

City of Lathrup Village
27400 Southfield Road
Lathrup Village, MI 48076
www.lathrupvillage.org | (248) 557-2600

TO: Mayor & City Council
FROM: Mike Greene – City Administrator
DATE: February 26, 2024
RE: Study Session

Fiscal Year 2024-25 – Council/Budget Goals

The purpose of this discussion item is for the Council to kick-start their discussion of what they wish to achieve in the next fiscal year. Enclosed in your packet are the Fiscal Year 2023-24 council/budget goals that I found in the Administrator files to assist with the discussion.

There was a budget public input meeting that took place on February 12th, 2024, from 5:30 PM to 7:30 PM for members of the community to share their thoughts on items for next year's budget. A summary of that meeting is enclosed for your records.

Community Room

The purpose of this item is to discuss the management of the Community Room and to clarify how the rate structure should be applied. The DRAFT rental form included in your packet is for discussion purposes only and to solicit ideas from the Council on how to move forward.

General Fund, Revenue, & Expense Review Presentation

Please see the enclosed information from Councilmember Kantor.

Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA)

Currently, the City Council serves as the ZBA for Lathrup Village which is permissible under the zoning and enabling act 125.3601(2), and our zoning ordinance was drafted to reflect the same. The purpose of this discussion is to determine the Council's interest in establishing an independent board to serve as the ZBA, shedding some of the responsibility and workload of the City Council.

Inclusion, Diversity, & Accessibility (IDA) Committee

At a previous study session, there was a brief discussion on the creation of an IDA Committee and what that could potentially look like. The purpose of this item is to continue that discussion and see if there is interest in beginning to solicit applications.

Ferguson Water Meter Tower Installation – City Hall Campus

It is my understanding that during the spring of 2023, the City Council approved the furnishing of Neptune 360 AMI Software, installing the necessary AMI Infrastructure, and the purchase of backup reading equipment via Ferguson Waterworks. At a subsequent meeting, it was pitched and denied placing a new 75-foot antenna within our municipal park for meter reading. The purpose of this discussion is to determine the Council's interest in placing the approved tower on the City Hall site, by replacing the old dispatch antenna next to the Police Department. If there is consensus to move forward, an updated proposal from DES Electric (generator electrician) will need to be obtained/approved by the Council for additional electrical work that would need to take place.

Interior Service Line Identification

At the last study session, there was a discussion regarding the interior service line identification program. After a meeting with our City Engineer, we are seeking Council input on a plan to move forward. While staff explored a short-term plan to Utilize Giffels Webster inspectors to conduct interior inspections, timing is not on our side as they are now entering construction season which limits their availability. We are still working on finalizing an RFP to seek a company to handle the scheduling/inspections of all remaining identifications to meet our deadlines before having to turn to extreme measures (i.e. hefty penalties/shut-offs). We are also soliciting company's the City has worked with on other projects to see if this type of project fits within their company's scope to try and move this project forward.

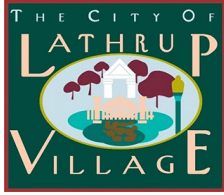
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Goals & Performance Measures
Fiscal Year 2023/2024

Transparent, Open & Honest Government	
<i>This value reflects our first and most important responsibility. We maintain an organizational reputation for openness, honesty, and integrity.</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve communications with residents and local businesses 	Use all possible media to communicate events, meetings, and updates promptly. Develop a clear and concise timeline for when items need to be turned in for the media and be consistent with the timing of posting.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop effective document management and paperless processes 	Develop processes and policies that allow residents to conduct business online and make payments with ease.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve website design to make info more easily accessible 	Online payments are easily conducted, checking for available rentals (i.e. community room, meeting place, gazebo)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do more Town Halls 	Conduct as many in-person meetings as possible where the general public can attend. Provide quarterly open houses with Council Members and City Administrator.

Dedication to Service	
<i>Our primary duty is to the people we serve. We are accessible, responsive, consistent, and understanding. We provide assistance beyond our customer's expectations, and we find effective solutions to problems that are brought to our attention.</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve operations through upgrades in technology 	Develop processes and policies that allow residents to conduct business online and make payments with ease.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain robust and attractive business corridors 	Code enforcer and City Administrator conduct business inventory quarterly not only to provide feedback for improvement but also to increase business relationships.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote a safe and secure community 	Continue to patrol the City, engaging with the residents and assisting when a resident is in need.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and prioritize improvements to parks and playgrounds 	We will ensure that our parks and playgrounds are clean and safe. When available financial upgrades will be done.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve quality of life for residents of all ages 	We will respond to residents professionally and respectfully in a timely manner. Even if we do not have the answer immediately we will return phone calls, emails, and messages within 48 hours.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a maximum of one (1) workday initial response to See Click Fix reports with an additional response every three (3) business days until the issue is resolved 	Residents will be updated regularly until their inquiry is completed. The City Council will be updated with open issues from See Click Fix bi-weekly consistently.
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Fiscal Responsibility	
<i>Proper use of community resources in a public trust which we continually guard. In the management of this trust, we must avoid even the appearance of impropriety. In our management of public funds, we will strive for the greater possible efficiency and effectiveness.</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employee Time Off 	All vacation days, personal days, and sick days will be communicated to the employee's direct supervisor and recorded properly in a time management system.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contracts 	Contracts will be reviewed annually and RFPs will be submitted when appropriate for new contractual services. All business conducted with the City will have a written agreement and/or contract in place.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support economic vitality to attract and retain local businesses • Maintain Infrastructure 	

Personal Honesty and Integrity	
<i>Each of us demonstrates the highest standards of personal integrity and honesty in public activities to inspire confidence and trust in government.</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update Council Rules and Procedures • Code of Ethics provided to all newly elected/appointed Council and Board members • All members of appointed and elected boards will come to meetings prepared to conduct business 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respond by agreed-upon deadlines 	Clear Expectations of due dates and assignments will be communicated. Reminders will be sent 24 hours before the due date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All staff, and members of appointed and elected boards will be as timely as possible with their arrival to meetings unless they have communicated otherwise. 	

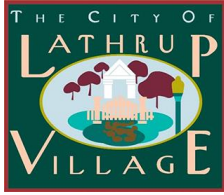
Excellence	
<i>We continually pursue excellence by being creative, and professional, taking risks, showing initiative, and being committed to our team. In this pursuit, we support continuing education and training for all team members.</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All staff and members of appointed and elected boards will participate in training that will increase knowledge and help the City progress 	Register and participate in training offered by MML and other organizations.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subscribe/read journals, organizations, and periodicals (e.g. Inside 208, Bridge, MML magazine, etc.) 	

- All staff, and members of appointed and elected boards will be proactive and take initiatives to improve community relations (i.e. residents, businesses, and surrounding communities)

Teamwork
<i>We are a team that emphasizes high levels of trust, cooperation, and commitment to excellent communication with the organization. We encourage employees to exercise independent judgment in meeting customer needs through professional behavior that is consistent with our values.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will provide professional development and team development opportunities bi-annually • We will work by the “golden rule” when it comes to interacting with staff, residents, and the general community

A Humane and Diverse Organization	
<i>We are a humane organization that honors diversity and protects individual rights. Open communication, respect for others, compassion, and a sense of humor contribute to our positive working environment. We make every attempt for every employee to reach their full potential. We value cultural and social diversity that is reflected in our community, and we welcome the changes and new perspectives that this diversity brings us.</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appointments to boards and commissions: 	Reflective of the cultural and social diversity of the community.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will provide cultural events for the community during holidays and for general celebrations. • We will respect all people regardless of their ethnicity, race, age, sexual orientation, and preference. 	

Other
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue best practices in maintaining city grounds, parks, and entrances. • Code enforcement classes (e.g. how do I maintain my ditch & culvert). • Identify cross-functional opportunities (e.g. police officers & Code Enforcement)



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TO: Mayor & City Council
FROM: Mike Greene – City Administrator
DATE: February 16, 2024
RE: Public Budget Input Session Feedback

On Monday, February 12th, 2024, I held a Public Input Budget Session to solicit feedback from residents on what they would like to see the City focus on this upcoming fiscal year. We had approximately 30 residents attend the session. The idea was to stick with high-level ideas and not discuss specific dollar numbers as we are not in that step of the budget process yet. I presented the attendees with topics (in **bold**) to share their ideas and have listed those ideas below. At the end of the session, I had the attendees rank which topic was the most important to them and listed the topics in this memo based on priority.

This information is purely informative. While we may be able to implement some of the ideas over this next year, it is uncertain until we get closer to a final budget and see what type of discretionary funding is still available.

If you have any questions, feel free to reach out.

Technology & Communications

- Our Town – Quarterly
- Consistent Updates to Website Information
 - Easier Searches on the Website (ex: meeting packets)
 - Dedicated Staff
- Sign in front of City Hall Announcing Events
- Evaluate – Creating IT Director vs. Outsourcing
- Communication Tools for Residents Not on Social Media
- Sign Placement throughout City (ex: Bike Signs)
- Keep Weekly Newsletter
 - Change Publication Timing
 - Limit Council Promotional Pieces
 - Separate City Information from Other
 - Include Resident Submission Section
 - Resident Volunteers for Newsletter Creation
- Provide Skills Development for Residents (ex: Senior Classes)
- City Meetings on Video
 - Study Session, Council Meetings, Planning Commission, DDA

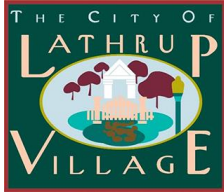
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Government Services

- Audit DDA – Evaluate Effectiveness
 - Clarify the Relationship with the City
- Establish Accounts at Office Supply, Printing, Etc.
- Salaried Staff – No Overtime Pay
 - Flex Time / Comp Time Monitored
- Conflict of Interest Issues
- More Transparency with the City Budget
 - Revenues & Expenses
- City Administration is Too Expensive
- Tidy Up Annie Lathrup School
- Provide Oversight to City Council
 - Adhere to Bylaws
 - Transparent Communication of Priorities
- Adhere to Ethics Ordinance
- No Question of Nepotism
- Value of money for administration
 - What do Individuals do?
 - Are we overstaffed for the size of the population?
- Ensure the Bid process is Followed
- Could positions be staffed by volunteers to support staff (ex: Code Enforcement & P&R Support)
- City Accountability for Code Enforcement
- Permit Process Review
- No partnerships with outside groups
- Open Meetings Act Transparency
- Decrease Credit Card Use

Other – Topics Not Covered by Prompts

- Establish Resident Finance Committee
- Meetings – Increase Public Comment Time Limits
 - Answer Questions When Asked
- Evaluate Standing Committees – Duties/Structure – Does it meet Charter requirements
- Yearly Citizen Survey
- Review City Contracts – Outsource vs. Internal
- Take Advantage of Volunteers / Skills Inventory
- Evaluate DDA Agreement
- Establish Ethics Committee
- Fiscal Responsibility

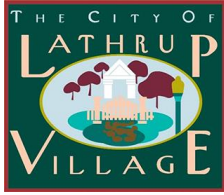
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Parks & Recreation

- Paid Director
- Coordinate & Support Groups of Volunteer City Groups
 - Garden, HOA, Historical, Women's, Supper Club
- Keep Parks Appearance Up
 - Mowed, Clean, Organized
 - Public Group Clean Ups
 - Add More Trees
- Organized Community Events/Contests (ex: Christmas, Halloween, etc.)
- Promote Local Events
- Bring Back:
 - Supper Club
 - Bike Parades
 - Community Garage Sales
 - Art & Crafts Shows
 - Farmers Market
- More Family Activities (ex: Breakfast with Santa / Easter Bunny)
- Increase Parks & Recreation Funding
- Add Athletic Facilities/Fields
- Community Groups discounted price to use City Facilities

Infrastructure

- Address Ditch Flooding
- City Grade Culverts
- Safe/Sufficient Water Pressure
- Properly Grade Dirt Roads
- Are replaced roads as wide as before?
- Keep up with repair/patching as needed
- Reduce Visual Pollution (unnecessary signage)
- Review Outsourced Services
- Follow-up & Follow-Through on Each Infrastructure Project
- Communicate with Residents Before Construction Start-Up
- Transparency with Infrastructure Funding
- Left Turn Lane off Bloomfield onto 12-Mile

Public Works

- Improve Park Maintenance
- Consistent Brush Pick-Up
- Finish Final Work After Paving
 - Debris Cleanup / Grass Seed Watering
- Establish a Strategic Plan for ROW Tree Replacement & Tree Maintenance
- Repair Damage Caused by Snowplows
- Improved coordination between County & City – Plowing
- Clear Intersection Triangles
- No More Garden Beds

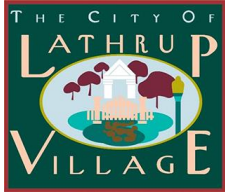
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Public Safety

- Bike Patrol
- Traffic Signal & Speed Limit Enforcement (ex: Goldengate & Southfield)
- Speed Bumps (temporary or permanent) on Major Streets
- Manage Current Staff
- Traffic Plans for Major Construction Projects
- Conduct Safety Audits for Homeowners
- Outsource vs. Internal Evaluation
- Establish One Way Alleys

Economic Development

- Traffic Slowed – Major Corridor
- Speed Limit Enforcement / “No Turn” Times
- Signage Standards
- Clean-Up Business Parking Lots
- Business Awards (Business of the Month)
- Promote Mixed-Use Developments
- Walkable Areas

Bonus Input – Types of Business You Would Want to See

- No Cannabis Businesses
- Resale Shops
- Coffee & Tea Shops
- Specialty Home Décor
- Market (Farmers)
- Family Restaurants
- Sports Bar
- Ice Cream Shops
- Quality Businesses / National Companies
- Meeting Spaces

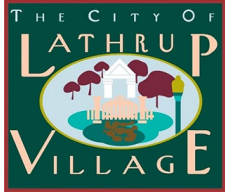
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Facility Rental Application – Single Event

Date Of Event: _____ Arrival Time: _____ End Time: _____

Name of Host Organization: _____

Address of Host: _____

Contact Email: _____ Phone #: _____

Type of Event: _____

Attendance Min: _____ Attendance Max: _____

Deposit

Park \$100 Community Room \$300 Other \$_____

Deposit Paid On: _____ Received By: _____

Alcohol Wavier: YES NO

Facility	Resident Rate	Non-Resident Rate	Hours Requested	Sub-Total
Community Room	\$100 Per Hour	\$125 Per Hour		
Community Room Setup/Cleaning Fee	\$100 Flat Fee			
Audio/Visual	\$60 Flat Fee			
Kitchen	\$100 Flat Fee	\$125 Flat Fee		
Meeting Place	\$20 Per Hour	\$25 Per Hour		
Meeting Place Setup/Cleaning Fee	\$30 Flat Fee			
Conference Room	\$5 Per Hour	\$10 Per Hour		
Dance Studio	\$25 Per Hour	\$30 Per Hour		
Municipal Park	\$50 Per Hour	\$100 Per Hour		
Park Electric	\$20 Flat Fee			
Goldengate Park	\$30 Per Hour	\$75 Per Hour		
Sarrackwood Park	\$20 Per Hour	\$50 Per Hour		

Balance Due By: _____

Total Due: _____

GENERAL RENTAL POLICIES

Damage and Cleanup Agreement

Said group agrees to pay the City of Lathrup Village ACTUAL costs for damages and/or cleaning required for property caused by said groups at said location, which may be above and beyond the security deposit amount.

Release and Hold Harmless Agreement

In consideration of entering into this agreement with the City of Lathrup Village, the undersigned, by this instrument does hereby expressly stipulate and agree to release, waive, discharge and indemnify and forever hold harmless the City of Lathrup Village, its departments, offices, officers, its assigns, agents' servants and employees and volunteers of any damage, loss, injury or death which heretofore has been or which may hereafter be sustained by the said INDIVIDUAL, GROUP, ORGANIZATION, OR FAMILY, as a consequence of their participation in any activities in connection with this agreement.

The release extends and applies to, and includes all unknown, unforeseen, unanticipated, and unsuspected injuries, damages, death, loss, and liability, and the consequence thereof, as well as those now disclosed and known to exist. The provisions of any state, federal, local, or territorial law or statute providing in substance that releases shall not extend to claims, demands, injuries, death, or damages, which are unknown or are unsuspected to exist at the time to the person executing such release, are hereby expressly waived.

Having read the above conditions and receiving the guidelines about this rental, I/we agree to the conditions of this agreement and the guidelines established by the City of Lathrup Village.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Deposits

A refundable deposit (separate from rental fees) is required for all park or community room rentals. A full deposit is due at the time of application. Deposits will be returned by check in the mail, within four weeks after the event, providing there has been no damage to the facilities and all rules, regulations, and policies were followed. Parties entering the premises before their booked time or

Cancellations

Indoor rental events canceled within two (2) business days of booking will be refunded their full deposit, less a \$20.00 processing fee. Events canceled between three (3) business days after booking and up to sixty (60) days before the date of the event will be refunded ½ of their deposit. **Events canceled for any reason within sixty (60) days of the event forfeit their entire deposit.**

Park events canceled between the time of booking and up to three (3) weeks of the event will be refunded their full deposit, less a \$20.00 processing fee. Events canceled for any reason within three (3) weeks of the date of the event forfeit their entire deposit. Events booked at the parks should be considered "rain or shine" as there are no refunds for cancellations due to weather conditions on the day of the event.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Discounts

OPTION EXAMPLE 1 - Those who, on the date of the event, are members of the City Council and City of Lathrup Village staff are entitled to seventy-five percent (75%) discounts on all rental fees, with a maximum of two discounted rentals per calendar year. A discount is not applied to any “flat fee” as outlined in the rental fee schedule.

Certified Lathrup Village 501(c)3 non-profit organizations are entitled to two (2) free room rentals (minus “flat fees”) per calendar year. Other certified 501(c)3 non-profit organizations are entitled to fifty percent (50%) discounts on all rental fees, with a maximum of two discounted rentals per calendar year (minus “flat fees”).

Fees are waived on all City-sponsored or other government agency events as approved by the City Administrator.

OPTION EXAMPLE 2 – Any group or individual that is seeking a discount for use of a City facility must put a request in writing and seek approval at an upcoming City Council meeting. The City requires a deposit to be placed in order to hold the requested date until the City Council decision is rendered.

General Rental Policies

- Park and building rental by permit only; ALL posted and written park/facility rules must be observed.
- The rental applicant must remain on-site for the duration of the rental period.
- Event organizers must have a printed copy of their rental permit to display to the Police Department if requested.
- Reservation holders may not transfer a rental permit.
- The use of any park/facility is at your own risk. The City does not assume responsibility for injury or for any loss, theft, or damage to personal items.
- Reservation holders must comply with State of Michigan laws and City of Lathrup Village ordinances.
- Individuals or groups who fail to comply with these policies or who are responsible for damage to a facility may lose their deposit and their ability to rent City of Lathrup Village facilities in the future.

INDOOR SPECIFIC POLICIES

Indoor General Policies

- Setup may not begin before the rental time. All activities, including cleanup, must be completed by the end of the rental period.
- An alcohol use agreement must be completed before the event for alcohol to be served. Users should keep the alcohol use agreement present and easily accessible throughout the event.
- Any party observed to be serving alcohol without an alcohol use agreement or in violation of our alcohol policies will be closed immediately with no refund of room usage fees or deposit.

Building Usage Policies

- Renters have access to the entire City Hall parking lot unless otherwise specified by city personnel. If directed to use a certain area of the lot, renters agree to make every effort to direct their guests to use that area.
- Renters and their guests are limited to the bathrooms on the floor of the room(s) they are renting unless otherwise specified. Users of Municipal Park are also able to use the restrooms in City Hall. All users are responsible for cleaning up after themselves and leaving the facility in good condition. Renters are responsible for ensuring their guests do not wander throughout the building and/or utilize spaces that have not been rented to that party.
- Renters are required to remove all their decorations from the premises at the end of their event. Trash should be placed in the trash bins.
- **Rental of the kitchen includes access to the ice machine, dishwasher, refrigerator, stovetop/ovens, and coffee maker to reheat, warm, and/or cool foods only.** The kitchen may not be rented stand-alone except by professional/insured chefs. Event organizers or participants are not allowed to open cupboards or drawers to use items belonging to the facility. If the kitchen is not rented, it will be locked.
- A digital projector, screen, wired microphone, CD player, DVD player, and audio are available for rent in the community room only. Event organizers must contact the room coordinator at least one week before their event to set up a time to test the compatibility of their equipment with our equipment. Event organizers must provide their connections to the projector and audio equipment.
- Rental of an indoor space includes use of furniture, limited to tables and chairs. The meeting place and community room can be arranged according to the needs of the applicant if a room diagram is provided at least two weeks before the event. Furniture for rent is subject to availability. For an updated inventory of what furniture is available, applicants may contact the room coordinator. Furniture may not be rented by itself for use off-site or outside. Linens, place settings, dinnerware, silverware, serving dishes, glasses, coffee/tea sets, kitchen utensils, etc. are not available for rent or use outside of City events. Rental of dance studio includes use of equipment in the room unless otherwise marked.
- Music and noise levels must be respectful towards other users of the building. Renters must abide by directives from city personnel regarding excessive music or noise volume. The music and behavior of users should be respectful of the use of a public building.

Decorations, Prohibited Items, & Events

- Decorations are limited to tables only. Nothing may be attached to walls, floors, ceilings, or fans. No loose decorations such as confetti or glitter may be used. All decorations must be removed by the users at the end of the event. Open flames and candles are prohibited.
- Events with tickets or admission fees are prohibited. Exceptions may be made for “suggested donation” events for non-profit organizations as approved by the City Administrator.
- Events in which products/services will be sold or promoted (ex. Mary Kay parties), are prohibited.
- Children’s parties are prohibited in the Community Room.
- Smoking of any kind, vaping/electronic cigarettes, marijuana, and marijuana-infused projects are prohibited.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

ALCOHOL USE AGREEMENT

Alcohol Policies

- Alcoholic beverages, including beer, are prohibited in all city buildings, except by an alcohol use agreement from the City of Lathrup Village. An Alcohol Use Agreement must be obtained at least one week before the event from the City office.
- Users must keep the agreement present and easily accessible throughout the event.
- Selling or serving alcohol to individuals under the age of 21 is prohibited.
- Selling or serving alcohol to individuals who are visibly intoxicated is prohibited.
- Alcohol of any kind is prohibited at high school graduation/open house parties.
- Any party observed to be serving alcohol without an agreement or in violation of our alcohol policies will be closed immediately with no refund of room usage fees or deposit.

Release & Hold Harmless Agreement

In consideration of being allowed by the City of Lathrup Village to possess and consume beer and/or wine at the above location and date(s), the undersigned, by this instrument does/do hereby expressly stipulate and agree to release, waive, discharge, indemnify, and forever hold harmless the City of Lathrup Village, its departments, officials, officers, its assigns, agents, servants, employees, and volunteers of and from all claims, demands, actions or causes of action now existing or which may hereafter exist because of any damage, loss, injury or death which heretofore has been, or which may hereafter, be sustained by the said individual, group, organization or family in consequence of their participation in any activities in connection with issuance of this agreement.

This release extends and applies to, and covers and includes, all unknown, unforeseen, unanticipated, and unsuspected injuries, death, damages, loss, and liability, and the consequences thereof, as well as those now disclosed and known to exist. The provisions of any state, federal, local, and territorial law or statute providing in substance that releases shall not extend to claims, demands, injuries, death, or damages which are unknown or unsuspected to exist at the time to the person executing such release, are hereby expressly waived.

APPLICANT HAS READ AND UNDERSTOOD THE ABOVE AND ITS CONDITIONS

I confirm that I/we will not sell or serve alcoholic beverages to any individuals under the age of 21 or who are visibly intoxicated at this event. I understand that alcoholic beverages are prohibited at all high school graduation/open house parties.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

A floor plan diagram enclosed in a dark blue border. At the top is a light blue trapezoidal area labeled 'STAGE'. Below it is a light blue rectangular area labeled 'DANCE FLOOR'. At the bottom is a light blue rectangular area labeled 'KITCHEN'. To the right of the kitchen is a light blue L-shaped area labeled 'BAR'.

STAGE

**DANCE
FLOOR**

BAR

KITCHEN



A HERITAGE OF GOOD LIVING

FINANCIAL REVIEW

CITY OF LATHRUP VILLAGE

27400 Southfield Road, Lathrup Village, Michigan 48076

GENERAL FUND, REVENUE & EXPENSE REVIEW

by Bruce Kantor

JANUARY 24, 2024

Introduction:

The final Fiscal Year 2023 audit received this past December revealed an unexpected \$659K reduction to the General Fund. This reduction was a shock to everyone, as it was significantly larger than the \$172K reduction in the General Fund that was originally budgeted for FY23. It was also greater than the updated \$234K reduction that was amended in January of 2023 and the updated \$251K reduction that was amended in June of 2023.

The cause of this unexpected General Fund reduction was primarily related to transfers missing from the General Fund that were identified during the audit. As the audit noted, several significant reconciliations and transfers were not completed in a timely manner. These transfers were mostly related to projects that were included and paid for as part of the three-year road bond (to get a better volume discount from the contractor), but ultimately needed to be paid for using General Fund dollars, not road bond funds. These reimbursements to the road fund never occurred because the former City Administrator, who also functioned as the City's Director of Finance, never directed the Treasury to make these reimbursements. Work that was previously performed on culverts, the Cambridge drainage system, the DPW parking lot and Santa Barbara, totaling almost \$420K, needed to be reimbursed to the road bond fund from the General Fund and resulted in the surprise reduction to the General Fund. Other transfers from the DDA and Water & Sewer Fund to the road fund were also necessary, but these did not affect the General Fund. See Appendix A for a list of these transfers.

The lack of untimely reconciliations and transfers painted a falsely positive financial picture during the fiscal year and resulted in the surprisingly large deduction to the General Fund post audit. Obviously, making informed decisions requires timely and accurate financial data. Not having accurate data hurt the decision-making process during FY23. The new City Administrator will be working with Plante Moran in the near future to implement the required processes and procedures to ensure the data City Council uses is both accurate and current.

As a result of this large, unexpected reduction to the General Fund, this Revenue & Expense Review project was tasked to (a) analyze the General Fund activity in FY23 and (b) to identify areas where revenue could potentially be increased and expenses decreased to ensure the General Fund would resume positive growth. The first phase was to analyze the General Fund activity

and to identify actions that could potentially be implemented to grow the General Fund. To identify growth opportunities, regular meetings occurred with the City Treasurer, City Administrator, auditors, department heads, and various staff members. In these meetings, revenue and expenses were discussed in detail, line-by-line, across all budget categories. These conversations were candid and no items were off-limits, regardless of their anticipated unpopularity or potential difficulty to change. No expense was considered too large or too small to be reviewed. The goal was to develop a comprehensive, objective list of ideas that could be evaluated further. Phase Two of this project will consist of administrative and/or City Council discussions on how and whether to implement the compiled list of suggestions.

Review of the General Fund Reduction in FY23:

As noted above, the \$420K of unexpected infrastructure expenses explains the difference between the General Fund deficit expected in the amended June 2023 budget and the actual \$659K total recorded post audit.

When analyzing the General Fund, it is made significantly more complex by the fact that many of the infrastructure projects a) have expenses that are eventually reimbursed, and b) have revenue and expenses that are not aligned within the same fiscal year. For example, sidewalk and culvert expenses occur in one fiscal year, but the majority of the reimbursement (revenue) does not occur until the subsequent fiscal year (or even the fiscal year after that given the City’s extended payment plan option available to residents). With the significant amount of reimbursable construction expenses that occurred during the fiscal year, it is interesting to review revenue compared to expenses after completely removing infrastructure expenses and their associated revenue.

REVENUE		EXPENSE	
Total FY 23 Revenue	\$ 5,194,960	Total FY23 Expenditures	\$ 5,854,555
Less FY23 Sidewalk Revenue	\$ 362,189	Less FY23 Sidewalk Expense	\$ 740,119
	\$ 4,832,771		\$ 5,114,436
Less FY23 Culvert Revenue	\$ 70,212	Less Culvert Expense Charged in FY23	\$ 174,973
	\$ 4,762,559		\$ 4,939,463
Less Santa Barbara\Cambridge Revenue	\$ 3,705	Less FY 23 Santa Barbara\Cambridge Expense	\$ 194,000
	\$ 4,758,854		\$ 4,745,463
Less DPW Parking Lot Revenue	\$ -	Less DPW Parking Lot Expense	\$ 50,897
	\$ 4,758,854		\$ 4,694,566
Revenue less Expenses:	\$ 64,288		

In the table above, after removing the infrastructure expenses from both the revenue and expense side of the ledger, the General Fund revenue was actually \$64K higher than expenses. In other words, after removing infrastructure projects, the City actually grew the General Fund slightly.

Given there is still significant infrastructure revenue yet to be realized, it is worthwhile to determine the magnitude of this future revenue and the effect it will have on the General Fund in FY24. The table below indicates the expected infrastructure revenue for FY24:

	FY 20/21	FY 21/22	FY 22/23	FY 23/24	Total	Outstanding Revenue (Difference between Revenue & Expense)
Sidewalk						
Expense		\$290,102	\$740,119	\$111,861	\$1,142,082	
Revenue		\$27,175	\$362,189	\$151,721	\$541,085	\$600,998
Ditch\Culvert						
Expense	\$14,788	\$106,316	\$53,869		\$174,973	
Revenue	\$9,641	\$6,110	\$70,212	\$34,434	\$120,397	\$54,576
Cambridge SAD						\$14,079
Eldorado SAD						\$10,500
Total Outstanding Revenue:						\$680,152

There remains approximately \$680K of outstanding infrastructure revenue. However, the FY24 budget (amended as of July 17, 2023) only projected approximately \$300K of infrastructure revenue (\$250K for sidewalks, approximately \$50K for culverts and the Cambridge special assessment, and nothing for the Eldorado special assessment). This indicates that an additional \$380K of infrastructure revenue should be expected over what was originally projected. The amended FY24 budget projected a \$225K surplus/growth in the General Fund. With this additional expected \$380K of revenue, the actual increase to the General Fund could be as high as \$605K, all things being equal. Note that the actual FY24 additional revenue will likely be somewhat less than \$380K, as there are some residents who opted to pay their infrastructure invoices over two years. That is, some of their payment will occur in FY25—however, the overall net effect to the General Fund over time is the same.

As noted, after removing the infrastructure projects, the City grew the General Fund slightly. This indicates that outside of infrastructure projects, the administration did a good job of aligning revenue and expenses in FY24, especially in light of high inflation. Of course, in absolute terms, the City did actually incur a large \$659K reduction in the General Fund in FY23. However, most of this reduction should be recouped (reversed) in the coming fiscal year as payments for infrastructure (sidewalks, culverts, special assessments, etc.) are received.

While aligning revenue with expenses (without infrastructure) is a good result, it is still important to ensure that the City is doing everything possible to maximize revenue and minimize expenses. This is especially true given rising prices and our difficulty increasing revenue due to the constraints of being a built-out city subject to Proposition A (and the real estate crash) and Headlee. Maximizing revenue and minimizing expenses will help the City provide residents with more of the services they desire. Potential revenue growth and expense reduction opportunities follow below.

Ideas to Grow the General Fund:

Suggestions to Increase Revenue:

1. **Headlee Override:** The City should consider placing a Headlee Override on a future ballot to bring the millage rate up from the current Headlee reduced rate of 17.5618 to the City's chartered rate of 20 mils. At the current taxable value of \$172M, this would generate approximately \$420K in new revenue. Making it effective for five years (before Headlee reductions can resume), as other communities have done, should also be considered. Alternatively, a Public Safety millage could also be considered. A Headlee Override has been consistently recommended by the City's auditors for the past several years and has been casually discussed by the Administration and Council. More serious discussions to determine the feasibility of such an effort are warranted.
2. **Increase Grant Revenue:** While the City does apply for and receive grants, there is no staff member who focuses solely on these lucrative opportunities. Hiring a grant writer (probably part-time), whose primary focus would be to review the plethora of available grants across various functions and submit applications, could result in additional revenue. If an effective grant writer was employed, the cost of this position could easily be covered by some of the additional revenue that is secured.
3. **Water Department Fees:** The City does not currently charge water and sewer connection fees. It also does not charge for turning water service on and off. Rates for these services should be established. These fees should be part of the Water/Sewer department and not the building department to ensure these fees are collected by the City, not McKenna, who retains 75% of permit fees. **Update:** This initiative has been successfully implemented by City Council, which approved the establishment of these rates at the December 18, 2023 City Council meeting.
4. **Building Department Fees:** The fee schedules charged by the Building Department (for electrical, plumbing, dumpsters, applications, etc.) has not been revised in many years. Since McKenna keeps 75% of permit fees, the City should require McKenna to perform a comparative analysis of surrounding communities and increase the City's fees accordingly. Since McKenna would keep 75% of the increase, they should be eager to take on such a project.
5. **Room Rental Fees:** Charges for the rental of the Community Room, Meeting Place, Parks, etc. should be reviewed and updated, as it has been several years since these rates have been reviewed. Rental fees should be assessed relative to other comparable facilities to determine if increases are necessary. One obvious related fee that needs adjustment is the cleaning fee for the Community Room. The City charges \$100, which is exactly the amount the City pays the custodian to do the cleaning. Given there are other costs such as supplies, insurance, equipment, utilities, etc., for each rental, the City loses money on every cleaning, which occurs regularly.
6. **City-owned property:** The City owns multiple parcels or un-platted sections of land throughout the City. The City should evaluate the land use and determine the best future use of the properties, which may include selling the parcels for development.
7. **Alleyway Vacations:** The City has many alleyways that it does not and never will use (e.g., Dolores west of Woodworth Way, Goldengate both east and west of Rainbow, Sunnybrook both east and west of Southfield Road, and others). The City should consider vacating these unused properties. This will save on City maintenance expenses and generate new annual tax revenue in perpetuity.

8. Encroachments: The City has an abundance of encroachments, where residents and business are using city-owned property for personal use. The usage requirements and fees have not been applied with any level of consistency over the years. City Council has been considering an encroachment policy for almost two years. Council asked for a comprehensive inventory of all encroachments within the City so that it could assess the magnitude of the issue and analyze/develop a consistent ordinance. Unfortunately, there have been multiple false starts at developing this inventory. A plan should be developed and implemented to create this inventory. Once completed, City Council can develop a policy, which will undoubtedly generate additional revenue for the City. Further, having a consistent policy will dramatically reduce the significant amount of time the City Administration spends on encroachment issues, which will further reduce costs.
9. Traffic Citations: Many police officers prefer not to write tickets, which seems counter to their job role. Revenue from traffic tickets could easily be increased significantly with more encouragement for ticket writing. Not only would this increase revenue, but it would also increase safety. As motorists become aware of Lathrup Village's reputation for enforcing traffic laws, they will adjust their driving behavior accordingly. Currently, officers average approximately 23 tickets per month, which seems quite low—officers should be encouraged to increase citations. Revenue could also be generated by handing out fewer warnings, which are often given to City residents, some of whom are at the heart of our traffic issues.
10. Police Charges for Services: The fees for police services (e.g., towing, police reports, vehicle releases, etc.) have not been updated in a long time. These fees should be reviewed and updated as necessary.
11. Code Enforcement Fines: The fee schedule for code enforcement violations (e.g., nuisance cuts) should be reviewed and updated. Not only would increasing fines help to increase revenue, but it would also act as a deterrent against ordinance violations.
12. Safe Truck Ordinance: The City should consider an ordinance for safe truck standards (weight, equipment, etc.) so that officers can write more truck tickets. Having our own ordinance would ensure these fines would stay in the City and not get collected by the court system. This was discussed several years ago, but to my knowledge, it was never acted upon. Fines for trucking violations tend to be quite considerable, which could enhance revenue significantly. In order to write these types of tickets, some additional equipment expenses may be necessary. However, the expenses would easily be recovered by the additional revenue gained by writing these tickets.
13. Fixed Asset Sales: The City should determine if it has fixed assets that are no longer used and can be sold (e.g., exercise equipment, unused DPW equipment, etc.).
14. Back Taxes: Approximately \$50K in back taxes are owed to the City by the owners of 28505 Southfield Road. It is unclear why these taxes have not been collected. If appropriate, action should be taken to collect this revenue.
15. Permits: Residential and Commercial Construction work is regularly being done without property owners obtaining the necessary permits. In the past, the City has not aggressively sought out these violations, has looked the other way, waived fines, etc. To increase both safety and revenue, Code Enforcement should be more aggressive about identifying these violations. It would also make sense to periodically remind residents in the eNewsletter as to what type of work requires a permit. In addition, residents should be reminded of the associated fines for not obtaining a permit. Code Enforcement need to be proactive at identifying these situations.

16. **Business License Fees:** Six years ago, there was discussion of raising business license fees, as the City's license fees are significantly lower than surrounding communities; however, this never happened. Increasing business license fees to ensure they are commensurate with market rates will increase City revenue. Empirical observations indicate our license cost is less than half of what other cities charge. In addition, many other cities charge a higher license fee for the initial license (versus a simple renewal). The City should also consider implementing a separate fee for the initial Business License.
17. **Inadequate Enforcement of Business License Requirements:** Many businesses have not renewed their business license for years. In 2022, all business licenses were erroneously deleted out of the BS&A financial system. As a result, only businesses that needed an active license for regulatory certifications renewed their business licenses with the City. Business license fees from 2022 must be retroactively collected from businesses that were in operation during this time period. Currently, business license enforcement appears to be more on the honor system than any type of proactive enforcement. The City needs to be significantly more aggressive about ensuring all businesses obtain their annual license. The City should establish a procedure to run reports regularly to determine which businesses are operating without a valid license.
18. **Past Due Balances:** When stakeholders come to the City office to transact business, the staff currently focuses solely on the business at hand, even when the stakeholder may owe the City a past balance for other past issues (e.g., business license, fines, fees, delinquent water bill, nuisance cut cost, etc.). A process must be put in place that requires a search in all our business systems to determine any past due balance prior to transacting the new business at hand. The City should implement a new policy that any outstanding fees must be paid prior to completing a new transaction.
19. **Delinquent BS&A Fees:** Currently, there are \$20K to 30K in funds owed to the City in BS&A by residents and businesses. A new process should be implemented to place any BS&A owed fees onto the tax rolls at the end of the year (i.e., using the same process currently in place for delinquent water bills, nuisance cuts, etc.). The City Attorney should be consulted to determine if an ordinance update is required to implement this process.
20. **Vacancy Fees:** The City does not currently enforce and collect vacancy fees for periodic surveillance of empty properties. Different fees should be assessed for extended vacations versus permanently empty business/homes and for commercial versus residential vacancies.
21. **Business Inspections:** The City should implement a policy that requires a property inspection whenever a business license lapses, a new business opens, or a business changes owners. This will provide an opportunity to ensure the safety of the occupant and to generate inspection revenue. Such a policy would also help to encourage businesses to ensure their business licenses do not lapse, as they would face an inspection along with the associated inspection fee for a lapsed license.
22. **Fire Inspections:** The City does not currently charge a fee when the Southfield Fire Department conducts fire inspections for the City. The City pays Southfield an annual fee for fire services. Some of this fee could be recouped by charging the property owner for fire inspections, as other cities do.

Suggestions to Decrease Expenses:

The biggest potential reduction of expenses could be achieved by reviewing existing contracts—many of which have not been reviewed or competitively bid in many years. Additionally, contracting for existing in-house services or bringing contracted services back in-house may also provide savings opportunities. A myriad of other, more relatively minor, savings opportunities exist across all City departments.

Contracts:

1. **Dispatch Services:** Dispatch services are currently provided by the City of Southfield. Given the new interoperability provided by recent communication system upgrades, Lathrup Village could now use another city's dispatch services. Quotes from nearby cities should be requested or an open RFP should be executed. However, this could be complicated by the fact that our current dispatch services handle both police and fire. Therefore, any change would require the new dispatcher be able to work with the City of Southfield, since the City contracts with Southfield for fire protection. The City currently pays approximately \$57K for outsourced dispatch services, but is currently operating without a contract. The last contract expired on June 30, 2023.
2. **Police Services:** The City currently employs its own Police Department. While contracting for police services with another city would likely be wildly unpopular, there may be savings associated with doing so, and as a result, this possibility should at least be investigated. Having our own community-oriented police force is a huge part of Lathrup Village's unique identity. However, if the City could realize dramatic savings by outsourcing its police department, the City may need to consider the possibility and have some uncomfortable discussions on the topic. The Police Department is projected to incur approximately \$2.6M in expenses in FY24 (51% of all General Fund expenses).
3. **DPW Services:** Many years ago, the Department of Public Works was outsourced to Lathrup Services LLC. The City currently pays approximately \$400K per year for these contracted services. An analysis should be conducted to determine if moving the services back in-house could reduce the amount spent on DPW services.
4. **Building Department Services:** The City currently contracts with McKenna for building department services. As payment, McKenna retains 75% of all permit fees, receives a set fee of \$100 per month, charges the City \$58 per hour when working onsite as the Building Official, and receives other miscellaneous fees. It might be worth investigating whether the City can bring these services in-house. Given McKenna provides multiple consultants with the appropriate expertise where necessary (e.g. plumbing, electrical, mechanical, etc.), this might be cost prohibitive. However, a cursory analysis could be done to determine whether looking at this at a more in-depth level would make sense. In addition, the City could investigate whether the contract could be renegotiated more in our favor (e.g., a 65%/35% split)?
5. **MML Liability Pool Insurance:** The City currently uses the Michigan Municipal League's liability pool for insurance. While this is probably the most cost-effective solution, other competitive options should be researched to confirm that assumption. The City currently pays \$93K annually for this policy.
6. **Technology Services:** The City currently uses VC3 for technology services. This contract currently costs the City \$15,600 per year. Other competitive options should be researched to ensure we are using the most cost-effective service.

7. Giffels Webster: Giffels Webster is a long-time valued asset to the City serving as both the City Planner and City Engineer. In addition, they possess a wealth of City-related historical knowledge. However, this contract could use review to ensure price competitiveness.

Other Expense Reductions:

Government Services:

1. Recording of Meetings: Over the last couple of years, there has been little oversight regarding which City meetings and events are recorded. For example, over a year ago, Council and the Administration decided that with respect to Council meetings, only the third Monday Council meeting would be recorded each month. However, until recently, this was only loosely enforced, as study sessions and special meetings were regularly recorded, often without authorization. Further, special events were regularly recorded without any prior authorization. This lack of oversight resulted in higher costs than expected. More oversight needs to be applied to ensure that recording policies are enforced and that all event recording is approved in advance. Additionally, it should be determined if there are other ways to reduce recording fees (e.g. static cameras, technology that can reduce human intervention, etc.). The current contract, which expired on December 31st, 2022, with CV Studios costs the City \$40,000 per year, plus any additional requested services at \$30 per hour.
2. Printing and Postage: The *Our Town* magazine costs the City approximately \$5,000 in printing, \$1,600 in postage costs and significant staff time cost. This communication method can easily be replaced with an electronic version, which will eliminate almost \$7,000 in cost. For those few residents who do not have broadband access (the last census indicates 99.2% of residents have broadband access), a limited number of hard copies can be made available at the front desk and/or delivered to those on the Adopt a Senior program.
3. Memberships: The Government Services department subscribes to a plethora of membership programs. Each program should be evaluated to determine the value of the membership relative to its cost. Those memberships that do not bring value to the City should be terminated.

Administration:

1. Staff Salary and Benefits: There has been a lot of discussion over the last two years with respect to the salary of administration employees. However, the most recent completed compensation study is at least four years old. In that time, there have been dramatic changes in the workforce due to Covid, mass retirements, a reduction in skilled employees, labor shortages, etc. Over that time, a limited amount of hard data has been available to address the appropriateness of the current compensation offered to city staff. A comprehensive salary analysis should be undertaken and adjustments made accordingly. In addition, some salaries may need to be adjusted downward in instances where tasks required in the job description are no longer being performed by that staff member.

Building and Grounds:

Nothing significant noted.

Public Services:

Nothing significant noted.

Public Safety:

Discussions with Chief McKee and Sergeant Zang made it clear that they have already been very proactive in cutting the expenses for their department. As such, there was only a single expense reduction opportunity noted; once the City receives its final accreditation for the Police Department, the City should reach out to the MML Liability Pool, as the City should receive a reduction in our liability premium.

Recreation:

1. There is a strong need and desire for active and diverse recreational opportunities in Lathrup Village. The City Administrator should assess whether there are funds in our tight City budget to hire a full-time or part-time staff member to oversee the recreation department. In the interim, or possibly in lieu of hiring Recreational Coordinator, the City should consider utilizing a strong Recreation Committee with leadership from the Council liaison to develop, lead, and conduct (using volunteers) City recreational activities and events. Volunteerism has worked well over the past year to plan and staff City events, but recreation has suffered from a lack of a Council liaison due to a prior Council member allowing the committee expire. The new Council needs to establish a Council liaison and establish a strong and active committee as soon as possible (Council is currently working on this). At best, this approach will provide robust recreational opportunities and potentially allow the City to forgo the hiring of a Recreation Coordinator, which will save significant City funds. At worst, an active committee will provide helpful organization and resources for a hired Recreation Coordinator to leverage, which will reduce the necessary resources (and cost) of the hired Recreation Coordinator.

Other Expense Factors:

During the expense research, several other factors that affect the City's expenses were noted. They are:

1. **Police Contract:** The current police contract expires in 2024. Surrounding communities have seen contract increases in the range of 20 to 30%. This is largely due to a depleted pool of available officers and the portability (lack of loyalty) of officers toward their employers due to the industry change from defined benefits (pension) plans to defined contribution plans. The new contract could conceivably raise costs to the City by \$200 to \$250K. If this increase was not reflected in the FY24 budget, a budget amendment may be necessary.
2. **Tasers:** The City's taser inventory is expiring in the upcoming fiscal year. This could add as much as \$30K in unplanned expenses. If this expense was not reflected in the FY24 budget, a budget amendment or capital fund expense may be necessary.
3. **Public Services:** Multiple pieces of day-to-day equipment have exceeded their useful life or are nearing the end of their useful life (e.g., the City dump truck). While the staff/contractors do everything they can to maintain the equipment and extend its life as far as possible if a piece of large equipment fails, the City will need to make an unbudgeted purchase or rent equipment to maintain services. New equipment should be evaluated, budgeted, and purchased as necessary to avoid unforeseen purchases due to equipment failure.
4. **Building & Grounds:** The City should conduct an assessment of facilities via a professional architect/engineering team to determine if the City is utilizing its spaces to their full potential and to determine where necessary building improvements are needed so the City can be proactive and budget for necessary improvements.

Appendix A

Below is a list of the transfers referenced in the FY23 audit that had not occurred by the end of the fiscal year. All transfers were made to the Bond Fund

From the General Fund:

- 2021 Santa Barbara Concrete Project (\$106,433)
- 2021 – 2023 Non-compliant Culverts (\$174,973)
- 2022 Cambridge Drainage SAD (\$87,567)
- 2022 DPW Parking Lot Paving (\$50,897)

From the Water Fund:

- 2023 Watermain trench repair (\$129,000)

From the DDA:

- 2021 – 2023 DDA Alley and Approach Repairs (\$265,222)
- 2021 Eastbound 11 Mile Road Hump Grind (\$2,381)

From the Capital Fund:

- 2021 DPW Parking Lot Paving (\$47,260)

From the Local Road Fund:

- 2023 Eldorado Paving Project (\$105,000)
- 2022 -2023 Road Grants (\$43,483)

Proposal

Proposal for the formation of an advisory commission on accessibility and inclusion for the City of Lathrup Village.
11/28/2023

Overview

A city commission for accessibility and inclusion benefits the city and its current and prospective residents and visitors by helping to ensure its services and communication are accessible and include the diverse needs of people. Such a commission should operate independently in an advisory role like a committee or advisory board – much like the Historic District Commission.

Several cities and municipalities in Michigan have such a commission or a similar role within the broader scope of another commission. Ferndale is such a city with an Accessibility and Inclusion Advisory Commission. [[website](#), [Facebook group](#)] Their membership includes citizens (including those with disabilities) as well as a staff liaison and a council liaison.

This commission should consist of at least: a chair, a secretary, and three additional residents. Volunteer terms could be set at two years, with an option to renew consecutive terms in the absence of new volunteers. Council should determine these details. Ideally, members have some life and/or professional or academic experience with access, inclusion, and equity.

Need

It is evident and clear that the City of Lathrup Village and its 4,000 plus residents would significantly benefit from improved access resulting from the advice of such a commission. Examples in information and communication technologies currently include at least: its website; newsletter; and social media communications. Worse, its website uses an accessibility overlay (more information later in document) – which not only excludes people, but is an additional barrier and insult to access. The official city newsletter is distributed as an untagged and inaccessible PDF.

An example in the physical space is a lack of sufficient enforcement for clear sidewalks where residents have shrub and tree growth causing significant or total obstruction.

Additional Relevance

A proclamation for “upholding the principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion” from June 2020, states:

“...welcomes, respects, and encourages the contributions of all people, in all our rich variety by ... language, mental and/or physical impairment and/or disability, ... or any of the other characteristics that are often used to divide people...”

“...the City of Lathrup Village hereby affirm and uphold the principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion. We encourage our residents, businesses, civic groups, schools, government operations, and other institutions to undertake their own initiatives, beyond this resolution, to make the City of Lathrup

Village an inclusive community that honors and values all people, while preventing the tragic effects of bias and violence.”

Yet this is aspirational at best while all of its digital communication excludes many with disabilities. And encouraging everyone else in a single statement buried in archives is disingenuous.

The Law

Under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, State and local governments, all departments, agencies, special purpose districts, and other instrumentalities of State or local government (public entities) must not discriminate on the equal opportunity of or effective communication with people with disabilities – including in all information and communication technology.

[Americans with Disabilities Act Title II Regulations](#)

[ADA Update: A Primer for State and Local Governments](#)

[Accessibility of State and Local Government Websites to People with Disabilities](#)

[Guidance on Web Accessibility and the ADA](#)

Updates and Pending Updates

In July 2023, an NPRM was issued.

[Fact Sheet: Notice of Proposed Rulemaking on Accessibility of Web Information and Services of State and Local Government Entities](#)

[Justice Department Advances Proposed Rule to Strengthen Web and Mobile App Access for People with Disabilities](#)

There are also current US House and Senate bills that would specify the standards for digital content as well as the reporting responsibilities for public entities.

More on accessibility overlays

“It is a mistake to believe that the features provided by the overlay widget will be of much use by end users because if those features were necessary to use the website, they’d be needed for all websites that the user interacts with. Instead, the widget is — at best — redundant functionality with what the user already has.”

[Overlay Fact Sheet](#)

“Vendors of these products claim that their product can repair underlying code quality problems in the sites on which they’re deployed and, further still, claim that they are using artificial intelligence to render websites compliant with laws and standards having to do with accessibility.”

[Overlay False Claims](#)

[All Posts Tagged Overlay](#) — Adrian Roselli

[New Low in the Accessibility “Industry:” Overlay Company Sues Globally-Recognized Accessibility Expert](#) — Lainey Feingold

About the Proposer

My name is Charles Hall. I have been a resident of Lathrup Village since August 2021. I plan to stay and invest here. Previously, I was a resident of Ferndale for over 22 years, and an active member of their Accessibility and Inclusion Advisory Commission from 2019 – 2021. I am a Domain Expert in Inclusive Design and Digital Accessibility for CVS Health. I am an Invited Expert in the W3C Accessibility Guidelines Working Group. I have over 15 years of experience in digital accessibility among over 36 years of experience in digital design. Additionally, I have lived experience as a person with disabilities.

Example from City Administrator:

Inclusion, Diversity, & Accessibility (IDA) Committee

Vision – We envision the Lathrup Village community to be one that is welcoming, safe, and inclusive. Our city values diversity denounces systemic racism and bigotry, and actively works toward equity and belonging for all.

Mission – To create a culture of inclusion and participation that benefits citizens, businesses, and visitors. Working together, the City will develop and promote initiatives and activities, enact policies, learn, and lead in building stronger community relationships, improving business opportunities, and general education, and ensuring quality governmental services for all citizens.

Purpose – In collaboration with citizens and businesses, the City will:

- Host cultural celebratory events;
- Embrace, educate on, and celebrate inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility issues;
- Create a culture of inclusion and participation that will help to both retain and attract citizens and businesses to our area;
- Develop understanding, tools, and resources for current citizens and businesses;
- Studies challenges relating to persons with visual, hearing, cognitive, or mobility disabilities and their interaction with the community;
- Collaborate with Southfield Public Schools, Lathrup Village Downtown Development Authority (DDA), Chamber of Commerce, Southfield District Library, Senior Center, Social Services, Lathrup Village Police Department, and other local groups and organizations.

Goal - To ensure that the City of Lathrup Village is safe for all residents, businesses, visitors, and potential residents and businesses by fostering a culture of inclusion and diversity.