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Streets and Sidewalk millages, Recycle Bank, Police contract and grant for more police salaries -- all up this week!


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Dear neighbors,

Late September brings such great color and activity in my garden. The market is full of produce – and football seems to be the activity that takes over our community. I picked up my first gallon of apple cider this morning. It's definitely fall.

Of course, that means the leaves are going to change color and then drop. While this time of year is beautiful here in Michigan, it does mean work is around the corner. I'm certain you remember that the City is no longer picking up leaves that you rake into the street.

The City's website offers a number of options:

1. **Use the city's weekly Compostable pickup service from April through mid-December (Dec. 16, 2011). Use bags or a compost cart (or both).**
2. **Feed your lawn with leaves by using a mulching mower.** Leaf mulching reports and videos from Scotts Lawn Care, MSU and others are posted at www.a2gov.org/leaves. Mulching leaves is a practical option for properties with lots of trees and is commonly used by many golf course operators.
3. [Using mowers/benefits of leaf mulching for lawns, from Scotts Lawn Care .](#)
4. [Michigan State University research on leaf mulching.](#)
5. **Or Compost at home.**

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FREE LEAF DROP-OFF AT THE ANN ARBOR

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From September through December, Ann Arbor property owners or their designated haulers may deliver unlimited quantities of fall leaves at no charge to the **Compost Center, 4150 Platt Road, Open Mon-Fri, 8-4 p.m. 734.794.6380**. Individual residents with up to 3 cubic yards of materials may use the scales at any operational time at no charge.

- **Summary of the two free leaf drop-off permit options A & B** ([pdf](#)). This FAQ is also available as a separate Web page [here](#).
- **Free leaf drop-off** [permit "A" for individual properties \(pdf\)](#) and [permit "B" for multiple properties \(pdf\)](#).

HELP AREA SENIORS WITH LEAF RAKING

Neighborhood Senior Services is coordinating its 35th annual fall chore day on a Saturday, in mid-November from 10-2. Volunteers sign up online by Oct 31 at www.nssweb.org and assist raking leaves, checking smoke alarms, and helping seniors throughout Washtenaw County. 734.712.7775. Groups, individuals, and families are welcome to participate.

For more information on dealing with your leaves, look at the City's [website](#).

On the Agenda

This week's agenda could have significance for many of us. Here's a link to the complete calendar with the [agenda](#), and below are highlights.

Public Hearings and Ordinances, Second Reading

Up for approval this week are two ordinances. These two ordinances plus two additional issues are the subjects of four (4) public hearings.

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City staff are seeking final approval of a change to the
[Investing Period in the Ordinance](#) retirement system for non-

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union staff. There's also an annexation from township to city land (this site is in the Third Ward).

Additionally, there are a couple of public hearings on resolutions. The first and possibly most significant is a hearing on annexing clusters of properties from townships into the city, and there's a public hearing on setting an application fee for a license to dispense adult beverages at a retirement home (see more about these in **Resolutions**, below).

Ordinances, First Reading

A **rezoning** ordinance is up for consideration. This is a proposal to rezone a small lot at 1712 S. State from O (office) to C1 (commercial). The property is currently being used as a Medical Marijuana dispensary; dispensaries are not allowed in office zonings.

An **amendment** to the Public Art ordinance will also be considered. This proposed amendment would specify that the proposed street and bridge millage (or the street and bridge and sidewalk millage), if approved by the voters, would not be subject to the Public Art ordinance. I am sponsoring this amendment; other members of Council may join me before the vote on Monday. (Note: this is not up for a public hearing; the public hearing, if the amendment passes First Reading, will be at a subsequent Council meeting.)

Resolutions (usually voted on at a single meeting)

The City staff are requesting that the Council approve a grant application for that would allow the City to **hire five police officers, either re-hiring those who were recently laid-off** or hiring new officers.

Also up for approval is a resolution to accept \$28,802 from a grant for an Emergency Manager's salary. This staff position, in the Police Department, is to deal with emergency planning. It's not the same as the State-run

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Emergency Manager, and should not be confused with that position. Ann Arundale is not at risk of imposing an emergency manager.

Still on the police department, there's a resolution to approve a labor contract with the police. This contract involves concessions on both sides, but alters the requirements for retirement and health benefit pay-in by police officers.

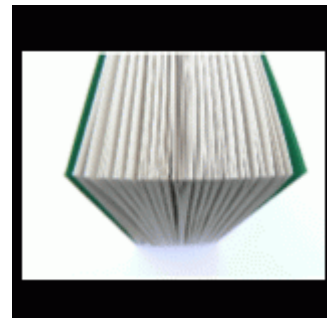
Postponed from the August 15th Council meeting is a **resolution to end the contract with RecycleBank**. I had asked you to take a survey ([results here](#)) and used those results as part of the rationale behind this resolution. The staff have recommended that the Council alter the contract, instead, and have provided two scenarios that they believe might work. [Here](#) are their recommendations. I drafted the resolution to end the contract, and received support from several other members of Council.

Resolution of Intent regarding the proposed Street and Bridges and Sidewalks millages. On the agenda is a resolution that outlines the way Council intends to use the proposed Bridges and Streets and Sidewalk millages. Here's a [link](#). I drafted this to clarify the Council's intentions and to provide clear guidance to the staff.

Resolution to approve changes to the Planning Commission by-laws: here's a [link](#) to the proposed by-laws.

Resolution to direct City staff to begin discussions regarding **annexation of clusters of properties from townships** into the City.

There are several clusters adjacent to the First Ward that could be affected. Here's a [report](#) from staff and a [map of the parcels](#).



Coffee wakes some of us up

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What am I reading?

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I hold office hours 7:30 to 9 am most Mondays at the Northside Grill. I like dark roast coffee, with no cream or sugar. Might as well be honest about using caffeine.

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

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:

The Gated City, an article by Ryan Avent, who writes for the Economist. (His premise is more density will solve economic, environmental and cultural problems.)
House by House, Block by Block: The Rebirth of America's Urban Neighborhoods by Alexander von Hoffman

On the Horizon



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According to an AP report (9/17/2011), state transportation officials expect a reduction of more than \$700 million annually in highway program funds due to a drop in state revenue and predictions that Michigan will not be able to put up enough matching money to secure all available federal aid unless it takes steps to raise revenue. I'm confident this will affect Ann Arbor, as the City receives the benefit of state and federal funding for street maintenance. Several major Ann Arbor streets (N. Main and Huron/Jackson, among others) are really State routes, and are maintained by the State of Michigan.

And regarding streets and the State of Michigan, the City recently adopted the complete Michigan Motor Vehicle Code. This code sets out different requirements for setting speed limits, both within and outside municipal boundaries. The City staff has begun work to evaluate specific areas of

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concern. The first area to be evaluated is that stretch of Newport Road from M14 to the city boundary. Any resident interested in this issue is welcome at the Ann Arbor Free Methodist Church, 1951 Newport Road. The meeting begins at 7 pm and will end at 9 pm. Here's to [link](#) to a flyer for the meeting, and here's the [proposal](#).

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