GMA visit to A2

ABC’s Good Morning America (GMA) will broadcast live in Ann Arbor, from the intersection of Ashley and Washington streets, Wednesday, July 3. In addition to the live remote, GMA will feature highlights of some A2 businesses as part of the broadcast. The Community High School Jazz Band will also perform live. Coverage is tentatively scheduled for during or just prior to the 8 a.m. hour. Be sure to tune in and join the rest of the country watching Ann Arbor in the national spotlight!

Independence Day schedule

City of Ann Arbor municipal offices will be closed Thursday, July 4, due to Independence Day. There will be no trash/recycling/compost curbside collection on the holiday Thursday. Pickups will resume Friday, July 5, with regularly scheduled Friday collections taking place Saturday. Go online for more information.

The City of Ann Arbor wishes you a safe and happy Independence Day!

Time for fireworks?

If you’re planning to celebrate Independence Day with fireworks, please remember to do so safely and responsibly; follow the laws; be courteous by letting neighbors know in advance; and be sensitive to the distress fireworks can cause to some community members who may be challenged with post-traumatic stress or other conditions.

This Independence Day, fireworks may ONLY be discharged in the city June 29 to July 5 (because it falls on a Friday this year), until 11:45 p.m. on each of those days, per the Michigan Fireworks Safety Act 256 of 2011 (PDF).
Use without permission is ALWAYS PROHIBITED at city parks, schools and all public and private property that isn't your own.

Please take note of these safety and courtesy tips:

- Keep a water source ready to spray embers from fireworks. Drench the entire area where you've been using fireworks when done.
- Toss used fireworks into a bucket of water for at least 24 hours before disposing.
- Don't try to reignite fireworks that didn't go off.
- Don't launch fireworks into forests or fields. Dry grass or leaves could ignite.
- Keep fireworks away from your face and eyes.

Visit the American Veterinary Medical Association website for ways to **keep pets safe** before, during and after the holiday/celebrations.

Find more tips and information on the [National Fire Protection Association](https://www.nfpa.org) website.

Also important to remember, anyone setting off fireworks that cause a fire resulting in property damage will potentially face civil and criminal liability.

The city thanks you in advance for being a good neighbor.

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**Park renaming to commemorate Ann Arbor bicentennial**

The community is invited to attend the renaming ceremony of Southeast Area Park to Bicentennial Park Thursday, July 11, at 4:30 p.m. Learn about the planned park revitalization and special announcements; guests can also enjoy light refreshments. Bicentennial Park is located at 2901 E. Ellsworth Road, Ann Arbor. Find details, as they become available, on the [Ann Arbor website](https://www.annarbor.gov).

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**More Life, Less Stuff**

Advertisements pressure and tempt us to "buy more," every day. These advertisements strategically play on a need to fit in, feel good about ourselves, not miss out, make life easier, and enjoy life's finer things. However, all this "stuff" comes with hidden costs that, in the end, might not be worth it.

The [More Life, Less Stuff Campaign](https://www.morelifemorestuff.com) focuses on the shared responsibility to right-size our consumption and minimize harm to the world and the life it sustains. The campaign aims to raise awareness about not just our individual choices but our collective commitment to a healthy future. Learn about the **benefits** of “less-is-more” living!
Standards for pavement sealant application

Summer is a common time for driveway, parking lot and other surface resealing projects. It’s important to remember the City of Ann Arbor banned the use of coal tar sealants, which is widely applied as a maintenance practice. The reason: These sealants contain high levels of polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, or PAHs, many of which have severe adverse health impacts in humans, fish and other aquatic organisms when they enter our waterways. Under the city ordinance, all applications of pavement sealant within Ann Arbor must be registered with the city and must use a product with less than 0.1% PAHs by weight. Please go online for more information and details on the pavement sealants requirements.

Food trucks return

July 17 marks the return of food truck and cart vendors at the open-air Ann Arbor Farmers Market, 315 Detroit St. On the third Wednesday of every month through October, 5–8 p.m., bring along a family member or friend for dinner from some of your favorite vendors and live music! Go online to learn more about the market and these special events, including parking information.
Swimming at Buhr, Fuller and Veterans Memorial park pools is a fun way to stay active and cool this summer. Swimming can also improve cardiovascular health, increase muscle strength, enhance flexibility, and is a great way to be social, reduce stress, boost mood and take a refreshing break from daily routines. All in all … time at the pool promotes overall well-being and a sense of community! We hope to see you poolside this summer. Sign up for a learn-to-swim class for all ages and skill levels—or— plan your pool day at www.a2gov.org/pools

Park millage due for renewal

The 2025–2044 Park Maintenance and Capital Improvements Millage renewal proposal is set to appear on the Nov. 5 General Election ballot, asking Ann Arbor voters to decide whether to continue supporting the Ann Arbor park system. If passed, the renewed millage would continue funding park system enhancements, repairs and restoration for the next 20 years. The millage renewal proposal remains for 1.10 mills and does not pose an increase; the rate would remain the same as the millage that is expiring this year.

Visit parks online for answers to frequently asked questions, to learn about projects and activities funded through the current and past millages and much more. Additional questions — or interest in scheduling a parks and recreation informational presentation for your neighborhood or community organization later this summer or fall — can be directed to parks@a2gov.org.
CTN highlights

Check out CTN’s wide range of programs available to watch online now!

**A2 Bicentennial** — Bikeapalooza

**Ann Arbor Inclusive** — Tracy Byrd

**Ann Arbor Public Schools** — Community High

**Ann Arbor Public Schools** — Huron High School Commencement

**Ann Arbor Public Schools** — Pathways to Success High School Commencement

**Ann Arbor Public Schools** — Pioneer High School Commencement

**Ann Arbor Public Schools** — Skyline High School Commencement

**FYI** — Juneteenth 2024

**FYI** — Kevin Walsh, president/CEO of the Michigan Flight Museum and Air Adventures, talks aeronautics; Ann Arbor flag redesign; and Bikeapalooza

**Green Light** — Pollinator-aware yard care

**Park Peek** — Allmendinger Park

**Senior Moments** — Ann Arbor Musician/Multi-instrumentalist Betsy Beckerman talks about her life and musical activities for seniors

**Soapbox** — Washtenaw Association for Community Advocacy

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**Leaf-blower ordinance in effect**

A new Ann Arbor ordinance was passed in December 2023 prohibiting the use of gas-powered leaf blowers in the city. The summer ban is already in effect, from June 1 to Sept. 30. Go online to find complete details.
Home
Electrification Expo

On Friday, Aug. 2, the Ann Arbor Office of Sustainability and Innovations will be hosting the third annual Home Electrification Expo at the Ann Arbor Farmers Market 5-8 p.m. Hear from experts, manufacturers and contractors about all things energy efficiency and electrification. There will also be food trucks, a live band and prize drawings, including a brand-new heat pump water heater with installation and free all-electric lawn care services. RSVP to receive updates about the event.

A²ZERO in review

The City of Ann Arbor Office of Sustainability and Innovations (OSI) has released the A²ZERO annual report highlighting major activities and accomplishments. The A²ZERO plan is charting the city's path to carbon neutrality by 2030. See the impressive year in review!

Ann Arbor Greenbelt celebrates Buy-Sell-Protect success

The City of Ann Arbor Greenbelt recently completed the final step of selling its first-ever conserved property under the program’s new buy-protect-sell initiative. This is a new city effort to create equitable and affordable conserved farmland-purchasing opportunities surrounding Ann Arbor. The city purchased a 54-acre farm in November 2022 in Northfield Township with the intent to split and sell it in two parts via a public request for proposals, but at a fixed, reduced price to reflect the conservation easement that would be applied. To be eligible, applicants could not already own land, or they had to be a small farmer, and had to meet an income limit.

Money received from buyers via the buy-protect-sell program is returned to the Greenbelt fund for more land conservation.

Learn more about this initiative and the Greenbelt's mission to protect farmland and open space around the Ann Arbor community.
New artwork on display in Council chambers

Please join the City of Ann Arbor Office of Organizational Equity in recognizing artists from the Ann Arbor disability community who have been chosen to display artwork in City Council chambers, second floor, Larcom City Hall, July 15–31. Public members are welcome to enjoy and view the displays.

Summer taxes due

Summer property taxes are due by July 31 in order to avoid interest or penalty. For eligible, low-income homeowners, Michigan law provides for a reduction in property taxes, commonly known as a poverty exemption. A poverty exemption application may be submitted no later than Friday, July 12, 2024, to allow time for review prior to the Board of Review July meeting, which takes place July 16. Go online to review the qualifications and application information.

Taxes may be paid by mail, by phone (866.890.4982) or online. As a reminder, in 2022, the city upgraded its online payment platform for property taxes. This platform has a similar look and feel to the online utility payment system and is intended to be more user friendly than the previous system. In addition, you have the option (not required) to register your email and/or mobile number to enable notifications and reminders. Payments are also accepted at the City of Ann Arbor Customer Service Center (located on the first floor of Larcom City Hall at 301 E. Huron St.) and at several Bank of Ann Arbor branches. Bank of Ann Arbor will accept full summer tax payments in July only.

Regular business hours at the customer service center are 8 a.m.–5 p.m. weekdays. Please note, the customer service center at Larcom City Hall is closed to observe the Independence Day holiday Thursday July 4, and will reopen Friday, July 5.

Visit the city’s property taxes webpage for more information, including how property taxes are calculated.
Ann Arbor Historic Preservation Awards

The 37th annual Ann Arbor Historic Preservation Awards presentation was featured at the June 3 City Council meeting. The ceremony honored residents of 11 properties for preservation and rehabilitation excellence, and one organization was presented the Centennial Award for making a difference in the community for more than 100 years. Thank you to the award recipients whose preservation efforts are contributing to the history of Ann Arbor! Learn more about this year's honorees.

Elections news: Celebrating excellence, preparing voters

Congratulations to the Ann Arbor City Clerk’s Office for earning the MiExcellence Award at the Michigan Association of Municipal Clerks annual conference in Traverse City June 21! The award recognizes the city clerk’s office for Overall Best Practice for the Voter Participation Specialist (VPS) program. The clerk’s office VPS program is a comprehensive temporary staffing program that engages temporary workers in all aspects of election administration, including election law, voter registration, absentee ballots and satellite office staffing. The success of the program is highlighted by three full-time hires in the Ann Arbor City Clerk’s Office coming from former VPS staff.

The knowledgeable, experienced and dedicated (+ award-winning!) city clerk’s office team has its sights set on gearing up for the two remaining elections in Ann Arbor for 2024: Aug. 6 State Primary Election and Nov. 5 General Election.

Here’s what you need to know to be ready to vote:

Check your voter registration status, register to vote if you still need to and view your Primary Election ballot at the Michigan Voter Information Center. Note, beginning July 23, voters must register in person, and show proof of residency, at the city clerk’s office in order to vote in the Primary Election.

Ann Arbor registered voters who applied for a Primary Election absentee ballot, including those voters on the permanent ballot list, should expect to see ballots in the mail beginning the first week of July. Fill it out, sign and return it on or before Election Day at 8 p.m.

Primary Election early voting sites will be open July 27–Aug. 4!

The city clerk’s office is open 8 a.m.–5 p.m. Monday –Friday and will be open additional hours for voter registration, absentee ballots and to answer your questions on weekends from 8
a.m.– 5 p.m. beginning Saturday, July 27, through Sunday, Aug. 4. Call, 734.794.6140, or stop by!

For your complete guide to voting information and resources, visit the city clerk’s office online anytime, [www.a2gov.org/elections](http://www.a2gov.org/elections).

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**Art fair pro tips**

The annual Ann Arbor Art Fair will be taking over many city streets — and will bring tens of thousands of visitors to the city — Thursday–Saturday, July 18–20. Anyone familiar with summertime in Michigan knows storms can also pay an unwelcomed visit to the event.

Visitors to the city, shoppers and fair vendors alike can be prepared by signing up for Art Fair urgent alerts via the city/county emergency alert system, [Everbridge](https://www.everbridge.com/). It's easy to do and instant from your mobile phone. The communications will only be sent to your phone during the fair dates and to share urgent safety information. To sign up, text A2ARTFAIR (in all caps, no spaces) to 888777.

Another way to prepare like a pro? Check the [road and lane closures webpage](https://www.a2gov.org/) as the event nears to find out which streets will be closed.

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**Are you ready?**

Ready.gov reminds us that now is the ideal time to ensure your [emergency plan and supplies](https://www.ready.gov/prepare) are up to date. The spring/summer seasons, especially, pose threats for severe thunderstorms, extreme heat and other hazardous weather conditions, which can strike with little or no warning.

Before an emergency, start your planning process with these thought prompts:

- What is my shelter plan?
- What is my evacuation route?
- What is my family/household communication plan?
- How will I receive emergency alerts and warnings? (Answer: Sign up for [year-round emergency alerts](https://www.ready.gov/prepare) for Ann Arbor through the Everbridge system, if you haven’t already!)

Ready.gov provides [valuable resources](https://www.ready.gov/prepare) to help you answer these questions and assemble a comprehensive plan.

Your planning should include steps to ensure your pets’ wellbeing, too. If you need to evacuate your home for any reason, remember your furry, scaly or feathered friends. The Ready Campaign offers guidance and tips for:

- Making a pet emergency plan.
- Preparing shelter for your pet.
- Protecting your pet during a disaster and caring for them afterward.
• Tips for large animals.

Learn more about how to ensure your entire family is prepared for emergency situations.

The City of Ann Arbor also operates 22 outdoor warning sirens citywide which are used to alert people who are outside to immediately seek shelter and seek out additional information. Sirens are used in the event of an emergency, which includes inclement weather, such as high winds, tornados, large hail, in addition to urgent situations relating to hazardous materials and dams.

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**Know how to Stop a Plot**

Michigan State Police recently launched an effort to raise awareness and to help community members identify and possibly prevent targeted acts of violence. The “Stop a Plot” campaign educates on how to recognize warning signs and take action to report suspicious behavior. The campaign includes a new webpage that details common warning signs and risk factors to look for, how to report confidentially, as well as tips and resources to help someone who might be at risk. Watch the video and visit the Stop a Plot website for more.

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**A2 earns AAA**

S&P Global Ratings has upgraded the City of Ann Arbor's credit rating from “AA+” to “AAA,” the highest rating a municipality can be assigned. S&P cited the city’s very strong management, trend of robust operating performance, resilient economy, and strengthened financial position as reasons for the rating upgrade. The improved credit rating was assigned as the city prepares for the sale of its 2024 Capital Improvement Bonds. Ann Arbor is now one of only nine Michigan cities that holds the prestigious “AAA” rating from S&P Global Ratings and is also the most populous the AAA city in the state. Learn more.