

CITY OF JACKSON

OFFICIAL CITY NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2021

HABITAT IN THE CITY

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY MAKING IMPACT IN NEIGHBORHOODS

While many see a boarded up, blighted house on Jackson's northwest side, Sara Napolitano sees potential.

"This house means everything for my family. Better living, more space, and new opportunities," Napolitano said.

The future first-time homeowner and her five children attended a groundbreaking event in May to celebrate the start of construction on their new home.

This fresh start for a Jackson family is made possible by Greater Jackson Habitat for Humanity.

The local organization bought the home on Hibbard Avenue from the City of Jackson for a rehabilitation project.

Habitat is looking forward to transforming the property from an eyesore back into a family home.

"Building inside the City Limits is where we see the biggest need, and where we see the biggest opportunity," said Wendy Clow, Executive Director of Greater Jackson Hab-



Sara Napolitano and her children outside their future home on Hibbard Avenue.

itat for Humanity.

With rising construction costs in mind, Clow says rehabs of existing houses means they can make projects more affordable.

"It's a way for families with modest household incomes to afford modest-priced houses," Clow said.

Another strategy to keep construction costs down is buying vacant lots owned by the City.

In April, Habitat also broke ground on DeLand Pointe, a residential development that will bring six single family homes to

a neighborhood south of Downtown Jackson.

Located on one City block bound by Franklin, Mechanic and Mason streets, future residents of these homes will be close to all that Jackson has to offer.

Clow says connectivity is another benefit to doing projects in the City.

"When we put families in houses, it's important that they are in neighborhoods where they have access to the things they need," Clow said.

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CONTINUED: HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

The DeLand Pointe project is the result of a collaboration between Habitat, the Community Action Agency, and City of Jackson.

City Manager Jonathan Greene says he's inspired to see a community collaboration to make lives better for local families.

"Rebuilding Jackson is going to take the teamwork of our residents, community partners, and City government. It's exciting to see these efforts underway and to consider what we can do

in the future," Greene said. Construction on the DeLand Pointe project will take place in the coming years, with full completion expected in 2023.

Meanwhile, Napoletano is looking forward to moving into her new home by the end of the year.

"It's in a quiet neighborhood with other families, plus I am close to a lot of the places I need to go. I thank Habitat for this opportunity," Napoletano said.



Groundbreaking for the DeLand Pointe housing development.

VACCINE UPDATE



Russell Davis receives a COVID-19 vaccine at MLK Center.

Jackson residents continue to roll up their sleeves to get COVID-19 vaccines.

The City's MLK Recreation Center has been a big part of this effort.

Since Henry Ford Allegiance Health started offering vaccines at the center in March, 1,112 vaccine doses have been administered.

The health department says as of late May, 68,821 Jackson County residents have received at least one vaccine dose.

That means 50.4% of residents over age 12 have received at least one dose.

44.1% of residents have received a second dose.

Visit mijackson.org/hd for more information on how to get vaccinated.

ROAD CONSTRUCTION



A five-block section of Morrell will be closed through the fall.

The 2021 construction season is now in full swing. 13 infrastructure projects are planned this year.

Residents have likely noticed the closure of Morrell Street from Greenwood Avenue to MLK Drive.

Crews are hard at work replacing the water main and lead water service lines.

After underground work is set, a new roadway will

be built. This section of Morrell Street has not been redone since 1980.

It will be closed through the fall.

Sections of Steward, Clinton, Douglas, Biddle and Cooley streets will also see fresh pavement this year.

A new pedestrian trail in Ella Sharp Park will be completed this summer.



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

Monday, July 5

City Hall closed for Independence Day

July 13 • 6:30 p.m.

City Council Meeting

Aug. 10 • 6:30 p.m.

City Council Meeting

Monday, Sept. 6

City Hall closed for Labor Day

Sept. 14 • 6:30 p.m.

City Council Meeting

Wednesday, Sept. 22

First Day of Autumn

Sept. 28 • 6:30 p.m.

City Council Meeting

PRIMARY ELECTION FOR MAYOR HAPPENING AUG. 3

2021 is an election year in the City of Jackson.

The first election is happening Tuesday, Aug. 3 with the August Primary Election.

The only race that will appear on ballots in the City is the primary election for Mayor of Jackson.

Residents will vote for one of the four candidates on the ballot.

The top two candidates with the most votes will move on to the Tuesday, Nov. 2 General Election.

All polling places will be open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Election Day.

Those opting to return absentee ballots by mail are encouraged to do so as early as possible.

Absentee ballots must be submitted by 8 p.m. on Election Day to be counted in the election.



Learn more about voting in this election by visiting cityofjackson.org/elections.

City Council races for Wards 1, 3 and 5 will be decided in the Nov. 2 General Election.

City elections are non-partisan and happen in odd-numbered years.

SOCIAL DISTRICT CREATED

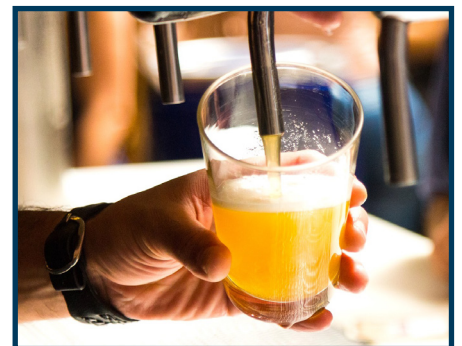
A new social district in Downtown Jackson will help businesses overcome some challenges created by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Approved by the City Council this spring, the social district allows permitted bars and restaurants to serve alcoholic beverages to customers, who can take drinks outside and enjoy them in the outdoor public spaces of Downtown Jackson.

The Downtown Development Authority worked with City officials to set up the social district's guidelines.

The State of Michigan passed legislation last year that allows local governments to create their own social districts.

With bars and restaurants signifi-



cantly impacted by the pandemic, this district helps establishments by giving them more space to serve customers, and encourages residents to safely return to businesses.

City and State approval is needed for businesses to participate in the social district.





From the Desk of the Mayor

Derek Dobies

Looking through this issue of the City Newsletter, it's easy to feel inspired by Jackson's progress and all the positive things we have going on.

This viewpoint differs from last summer, when we were still grappling with the uncertainty of a life-changing health crisis.

With the vaccine now protecting our residents, and the pandemic's storm clouds starting to part, we can ramp up work to rebuild our City.

Affordable housing in our neighborhoods, community gardens, improved streets, and a growing park system make this an exciting time to live in Jackson.

The creation of Downtown Jackson's first social district shows our local government's continued ability to adapt to a safe reopening process.

Another bright spot is our City's partnership with Henry Ford Allegiance Health to offer COVID-19 vaccines at the MLK Recreation Center, which makes sure all of our residents have access to this marvel of modern medicine.

I thank residents who have been vaccinated, and urge those who have not to get these important shots, so we can continue to protect our community and end the pandemic.

Jackson is sure to have more groundbreakings and ribbon cuttings in the coming years, but seeing them happen after so much turmoil helps us realize hope is on the horizon.

Sincerely,
Derek Dobies

SUMMER EVENTS RETURN TO DOWNTOWN JACKSON



Cruise In event on W. Michigan Avenue in June 2019.

Downtown Jackson will once again be the center of summer fun.

After being canceled in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, summer events organized by Jackson's Downtown Development Authority (DDA) are scheduled for this year.

How events are held will depend on the latest COVID-19 guidelines.

DDA Executive Director Cory Mays says after such a challenging year, they're excited to give residents something to look forward to.

"With our events taking place outdoors and in the open spaces of downtown, we believe visitors can stay safe and enjoy classic car shows, food trucks, movies, and much more," Mays said.

A full list of downtown summer events is available by visiting jacksondda.org.

ONLY RAIN DOWN THE DRAIN



Help us protect our local watershed by being mindful of what goes down storm drains around your property.

Visit cityofjackson.org/stormwater to learn what you need to know about stormwater awareness.

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

NEW COMMUNITY GARDENS BRINGING FRESH PRODUCE TO NEIGHBORHOODS

It's a small patch of land that's about to make a big difference in Jackson.

"We hope this garden will get folks excited about some fresh produce," said Payge Lindow, Farm Manager for Grow Jackson.

Over the summer, this 1/4 acre at the Martin Luther King Jr. Recreation Center will be transformed into a community garden to feed local families.

It's an effort from Grow Jackson, a new non-profit created by Jacob Inosencio.

"Our mission is to end food insecurity and hunger in Jackson though increased access to fresh food," Inosencio said.

Earlier this spring, the group started work on shaping community gardens at St. Mary's Catholic Church in Downtown Jackson and the MLK Center on Jackson's south side.

Grow Jackson's founder and board president says when he approached the City about a garden project, they offered land at the recreation center.

"The City is helping us with irrigation for the garden and future programming through the MLK Center," Inosencio said.

A wide variety of produce is set to grow in the MLK



Payge Lindow (left) and Jacob Inosencio (right) in Grow Jackson's garden at the MLK Center.

garden over the summer.

"We want this to be a one-stop shop for people to get produce, such as kale, broccoli, tomatoes, peppers, onions, berries, and lettuce greens, along with corn, beans, squash, and herbs," Lindow said.

The garden is also supported by Consumers Energy and Henry Ford Allegiance Health.

Once fruits and vegetables are ready for harvesting, Grow Jackson is planning on opening a farm stand at the MLK Center, where produce will be offered at low costs and to families using food assistance programs.

"We have a commitment to helping Jackson's neigh-

borhoods, so what we grow here is for the community," Inosencio said.

They estimate the garden has the potential to feed around 60 families a week.

With only two grocery stores in the City Limits, Grow Jackson is mindful of the challenges some residents face getting healthy food.

"A lack of fresh food in low-income areas is not because of a lack of desire, it comes from systemic issues. We are trying to be intentional in fighting that problem," Inosencio said.

MLK Center Director Antonio Parker says he is enjoying watching the garden sprout up.

"This is an awesome

thing for Jackson. I am looking forward to seeing our neighbors come here to get fresh produce when they need it," Parker said.

Those interested in donating or volunteering with Grow Jackson can visit their website, growjackson.org.

They are also active on Facebook and Instagram.

Once Grow Jackson sees the fruits of their labor in the gardens, they hope to help Jackson residents start their own urban farms.

"When you have that control over what you're putting in your body or feeding your kids, that's a huge thing for mental health and to empower the community," Lindow said.

WOOF! JACKSON'S FIRST DOG PARK

Tails are wagging across town now that construction is underway on Betty's Dog Park!

When work is complete this summer, the park will be fully fenced, with separate areas for big and small dogs to roam free, including sidewalks, benches, and picnic tables.

This pooch paradise at the intersection of N. Blackstone and Van Buren streets makes use of space in Beech Tree Park.

The park is named after Betty Dahlem Desbiens, a long-time Jackson resident who donated funds to make the park possible.

The dog-friendly digs will be free to use and open to the public when it's complete.

Located within a short walk from Downtown Jackson, Betty's Dog Park will be useful for downtown apartment dwellers and their pets to have ample space for play time.

Mayor Derek Dobies says this will be a great place for all of Jackson's four-legged friends.

"Having a dog park placed centrally in the City makes a lot of sense of our downtown residents and people all over Jackson. I thank Betty for helping make this dog park possible," Mayor Dobies said.



A groundbreaking event was held in May for the future Betty's Dog Park on N. Blackstone Street.

NEW APARTMENT COMPLEX OPENS DOWNTOWN



New section of the Albert Kahn Apartments on S. Jackson Street.

Downtown Jackson continues to welcome new residents with the opening of the Albert Kahn Apartments earlier this spring.

Located on S. Jackson Street, the Albert Kahn Apartments makes use of the former Jackson Citizen Patriot newspaper building, along with a new addition.

The 73-unit complex is named after the famous architect Albert Kahn, who designed the original Jackson Citizen Patriot building.

This is a housing development from General Capital Group of Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

State of Michigan tax credits are provided so rent is affordable for low-to-moderate income tenants.

One and two bedroom units are offered to tenants who earn less than \$37,200 annu-

ally.

Community Manager Amy Jo Tisdel says they're excited to offer affordable downtown living.

"Our growing wait list really speaks to the need for affordable housing projects in Jackson," Tisdel said.

The complex also offers commercial space on the first floor, along with unique live-work units, for business owners who want both a living space and storefront.

"We've heard from residents that they really love the walkability of the property and being downtown," Tisdel said.

More information about these apartments can be found by visiting albertkahnapt.com.

Two other downtown apartment developments, The 200 on N. Jackson Street and the Francis Senior Lofts on S. MLK Drive, opened last year.