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Survey results, the City Administrator search and interviews, and what's on the Agenda.



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Dear neighbors,

Today is Canada Day, which means that Monday is July 4th -- Independence Day. I used to go to fireworks, until it became too difficult, too late, too far away. Still, I think fireworks, picnics, and parades are part of how I want to think about spending Independence Day. So on Monday, some time between 9:15 and 9:30 am, I'll find some other folks to walk near in the parade down Liberty and Main. I'll have my camera, and I hope I get to take your photo. Wave if you see me!

After the parade, I'm heading home to enjoy a cook-out with some of the folks from my street. If this heat continues, I think all the food will be served cold -- or cooked on a grill.

I hope you will enjoy the holiday. To me, this marks the middle of summer: raspberries, strawberries, cherries and blueberries are all in season at once. Nothing could be better than steamy July weather and fresh fruit.

Of course, the Art Fair is just around the corner -- and that can be interesting, too.

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## The Survey

Although I wish more people had decided to take the survey and share their ideas with me, I received 60 responses; that's a very small sample. All of those who responded chose to do so; this survey was not sent to a specific interest group or set of stakeholders. To me, you are all stakeholders.

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## Coffee wakes some of us up

I hold office hours 7:30 to 9 am most weeks on Mondays at the Northside Grill. This Monday (July 4) I'll take the morning off. I'm going to the parade!

But I'll be back at my usual table on Tuesday, July 5th at 7:30 am. I hope you'll take time to talk with me. Next Monday, July 11, it's back to the usual schedule.

While I'm at the Northside, I work on Council business. Recently I've been writing emails to City staff and constituents while I eat breakfast and meeting with folks concerned about Fuller Road Station and rental housing inspections. I like enjoy the opportunity to discuss the issues that concern others -- potholes, parks, trash pickup, construction noise, zoning, City staffing and changes they like or don't like.

to plan effectively for the future, help to take the long view. Sometimes I believe that we all chase after the next shiny idea or plan. I believe creating a vision will help us keep our focus on where we want to go and what kind of City we want to be.

I don't want you to think that the views represented in the survey responses are the views of everyone in our community. They are only the views of the people who chose to take the survey. However, I hope you'll read the results and my own viewpoint (all in this [paper](#)) and let me know if you agree, disagree, or have new ideas I haven't heard before.

If creating a vision for Ann Arbor interests you, please give me a call or come talk with me. I want to hear your ideas.

Some folks have asked me about my vision for Ann Arbor's future. I have one -- but I've been thinking about this for some time. Just because I have a vision doesn't make it the right vision or even the right direction for our community to embrace. So while I could dazzle you (just joking) with my vision, I'd rather we worked together to find a vision that comes from all of us, not just a few folks who usually go to meetings and talk with politicians. After all, you won't embrace a vision you don't share and you won't like the decisions that are made by Council, the Planning Commission, the Public Arts Commission, the Parks Advisory Commission, or the DDA.

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## The City Administrator

The City Council appointed a search committee to create some protocols for selecting a new City Administrator. The committee recommended hiring an outside firm -- to guarantee a national applicant pool and the confidentiality of all applicants. The committee also recommended that the City's Human Resources staff work with this firm (AFFION) to make certain that Ann Arbor's specific needs are met. On July 5, members of the committee will see, for the first time, the applications of interested and qualified candidates. The committee will recommend finalists for interviews. These interviews will take place on July 13. There will be a reception -- open to the public -- for the finalists on **Tuesday July 12 from 5:30 to 7:30**. This reception will be held in the lobby of the

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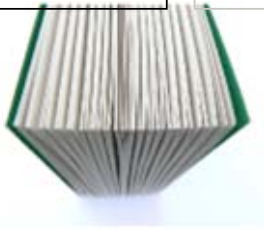
Wednesday, July 13, 2011

Participants will



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## What am I reading?

I spend a lot of time reading. I read about other communities, Lansing government, development and planning policy, transportation planning . . .

Here's my current and recent reading list:

I read the various updates out of Lansing about the legislation that's important to local governments.

I read the R4C/R2A committee report. It's still not final, but members of the Planning Commission stated at a recent working session that there should be more clarity regarding where dense developments can be built.

I am reading *The Trouble with Urban Planning* by Christina Ford.

new Courts/Police addition to City Hall.

interviews. The interviews will be open to the public, and will be held between 8 am and noon in the City Council chambers. I hope you will consider coming to one or both events, and then telling me what you think of the candidates. Our last City Administrator helped shape the way the staff responded to Council and community priorities. He worked for the City for over 9 years. Stable relationships with City Administrators are common in Ann Arbor; other communities have not always been able to retain someone long-term in this position. The person hired by the Council to be the administrator will be very important, although not necessarily very visible. Your input can help guide me and other members of Council to select the best candidate.

## Council meeting on July 5<sup>th</sup>

The Agenda for the Council meeting on July 5<sup>th</sup> will be pretty light. I've highlighted what I think might be important below. There are two other items on the agenda that may or may not be interesting.

Council member Anglin wants to reconsider the vote on whether to rebuild -- and move -- a sanitary sewer line. The City Council voted on June 20th to approve funding to replace a sanitary sewer line that runs under the Fuller site. This sewer, however, is a major trunk line that services the northwest and westerly parts of the city, and extends directly to the wastewater treatment plant. While rebuilding the line may not be an emergency, the new line will handle more waste, and won't need to be replaced for many years. The current line is over 30 years old.

Another item is a resolution -- that I'm offering -- to officially adopt a policy of non-disclosure of information related to medical marijuana zoning and licensing. Although I am confident this information is already protected, I like the idea of 'belt and suspenders' when it comes to guaranteeing privacy. This resolution would make the City's policy clear.

## On the Agenda

## Ordinances, First Reading

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### **An ordinance to reapportion the wards for the November, 2011 election.**

The City must redistrict after every census. Although there have been only minor changes in population (Ann Arbor lost 90 residents over the last decade), there have been some shifts in where people live.

The First Ward gained more residents compared with the other wards. The proposed redistricting moves parts of the First Ward to each of the other wards.

One issue is that this change would take place between the primary (the First Ward doesn't have a primary this year) and the general election in November. Some folks who watch this type of change very closely have recommended that the ward boundaries remain unchanged through the November election. To find out more about the new boundaries (everyone affected lives near downtown) click [here](#). I may offer an alternative boundary map; here's a [link](#) to that option.

## **Resolutions**

### **A resolution to approve a contract to build a rain garden at Kingsley and First.**

Many of us have noticed the house at the corner of Kingsley and First – boarded up windows, significant signs of neglect and all. The good news is that the City is in the process of purchasing that property. When the purchase is complete, the house will be demolished.

Why demolish a house? This property is in the flood plain, and cannot be renovated or rebuilt.

But there's a bright side to the story. Nearly all of us have been confronted with deep water at the intersection of Kingsley and First – this is one of the first areas to flood when we have heavy rains. So, after removing the house, the City will install a rain garden. This rain garden will actually store a major portion of any rainfall, and will help relieve some of the flooding problems.

This corner can also be part of the Allen Creek greenway.

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The cost? \$25,440 from the Stormwater capital projects budget.

**A resolution to approve a contract to determine the Level of Service (LOS) for water distribution.**

The purpose of this work is to determine what the sustainable level of service (LOS) for the City of Ann Arbor water distribution system should be and to also quantify the associated level of reinvestment in the system. Fundamentally, this will help the City during its capital planning by providing what level of investment the City should be making in the replacement/rehabilitation of our water distribution system and what water mains should be replaced first.

The cost? \$208,984 from the Water System capital projects budget.

I was initially skeptical about this project (the Council postponed it from the May 16, 2011 meeting). Reading the staff memo with an explanation about the project – especially in light of the increase in our water bills that Council also approved – helped me understand why this project might be a good idea. I'd love to hear what you think.

Here's a [link](#) to a staff memo on the LOS proposal.

**Resolution to approve a contract to build a permeable alley in Burns Park.**

Permeable pavements, when properly maintained, help reduce storm water runoff. The City has been installing them where the engineers believe such pavements will be most valuable – due to drainage and whether the soil will move the water along or hold it. This is a new project.

The cost? This contract is for \$121,139, but the project budget as a whole is estimated to be \$200,000. The project is being funded by the Stormwater capital budget. That in turn will be repaid as a loan to the State Revolving Fund (SRF) and will include 50% loan forgiveness.

Here's a [link](#) to this item on the agenda. From this link, you'll be able to see a map that includes the alley.

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property

Two of these easements are for the north and south areas of 3600 Varsity Drive; the other is for an area that runs from Murfin Drive to Broadway. All three easements are for utilities.



### Talking about the Budget

The City's budget passed on May 31. But since then there have been some significant changes coming out of the state legislature. These changes involve municipal governments in two ways. The first is a change to binding arbitration (Act 312). The new legislation requires arbitrators take into consideration the amount a municipal government can afford, and not just what a Unions wants in pay and benefits. The second change is to codify those benefits. The legislation requires that the municipal



### Care to participate?

On Tuesday, July 12, City Council will host a public reception in the lobby of the Courts/Police addition to City Hall from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. for citizens to meet final City Administrator candidates. The public reception program will include light refreshments, five-minute presentations from each candidate and then time for informal conversations with candidates. The addition is located at 301 E. Huron St. in front of Larcom City Hall; enter from 5th Avenue.

On Wednesday, July 13, the candidates will participate in public interviews in Larcom City Hall, Council Chambers, 2nd floor, from 8 a.m. to 12 noon (301 E. Huron Street). A detailed schedule will be

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government take one of  
 80% - 20% pay (with  
 employees paying 20%  
 of the cost of benefits)  
**OR** adopt a top cap (a  
 dollar amount the  
 government will pay  
 toward benefits) and  
 require employees to pay  
 any amount above that  
**OR** vote to opt out.  
 The state has  
 restructured exactly how  
 the amounts of state  
 revenue will go to  
 municipalities, and has  
 required that local  
 governments institute  
 several changes,  
 including how they  
 collaborate with  
 neighboring communities  
 and how they structure  
 their benefits package. I  
 expect we'll see some  
 impact to **next year's  
 budget**. Council  
 members will start talking  
 about the budget by  
 September, I'd bet.

posted on the city website,  
[www.a2gov.org](http://www.a2gov.org), where  
 becomes available in early  
 July.

### Millage survey

Want to give your thoughts  
 regarding a proposed  
 renewal of the street millage  
 and addition of a 0.125%  
 millage for sidewalk  
 maintenance? Please take  
 the 5-minute survey that will  
 be posted online from June  
 20-July 5, 2011, at  
[www.a2gov.org/StreetMillage](http://www.a2gov.org/StreetMillage).

There's an opportunity to  
 make a comment, too. I hope  
 you'll share your views with  
 the City.

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