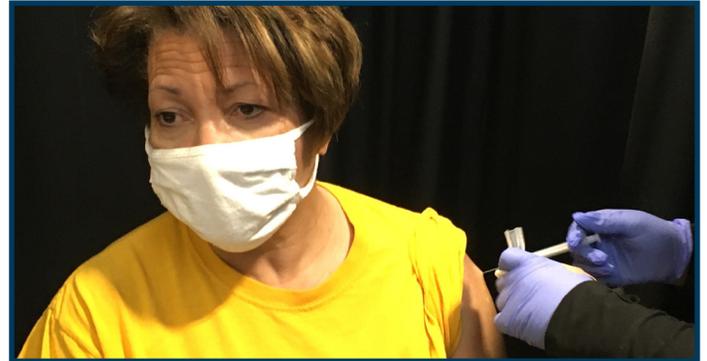
day from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the center.

Shots will be given to those who are eligible to receive vaccinations according to the latest State of Michigan guidelines.

Residents wanting to get vaccinated at the MLK Center can sign up through their health care provider.

Walk-ins at the MLK Center vaccination site are welcome, as long as you meet the current State qualifications.

The MLK Center is located at 1107 Adrian St. and is reached by calling 517-788-4067.



Deborah Davis gets her COVID-19 vaccine.



The vaccine clinic is set up in the MLK Center’s gymnasium.

ROAD CONSTRUCTION SEASON PLANNED

Work continues this year to improve Jackson’s streets and trails.

The City’s Engineering Division has identified 13 infrastructure projects for the 2021 construction season.

They include replacing street pavement and sidewalks, installing new water mains, upgrading street lighting, and building a new pedestrian trail.

A sizable planned project will bring a new water main and road surface to Morrell Street from MLK Drive to Greenwood Avenue.

Construction on the new trail through Ella Sharp Park started in March.

It replaces a deteriorating trail along Elmdale Drive in the park.

The improved trail will be wider to accommodate more pedestrian traffic and is further set back from the street.

This project is partially funded through a Safe Routes to School grant because it is used by students to reach the Middle School at Parkside.

Trail construction will take place through the summer.



The 2021 construction season started in March with a new pedestrian trail along Elmdale Drive in Ella Sharp Park.



FAIR CHANCE HOUSING

Jackson residents with a criminal background will soon have a “fair chance” at housing.

The City Council recently voted to create the City’s Fair Chance Housing Ordinance.

The new law bars landlords from immediately disqualifying a potential tenant for rental housing based only on their criminal or arrest record.

The ordinance does the following:

- Prohibits landlords from asking renters about their criminal history during the initial screening process.
- Postpones any background check until a conditional lease is offered.
- Prevents landlords from unfairly denying applications for housing solely based on criminal history, unless it would impact public safety, property or other tenants.
- Allows tenants to show evidence of rehabilitation prior to final denial by a landlord.



Landlords still have the ability to perform background checks and the ordinance does not limit a housing provider’s ability to choose the most qualified and appropriate candidate from applicants for housing.

The Fair Chance Housing Ordinance goes into effect on June 8.

Suspected violations of the ordinance will be reviewed and enforced by the City’s Human Relations Commission.

MAYOR

Derek Dobies

COUNCIL

Ward

Arlene Robinson	1
Freddie Dancy	2
Jeromy Alexander	3
Laura Dwyer Schlecte	4
Karen Bunnell	5
Will Forgrave	6

CITY MANAGER

Jonathan Greene

MEETINGS & IMPORTANT DATES

April 13 • 6:30 p.m.
City Council Meeting

April 27 • 6:30 p.m.
City Council Meeting

May 11 • 6:30 p.m.
City Council Meeting

May 25 • 6:30 p.m.
City Council Meeting

Monday, May 31
City Hall closed for Memorial Day

June 8 • 6:30 p.m.
City Council Meeting

Saturday, June 20
First Day of Summer

GRASS CUTTING REMINDER

Failing to cut your grass could bring a fine from the City of Jackson.

The City’s mowing ordinance says residents are responsible for maintaining lawns and must keep grass and weeds below 8 inches in height.

Letting grass grow beyond 8 inches for weeks or months can result in a fine and City contractors coming onto your property to cut the grass.

The average fine for this violation is \$156, but it can sometimes cost more depending on how much grass and weeds have to be removed.



Please help us keep Jackson’s neighborhoods looking their best by staying on top of grass cutting this spring, summer and fall.





From the Desk of the Mayor

Derek Dobies

As spring flowers bloom and days get warmer, it's hard not to be inspired by the hopefulness of spring and brighter days ahead.

Thankfully, this spring in the City of Jackson is looking even better thanks to progress with the life-saving COVID-19 vaccine and a new City ordinance that's giving residents a fresh start.

It's truly heartening to see residents line up at the Martin Luther King Jr. Recreation Center and other vaccination sites to get their COVID-19 vaccines.

This marvel of modern medicine is a game changer for the fight against this pandemic.

I encourage all Jacksonians to get vaccinated when it becomes available to them, so we can return to some semblance of normalcy.

As we get shots in our arms, we're also seeing the start of the Fair Chance Housing Ordinance.

Proposed by myself and Councilmember Will Forgrave, this new law means residents will no longer be automatically disqualified for rental housing based only on a criminal or arrest record.

Because we know that securing housing helps people who were once incarcerated find jobs, this is something that helps their families, along with the entire Jackson community.

Please continue to mask up, get vaccinated, and make safe choices.

With the darkness of 2020 now a passing storm cloud, I am hopeful that a sunnier 2021 is on its way.

Sincerely,
Derek Dobies



Now that spring has sprung, you are likely spending more time outdoors around your property.

Before fertilizing your lawn or washing your vehicle, it's important to be aware of the impacts those activities have on storm water.

Storm water is the untreated water that goes into storm drains, such as rain water and run off from your property, and flows into local rivers and lakes.

The Department of Public Works invites residents to learn about storm water and its impacts on the local watershed.

A new section of the City website provides education for residents on storm water and how you can help protect the environment.

You can view this information at www.cityofjackson.org/stormwater.

FORECLOSURE HELP

If you are facing home foreclosure due the COVID-19 pandemic, you should know that the City of Jackson has money available to help.

The City is working with \$200,000 in federal COVID-19 relief funds to provide a foreclosure prevention program.

Residents needing this assistance apply through the Community Action Agency (CAA) and must meet certain requirements, such as live in the City, be of a low-to-moderate income, and prove they've been financially impacted by the pandemic.

Payments go from CAA directly to the mortgage holder or the Jackson County Treasurer and not the resident.

Residents needing assistance with stopping foreclosure are asked to contact Sierra Jones at the Community Action Agency using 517-740-1027 or smjones@caajlh.org.

SPOTLIGHT ON VACCINES

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE VACCINE

Making sure residents have correct information about the COVID-19 vaccine is vital for the overall health of the Jackson community. The following article is brought to you by the Jackson County Health Department to answer frequently-asked questions about the vaccine.

When will I be eligible for a vaccine?

Vaccines are made available based on guidelines from the State of Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS).

These guidelines provide phases and priority groups for local health departments to follow.

In April 2021, MDHHS plans to make COVID-19 vaccines available to all Michigan residents aged 16 and up regardless of health conditions.

The Jackson County Health Department vaccine web page provides information regarding who is currently eligible and how to sign up for vaccine clinics.

We are working with community partners to promote registrations and clinic sites.

What vaccines are available in Jackson County?

There are three brands of vaccine currently available in Jackson County.

- Pfizer: Requires two doses, 21 days apart.
- Moderna: Requires two doses, 28 days apart
- Johnson and Johnson: One dose needed.

How safe are the vaccines?

Before they were approved, the vaccines were put through extensive testing.

Due to the urgent need for a vaccine, COVID-19 vaccine testing was done at a faster rate, but with the same strict standards as all tests are conducted.

Several government agencies, such as the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), reviewed vaccine testing and gave final approval for emergency use.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and FDA continue to monitor how the vaccines are working in case any rare side effects show up.

Why should I get the vaccine?

The vaccine is designed to help reduce the spread of COVID-19 and the severity of the illness.

We already know that people react differently to COVID-19, with some people impacted more severely than others, some even resulting in death.

Getting vaccinated can help protect yourself, your family, and community from the illness.



A message from the Medical Director

According to Dr. Dennis Chernin, Medical Director for Jackson County:

Residents should not worry about which vaccine they get and take the vaccine they have access to as soon as they can.

All three vaccines are very safe and are virtually 100% effective in clinical trials at preventing hospitalizations and deaths, which is the endpoint we care most about.

Getting a high level of immunity right now protects you and others around you.

It also may help to stop the development of new variants and help us reach herd immunity sooner as a society.

Best Prevention Measures:

- Get a vaccine as soon as it is available to you.
- Wear a mask so it covers your nose and mouth.
- Frequently wash your hands.
- Stay home if you are feeling ill.
- Keep a distance of 6 feet between yourself and others when in public or crowds.

For more information visit the health dept. website: www.mijackson.org/hd

EMERGENCY HOME REPAIRS

Help is available for residents who are struggling to pay for expensive home repairs.

The City of Jackson offers no interest, short term loans to low-income homeowners facing emergency maintenance problems.

Emergency hazard conditions include leaking roof systems, no heating or cooling, water leaks, damaged drainage systems, major electrical problems, and any other immediate threat to the health and safety of the residents.

The City can also help you avoid emergencies by replacing major systems that are at or near their useful life, such as plumbing, mechanical and electrical systems, roofs and chimneys.

To be eligible, you must own and occupy your home as your primary residence and be current on all property taxes, special assessments, water bills, and mortgage payments.

Residents qualify for this program based on income and the number of people living in the home.

Visit www.cityofjackson.org/rehabs to learn more about this program, which is run by the City's Department of Neighborhood and Economic Operations.



This home on E. Robinson Street recently received a new roof using an Emergency Hazard Loan.

OUR TOWN MEAL PROGRAM PROVIDES 42,000 FREE MEALS



Volunteer Kenny Robinson distributes free meals at an Our Town Meal Distribution event in March.

The Jackson community is seeing the big impact of a special collaboration between the City of Jackson and Consumers Energy.

The Our Town Meal Distribution Program handed out free meals at the MLK Center every Monday, Wednesday and Friday from Feb. 1 to April 9.

During the 10 week program, nearly 42,000 meals were given to residents in need.

That meant 21 local restaurants and catering companies were paid a combined total of about \$420,000 to produce the meals.

Our Town was funded by Consumers Energy and other community partners.

The City of Jackson supported this effort by hosting the distribution at the MLK Center and providing staff to organize

the program.

Our Town helped the COVID-19 pandemic on three fronts, providing free meals to people struggling to buy food, helping local businesses financially impacted by the pandemic, and keeping employees working at the businesses.

MLK Center Director Antonio Parker worked alongside volunteers at every event.

"The huge demand we saw for meals really showed how much the pandemic is impacting Jackson. This was something families depended on to make ends meet, and they told us how thankful they were for this program," Parker said.

The City thanks everyone who helped make this program a success.