

## LINING UP JACKSON LEAD LINE REPLACEMENTS INCREASE IN 2022

Residents can expect to see lots of street construction in 2022, as the City of Jackson ramps up efforts to replace thousands of lead service lines.

Replacing all of our lead service lines is not a project unique to Jackson.

In 2018, State of Michigan lawmakers approved changes to the State's Lead and Copper Rule, requiring all communities across Michigan to replace lead service lines.

This action started with the Flint Water Crisis in 2014, a public health crisis where drinking water was contaminated with lead from corrosive lead service lines.

Service lines go from the water main to every home on the street so they can access water.

The line goes under the parkway, sidewalk and front yard, then comes in through the basement and links up with the plumbing in your home.

It's important for residents to know that re-



Construction crews install a new water service line on Homecrest Road.

peated testing of Jackson's water system has not shown any evidence of corrosive lead pipes and current lead levels are well below safety requirements.

With such a massive undertaking starting this year, the City has launched Lining Up Jackson to keep residents in the loop.

By visiting [cityofjackson.org/liningupjackson](http://cityofjackson.org/liningupjackson), residents can learn everything they need to know about the City's lead line replacement program.

This website features lead safety information, replacement progress, and upcoming construction schedules.

The City's \$120 million plan to switch out all 11,339 lead service lines over 35 years is being paid for by revenue from water bills, City funds, and other governmental funding sources.

The Lining Up Jackson website can be found under the "Our Services" tab of the City website or by searching [cityofjackson.org/liningupjackson](http://cityofjackson.org/liningupjackson).

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## POLICE OVERSIGHT COMMISSION FORMED

A new effort to further enhance transparency and trust between the Jackson Police Department (JPD) and the community they serve is now officially underway.

This past fall, the City Council approved an ordinance that created the Community Police Oversight Commission.

The commission will consist of a five-member board of City residents and businesses owners who will advise the City's Director of Police and Fire Services on community relations, policies, training, hiring and

other programming.

The ordinance also allows the oversight commission to review JPD's budgets, misconduct rules, and resident complaints about officer interactions.

Elmer Hitt, Director of Jackson Police and Fire Services, embraces this new approach for the department.

"JPD has always prided itself on providing professional police services while striving to treat all persons with respect and dignity. This commission will provide a different level of transparency between the



department and the community, along with strengthening existing relationships and creating new ones," Director Hitt said.

Those interested in serv-

ing on the Community Police Oversight Commission may submit a Board/Commission Application through the City website.

## HOW WE'RE FIXING THE ROADS

"Fix the roads" is a comment City leaders hear a lot from residents.

But did you know that since 2012, 21.5 miles of Jackson streets have been resurfaced and road spending has increased 152.7 percent?

Improving Jackson's infrastructure is an ongoing priority for the City.

A new section of the City website, Paving Jackson, is designed to keep residents informed on those efforts, with breakdowns of road construction projects over the past 20 years and upcoming improvements.

Jackson uses City Street,

Water and Sewer funds, which come from tax revenue, to pay for infrastructure projects.

Special assessments, along with state and federal funds, are also used for project costs.

Looking at the City's contributions to street construction, a total of \$105 million in City funds have gone toward dozens of projects over the past nine years.

More construction projects are on the horizon as the City ramps up efforts to replace lead service lines.

Line replacements will also bring extensive street,



S. Higby Street resurfacing project.

sidewalk, and curb repairs.

Once construction projects are planned for 2022, they will be listed on the Paving Jackson section of the website.

It can be found under the "Our Services" tab of the City website or by searching [cityofjackson.org/pavingjackson](http://cityofjackson.org/pavingjackson).



## 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

**JAN. 11 • 6:30 p.m.**  
City Council Meeting

**Monday, Jan. 17**  
City Hall closed for MLK Day

**JAN. 25 • 6:30 p.m.**  
City Council Meeting

**FEB. 8 • 6:30 p.m.**  
City Council Meeting

**Monday, Feb. 14**  
City's 165th Birthday

**Monday, Feb. 21**  
City Hall Closed for Presidents' Day

**FEB. 22 • 6:30 p.m.**  
City Council Meeting

**MARCH 8 • 6:30 p.m.**  
City Council Meeting

**MARCH 22 • 6:30 p.m.**  
City Council Meeting

## NEW MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL TAKE OFFICE



Jackson City Council and appointed officials in group photo for 2021-23 session.

The City of Jackson is welcoming a new Mayor and City Councilmember.

Daniel Mahoney won the Mayoral election in Nov.

He previously represented Jackson's District 7 on the County Board of Commissioners.

Another new face to the council is Angelita V. Gunn, who won the election for Ward 3 City Council.

Ward 1 City Councilmember Arlene Robinson and Ward 5 City Councilmember Karen Bunnell both won re-election.

Mayor Mahoney and City Councilmembers officially started their new terms at the first council meeting in Dec.

Also at this meeting, the council voted to make City Councilmember Robinson the Vice Mayor and Ward 6 City Councilmember Will Forgrave the Chief Parliamentarian.

The Vice Mayor serves in the absence of the Mayor.

The Chief Parliamentarian makes sure council rules and procedures

are followed during meetings.

Councilmembers serve four year terms and the Mayor serves for two years.

Wards 2, 4 and 6 will have elections in 2023.

In-person City Council meetings resumed in 2021.

The meetings are broadcast live on Comcast Cable Channel 21, the City Facebook page, and the City website.

Meeting videos and summaries are also available on the City website the following day.



City Councilmember Angelita V. Gunn





## Message from the Mayor

**Daniel Mahoney**

2022 brings a new Mayor for the City of Jackson.

I'm honored to have been chosen by residents for this role and am excited for all we can accomplish together in the new year.

As I work to get to know more residents, here's some background on me.

A part of the community my entire life, I was born and raised in Jackson and graduated from Jackson High School in 2000.

My home is in the southeast side of the Jackson, where my wife, Semaj, and I are the proud parents of five daughters.

I currently work as the African American Affinity Liaison for Jackson College and run the non-profit Many Hands Community Services.

Before becoming Mayor, I represented the eastern half of the City on the Jackson County Board of Commissioners for seven years.

I'm excited to now serve all Jackson residents as your Mayor; prioritizing neighborhood revitalization, economic development, public safety, street improvements, and continuing our City's equity efforts.

My vision for Jackson as Mayor is a City with safe, vibrant, walkable neighborhoods with a thriving economy, well-maintained infrastructure, where anyone can feel at home, look to raise a family or retire, and where local government exists to serve the citizens of the community.

Collaborating with the City Council, City staff, and residents, we can make a community where everyone thrives.

A new year brings new challenges and opportunities. I look forward to helping lead Jackson through these moments and into a brighter 2022.

Sincerely,  
*Daniel Mahoney*

## AFFORDABLE HOUSING PLAN GETS \$4.5 MILLION

Efforts to create more affordable housing in Jackson are getting a big boost following a \$4.5 million funding decision from the Jackson City Council.

This past fall, the City Council voted to approve a new ordinance that creates multiple initiatives to support affordable housing for Jackson residents.

An Affordable Housing Development Board will oversee affordable housing programs in Jackson.

These programs will be powered by \$3.5 million from the City's American Rescue Plan (ARP) funds.

The funds will be held in an Affordable Housing Fund, which will be overseen by the board.

The new initiatives will help residents navigate getting housing assistance, provide grants and loans to low-income residents, create incentives for new affordable housing developments, and address homelessness by providing services and housing for homeless residents.

Councilmembers also approved a plan to allow City Manager Jonathan Greene to spend up to \$1 million in ARP funds to rehab vacant City-owned homes for low-income residents with housing needs.

The \$4.5 million for affordable housing is the biggest allocation the City Council has made with its \$31 million in ARP funds.

Those interested in serving on the Affordable Housing Development Board may submit a Board/Commission Application through the City website.



Homes on E. Robinson Street.

# COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

## SCHOOL OF THE ARTS NOW CREATING IN DOWNTOWN JACKSON

A core mission of the Jackson School of the Arts (JSA) is to provide accessible arts for everyone.

Their move to a new facility in Downtown Jackson is making good on that mission.

“It’s exciting to be in the new building. We can spread out and have lots of room for bigger class sizes,” said JSA Executive Director Carolyn Moser.

The art school moved into the former Vermeulen’s Furniture building on W. Cortland Street this past fall after the completion of a \$3.5 million renovation project.

JSA was previously locat-

ed in the Art 634 complex on N. Mechanic Street.

The school provides art, theatre, dance, martial arts and gymnastics classes for school-age kids, along with art and dance programs for adults.

Moser says the new space provides more elbow room for classes and has many other benefits.

“Parents can also drop off students and enjoy all that Downtown Jackson has to offer like shopping and restaurants,” Moser said.

Located next door to the bus transfer center, the new building makes the arts more accessible for families with transportation issues.



Students enjoy an art class at the new school.



Jackson School of the Arts is now located in the former Vermeulen’s Furniture building on W. Cortland Street.

“The response has been absolutely fabulous. Everyone who comes in loves the new building,” Moser said.

Wanting a larger building that was more centrally located, JSA originally planned on renovating the historic Masonic Temple building on W. Cortland Street.

In late 2020, it was determined the Vermeulen’s property next door would better meet their budget and space needs.

JSA worked with the City of Jackson to buy the vacant City-owned building.

“The City was great to work with in purchasing the property. Everyone was very supportive and made it an easy process,” Moser said.

Class costs are based on individual family income, using low-to-moderate income guidelines from the federal government.

“The most our kids pay is \$35 a month. We also have scholarships that get the cost all the way down to \$12 a month for classes,” Moser said.

JSA hopes the new facility can also be used for community events.

Moser says they are working on providing a space that includes a rooftop balcony for medium-sized family, corporate and community events.

“Money from the events rentals will go to the scholarship fund so our programs remain affordable for local families,” Moser said.

## FREE WI-FI IN BLACKMAN PARK

Visitors to Downtown Jackson can now take advantage of free Wi-Fi!

The City of Jackson is working with the Jackson District Library (JDL) to provide free Wi-Fi in Horace Blackman Park 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

This adds to the experience of visiting downtown and fits with the library's goal of increasing internet access in the community.

City employees worked with JDL staff to extend the nearby Carnegie Library's internet signal into the park.

The City of Jackson thanks the district library for this collaboration.

Those wanting to use the free Wi-Fi will connect to it using the JDL internet network.

This is the first park in the City of Jackson to provide free Wi-Fi.



Signs in Horace Blackman Park announce free Wi-Fi for visitors.

## CITY ADOPTS NEW SEAL



A new seal was approved by the City Council at their Nov. 9, 2021 meeting.

The City of Jackson is starting 2022 with a new look for the official City Seal.

The City Council voted last Nov. to adopt a new design for the seal, which is used for display at City facilities and on official documents.

The former City Seal references a statue in Washington, D.C. of U.S. President Andrew Jackson, the City's namesake.

In July 2020, the City Council voted unanimously to start the seal redesign process.

This decision came after residents raised concerns about racist associations the seal may have by depicting President Jackson, a slaveholder whose actions lead to the forced relocation of Native Americans.

It was also important to provide a seal that more directly referenced the City of Jackson, Michigan.

The Jackson Public Arts Commission (JPAC) was tasked by the City Council to oversee the redesign process.

JPAC collected input from residents on what they'd like the new seal to look like.

The commission then worked with a graphic design company to come up with seal proposals based on resident feedback.

The design selected by the City Council shows an outline of the Downtown Jackson skyline with bands of blue and green.

The blue band represents the Grand River flowing through Jackson.

The new seal will be phased in over the next year as City staff apply it to facilities, signage, and uniforms.

The seal differs from the City's circle logo, which is used for promotional purposes.