

A² CITY NEWS



The Newsletter for the City of Ann Arbor, Michigan

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This is a reprinted version of the original, which was e-mailed to A² City News subscribers on Feb. 1, 2010. Further information on featured topics and current news can be found at www.a2gov.org.

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Fiscal year 2011 budget process

Last month, several hundred city employees attended a meeting to hear first-hand details about the city's fiscal year 2011 revenues, recommendations for expense reductions and outlook for fiscal year 2012. This all-employee meeting was a first for the city, but an important step to keeping employees informed of the city's current economic state and the decisions that must be made in the coming months to achieve an 8-percent spending reduction for the fiscal year 2011 budget, which begins on July 1, 2010.

In addition, City Council work sessions have been scheduled for Feb. 8 and Feb. 22 at City Hall in Council chambers. Taped for later replay on Community Television Network's cable channel 16 and available for online viewing, at www.a2gov.org/government/city_administration/communicationsoffice/ctn/Pages/VideoOnDemand.aspx, these work sessions will focus on fiscal year 2011 expenditure reduction proposals and revenue forecasts.

At this time, no town hall meetings have been scheduled, but as the budget process continues, details will be made available on the Our Town Web page on the city's Web site www.a2gov.org/ourtown. Sign up to be alerted when new information is available by clicking on the red envelope in the right column of the page.

Be a part of history: Participate in the 2010 Census

Make history in 2010 by participating in the 2010 Census. Conducted every 10 years, the census will provide a vital snapshot of our nation's growing and changing population and demographics, documenting how our nation has changed in the past decade and what our communities need in order to prosper for the next 10 years. Census data informs critical political and funding decisions on the national, state and local level, as well as provides benefits to businesses, social service and non-profit organizations and many others.



IT'S IN OUR HANDS

Why the 2010 Census is important

Every year, the federal government distributes more than \$400 billion to tribal, state, and local governments based on census data. Census data guides local planning decisions, including where to provide additional social services,

establish child care and senior centers, build new roads, hospitals, schools and job training and community centers. Census data also is used to reapportion congressional seats to states and assure proper district representation.

How to participate

Participation in the 2010 Census is easy, important and safe. One of the shortest census forms in history, the 2010 Census form asks 10 questions and takes about 10 minutes to complete. Census forms will be mailed or delivered to households in March 2010, and every household in the United States should complete and return its census form upon receipt. Census workers, identified by a census badge and bag, will visit households that do not return the forms to take a count in person.

Questionnaire assistance centers (QAC) will be available to assist those unable to read or understand the census form, and a language assistance guide also will be available in 59 languages at all QAC locations. For QAC locations near you, visit the U.S. Census online, www.2010census.gov.

Who should participate

Every person living in the United States must be counted in the 2010 Census — even noncitizens. This is an important clarification for a university town such as Ann Arbor, with an international workforce, students and faculty. Another variable important to understand for the enumeration, U.S. Census Bureau residence rules require for people to be counted where they live and sleep most of the year; so college students living on and off campus in Ann Arbor must respond to the Census accordingly, rather being accounted for on their parents' census forms.

The information you provide on your census form is confidential. By law, the U.S. Census Bureau cannot share respondents' answers with anyone, including other federal agencies and law enforcement entities. All Census Bureau employees take an oath of nondisclosure and are sworn for life to protect the confidentiality of the data. The penalty for unlawful disclosure is a fine of up to \$250,000 or imprisonment of up to five years, or both.

Watch for your census form in April and go online for more information, www.2010census.gov. Be a part of history. Participate in the 2010 Census!

Commercial loading zone permits

Commercial vehicles using the designated commercial loading zones on downtown Ann Arbor streets will soon be required to have specially-issued permits affixed to the driver-side front window. With enforcement anticipated to begin March 1, 2010, the permits allow vehicles with commercial plates to use the unmetered commercial parking zones up to the time-limit posted at each site.

Please note that sale of the permits has been temporarily suspended to provide the opportunity for council to further review suggested changes to the permit use and pricing. In the interim, beginning Monday, Feb. 1, 2010, vehicles using the loading zones in unauthorized ways will receive educational notices regarding the new requirements. Visit the designated page on the city's Web site for loading zone permit information, maps and to request to be placed on e-mail list for program updates: www.a2gov.org/government/publicservices/customerservice/Pages/On-StreetCommercialLoadingZonePermits.aspx.

Initiatives kicking off and continuing on

Several projects are under way or are about to begin in the City of Ann Arbor. Here is a brief summary of some of the most significant initiatives.

Fuller Road Station project

In 2006, Ann Arbor Mayor John Hieftje announced his vision for making Ann Arbor a model for mobility in the 21st century. He outlined key elements of his transportation vision that included and supported alternative forms of

transportation such as walking and bicycling, but also expanded on the city's bus, rail and train system to support a more regional mode of mobility.

Today, the City of Ann Arbor has the opportunity to move toward this vision. In September 2009, community members were invited to attend the first of several public meetings about this project. A second public meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 10, at 7 p.m. in Council Chambers at City Hall.

This meeting will be taped for later replay on Community Television Network's Meeting Place Comcast Cable Channel 16. For more information about this project, contact Dave Dykman, City of Ann Arbor project management services unit, at 734.794.6410, extension 43685 / ddykman@a2gov.org.

Library Lot

Interviews took place in mid January with those who submitted proposals for development of the Library Lot (319 S. Fifth Ave.). The interviews are currently available for viewing online at <http://a2govtv.pegcentral.com/>. Project resources, details and updates can be found on the dedicated page of the city's Web site:

www.a2gov.org/government/communityservices/319%20S%205th%20Ave%20Lot%20-%20RFP/Pages/default.aspx

West Park Art Installation Request for Qualifications

The City of Ann Arbor Public Art Commission and the Park Advisory Commission are seeking a Michigan artist or artist collaborators to create artwork(s) for permanent inclusion in a renovation project in the 23-acre West Park, located close to downtown Ann Arbor.

A master plan was recently completed that addresses storm water issues, and will result in the creation of bioswales, created wetlands, naturalized plantings, new pathways, improved access to the park, a renovated parking area and concrete seat walls built in to the hillside to accommodate better viewing of events at the band shell. These concrete seat walls will be the canvas upon which the artwork will be installed. See the request for qualifications, including a process timeline, posted to the "news" page of the city's Web site, www.a2gov.org/news.

West Stadium Boulevard

In March 2010 through approximately November 2010, construction will take place on the West Stadium (Suffolk to Hutchins) Improvement project. Funded in part through the Street Resurfacing Millage, this is a continuation of the work completed at and west of Pauline Boulevard. An informational open house will take place Wednesday, Feb. 3, 7 – 8:30 p.m. at Trinity Lutheran Church, 1400 W. Stadium Boulevard. There will be a brief presentation at 7:15 p.m. to explain the project, followed by a question-and-answers session. For additional details, visit the project page on the city's Web site:

www.a2gov.org/wstadiumroadproject.



Ann Arbor-Saline Road Pedestrian Bridge

The steel bridge on the west side of Ann Arbor-Saline Road at Northbrook Drive is temporary. The public is invited to a meeting to review the available replacement options on Tuesday, Feb. 9, 6:30 p.m. at Lawton Elementary School auditorium (2250 South Seventh Street). For more information, visit the "news" page of the city's Web site: www.a2gov.org/news.

Conserve energy, earn tax credits

Whether you're looking to maximize your 2009 tax return or resolved to get more efficient in 2010, take a look at these federal tax credit for Energy Star qualified products like insulation, storm windows and doors, heating and cooling systems, and a number of other home improvements. If you made any qualifying improvements in 2009, be sure to get credit on April 15. If you haven't yet, now is the time, as many of these credits expire at the end of the year!

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What to know:

- You may be eligible for tax credits up to 30 percent of the cost or as much as \$1,500 on certain product installations.
- Certain improvements, like insulation, do not include installation costs in the credit, while other improvements factor installation expenses into your credit.
- New construction and rental properties don't qualify.
- These tax credits are set to expire Dec. 31, 2010.
- Learn about all the products that qualify, access the forms and view other handy FAQs by visiting EPA's Energy Star Federal Tax Credits for Consumer Energy Efficiency Web site:
http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=tax_credits.tx_index.

Consider this: A typical washing machine uses 10 percent of the overall energy to run the motor, and a whopping 90 percent to heat the water. Anyone can reduce energy bills by turning the washing machine dial to "cold" and using a cold water detergent.

In other energy news, the city's energy office is conducting a survey of Ann Arbor residents to gauge interest in renewable energy opportunities. If you live in the Ann Arbor Area and are giving any thought to energy efficiency improvements — or think you would if you could get good advice and low-interest loans — please take a minute to respond to the survey: www.surveymonkey.com/s/energysurvey.

Get your A² gear today!

Now you can show your Ann Arbor pride where ever you go with fashionable and functional city water bottles and reusable bags. On sale now at the Ann Arbor Customer Service Center, 220 E. Huron, diagonally across from City Hall, are the following "Ann Arbor original" items:

Recycled-content reusable shopping bags for \$5 each: Stuffs into a tiny built-in pouch with a clip; small and lightweight; 99 percent recycled content; fabric and cord from 100 percent recycled PET plastic water bottles; carabineer 97 percent recycled aluminum; imprinted with city's "Protect our Spot" logo.

Refillable A²H₂O waterbottles: Five varieties in 30-ounce to 16-ounce sizes; plastic, aluminum and stainless steel; ranging in price from \$2 to \$12.

Not too early to think "summer"

Summer day camp registration begins Monday, Feb. 15 for Ann Arbor Parks and Recreation facilities. Summer camps will be offered at Argo Park and Canoe Livery, Buhr Park and Pool, Fuller Park and Pool, Gallup Park and Canoe Livery, Huron Hills Golf Course and Leslie Science & Nature Center. For details, call 734.794.6240 or visit the camps Web site, www.a2gov.org/camps. Trained, experienced and caring staff will ensure this summer is the best yet.



Ann Arbor's first brownfield development project

The Illinois-based grocery store chain Aldi opened its 50th Michigan store to the public on Friday, Nov. 20. This first Aldi store in Ann Arbor is also the "greenest" Aldi store built to-date. The developers are applying for LEED silver designation under the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) program because of the green building features used in construction. In addition, the Aldi location is the first brownfield project completed in Ann Arbor. According to State Act 381, brownfield projects are redevelopments in core communities using eligible activities to clean up environmental contamination.

The developer invested over a \$1 million dollars to clean up a site that included al
contaminated soils. The new tax revenues generated by the development will be u
the clean-up costs. The environmental remediation at this site includes:

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for

- Seven commercial buildings were removed and debris recycled as much as possible.
- Four steel underground storage tanks were removed and recycled.
- Thirteen underground automotive hoists were removed, decontaminated and recycled.
- 18,000 cubic yards of contaminated soil were removed and transported to a licensed type II landfill. This is the equivalent of filling 5.52 Olympic-sized swimming pools.
- 10,000 pounds of hazardous materials from inside the buildings were removed and recycled (including fluorescent bulbs, mercury thermometers, pcb ballasts, asbestos tiles, various paints and cleaning chemicals).
- 2,500 yards of concrete were removed and recycled.
- Four septic tanks and septic fields were removed.

The site previously had no stormwater controls in place to handle rainwater runoff. The new Aldi development significantly improves stormwater control by using several construction standards for best management practices (BMP) and low impact designs (LID). The combined underground water storage systems detain the quantity of rain that could be anticipated in a large, once-in-a-100-year storm event and has the capacity to contain 24,713 cubic feet (184,853 gallons) of stormwater runoff. Additional stormwater site management features include vegetative bioretention areas to capture and filter water and a 650-foot rain garden. The newly landscaped site includes over 100 new trees and plants, selected with an emphasis on using native Michigan species.

For more information on Ann Arbor's brownfield program, visit the dedicated page on the city's Web site:
www.a2gov.org/government/publicservices/systems_planning/Environment/Pages/brownfields.aspx.

CTN workshops



Did you know Community Television Network offers FREE production workshops to teach Ann Arbor residents and representatives of non-profit organizations based within the City of Ann Arbor how to produce their own TV shows for telecast on CTN channel 17?

The first step to CTN's array of production classes is to attend a Preview session; the next session is scheduled for Monday, March 1. Register today! Visit CTN's Web site and click "Classes" on the left sidebar for

details: www.a2gov.org/GOVERNMENT/CITY_ADMINISTRATION/COMMUNICATIONSOFFICE/CTN/Pages/Home.aspx. Speak out, create, communicate on CTN!

PBS to feature Ann Arbor's green fleets

The City of Ann Arbor's Green Fleets Program is the focus of a MotorWeek Clean Cities Success Story on PBS. This segment will air on PBS stations nationwide starting Feb. 6, 2010. It will also be broadcasted on the SPEED Channel beginning Feb. 13, 2010. For show times, check the MotorWeek (www.mpt.org/motorweek/stationlist.shtml) and SPEED (www.speedtv.com/programs/motorweek/) channel Web sites.



In 2004, the city started with a goal of reducing its fleet's petroleum reduction by 10 percent by 2012. The Green Fleets Program has more than exceeded its original goal and has set a new goal to achieve a 30 percent reduction goal

by the end of 2010. For information about the city's green fleets, go to the city's Web site: www.a2gov.org/government/publicservices/systems_planning/energy/Pages/GreenFleets.aspx.

APWA Project of the Year awarded to two Ann Arbor projects

The City of Ann Arbor project management services unit recently received two Project of The Year awards from the Detroit Metro Area American Public Works Association. The awards were given for projects that implemented innovative solutions to engineering problems in the city.



The Harvard Drain & Nichols Arboretum Storm Control project took an unusual landform-based approach to an erosion problem that affected both city residents and the University of Michigan. The City of Ann Arbor and the University of Michigan partnered on this project to design a solution to a perennial erosion problem. The solution involved upsizing the storm pipes, installing velocity-reducing structures and reshaping the receiving area in the Arboretum. The newly shaped prairie infiltration area in the Arb has been planted with native perennials and shrubs by volunteers and students. The stormwater should completely infiltrate the water from

the neighborhood in the Arboretum before it reaches the Huron River. Infiltrating stormwater is considered a best practice for increasing water quality in natural streams and rivers.

The Harvard Drain and Nichols Arboretum project award was accepted by city Project Manager Susan Bryan.

The Huron Parkway – Nixon Road Improvement project received an award for the seamless construction and innovative design of a modern roundabout.

This intersection had a history of accidents involving pedestrians, traffic congestion that was compounded by heavy bus and pedestrian use and lack of adequate storm and bike facilities. The solution called for a modern roundabout that would facilitate the safe crossing of pedestrians. The new roundabout includes one central island to guide the vehicular traffic and refuge islands for the safety of foot traffic crossing the streets. Because modern roundabouts have 75 percent fewer conflict points between all modes of traffic, the design significantly improves safety. It also calms traffic by lowering traffic speeds while reducing delays.

The project also reconstructed Nixon Road from Plymouth Road to Huron Parkway. Road reconstruction included new roadway, curb and sidewalks. Water quality that flows to the river was improved by installing new storm sewer structures. New bike lanes were added on both Nixon and Huron, and accommodated safely through the roundabout, providing new access for green transportation.

The project improved the area's carbon footprint by installing new LED energy-efficient street lights for less energy consumption.

With a focus on public involvement in the project, input was solicited via public meetings beginning in 2007 with local residents, business owners, the AATA, the Washtenaw Biking and Walking Coalition, the Ann Arbor Commission on Disability Issues and the Ann Arbor Center for Independent Living. After a design was complete, another meeting was held to review the design and provide information regarding construction.

The Huron Parkway – Nixon Road Improvement project award was accepted by city Project Engineer Igor Kotlyar and city Traffic Engineer Les Sipowski.

The awards were given at the APWA Chapter level, and both will be submitted for awards at the state level.

City government offices closed Feb. 15

In observance of Presidents Day, city government offices will be closed on Monday, Feb. 15. There will be no interruption in trash and recycling collection. Go online for a listing of other city events and meetings:

http://www.a2gov.org/government/city_administration/communicationsoffice/Pages/Events.aspx.
