

DIALOG



East Lansing's Residential Newsletter • September 2012 • Curbside Journal inside!



Library Millage up for Vote

East Lansing City Council has proposed a one-millage operating levy for the East Lansing Public Library (ELPL) to be placed on the Nov. 6 General Election ballot.

The millage, if passed by voters, would result in a tax increase for residents, 28 cents per day or \$8.34 per month for a home with a taxable value of \$100,000, over 10 years. This revenue would provide secure, dedicated operational funding to ELPL, which would be used for materials, repairs and the creation of a building fund. It would also offset the City's annual

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Development Projects Pave the Way for Future Success

In the face of a challenging economic backdrop; past, present and future redevelopment projects in the City of East Lansing point to the continued vitality, appeal and perseverance of the local university community.

East Lansing's Comprehensive Plan, created with community input and adopted in 2006, strongly supports redevelopment in the East Lansing-MSU community and indicates that it is a necessary tool to move the community forward toward a vibrant future. Redevelopment projects help keep communities strong by creating jobs, diversifying housing stock, improving public infrastructure and expanding tax base.

In East Lansing, this can be seen firsthand with successfully completed projects like City Center I, West Village and the Albert Place Condominiums. These projects, all completed within the last decade, significantly changed the urban landscape in East Lansing's downtown and paved the way for new businesses, residents and jobs.

Now, two new mixed-use projects along Ann Street Plaza – the St. Anne Luxury Lofts and The Residences – will together bring 73 new rental units and new commercial businesses to the



Construction crews worked this summer to improve downtown infrastructure for current and future redevelopment in the area.

downtown. The St. Anne project is slated for completion this fall and The Residences are slated to open in fall 2013. Along with these two projects, 1,750 feet of infrastructure along Albert Avenue and Grove Street was improved this summer, including an upgrade of sewer and water utilities and the replacement of streets, curbs, sidewalks and gutters. Still to come, Ann Street Plaza will receive a makeover in the

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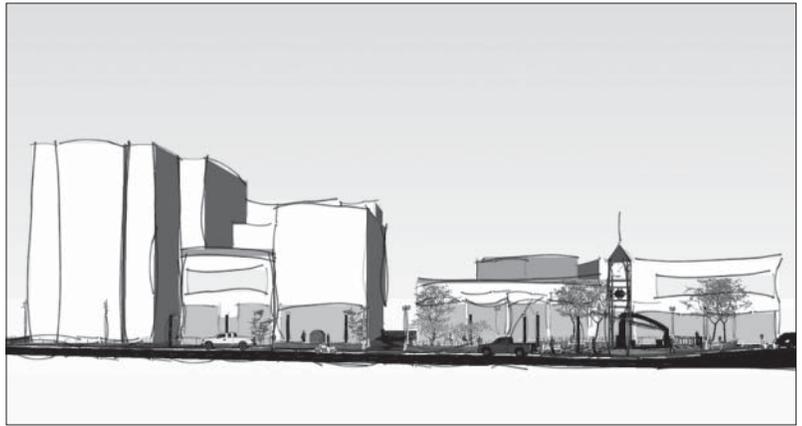
Manager's Message

Thirteen years ago when I moved to East Lansing, I was struck by how many citizens referred to the East Lansing Public Library (ELPL) as the “jewel of the community.” That sentiment has not waned.

As a father, I use the library with my daughters. They love choosing books and DVDs and attending the variety of quality programs ELPL provides, including story times and concerts. I also have seen ELPL extend its resources outside the library walls, delivering materials to Burcham Hills residents and partnering with All Saints Episcopal Church to provide teen after school programming. Annually, the library is visited approximately 270,000 times and hosts approximately 44,000 computer sessions. These are just a few of many reasons why I believe ELPL is vital to our community and needs to remain strong.

Over the past few fiscal years the City budget has seen drastic reductions and all departments have had to reduce services. Now, the City is looking to utilize a phased revenue enhancement to balance its Fiscal Year 2013 and 2014 budgets. As such, East Lansing City Council has placed a one-mill levy on the November ballot to support the library. This mill will mean a modest tax increase for residents and will provide vital funding to ELPL and, in turn, the City's general fund. Preservation of general fund dollars allows us to reinvest in City infrastructure and maintain the level of City services residents have come to expect. Please join me on Nov. 6 to protect the future of our library.

George Lahanas
East Lansing City Manager



The rendering above provides a conceptual idea of what Ann Street Plaza will look like once construction has been completed. The buildings are not drawn to scale.

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coming months.

Other projects currently underway include a medical facility and PNC Bank on the former Blue Cross Blue Shield site on Lake Lansing Road, a mixed-use project including apartments and retail on the former site of Koehler's along Michigan Avenue and, of course, the Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum, slated to open Nov. 9 directly adjacent to downtown. The Broad is expected to significantly impact the local community, drawing visitors from across the state, nation and world.

Looking to the future, there are a number of projects and potential redevelopment opportunities on the horizon, including a redevelopment/upgrade of the East Lansing Amtrak Station, the FRIB and the former City Center II site. Although City Center II is not moving forward, the City is looking at next steps for the publicly controlled properties on the site and plan to issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) in October.

Two open-to-the-public meetings will be held in September for community feedback on the RFP. See story on page 4 for details.

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\$560,000 general fund operating transfer to ELPL.

The City of East Lansing's projected budget shortfall for Fiscal Year 2014 is more than \$2 million. If the millage does not pass, it will mean less general fund dollars invested in the library and other City service areas.

The City's previous efforts to cut its budget include reducing its workforce by 85 full-time positions over 10 years, a reduction in City facility improvements, a postponement of the City's sidewalk improvement program, a freeze on annual pay adjustments, elimination of a number of departmental sub-contracts, a reduction in the City's rate of healthcare costs through collaboration/competitive bargaining and other departmental cuts. Specifically, at ELPL, 10 staff positions have been eliminated since January 2011 and the library materials budget has decreased 33 percent from Fiscal Year 2012.



Best Interests of East Lansing Residents Must Factor into Regional Collaboration

The fiscal challenges facing all levels of government have led to increased calls for shared services, collaboration and even full consolidation of services.

For more than a decade, local governments around Michigan have felt the crunch of reduced revenue sharing and property tax revenues - East Lansing is no exception. And like many other communities, East Lansing has long sought out and engaged in opportunities for shared services that result in efficiencies and cost savings for East Lansing taxpayers. This includes sharing an assessor with Meridian Township, contracting with Meridian Township to provide trade inspection services, sharing a fire chief with the City of Lansing and a joint water authority with Meridian that goes back 40 years.

But the decision to pursue consolidation of services isn't black and white - or green for that matter. It is a complex and nuanced undertaking that requires thoughtful dialogue, reliable and unbiased data and public input. It is also important to recognize that not all service consolidations will impact participants equally. For example, over the past five years the cities of East Lansing and Lansing have engaged in the consolidation of 911 dispatch services. Prior to the consolidation, Ingham County contracted with both cities for dispatch, but opted to withdraw the contracts. While East

Lansing's dispatch employees were allocated to the County, the legacy costs of existing retirees remains with the City. As a result, the cost of dispatch services to the City of East Lansing is now almost triple the \$25,000 paid prior to the consolidation. Consolidated dispatch is certainly a benefit to the region, but the added cost to East Lansing residents is a reminder that each opportunity for shared services or consolidation must be carefully considered through cost-benefit analysis.

East Lansing has long engaged in practices that have helped the City stay solvent. Fiscal stability has been achieved through years of sound practices and collaboration with employee groups on health care cost containment and wage concessions. East Lansing taxpayers have also made significant sacrifices. These sacrifices have led to a heightened responsibility to make prudent decisions about the use of City resources. Any potential partners in service sharing must do the same. Undoubtedly, the health of the region as a whole is of great importance to all mid-Michigan communities; however, East Lansing City government must balance regional needs with an overriding responsibility to residents of this great community.

View a list of some of the City's shared services below and find more at www.cityofeastlansing.com/collaborate.

City to Launch New Neighborhood Initiative

The City will launch its new Neighborhood Partnerships Initiative this fall in an effort to support and encourage citizen engagement within East Lansing's strong and vibrant neighborhoods.

The goals of the new initiative are to support citizenship, foster two-way communication and build community by taking a new approach to neighborhood support and outreach.

As a part of the initiative, the City will launch a neighborhood association website that is hosted by the City and maintained by participating neighborhoods. Neighborhoods will have the opportunity to update their own page on the website with news, events and more.

City staff liaisons will also be assigned to work one-on-one with neighborhoods to create important two-way dialogue and a personal link to City Hall. The staff liaisons will be assigned to three pilot neighborhoods, with other neighborhoods added over time. Learn more at www.cityofeastlansing.com/neighborhoodpartnerships.



A Few Examples of Shared Services & Partnerships

- East Lansing shares an assessor with Meridian Township.
- East Lansing contracts with Meridian Township to provide trade inspections (electrical, plumbing, mechanical).
- East Lansing shares a fire chief with Lansing.
- East Lansing participated in the consolidation of the County's 911 dispatch services.
- East Lansing collaborates with the school district to provide before & after school programs, share the cost of a school resource officer and more.
- East Lansing partners with Lansing Economic Area Partnership, MSU and other area agencies for business attraction and retention.
- East Lansing partnered with CATA and MSU to secure grant funds for an East Lansing Amtrak Station upgrade.

IT'S YOUR BUSINESS

The Grove Gallery Co-op, located in Suite A at 325 Grove St., is a local artist cooperative offering a range of fine art and craft to shoppers.

The downtown East Lansing business features on-site artist workspace and a gallery featuring the work of both on-site and off-site artists. Art currently displayed in the gallery includes mixed media, printmaking, pastel and oil painting, traditional weaving, sculptural basketry, bead work and jewelry, fused glass, wood, fiber arts and more.

What makes the co-op unique is that customers who stop by can enjoy both the gallery and the artists at work in their studios, providing a behind-the-scenes-look at creativity in progress. On-site artists pay a monthly fee to rent both studio and exhibition space at the co-op, while off-site artists pay a reduced fee for exhibition space only.

Visit www.grovegalleriescoop.com to meet the artists currently exhibiting in the space, peruse a photo gallery of artwork and learn about upcoming events. The co-op can be found across the street from the Grove Street Parking Ramp, next to Woven Art - another downtown arts-based business featuring a yarn shop and fiber art gallery. This quaint little pocket of the downtown is a great place for shoppers to find beautiful, locally made items.



The Grove Gallery Co-op features artwork by a variety of local on-site and off-site artists.

GROVE GALLERY CO-OP

Business Quick Facts

Address: 325 Grove St., Suite A

Phone: (517) 333-7180

Web: www.grovegalleriescoop.com

Business Hours:

Tuesday-Friday, noon - 6 p.m.

Saturday-Sunday, noon - 4 p.m.



General Election is Nov. 6

The East Lansing City Clerk's office is gearing up for the Nov. 6 General Election.

The voter registration deadline is Oct. 9 and all absentee ballot applications must be received by no later than 2 p.m. on the Saturday prior to the election in order to receive an absentee ballot in the mail. An absentee ballot can also be voted in person at the East Lansing

City Clerk's office, 410 Abbot Road, up to 4 p.m. on the Monday prior to the election.

The polls will be open 7 a.m.-8 p.m. on the day of the election.

East Lansing residents can visit www.cityofeastlansing.com/elections for additional information, including links to election applications, polling locations, sample ballots and more.

City Center II Next Steps

Although the proposed City Center II project is not moving forward, the City of East Lansing is looking at next steps for the publicly controlled properties on the former City Center II/Park District Planning Area site.

Community members are invited to two open-to-the-public community conversations on Thursday, Sept. 6 at 7 p.m. and Friday, Sept. 7 at 9 a.m. at the East Lansing Hannah Community Center, 819 Abbot Road. These meetings will be held for the purposes of receiving stakeholder input

for a Request for Proposals (RFP) that is expected to be issued in October for the publicly controlled properties on the site.

"We plan to move forward with the publicly controlled properties by first and foremost involving community members in the process," said East Lansing City Manager George Lahanas. "These meetings will provide community members with an opportunity to voice their opinions about what type of project they would like to see on that site."

City Launches Donate Page

The City of East Lansing has launched a donate page on its website, providing citizens with an easy way to invest in the future of the East Lansing community.

The page features right-hand navigation, where visitors can navigate through different departments and City programs where

donation opportunities are available. Community members can invest in anything from parks to festivals, the library, police outreach programs, the Prime Time Seniors' Program and much more.

Visit www.cityofeastlansing.com/donate to learn more.

Author Kicks Off One Book 2012

Pulitzer prize winner and bestselling author Katherine Boo visited the City of East Lansing this past August to kick off the 2012 One Book, One Community (OBOC) program.

Boo spoke before a standing room-only crowd at the East Lansing High School auditorium on Aug. 26 and the following day spoke to the incoming freshman class at the MSU Academic Welcome.

This year's OBOC selection, authored by Boo, is the New York Times bestseller "Behind the Beautiful Forevers." The book takes readers to a makeshift settlement in Mumbai and tells the real-life stories of some of India's most deprived citizens.

The OBOC program continues this September with a number of events centered around the themes in Boo's book.



Pulitzer Prize winner and bestselling author Katherine Boo visited the East Lansing community Aug. 26-27.

Community members can look forward to film nights, dance demonstrations, a "Taste of India" dinner, a found art composing project and more.

Visit www.onebookeastlansing.com to learn more about the OBOC program and this September's community events.

Farmer's Market Serves Up Fall Fun

The East Lansing Farmer's Market (ELFM) will continue this fall on Sundays from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. in Valley Court Park, located behind Crunchy's off of Grand River Avenue.

The 2012 season will run through the end of October.

Community members who have yet to visit the market are encouraged to stop down on Sundays this fall to check out the variety of homegrown, in-season Michigan produce and products available.

Market goers can enjoy everything from corn to pumpkins, gourds, squash, apple cider, coffee, artisan bread, granola, baked goods, grass-fed beef, artisan cheese, fish and more. The ELFM will also continue to feature eat-on-site food served up by the popular Greater Lansing food trucks, Trailer Park'd and The Purple Carrot.

Community members are also encouraged to mark their calendars for the ELFM's annual Autumn Fest event, which will take place this year on Sunday, Oct. 7 from 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Autumn Fest, open to all community members, will feature live music, fall



activities for children, free donuts and cider and fall-themed decorations throughout the market.

Community members can learn more about the market and the 2012 vendors at www.cityofeastlansing.com/farmersmarket and on Facebook at www.facebook.com/elfarmersmarket.

Community members can also sign up to receive the ELFM's weekly e-newsletter at www.cityofeastlansing.com/news. The e-newsletter includes a weekly shopping list, recipes featuring in-season produce and products that can be found at the market, vendor spotlights and more.

AECT 24th Season

The All-of-us Express Children's Theatre (AECT) has announced the lineup for its 24th season: "Little Women," "The Princess and the Pea," "Rapunzel," "The Beatles Slept Here" and "Aladdin and His Wonderful, Magical Lamp."

"Little Women" will be brought to the East Lansing Hannah Community Center (ELHCC) stage Nov. 2-3 and Nov. 9-10 with auditions Sept. 6-8.

"The Princess and the Pea" and "Rapunzel" will be brought to the ELHCC stage Feb. 8-9 and Feb. 15-16 with auditions Nov. 29-Dec. 1.

"The Beatles Slept Here" will be on stage at the Riverwalk Theatre in Lansing April 19-21 and April 26-28, with auditions Feb. 21-23.

"Aladdin and His Wonderful, Magical Lamp" will be brought to the ELHCC stage July 26-27 and Aug. 2-3 with auditions May 16-18.

Visit www.cityofeastlansing.com/allofus for additional information, including ticket prices. Auditions are open to all interested area youth, however age ranges do vary.

New Online CrimeMapping

The East Lansing Police Department (ELPD) recently implemented CrimeMapping.com™, providing residents with an opportunity to view crimes that have occurred in East Lansing using an interactive online map.

Residents can view crimes by type, date, location and subscribing agencies. Additionally, residents can look back at past crime activity (up to 6 months)

and can sign up to receive crime alerts. It can take up to a week for new crimes to appear due to the approval process.

An online sector map was also created by ELPD, linking residents to their specific neighborhood watch officer. Residents can contact their officer to ask general questions about crimes.

Learn more at www.cityofeastlansing.com/CrimeMapping.



The 3rd Annual East Lansing Welcomes the World will take place at the East Lansing Public Library on Sept. 16 from 3-5 p.m.

ELPL to Host East Lansing Welcomes the World

The 3rd Annual East Lansing Welcomes the World will take place Sunday, Sept. 16 from 3-5 p.m. at the East Lansing Public Library, 950 Abbot Road.

This special event provides an opportunity for international students and families to meet their East Lansing neighbors, while enjoying live music, food, children's activities, information tables and more. The event will kick off with a brief program at 3:10 p.m., featuring welcoming remarks by MSU President Lou Anna K. Simon, East Lansing Mayor Diane Goddeeris and MSU Office for International Students and Scholars Director Peter Briggs.

Free shuttle buses will run on a continuous loop from campus to the library from 2:45-5:15 p.m., stopping regularly at North Hubbard Hall, the International Center and Spartan Village Community Center.

This event is free and all community members are welcome to attend. Learn more at www.cityofeastlansing.com/world.



A young participant at the 2011 Great Pumpkin Walk in downtown East Lansing poses for a photo.

Homecoming Parades, Pumpkin Walk set for Fall

With fall just around the corner, community members can look forward to a variety of upcoming annual events, including the MSU Homecoming Parade, East Lansing High School Homecoming Parade and the Great Pumpkin Walk.

The MSU Homecoming Parade is scheduled to take place on Friday, Oct. 12, beginning at 6 p.m.

The parade will begin at the intersection of Abbot Road and Burcham Drive, travel south on Abbot Road, east on Grand River Avenue, south at Collingwood Drive, south on Farm Lane and conclude at the corner of Farm and Shaw lanes.

The East Lansing High School Homecoming Parade will take place on Friday, Oct. 5 at 5:30 p.m. The parade will head west on Burcham Drive, south on M.A.C. Avenue, east on Albert Avenue, north on Bailey Street and back to the high school. The game will follow at 7 p.m.

Downtown East Lansing's annual Great Pumpkin Walk will take place Thursday, Oct. 25 from 5-7 p.m. Children are invited to downtown East Lansing for door-to-door trick-or-treat fun with participating downtown businesses. This popular annual event is hosted by the Downtown Management Board.

CRC Gears Up for a Year of Community Building

The Community Relations Coalition (CRC) is gearing up for another great year of community building and outreach in the East Lansing-MSU community.

Founded in 1999, the CRC is a non-profit organization that brings together stakeholders in an effort to enhance relationships and foster communication between residents in near-campus neighborhoods. Community members are invited to get to know the CRC and encouraged to participate in upcoming CRC-hosted events and activities. Visit www.WeAllLiveHere.org to learn more about the CRC. A few highlights include:

- Meet the CRC interns for the 2012-2013 academic year. The CRC interns are undergraduate MSU students who live in the near-campus neighborhoods and strive to serve as a resource for their neighbors.
- Attend a neighborhood block party featuring MSU Dairy Store ice cream. Block parties will take place from 6-7 p.m. on Sept. 6, Sept. 11 and Sept. 20 in the Bailey, Red Cedar and Oakwood neighborhoods respectively.
- Check out the Spartan Big List – the CRC’s portal to off-campus living resources.
- Participate in neighborhood cleanup efforts following two MSU home football weekends. The cleanups will take place on Sunday, Sept. 16 following the Notre Dame game and on Sunday, Sept. 30 following the Ohio State game. Volunteers will meet at 10:30 a.m. behind East Lansing City Hall, 410 Abbot Road.



The new 2012-2013 CRC interns are pictured above.

- Interested in being actively involved in the CRC? Consider joining the Board of Directors! Contact the CRC at crc@msu.edu for more information.



The Broad will be dedicated on Nov. 9 and there will be an open house for tours on Nov. 10.

Broad Art Museum to Open Nov. 9

The Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum at Michigan State University will be dedicated on Friday, Nov. 9 with an outdoor public ceremony, as well as an open house for tours on Saturday, Nov. 10. The 46,000-square-foot museum designed by Pritzker Prize-winning architect Zaha Hadid features a striking stainless steel and glass façade, with 70

percent of its space reserved for modern and contemporary art. The Broad will act as an educational resource for MSU and a cultural hub for the state of Michigan. According to director Michael Rush, “The opening of the new museum will be an important milestone for MSU and we are eager to move forward with our full spectrum of exhibitions and programs.”

Community Survey

During the week of Sept. 10 a local public opinion research firm, Marketing Resource Group, will be conducting an opinion survey of East Lansing residents on behalf of the City.

The local firm will be contacting a sample of registered East Lansing voters by landlines and cell phones to ask them questions about City services, communication, neighborhood associations and more. This brief, 25-question survey will help East Lansing officials gauge the opinions of residents and assist in shaping future City initiatives and priorities.

This is not a sales or political call and individual responses will be kept confidential.

This survey is an initiative of the East Lansing City Manager’s office. Community members who are contacted are encouraged to participate.

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City Council
410 Abbot Road, (517) 319-6920

Mayor Diane Goddeeris
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Councilmember Kevin Beard
Councilmember Victor Loomis

City Manager
George Lahanas

Dialog Staff
Mikell Frey, Editor-in-Chief / Design

Published for the information of East Lansing residents. If you have questions or need more information call (517) 319-6873, write *Dialog*, 410 Abbot Road, East Lansing, MI 48823, or e-mail mfrey@cityofeastlansing.com. Visit www.cityofeastlansing.com/news to sign up for the *e-Dialog*. Follow us on Twitter and Facebook at www.twitter.com/cityofel and www.facebook.com/cityofeastlansing.

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COMMUNITY EVENTS

East Lansing Farmer's Market **Sundays, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. through Oct. 28**

The East Lansing Farmer's Market features homegrown Michigan produce and products in a beautiful outdoor setting at Valley Court Park. Learn more at www.cityofeastlansing.com/farmersmarket.

One Book, One Community **Events throughout September**

The One Book, One Community program, co-sponsored by the City of East Lansing and MSU, encourages the community to read the same book and come together for a variety of events in the fall. Learn more about this year's events at www.onebookeastlansing.com.

MSU Homecoming Parade **Oct. 12 at 6 p.m.**

MSU Spartan fans are encouraged to line the streets of downtown East Lansing and the MSU campus for the 2012 Homecoming Parade. This year's them is Spartans Will...Make History. View the page 6 story or visit <http://alumni.msu.edu/programs/homecoming> to learn more.

Great Pumpkin Walk **Oct. 25 from 5-7 p.m.**

Costumed children are invited to downtown East Lansing for door-to-door trick-or-treat fun with participating downtown East Lansing businesses. This popular annual event is hosted by the Downtown Management Board.

Green Friday **Nov. 30**

Community members are invited to downtown East Lansing's special version of the Black Friday sales! Participating merchants will offer specials and sales during regular business hours. Find additional event information at www.facebook.com/DowntownEastLansing.

Winter Glow **Dec. 1**

The Winter Glow will take place in downtown East Lansing on Saturday, Dec. 1 (time TBA). Activities will include ice carving, a reindeer petting zoo, photos with Santa and Mrs. Claus, horse and carriage rides, a lighting of luminaries throughout downtown and more. Learn more at www.cityofeastlansing.com/winterglow.

