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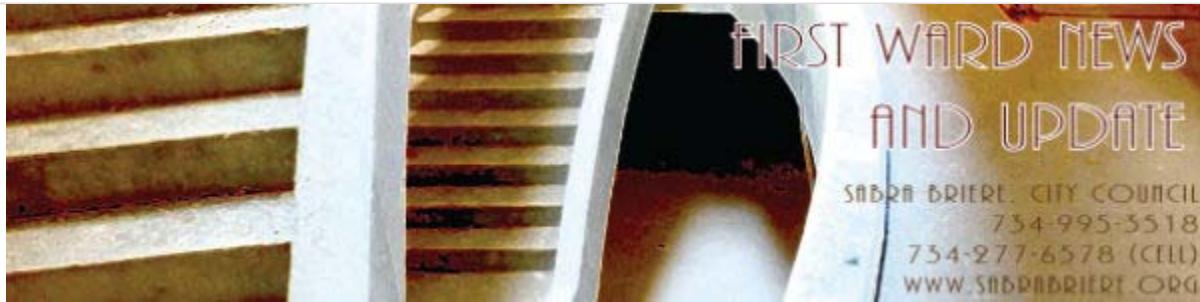


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First Ward News -- Sabra Briere, Ann Arbor City Council.  
A new survey on composting, updates and what's on the horizon.

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## Sabra Briere

**First Ward, City Council**

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## Survey Survey Survey

Dear neighbors,

If this is the first time you've received this newsletter -- it's because you responded to a recent survey. I hope you'll stick around and become part of this network, but please unsubscribe if this is just too much information for your in-box.

You may have noticed that there's yet another [survey](#) linked to this report. The most recent survey started a series of four (4) surveys on our solid waste program. The first one -- still [available, if you want to take it](#) -- asks for input on how we deal with all of our unwanted stuff. This survey focuses on organic waste -- compost and other fun things. Here are the [preliminary results of the first survey](#). I'll offer two more surveys in May -- on trash and on overall services. The final report will include responses from all the surveys, and will be available on my [website](#).

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Last December the Council appointed me to the Environmental Commission. Because I'm on this commission, I've been taking a crash course in the impact we have on the environment while looking at the affect of local laws and policies. Right now members of the Environmental Commission are reviewing the 2002 - 2007 Solid Waste Plan -- the plan that brought us single-stream recycling and reduced leaf and holiday tree pickup. The staff aren't ready yet to survey the public -- but I am. Over the next two months (April and May) I'll have a short survey attached to

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each newsletter. All the surveys will remain live for two weeks. This

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the leaves, branches, weeds and other stuff all that growth really means.

If you are interested in the City's current environmental goals, in the current Solid Waste Plan, or in learning more about our community's commitment to environmental issues, here's a [link](#) to the City's webpages on the environment. The **Ann Arbor Chronicle** ran a [series of articles](#), written by City staff, about environmental issues, too.

## Coffee wakes some of us up

I hold office hours 7:30 to 9 am on Mondays at the Northside Grill.

While I'm there, I meet with neighbors from all over our community to discuss the issues that concern them -- potholes, parks, trash pickup, construction noise, planning, zoning, City staffing and changes they like or don't like.

The folks at the Northside put up with political talk early in the morning. If you see me there, please wave, and if you have time, please, join me for coffee and a chat.

One of the goals I have in sending out surveys is to increase the feedback on issues that I receive from you. It's easy for me to assume I have my finger on the pulse of Ann Arbor -- I read the Chronicle and AnnArbor.com, including the comments, I go to many meetings, and I make myself available for phone or face meetings. But if I were to think that means I know how you feel, I'd risk thinking I know the answers. I just want to know the right questions. Thank you all for sending your feedback and survey responses. I really appreciate it.

## This week I took a tour of the underground parking structure next to the downtown library.

Maybe parking structures aren't your thing, but I wanted to see how the sunlight penetrated all the way to the lowest level. I wanted to understand how much space was under there, and how it would feel to park and walk up -- or to take the elevator down. I learned that, on the lowest level, there's an office that will be regularly staffed. They put this office on the lowest level to ensure that all the workers will have to walk or drive through the entire parking structure every day.

(The picture at the top is of the stairs closest to 5th Avenue. Here's just [some of the photos I took](#).)

I know I'm impatient for Fifth Avenue to reopen. I really miss parking next to the library, too. And I'm really looking forward to going to events on the new plaza.

## On the Agenda



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# Ordinances and Resolutions, Public hearings

One of the best parts of this job is your willingness to teach me. Today I opened the mail and found that one of our neighbors (Thank you, Susan Wineberg!) had sent me a report from 1966 titled "*Quo Vadis Ann Arbor?*". This report grew out of a goal-setting conference, some symposia and workshops on -- honest! -- creating a vision for Ann Arbor and Washtenaw County. The Ann Arbor Area Goals Conference was hosted by members of the American Institute of Architects, the Ann Arbor Art Association, the Ann Arbor News, the American Association of University Women, the League of Women Voters, the Citizens Association for Area Planning . . and, contributing but not leading, the planning staff and planning commissions of Ann Arbor and Washtenaw County.

My favorite quote so far:  
*"Citizen concern is on the rise. . . . But an assessment of the implications [of the goals] is generally lacking, and communication between citizens and planners is inadequate. Ann Arbor City Council concern has increased. . . but again, the communication and the rate of progress toward full discussion of plan alternatives has been too slow and too limited."*

Some things just don't change.  
 1966 is almost 50 years ago . . .

I'm also reading *City, urbanism*

The City Council will hold public hearings on one site plan (this is a

RESOLUTION) and several ORDINANCES.

## Ordinances, Public Hearings and Second Reading

The City Council will hold public hearings on ordinances that would:

- amend the traffic code (creating a new level of enforcement for those driving while impaired with **blood alcohol above .17**);
- amend the streets and sidewalk code to clarify sidewalk occupancy permit dates;
- amend retiree benefits ordinances to reflect new contracts and allow staff to 'opt-in' (three separate ordinances);

## Resolutions with Public Hearings

There one public hearing on a site plan for a new (chain) restaurant on State Street near Briarwood. (Site plans do not require ordinance changes, but still need to be approved by the City Council.)

## Ordinances, First Reading

The City Council will take up, at First Reading, a request to change the zoning of 1320 S. University from D2 to D1. The planning staff and Planning Commission recommended that the Council reject this change in zoning.

There are other rezoning requests -- a rezoning of a parcel on Main from O (office) to P (parking). This site is adjacent to the AAA building, and the rezoning is part of planning for new construction. There are also two rezonings of single family houses moving from TWP (township) to R1 (residential, single family).

## Resolutions

A resolution to approve a grant contract with MDOT for an environmental assessment related to the extension of a runway at the airport.

The staff report says, in part,

"In early 2009, City Council authorized the undertaking of the Environmental Assessment to identify potential impacts that may be

**and its end**, by Prof. Douglas

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Rae, which is set in New Haven but looks at the changes in urban planning and urban expectations over the last 200 or so years.

Although it's a study of just one community, nothing I'm reading is truly a unique challenge.

related to the extension of runway 6/24 at the Ann Arbor Airport.

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These proposed modifications were depicted on the Airport

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Plan approved by Council in September 2008. The EA process is a requirement of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and MDOT-Aero, which regulate aviation activities at the Ann Arbor Airport. This highly regulated process is dictated by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and includes a significant public input process.

There are two related resolutions authorizing contract amendments for the Environmental Assessment work to the [URS Corporation](#) and [JJR, Inc.](#)

## Caucus

The City Council holds a caucus meeting each Sunday prior to a Council meeting. This meeting is an opportunity for members of Council to discuss agenda items -- and pending issues - - with each other in public view. Members of the public are welcome to attend to bring issues to the attention of Council members.

I go to almost all Caucus meetings.

Of course, there's other business to conduct. The City Council will vote on street closings and on some liquor license transactions. There are also votes related to the continuing work on Stadium and the Stadium Bridges. I have only highlighted a few issues. Here's a link to the entire [agenda](#).



## Talking about the Budget

The City Administrator will present his proposed budget at the Council meeting on Monday, April 16. I've attached the [presentation](#), in case you want to see it.

The good news isn't really news -- the budget looks better, and the City intends to continue hiring police officers and fire fighters to fill those



**Care to participate?  
Did you already participate?**

The parks and open space millage expires this year. Staff are recommending that this millage be renewed. To learn more and to voice your opinion, please go to one of these meetings:

- **Monday, April 23,** from 6:30-7:30 p.m. at Leslie Science &

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In addition, the City expects

to slowly increase both fire  
and police staffing.

I'm anticipating a quick  
increase from the 76 current  
fire staff to the 82 in the City's  
budget. I also anticipate that  
the police staffing will top out  
at 147 members of the police  
force plus some 'cadet'  
officers. These are lower  
numbers than last year, but  
that change is due to the  
consolidation of dispatch.

(I'm told the dispatch staff are  
experiencing increased  
training and those from Ann  
Arbor are enthusiastic about  
the additional training.)

Another area of funding  
increase is in human  
services. But I'm still  
analyzing the draft document.

Nature Center's  
 Nature House,  Like  C  
Traver Road.

- **Thursday, April 26,**  
from 6:30-7:30 p.m.  
at the Ann Arbor  
District Library  
Traverwood Branch,  
3333 Traverwood  
Drive.

As a reminder, the DDA  
conducted a survey for the  
Connecting William Street  
project. Here's a link to the  
[survey overview](#) and  
[another to the raw results](#).  
Here's also a [link to a story](#)  
on The Chronicle about this  
process -- and other items  
related to the DDA.  
Let me know what you think  
about the Connecting  
William Street.

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