

Northville Matters

www.ci.northville.mi.us

City of Northville • 215 West Main Street • Northville, Michigan 48167

Downs development update

Now that developer Hunter Pasteur (HP), operating under the name Perennial Northville LLC, has received approval from the Planning Commission to redevelop the Downs property and adjoining parcels, several actions are expected in the coming months. Final sale and transfer of property from the existing owners to the developer is planned for early February with demolition of the race track buildings and site preparation scheduled to begin soon after.

A team of city staff and consultants will work with HP to plan for project commencement, including making certain the developer obtains the required city permits prior to beginning demolition. The city's building inspector will monitor the demolition process to help ensure it's done safely and with consideration of nearby neighborhoods.

Funds from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) of 2021 are available through Wayne County for use in site preparation of the portions of the site that will become city-owned property, including the underground Middle Rouge River, riverbanks, future public streets, right of ways and easements. ARPA funds are federal funds with very specific requirements and in the coming months City Council will be presented with a number of documents and contracts with HP detailing those requirements.

Residents and the public can learn about the development's progress by reading City News, the city's free weekly e-newsletter; listening to updates given by the city manager at open meetings; and viewing the city's Facebook and X pages.



One of the new city entrance signs appears near the water wheel on S. Main. Photo by Liz Cezat.

Infrastructure and signage upgrades make a difference

Much was accomplished in 2023 for infrastructure and beautification improvements throughout the city. Yerkes Street was repaved and new curbs were added. Homeowners had a new apron installed on their driveway. The water main pipes were upgraded from four-inch cast iron to eight-inch high-density polyethylene (HDPE). Five catch basins were replaced due to deterioration.

New entrance signs were added at six locations, welcoming people to the city on Randolph near 8 Mile, N. Center near 8 Mile, 7 Mile east of Griswold, 7 Mile at S. Center, 8 Mile and Novi Rd. and Griswold near Baseline Road. City boundary signs will be placed at 11 locations. New signs also grace City Hall, the Police Dept. and City Yards. The new signs replaced decades-old wooden signs that were falling apart.

The signs made for lively discussion when they first arrived. The swirls behind the city of Northville logo were too dark originally, prompting the Department of Public Works (DPW) to work with the sign vendor to improve readability, at a nominal cost. The signs convey the city's new branding and are consistent with the logo used in the city's publications, website, vehicle signage, and branded work attire.

The water tower was completely refurbished with sand-blasting down to base metal, a primer, two coats of paint and the new logo on two sides. The base of the bowl is a slightly tan color to help repel mold. It had been 17 years since the water tower was last painted, and the renovation will extend its life. The tower can be seen from 8 Mile near Randolph and at other vantage points and serves as a welcoming beacon in the city.

"People take great pride in this community. Having nice entry signs and the new logo on the water tower create a positive image for the city and a welcoming sense of place," said City Manager George Lahanas.

The residential cross-connection program continued to move forward, with zones 1 through 4 completed. In 2024, zone 5 will be done. (See zone map on website: Services/DPW/Water-Sewer.) The state-mandated program requires technicians to inspect and report on exterior water connections at homes. HydroCorp is the city's vendor. The survey is free to homeowners, but they

Continued on page 3

City Manager George Lahanas (left) and Mayor Brian Turnbull show the new bollards at Main and Hutton. See article on pg. 3



NOTICES

Election news

Absentee ballots for the Tuesday, Feb. 27 Presidential Primary

All registered voters have the right to vote by mail without providing a reason. To obtain an absentee ballot for the Feb. 27 Election, you can complete and submit your application online through this link (<https://mvlc.sos.state.mi.us/avapplication>). Applications are also available in the City Hall 24-hour vestibule or during normal office hours at the Clerk's office.

If you signed up to receive automatic absentee ballot applications, the absentee ballot applications (red/white/blue postcard) were mailed in late December. You must sign and return the application to have a ballot mailed to you. The deadline to have a ballot mailed is 5 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 23. Apply earlier to avoid any mail delays.

Voter Registration

Now through Feb. 12: Register in any manner (online, by mail, in person)

Feb. 13 through 8 p.m. Feb. 27: Register in person at the Northville City Clerk's Office, 215 W. Main Street. Residency verification is required. You may vote by absentee ballot or at your polling place on Election Day. Residency verification must have your name and current Northville address. Digital copies are acceptable.

Nine-Day Early Voting

With the passing of Proposal 22-2, you now have the right to vote in person at an early voting site for nine consecutive days before Election Day. Northville has partnered with Oakland County, the city of Novi and Novi Township to offer early voting at the Novi Civic Center, 45175 W. 10 Mile Rd.

Saturday hours

On Feb. 24, the City Clerk's office will be open from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. for election business only.

Facts at a glance

Polls open: 7 a.m. – 8 p.m.

Precinct 1 (Wayne County voters): Northville Community Center, 303 W. Main St.

Precinct 2 (Oakland County voters): Amerman School, 847 N. Center St.

Am I registered to vote? Where can I view the ballot? Do I need a photo ID?

To learn the answers to these questions and more, visit the Elections and Voting section of the city website. In addition to checking your voter information, you can also view and print a sample ballot when they become available in late January. If you have any additional questions, please contact the City Clerk's office at 248.349.1300 or email the City Clerk Department at clerk@ci.northville.mi.us

Upcoming tax and assessing deadlines

View your tax, assessing, utility and permit property information on the city website (Online Property Information and Payments). You can sign up for automatic payment of taxes and utilities, request to receive your utility bill via email, make payments by credit card or e-check, and view your payment status.

General property tax dates

Feb. 14 – Last day to pay winter 2023 taxes without penalty or interest. On Feb. 15, a 3% penalty will apply.

March 1 – Assessment notices are mailed in mid-February. If you have not received a notice by March 1, please contact the city at 248-449-9901.

Feb. 29 – Last day to pay summer and winter 2023 property taxes at the city. On March 1, delinquent amounts will be turned over to the county for collection.

March – Board of Review public hearings and deliberations. Dates will appear on the assessment notice.

Business owners

January – Personal Property Statements are mailed the first week in January. If you filed a Small Business Affidavit in 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, or 2023 on time and it was accepted, you will not receive a Personal Property Statement due to recent changes in property tax laws. Any changes in business status or personal property values need to be reported to the assessor.

Feb. 20 – Personal Property Statements or exemption affidavits are due to the city assessor.

Accountability and Transparency

To meet the requirements for Accountability and Transparency under City, Village, and Township Revenue Sharing/County Incentive Program (CVTRS/CIP), the city of Northville provides a Debt Service Report and a Projected Budget Report on the city website in this section: [Services/Finance/Open Government](#).

Dog licenses up for renewal in February

Annual dog licenses expire on Feb. 28, 2024. All dogs four months and older must be licensed. The annual license fee is \$13 (\$10 with documented spay/neuter). On March 1, a \$5 late fee will be applied to the license fee. A current rabies vaccination certificate is required with the application. Renewal applications have been mailed to current license holders. Applications can be downloaded from the city website (Services/City Clerk/Permits and Licenses). Completed applications can be mailed, placed in the City Hall drop box, or renewed in person at City Hall.

Keeping streets clear of snow and ice

When it snows, you'll find snow plows and trucks out to clear local streets. Major streets such as Center, Main and Taft are plowed first, followed by streets with steep hills and sharp curves.

Wayne County plows snow on Griswold, 7 Mile, Northville Road, and 8 Mile, east of Taft, while Oakland County clears snow on 8 Mile, west of Taft, and Novi Road. Neighborhood streets, parking lots, alleys and cemetery roads are plowed by the city after main streets are completed. Please keep vehicles off the streets until the snow has been cleared.

All property owners must clear sidewalks within 24 hours of a snow or ice event. It is against the law to blow or shovel snow into any roadway. The DPW clears sidewalks only on city-owned or operated properties. Prompt removal of snow reduces the need for salt. That means less salt travels to storm drains, which discharge into the Middle Rouge River.

New overnight parking, vacation watch system

There's a new online link being used by the Police Dept. to make it easier for people to request overnight street parking or have an officer check the exterior of their home while they are away. The link is: <https://www.frontlinepss.com/northville-mi>.

For overnight parking, you will need to complete the online form and provide details of your vehicle and where it will be parked that night. Parking requests can be made for a maximum of three consecutive days, not to exceed nine days per month. If you need overnight parking for a longer period of time, you will need to purchase a parking permit from the Police Dept.

To request a police officer to check on your home while you're away, please fill out an online form at the link above and provide the address of your property, your contact information, an emergency contact, the dates you will be away, and any other relevant details. Once the form is submitted, your property will be added to the Police Dept.'s list of vacation watches for officers to check on (time-permitting).

Officer Cerulla aims to do his best

Frank Cerulla was chosen by his peers as Officer of the Year for 2022 not for any particular action but for his overall positive impact while doing his beat and helping the department maintain its accreditation.

He received a framed award from Police Chief Alan Maciag at the City Council meeting on Nov. 20, and a plaque from Mayor Brian Turnbull. Other resolutions came from the State of Michigan, presented by State Rep. Matt Koleszar, and from Wayne County Commissioner Terry Marecki.

When asked what the award means to him, Cerulla said, "Personally, it's a huge honor. It makes me feel good that I'm making a difference. Professionally, it's a great honor. Not many people get this award. You have to earn it. My peers and administration saw that I was deemed fit for this award. It gives me a boost to continue to work hard every single day."

His attitude toward being a police officer is to do the work in a positive manner and take on responsibilities without complaint. "I do the 7 to 7 (the regular shift) and want to go above and beyond. I want to make the Police Department as best as it can possibly be."

He is a field training officer, a taser instructor, and an accreditation manager for the department – making sure the Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police (MACP) has the documentation it needs to ensure the department is in compliance on an annual basis. He also helps prepare the department for an extensive review every three years. "These roles have helped push my career farther along. The accreditation position is the coolest position that I've been granted," he noted.

Coming from the Detroit Police Dept. three years ago, he enjoys the community-oriented focus of the Northville Police Dept. He said, it's "more pro-active not reactive." He now has time to check in with businesses and build a stronger bond with the community.

He and his wife, Adriana, and son, Elliott, 2 years old, live in Wyandotte.



Officer Frank Cerulla was presented with the 2022 Officer of the Year award by Chief Maciag along with an honorary plaque from Mayor Turnbull at the Nov. 20 City Council meeting. Photo by Liz Cezat.

Infrastructure ... continued from page 1

do need to pay for any corrective measures.

There were numerous water main breaks throughout the year, which was higher than 2022 and about the same as 2021. Most of the breaks are ring breaks where the circumference of the pipe breaks, due to the freeze/thaw cycle that causes the earth below the surface to shift. The most common repair is to clamp the pipe and restore the street surface area around the pipe, typically with cold patch. The biggest break in 2023 was at Center and Sheldon, east of the intersection, when a "blow-hole split" – a break along the length of the pipe – caused the intersection to flood. It required replacing 12 feet of pipe. Please report any water main breaks to DPW (after normal business hours, call: 248-349-1234).

The city embarked on an ambitious multi-year plan to upgrade the water delivery system at an estimated cost of \$24 million. Project construction involves replacing and installing nearly 21,320 feet of 8- to 12-inch water main; decommissioning the underground water storage reservoir and pump station near the water tower; constructing a new booster pump station near Baseline and Center; installing new pressure-reducing valves; and replacing many lead service lines.

The city's application to the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) for a low-interest 20-year loan in Summer 2023 was denied but DPW and city engineers will meet with EGLE in January to determine if a second application might succeed. Meanwhile, decommission of the reservoir has been moved up to 2025 to meet EGLE standards. Prior to that, the new booster pump station and pressure-reducing valves must be in place. That price tag is approximately \$7.6 million. To help determine how to budget for that, the city is working with a vendor to assess water/sewer rates, and compare them to rates of area municipalities.

In 2024, DPW Director Mike Domine will work with two firms on engineering projects, approved by Council following a bidding process that elicited 11 proposals. OHM Advisors was selected as the chief engineering firm and Spicer Group was selected as the secondary firm. Having two firms allows for better scheduling and expertise matched to the project. The two firms will use newly updated engineering standards for the city, which were approved by City Council in 2023.

Downtown streetscape improvements

Downtown Northville now has an added safety feature with new 3-foot, retractable bollards, in sets of 10 at Main and Hutton, Center and Dunlap (11 bollards here) and Center and Main. The north side of Center and Main will have bollards installed in the early spring.

When the streets are closed, the bollards will be upright to prevent vehicles from entering the streets. When streets are open to traffic, the bollards reside underground with a metal plate over the opening. Emergency personnel have keys to raise and lower the bollards. They replace the water barricades and the so-called Blues Brothers police cars that were used for pedestrian safety.

The contemporary yet classic appearance of the bollards adds another distinctive feature to Downtown Northville, which is well regarded for its seasonal, lavish flowers and plantings and brightly lit trees that add a special sparkle to the downtown streets over the holiday season. Lighting is also keeping downtown bright as the DDA replaces older lights with new LED luminaires.

The city extends a special thanks to the DDA, the Beautification Commission, and Begonia Brothers of Northville for keeping the downtown area looking warm and inviting year-round.



New firefighting equipment – Fire Dept. personnel show the flashlights and tools they received from the MI Fire Equipment Grant Program. They also received thermal imaging cameras, which can help locate people and objects in the dark and smoke-filled rooms. NCFD Fire Chief Matt Samhat coordinated the \$20,000 grant application for the department, which serves the cities of Northville and Plymouth. From left, Lt. John Lapenta and Firefighters Austin Jones and Chris Helinski. Photo by Chief Samhat.

 Like us on Facebook
<https://www.facebook.com/northvillecityhall/>

 Follow us on Twitter
<https://twitter.com/NorthvilleCity>

2023 Highlights

January – City Manager Pat Sullivan retires after 16 years of service to the city.// Grissim Metz and Andriese (GMA) present ways to improve street aesthetics along the closed sections of Center and Main in Downtown Northville.

February – Major ice storm slams into city on Feb. 22/23 – First responders, the Fire Dept., Police Dept. and Dept. of Public Works (DPW) sprang into action.

March – George Lahanas began his new role as city manager in Northville after working as East Lansing’s city manager for 11 years.// The Northville City Fire Department (NCFD) renewed a 12-year interlocal agreement with the city of Plymouth that shares fire and emergency services.

April – Council unanimously approved a resolution (D-2*) required by MDOT to decertify approximately 982 ft. of major roads from the city of Northville’s public road system for non-motorized use (pedestrian only) from late April to early November, and for intermittent closures for special events from early November through late April.

May – A public hearing was held at City Hall to discuss projects designed to upgrade the city’s aging water infrastructure.

June – Coffee with Council begins, enabling citizens to meet with two different City Council members and the city manager at each monthly meeting for informal conversation.

July – Giarmarco, Mullins and Horton, P.C., of Troy, also known as GMH, was chosen during a bid process to represent the city as legal counsel.// Derek Smith began serving as the new director of Northville Parks and Recreation. // City Hall was temporarily closed to the public on July 27 due to a power outage following a storm.

August – Council approved a proposal by GMA for the preliminary plans and renderings of a curb-less roadway design for Main Street.

September – New entrance signs were installed around the city along with building signs at City Hall, the DPW Yard, and the Police Dept.

October – City Council adopted the 2023 Non-Motorized Transportation Plan developed by The Greenway Collaborative.//The annual Skeletons are Alive event and month-long display drew record crowds to town.// Bollards were installed at two downtown intersections and, when complete, will border four intersections.

November – The Planning Commission approved the Final PUD Site Plan, with conditions, of the Downs redevelopment project, capping a two-year process of presentations, deliberations and changes.// The downtown closed streets were reopened to traffic for the first time since they were closed in Summer 2020 to stimulate business during COVID-19.//The Ford Field Master Plan developed by Wade-Trim was adopted by City Council.//Laura Genitti is the top vote-getter to hold a seat on City Council and Barbara Moroski-Browne is re-elected in a tight race. Mayor Brian Turnbull, unchallenged, wins re-election.

December – Council approved the DDA boundary expansion to include portions of Cady Street and River Park along with a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) plan to help fund economic development.

City Directory

Allen Terrace.....	248-349-8030
Assessor.....	248-305-2704
Building Department.....	248-449-9902
Cemetery.....	248-305-2702
City Manager.....	248-449-9905
City Clerk.....	248-349-1300
Communications (print, online).....	248-305-2703
Community Center.....	248-349-4140
DDA.....	248-349-0345
Finance Department.....	248-449-9907
Fire Department.....	248-449-9920
Parks and Recreation.....	248-349-0203
Police Dispatch (non-emergency).....	248-349-1234
Police.....	248-349-5100
Public Works.....	248-449-9930
Tax Department/Treasurer.....	248-449-9901
Youth Assistance.....	248-344-1618

Frequently Called Numbers

Art House.....	248-344-0497
Chamber of Commerce.....	248-349-7640
Civic Concern.....	248-344-1033
GFL (trash).....	844-464-3587
Historical Society.....	248-348-1845
Library.....	248-349-3020
Mill Race Village.....	248-348-1845
Post Office.....	248-349-2062

Northville Matters editor: Liz Cezat
lcezat@ci.northville.mi.us

City News
of Northville

Find out what's happening around town.
Subscribe to our free weekly e-newsletter.
<https://tinyurl.com/tld3opr>