



Breathing New Life into the Grand River Corridor

Following the completion of a two-year grant-funded feasibility process, the Cities of Farmington Hills and Farmington moved forward with a cooperative effort to revitalize the Grand River Corridor. In October 2011, both communities created a Corridor Improvement Authority (CIA). Through an inter-local agreement, these two Authorities were charged with the task of breathing new life into a Corridor that, despite its strengths, has seen decline and disinvestment. The two CIA Boards are each made up of seven property owners in and adjacent to the corridor including business and residential representatives.

After much thought, the Boards realized that in order to know what direction to take, they first needed to know their destination. Hence, the decision was made to develop the Grand River Corridor Vision Plan. The Plan, adopted by the CIA Boards on August 22, 2013, is the culmination of input by over 200 residents, business owners, and property owners, in addition to CIA Board Members, City Staff, and the Consultant Team. "Public input was a major part of this project and you see that in the plan," explains Spencer Brown, Farmington Hills CIA Board Chair and resident of the area. "It was important to understand the Community's impressions of and hopes for the Corridor."

The Grand River Corridor Improvement Authority provides the tools necessary to bring focus and resources that can help catalyze change and attract investment. The revitalization of the Corridor will be a long-term process requiring commitment and persistence, but the aim is to continue the partnership with the City of Farmington, the two Authority Boards, and public and private sector interests to bring a focused economic development strategy to Grand River.

For more information on the Grand River Corridor effort or to see a copy of the Vision Plan, visit www.fhgov.com/grandriver.

KEY FINDINGS FROM PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT			
Develop a brand for the corridor	Increase connections	Connect with the natural environment	Strengthen the economy
Improve the overall character	Offer more housing options	Encourage redevelopment in target areas	Re-purpose the historic winery
Enhance community gathering	Improve mobility	Offer more parks and recreation areas	Slow traffic

Fire Department – Holiday Safety Tips

The Farmington Hills Fire Department and the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) encourage you to follow these important tips to keep this holiday season safe.

Smoke Alarm Safety at Home

- Install smoke alarms inside every bedroom, outside each sleeping area, and on every level of the home, including the basement. Larger homes may need additional smoke alarms to provide enough protection.
- Interconnect all smoke alarms so when one sounds, they all sound.
- An ionization smoke alarm is generally more responsive to flaming fires and a photoelectric smoke alarm is generally more responsive to smoldering fires. For the best protection, both types of alarms or combination ionization and photoelectric alarms (also known as dual sensor alarms) are recommended.
- Smoke alarms should be installed away from the kitchen to prevent false alarms and they should be at least 10 feet from a cooking appliance.
- Smoke alarms have a maximum service life of 10 years when properly maintained.
- Test all smoke alarms monthly.
- "Change your clock; change your smoke alarm battery" on **Sunday, November 4**.
- Through its Smoke Alarm Installation Program, the Fire Department wants to ensure that all residents are provided with early warning in the event of a fire. If your home is not properly protected, contact fire prevention for assistance at 248-871-2820.

Heating Safety - Be Warm and Safe this Winter

- Keep anything that can burn at least three feet away from heating equipment, like the furnace, fireplace, wood stove or portable space heaters.
- Have a three-foot "kid-free zone" around open fires and space heaters.
- Never use your oven to heat your home.
- Have a qualified professional install stationary space heating equipment, water heaters or central heating equipment according to the local codes and manufacturer's instructions.
- Have heating equipment and chimneys cleaned and inspected every year by a qualified professional.
- Remember to turn portable heaters off when leaving the room or going to bed.
- Install and maintain carbon monoxide (CO) alarms to avoid the risk of CO poisoning.
- Always use the fuel specified by the manufacturer for fuel burning space heaters.
- Make sure the fireplace has a sturdy screen to stop sparks from flying into the room.
- Ashes should be cool before putting them into a metal container. Keep the container a safe distance away from your home.

Christmas Tree Safety

Picking the Tree: Choose a tree with fresh, green needles that do not fall off when touched. Only purchase an artificial tree which is labeled "flame-resistant" by a nationally recognized testing laboratory.

Placing the Tree: Before placing the tree in the stand, make a fresh cut one to two inches from the base of the trunk. Make sure the tree is at least three feet away from any heat source such as fireplaces, radiators, candles, heat vents or lights. Add water to the tree stand daily. Make sure the tree is not blocking an exit.

Lighting the Tree: Use lights that have the label of an independent testing laboratory. Some lights are specified only for indoor or outdoor use. Replace any string of lights with worn or broken cords or loose bulb connections. Connect no more than three strands of mini-string sets and a maximum of 50 bulbs for screw-in bulbs. Read manufacturer's instructions for the number of LED strands to connect. Never use lit candles to decorate the tree. Always turn off Christmas tree lights before leaving home or going to bed. Check natural trees daily for dryness (needles that fall off when touched). Remove any tree showing signs of unusual dryness.

Open Burning

Open burning (campfires, etc.) is only allowed when following specific guidelines, on the site of a single family dwelling using an approved semi-enclosed device that can be purchased from a local retailer. When choosing a location for your burn area, make sure it is at least eight feet away from any surfaces that could easily catch fire, such as wooden decks and patio furniture. Likewise, you do not want it to be underneath electrical or utility service wires. Only seasoned firewood may be burned, at no time is the burning of yard waste allowed. Please consult Section 12-14 of the City Code of Ordinances for guidelines or call Fire Prevention at 248-871-2820 for clarification.

School Fall Assembly

The Fire Department is bringing back the school Fall Safety & Fire Prevention assembly program for Farmington Public School students in grades K- 6. Safety messages will be presented via an entertaining program written and directed by Fire Inspector Stan Barnes and performed by members of the Farmington Hills Fire Department and Farmington Public Safety.

Police Department

The Farmington Hills Police Department is excited to announce its newest crime fighting tool: LEADS Online.

LEADS Online is a nationwide, online investigation system designed to assist law enforcement in solving crimes by providing a link between investigators and stolen property.

Farmington Hills resale and pawn shops have registered with LEADS Online and submit transaction and seller information, which then becomes part of a database that can be searched in the course of an investigation. Farmington Hills detectives can search for a particular item through either its serial number or physical description to determine if, and where, it was pawned. They can also search for a description and photo of the person pawning the item, a suspect vehicle, and any items that a person has pawned in the past. If there's no initial match, no worries! Searches can be saved so that if a person of interest pawns an item at any time in the future, an alert will be emailed to investigators. In cases such as larceny from automobiles or home invasions - where items stolen are often pawned or sold for cash - LEADS Online will assist detectives in locating and recovering stolen property at a much faster rate than ever before. This program is being utilized by police agencies across the nation, helping investigators link cases from different cities or states together with just a few keystrokes.

Recently, a local business was broken into. Surveillance video at the scene recorded the suspect's vehicle, but not the license plate. Farmington Hills detectives entered the vehicle description into LEADS Online and received a match. A person with the same vehicle description sold the merchandise stolen from the burglary to a pawn shop in a neighboring community. Detectives contacted the pawn shop and were able to identify the suspect. In another case, an antique mantel clock was stolen from a Farmington Hills business and sold at a pawn shop in a neighboring community. The sales transaction was recorded in LEADS Online. Farmington Hills detectives discovered the transaction, recovered the clock and arrested the suspect.

Without LEADS Online, the suspects in these cases may never have been identified. The Farmington Hills Police Department is always looking for ways to do things more efficiently and effectively. In 2012, Farmington Hills had the lowest total number of burglaries in City history, and the Police Department will continue to expand resources in an effort to keep citizens safe. LEADS Online is one more tool that will help in achieving that goal.



Fire Station No. 3 and the Jon Grant Community Center are part of the Grand River Corridor.

Fall/Winter 2013

City Council

Mayor - Barry Brickner

Mayor Pro Tem - Richard Lerner

- Nancy Bates
- Michael Bridges
- Randy Bruce
- Ken Massey
- Cheryl Oliverio

City Manager - Steve Brock

Each issue of the Focus newsletter can also be found on the City website at www.fhgov.com. Go to Quick Links on the home page and click on Newsletter. Click on the "+" button on the toolbar to increase the magnification of the entire page.



Register online for classes and programs at <https://recreg.fhgov.com>. Or go to www.fhgov.com, click on Quick Links, then Recreation Online Registration.

If you have an account, follow the prompts to register. If you're new, create an account by registering online or in person at the Costick Center, Monday thru Friday, 8:30am-4:30pm.

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Zoning Division

Firewood Storage

Improperly stored firewood can be a haven for rodents or other pests. Therefore, the City has adopted the following regulations for the storage of firewood in residential areas:

- The outside storage of more than two face cords is prohibited unless approved by the Planning and Community Development Department.
- Firewood must be stored on a structure that is at least three inches above the ground, not more than 40 inches in height, and not more than 10 feet in length.
- Firewood must be stacked in a compact and orderly manner.
- Storage of firewood in the front yard is prohibited.
- Storage of firewood is permitted only for use of the dwelling contained on the lot or parcel.
- Storage of firewood is prohibited on vacant parcels.

For further information, contact the Zoning Division at 248-871-2520

Housing Rehabilitation Program

New Opportunities for Home Repair Loans to Qualified Homeowners

The City of Farmington Hills has joined a partnership with the Oakland County Community and Home Improvement Division to help qualified homeowners repair or improve their houses.

This partnership, which will go into effect in July 2014, will offer home repair loans that may be used for eligible repairs including roofs, windows, furnaces, insulation or hot water tanks.

Funding for this program is provided by the U.S. Housing and Urban Development Office (HUD). To qualify for the home repair loans, applicants must own and occupy a home in Farmington Hills. The family must also meet income guidelines set by the Federal government – a family of four, for example, must have a gross income of less than \$51,500.

More information is available at www.fhgov.com by clicking on the Housing Rehabilitation Program under the Quick Links menu or by calling the Community Development Office at 248-871-2543.



The owners of this house received a home repair loan to replace their roof through the Housing Rehabilitation Program.

Finance Department

2014 Property Tax Calendar

- February 14: Last day to pay winter property taxes without penalty.
- February 20: Personal property statements due to assessor (business only).
- Late February: Change of assessment notices mailed.
- Last day of February: Last day to pay summer or winter property taxes at City Hall.
- Mid March: Board of Review meets.
- June 1: Last day to file Primary Residence Exemption affidavit for the entire tax year.
- Early June: Budget public hearing where City Council sets City tax rate.
- June 28 - 30: Summer tax bills mailed.
- September 2: Last day to pay summer property taxes without penalty. The due date is extended beyond August 31 due to the weekend and holiday.
- September 15: Last day for eligible persons to file for summer tax deferral.
- November 1: Last day to file Primary Residence Exemption affidavit, for winter taxes only.
- November 28 - 30: Winter tax bills mailed.
- December 31: Taxable status set for coming year's bill.



Building Division

Pre-Fabricated Fireplaces

With winter approaching, are you thinking about installing a pre-fabricated fireplace?

Mechanical contractors are responsible for all aspects of the installation – including work that they don't usually complete such as the hearth, surround, mantel, and framing.

The City requires a rough inspection at the time that the fireplace is installed, as well as the venting system and hearth insulating board, to verify that the correct type of insulating board has been installed. The contractor (permit holder) is responsible for clearances to all combustibles. The contractor must make sure that the carpenter maintained the proper clearances and didn't put the framing too close to the fireplace.

A final inspection is then required when the fireplace is ready to operate. It is the responsibility of the contractor to ensure that additional work, including the surround, mantel, and hearth, complies with the manufacturer's installation instructions.

Follow these tips if you decide to install a pre-fab fireplace:

- Do not pay the entire contract price in advance. Withhold final payment until the work has been completed and approved by the Building Division.
- Beware of prices that are good "today only."
- If the contract price includes the cost of the permit, ask for a copy of the permit and make sure it is posted on site.

Contact the Building Division at 248-871-2450 to confirm that all inspections have been approved.

Housing Discrimination Notice

Housing discrimination is prohibited by law. For more information on housing discrimination, visit www.hud.gov/fairhousing. If you have a housing discrimination complaint, contact the Michigan Department of Civil Rights at 313-456-3700 or the HUD hotline at 1-800-669-9777 or 1-800-927-9275 (TTY).

Fast Facts about Your Property Taxes

After tax bills are mailed, amounts will be available at www.fhgov.com. Go to quick links, then property/tax inquiry, then visit the online property inquiry and then go to current taxes and enter a property address or parcel ID number.

If you use online bank payments (not recommended), mail the payment to: Treasurer's Office, 31555 W. Eleven Mile, Farmington Hills MI 48336. The remittance portion of the tax bill is not included with online payments. If we can't identify the property involved, the check will be returned and the unpaid tax will be subject to all penalties and interest for late payment.

The original copy of the tax bill is mailed to the owner of record. If property taxes are paid through an escrow account, the paying agent receives a separate notification. Original copies of the tax bill should be retained for income tax purposes.

Property tax bills are mailed to the address of record. Changes of address must be filed with the City in writing. Tax bills are not forwarded by the Post Office to new addresses on file with the Post Office, unless it is a temporary forwarding only. Temporary seasonal changes may be filed with the Treasurer's Office, but permanent changes must be filed with the City Assessor. Failure to receive a tax bill does not waive the tax or any penalties for late payment.

Ice Arena - Special Services Department

The Farmington Hills Ice Arena offers activities for the whole family including Learn-to-Skate, Open Skate, Drop-In Hockey, Mid-Day Skate, Adult Skate, Figure Skating, and Youth and Adult Hockey. The Ice Arena is also home to the Farmington Hills Hockey Association (FHHA), which serves 500 players at all skating levels and offers house and travel teams, plus the international TimBits development program. The Ice Arena is also home to the Farmington Falcons, Farmington Flyers, and the Farmington Hills Figure Skating Club.

The Ice Arena is proud to welcome new Skating Directors Barb Miller and Liz Laburn.

For more information, go to www.fhice.com.

ADULTS 50 & BETTER - Special Services Department

The City of Farmington Hills Adults 50 & Better provides a variety of speakers, fitness programs, classes, services and special events at the Costick Center. For a schedule of activities, see the monthly newsletter "The Messenger" on the City website at www.fhgov.com or call 248-473-1830 for information, dates, and times.

FIRST FRIDAY BALLROOM & BUFFET: Enjoy ballroom dancing, a delicious buffet, and music by the Mike Wolverton Band first Fridays each month, 3-6pm. All levels of dance, couples and singles welcome. Scheduled dates: Nov. 1, Dec. 6, Jan. 3, Feb. 7, and Mar. 7. Purchase tickets by Monday before the event for \$10/\$12 after. Resident member discount \$9.

SUPPORT GROUPS: Support groups meet at the Costick Center to provide encouragement, information, speakers, and socialization. **First Step Stroke:** Tuesdays at 1pm (first Tuesday the group dines out), **Stroke Caregivers:** third Tuesday at 1pm, **Low Vision Support:** first Wednesday at 1pm, **Caregivers:** first and third Wednesdays at 1pm, **Grief & Loss:** second and fourth Wednesdays at 1:30pm.

A CELEBRATION OF VETERANS: The Senior Division will honor local veterans at the Stars & Stripes Forever Veterans Recognition Celebration on Friday, Nov. 8, from 11am – 3pm. The event features an honor guard ceremony, keynote address, recitation of veterans' names, special luncheon, and an afternoon of dancing to the Mike Wolverton Band. Stars & Stripes Forever is sponsored by American House. Tickets \$8 by Nov. 5/\$10 after. Complimentary admission for veterans that reside in Farmington and Farmington Hills (must register by Nov. 4.)

HOLIDAY EVENTS & PARTIES: Enjoy meals, entertainment, dancing, prizes, and more. Purchase tickets at least one week prior to event for \$8 per person/\$10 after.

1950's Sock Hop – Oct. 25 Turkey, Pumpkins, and Bingo, Oh My! – Nov. 19 Black and White Ball – Dec. 13 Valentine Dance – Feb. 14 St. Pat's Dance Party – Mar. 17

SHREDDING FOR SAFETY: Protect your identity, de-clutter your files, and recycle! Bring up to four paper grocery bags of documents to be shredded in the Costick Center parking lot. Drive up only, enter Gate 3. No magazines, junk mail or trash! Event for resident adults 50 or older. Dec. 10: 10am – 12pm

GOLF LEAGUES: Registration for the men's, women's and couples' golf leagues begins in February at the Costick Center. League play begins the first week in May at the Farmington Hills Golf Club.

Public Services Department



Winter Reminders

Snow Plowing Operations

Major roads and school bus routes receive the highest priority; they are plowed and salted following any accumulation of snow or ice. Local (subdivision) streets are plowed following accumulation of four inches or more of snow. The City makes a practice of rotating which neighborhoods are plowed first after each snow event.

Snow Buildup at the End of Driveways

Snow plows are angled to the right for plowing from the centerline of the street to the curb, making the deposit of snow at the end of driveways a natural byproduct of plowing operations. You may help alleviate some of this accumulation if you clear the area to the right of your driveway before a snow plow comes down your street. The City is unable to return to clear this deposit at the end of your driveway and is unable to prevent this from occurring at over 23,000 driveways city-wide.

Mailboxes

Curbside mailboxes may become blocked by plowed snow. The U.S. Post Office has a policy regarding access to mailboxes, which requires snow to be removed enough to allow the mail trucks to drive up to the mailbox for delivery. This is the responsibility of the postal customer.

During snow plowing operations, weak or damaged mailboxes are sometimes knocked down by the weight of snow thrown by snow plows. To ensure that your mailbox is sturdy enough to survive the winter season, it is a good idea to "shake your mailbox" before each winter to check to see if it is in need of repair.

Fire Hydrants

Removing snow around fire hydrants greatly assists the Fire Department. It is important that fire hydrants be visible and accessible at all times.

Safety Reminders

In addition to driving defensively and carefully in inclement weather, there are several important safety reminders to remember:

Discourage children from playing on snow banks near the road.

When following a snow plow truck, please stay a safe distance behind the truck.

Snow should not be plowed or shoveled into the roadway.

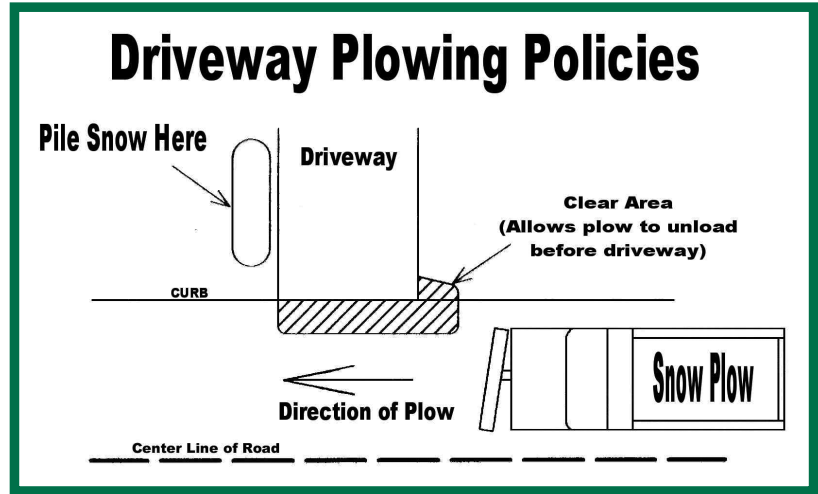
Salt/Sand Barrels

The City places 55-gallon drums filled with a mixture of sand and salt at intersections and hills upon written request from homeowner groups. If your association is interested in having barrels placed within your subdivision, please send a letter, along with a clear description or sketch of the location, to the Division of Public Works at 27245 Halsted, Farmington Hills, Michigan, 48331. It is important to obtain the approval of the property owner adjacent to the selected location, given that spilled salt may burn the grass.

Be a Good Neighbor

Many people require assistance after a snowstorm. The elderly and disabled often need help removing snow from their driveways. If you know of a neighbor in need of help, please give a hand.

Division of Public Works: 248-871-2850



Removal of Items from Recycling Carts

Did you know that taking items from a recycling cart is unlawful according to City Codes?

The new larger recycling carts have caused interest from scrap dealers and others who are taking items such as metals and newspapers from recycling carts placed at the curbside. When these items are removed, they take away recycling revenue that helps to offset the costs of collection.

According to the service agreement, the City is obligated to deliver all residential recyclable materials from the recycling carts to the Material Recovery Facility. Scavenging violates that provision, and has the potential to lower the volume of materials on which the City receives revenue sharing.

Holiday Recycling

Recycle holiday cards and wrapping paper with newspapers and junk mail in your green recycling cart. But please put cards and wrapping paper with glitter or metallics in with your regular trash.

Recycle Christmas trees at Glen Oaks Golf Course from December 26, 2013 through January 10, 2014, seven days a week, 9am–4pm at the east end of the clubhouse parking lot at 30500 West Thirteen Mile Road, just east of Orchard Lake. Trees must be free of all decorations, lights, and tinsel. There is no charge for the self-serve recycling tree drop off. Large quantities from commercial lots will not be accepted.

Voluntary Water Shutoff

The City of Farmington Hills provides a water shutoff service to residents who are on vacation or away for an extended period. For a \$90 fee, your water service can be shut off at the stopbox (the valve the City has installed to access water service) and then turned back on upon request. This will save you money and prevent costly repairs:

- If your water service is off for at least three months, the normal quarterly minimum charge will be waived.
- Turning off water service will help prevent freezing of your internal plumbing and meter, which could cause significant water damage to your home.

To schedule an appointment to shut off your water, call the Oakland County Water Resources Commissioner's Office at 248-858-1110.

Important Information for Rental Property Owners

If you are a landlord, it is your responsibility to verify that tenants are paying their quarterly water bills. Water service invoices are always sent to the address of the property receiving the service. Delinquent water invoices are then rolled onto property taxes if unpaid. If you own the property, you may request in writing that a duplicate bill be sent to your address as well as to the service address.

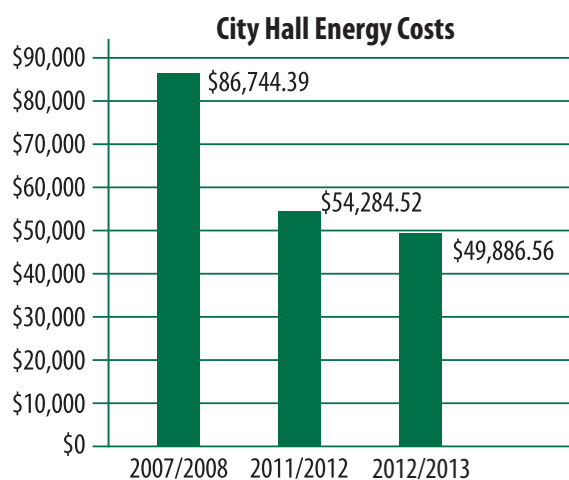
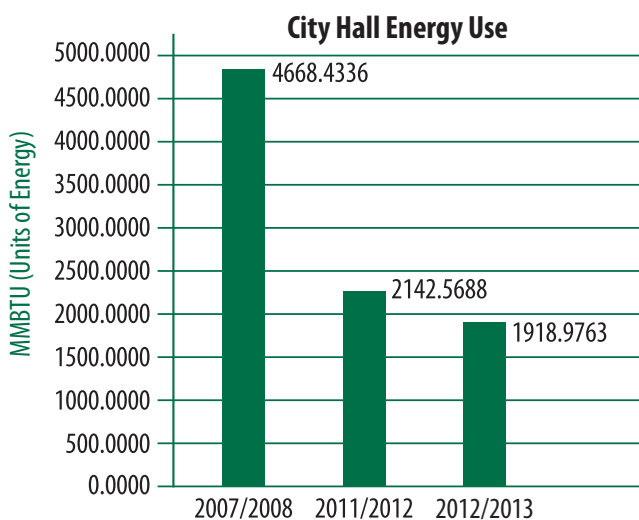
Holiday Delays for Garbage, Recycling and Yard Waste Pickup

Thanksgiving – No collection Thursday, November 28. Monday – Wednesday: regular collection. Thursday – Friday: collection delayed one day, with Friday's collection occurring on Saturday. Please note: The last yard waste pickup is Saturday, November 30. Starting the week of December 2, yard waste will not be picked up until the program resumes in April 2014.

Christmas Day and New Year's Day – No collection on Wednesday, December 25 or Wednesday, January 1. Collection will be delayed one day for Wednesday through Friday pickups, with Friday's collection occurring on Saturday.

Martin Luther King Day and President's Day – Collection takes place on the regularly scheduled day. City offices closed Monday, January 20 and Monday, February 17.

The City Continues to Save...



The Focus is printed on recycled paper with a 30% post-consumer waste content. Please recycle this newsletter when you are done with it.



Find us on Facebook
Search for: Farmington Hills Special Services Department

Save time...
REGISTER ONLINE!
<https://recreg.fhgov.com>

FARMINGTON HILLS
Michigan
visit us 24/7
www.fhgov.com

Special Services Department The Costick Center is now open until 7pm on Wednesdays for registration services.

Youth & Family Services

The After School Program is **FREE** to Farmington Hills/Farmington residents after the purchase of a photo ID card for \$40 at the Costick Center. The After School Program serves over 300 middle school youth per day at five Youth Centers.

The Outdoor Nature Program is back by popular demand. Youth head outside to explore natural surroundings and develop into healthier individuals. By following the school curriculum, it enhances what they learn at school in a hands-on environment.



The summer "Go and Grow" outdoor program was held at Tollgate Farms Educational Center. The youth learned to garden, maintained crops, and made homemade soup from their vegetables. They built their own produce stand, sold items they had grown, took care of farm animals and had an unforgettable experience.

Returning programs: *Girl Power* and *Guy Time* are wonderful programs designed to give young boys and girls a forum where they can share ideas, have discussions with their peers, build self-esteem and participate in community service projects. *LinguaFlo Foreign Language* courses are being offered and also the *Youth Full of Stories* creative writing program. In a partnership with F2HFIT Challenge and Botsford Hospital, representatives come to the Youth Centers and assess youth's health and get them on the road to health and fitness.

Cultural Arts Division

The Cultural Arts Concert Series continues its season with a lineup of performances at the Farmington Players Barn Theatre. Tickets are \$17 for seniors and students and \$19 for adults, and may be purchased online at <https://recreg.fhgov.com> or charged by phone at 248-473-1848. **Upcoming concerts include:**

November 9: A rock & roll trip back in time with *Magic Bus*, with all the sights and sounds of the Woodstock era, featuring music from groups such as The Who; Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young; and others.

January 11: *Sam Fazio*, performing Songs We Love, a tribute to the Rat Pack era and beyond. Fazio's voice has been compared to Frank Sinatra and Harry Connick, Jr.

March 7 & 8: *Blackthorn* returns with their special blend of hilarity, tight harmony, and skilled musicianship. Fun for both the Irish and non-Irish alike!

Youth Theatre: The Farmington Hills Youth Theatre will present "TARZAN – The Stage Musical" on two weekends, Nov. 15 & 17 and Nov. 22, 23 & 24 at the Costick Center. 100+ children and adults in two casts will bring the classic tale to life, with music from Phil Collins, based on the Disney movie. Tickets are \$10 each, ages 3 and under are free; purchase tickets online or at the door.

Art Exhibits: The Costick Center's City Gallery will feature an exhibit by The Michigan Weavers Guild October 18 – December 6. The paintings of artist Martine MacDonald will be featured from December 13 – January 22.

Artful Gift Sales: Looking for a beautiful gift? The Michigan Weavers Guild will return with their annual sale of clothing and items for the home on November 23.

Art Classes for Children and Adults: The Heritage Park Stables Studio offers the following classes for children and teens: Pottery for Kids, Art for Homeschoolers, and Step by Step Drawing; and for adults: Basic Drawing, Exploring Ceramics, Pastels - Still Life, Oil Painting, Mixed Media Art, Watercolor Studio, Camera Intensive Workshop, and Digital Photography, Basics & Beyond Basics. One day workshops will feature: Colored Pencil, Watercolor Techniques in Floral, Landscape & Yupo, and Wool Felting.

Music Classes and Lessons: Group and individual lessons are available from highly qualified instructors in acoustic, electric or bass guitar; piano (ages 8+ through adult), Kelly Kirby piano (ages 5 - 7), and Beginning Violin.

City Directory

Emergency Calls Only	
Fire Department	9-1-1
Police Department	9-1-1
Central Services/Purchasing	248-871-2430
City Clerk	248-871-2410
City Hall	248-871-2400
City Manager's Office	248-871-2500
Council Newsline	248-871-2511
District Court	248-871-2900
Farmington Community Library	248-553-0300
Finance Department	248-871-2440
Assessing	248-871-2470
Treasury	248-871-2480
Fire Department	
Non-emergency	248-871-2800
General Information	248-871-2400
Human Resources	248-871-2490
Planning Department	
Building	248-871-2450
Community Development and Housing Rehabilitation	248-871-2549
Planning	248-871-2540
Zoning	248-871-2520
Police Department	
Non-emergency	248-871-2600
Public Services Department	
Engineering Division.....	248-871-2560
Public Works	248-871-2850
Special Services Department	
Costick Center	248-473-1800
Cultural Arts Division	248-473-1856
Golf Club	248-476-5910
Ice Arena	248-478-8800
Jon Grant Center	248-871-2849
Longacre House	248-477-8404
Nature Center	248-477-1135
Parks & Golf Maintenance.....	248-473-1890
Recreation	248-473-1800
Senior Adult Division	248-473-1830
Youth & Family Services	248-473-1841
Volunteer Center	248-473-1813

focus is produced by the City of Farmington Hills and mailed to residents three times a year. Articles are submitted by City department directors. We welcome your comments.

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Splash into Aquatics at the Costick Center Pool!

Let the City's staff of Certified Red Cross lifeguards and instructors give you and your family an outstanding swimming experience.

Public Open Swim: Walk-in times available seven days a week; \$3/swimmer.

Swim Lessons: Swim Lessons for all ages and abilities are conducted seven days a week. Class days and times can be found in the Special Services Brochure and online at www.recreg.fhgov.com.

Ages 0.5 -3 yrs: Parent/Child (PC) classes are a great way for children to become comfortable in the water, gain instruction, and interact with peers.

Ages 3-5 yrs: Preschool (PS-1, PS-2) classes are an important first step to a child's independence in the water. These classes teach water safety and basic swimming skills.

Ages 5-16 yrs: Youth classes range from beginner (Pink Fish) to Competitive. Class curriculum is based on stroke development and refinement.

Adult Lessons: It's never too late to learn how to swim! Classes are for swimmers of all abilities. Adult Beginner class (Adult 1) helps build confidence by working on simple movements and stroke development. Adult Intermediate class (Adult 2) develops proper technique, breathing, and endurance.

Stay fit year round - water exercise is available five days a week!
Try out the low impact water aerobic workouts, no swimming ability required.

Red Cross Lifeguard Class

Do you know someone who needs a summer or year-round job? Don't wait until spring! Get your two-year Lifeguard/CPR certification now. Get a head start on the job market by taking advantage of winter and spring Red Cross Lifeguard classes. *Must attend all dates to be eligible for certification. Minimum age 15yrs.*

Session I:	Session II:	Session III:
4pm-9pm Jan. 17, 24	4pm-9pm Feb. 14, 21	4pm-9pm Mar. 14, 21
8am-4pm Jan. 18, 25	8am-4pm Feb. 15, 22	8am-4pm Mar. 15, 22

Call 248-473-1834 for more information and registration details for all programs.

Have you or a family member had a great experience with a program or event from the Special Services Department?

WIN a \$50 Special Services Gift Certificate
by telling us your story!

Pick up a form at the Costick Center or email us at: specialservices@fhgov.com

Recreation Division

Play, Explore, Learn, Live! Discover a new program or try one of the many popular classes including dance, tennis, gymnastics, adult fitness (Zumba, yoga, z-box, Zumba-toning, cardio boxing, outdoor yoga, and more), martial arts, dog training, babysitter training, kickball leagues, youth basketball leagues, flag football leagues, and soccer leagues.

Be sure to visit the Farmington Hills Nature Center in Heritage Park and explore exhibits, photo displays, hands-on activities, and programs including nature pre-school classes, Junior Naturalist Club, Walk with a Doc, night hikes, scout programs, and more.

Mark your calendar for Farmington Hills Events:

- Friday nights through Nov 1: Hay Ride Central in Heritage Park
- Nov 23: Thanksgiving for Nature in Heritage Park
- Nov 14: Annual Turkey Shoot at the Costick Center
- Dec 3: Annual Holiday Lights Ceremony at City Hall
- Dec 6: Stories & Cookies with Santa at Longacre House
- Dec 7 & 14: Breakfast with Santa at Longacre House
- Dec 7: Live & Local at the Costick Center
- Dec 14-15: Holiday Shopping Expo at the Costick Center (with Santa)
- Jan 24: Inside Out at the Costick Center
- Jan 31 & Feb 1: Daddy/Daughter Dance at the Costick Center
- Feb 1: Chili Golf Open at Farmington Hills Golf Club

Some programs and events require advance registration, call 248-473-1800 for more information or click on the 2013 Fall Special Services brochure at www.fhgov.com.



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FARMINGTON HILLS Michigan

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Fall/Winter 2013

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City Clerk's Office – 2013 Election Information

ELECTION DATE: Tuesday, November 5, 2013 – City General Election

OFFICES ON THE BALLOT: Mayor – One to be elected for a two-year term
City Council Member – Three to be elected for four-year terms

PROPOSALS ON THE BALLOT

FARMINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT (Farmington Hills Precincts 1-4, 7-26 only)

BOND PROPOSALS:

PROPOSAL 1: SAFETY/INFRASTRUCTURE/TECHNOLOGY

Shall the Farmington Public School District, County of Oakland, Michigan, borrow the principal sum of not to exceed One Hundred Fifty-Four Million Six Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$154,600,000) and issue its general obligation unlimited tax bonds in one or more series for the purpose of defraying the cost of making the following improvements:

- remodeling, equipping, furnishing, re-equipping and refurbishing buildings, including classrooms and media resource centers, and safety and security, technology infrastructure and operational efficiency improvements
- constructing additions to buildings, including new secure entrances and media resource centers
- acquiring and installing technology equipment
- improving and developing sites, including playgrounds and parking lots, in the School District

YES / NO

The estimated millage to be levied in 2014 to service this issue of bonds is 1.52 mills (\$1.52 per \$1,000 of taxable value) and the estimated simple average annual millage rate required to retire the bonds of this issue is 1.95 mills (\$1.95 per \$1,000 of taxable value). The debt millage required to retire all bonds of the School District currently outstanding and proposed pursuant to this Proposal 1 and Proposal 2, if approved, is estimated to be at or below 4.33 mills. The debt millage required to retire all bonds of the School District currently outstanding and proposed pursuant to this Proposal 1 only, if approved, is estimated to be at or below 3.88 mills. The bonds may be issued in multiple series, payable in the case of each series in not to exceed 25 years from the date of issue of such series. *(Under state law, bond proceeds may not be used to pay teacher or administrator salaries, routine maintenance costs or other School District operating expenses.)*

PROPOSAL 2 : ARTS/ATHLETICS/TECHNOLOGY REPLACEMENTS

Shall the Farmington Public School District, County of Oakland, Michigan, borrow the principal sum of not to exceed Thirty-One Million Six Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$31,600,000) and issue its general obligation unlimited tax bonds in one or more series for the purpose of defraying the cost of making the following improvements:

- constructing additions to and remodeling, equipping, furnishing, re-equipping and refurbishing all high school performing arts centers and adjacent spaces
- acquiring and installing technology and related furnishings and equipment
- improving sites, including high school athletic fields, tracks and tennis courts, in the School District

YES / NO

The estimated millage to be levied in 2014 to service this issue of bonds is 0.65 mills (\$0.65 per \$1,000 of taxable value) and the estimated simple average annual millage rate required to retire the bonds of this issue is 0.55 mills (\$0.55 per \$1,000 of taxable value). The debt millage required to retire all bonds of the School District currently outstanding and proposed pursuant to this Proposal 2 and Proposal 1, if approved, is estimated to be at or below 4.33 mills. The bonds may be issued in multiple series, payable in the case of each series in not to exceed 25 years from the date of issue of such series. *(Under state law, bond proceeds may not be used to pay teacher or administrator salaries, routine maintenance costs or other School District operating expenses.)*

WALLED LAKE CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL DISTRICT (Farmington Hills Precincts 5 & 6 only): SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT BOND PROPOSITION

Shall the Walled Lake Consolidated Schools, County of Oakland, State of Michigan, borrow the sum of not to exceed Sixty Seven Million Five Hundred Thousand (\$67,500,000) Dollars and issue its general obligation unlimited tax bonds therefore, in one or more series, for the purpose of paying for the cost of the following projects:

- Remodeling, equipping, re-equipping, furnishing, refurbishing school buildings and other facilities to enhance security and for other purposes
- Acquiring and installing technology equipment and technology infrastructure in school buildings and other facilities
- Constructing additions to school building entrances to enhance security
- Preparing, developing and improving sites at school buildings and other facilities and the purchase of school buses

YES / NO

The maximum number of years the bonds may be outstanding, exclusive of refunding, is not more than thirty years; the estimated millage that will be levied to pay the proposed bonds in the first year is 0.78 mills (which is equal to \$0.78 per \$1,000 of taxable value); and the estimated simple average annual millage that will be required to retire the bonds over thirty years is 0.99 mills annually (\$0.99 per \$1,000 of taxable value).

If approved by the voters, the bonds will be guaranteed by the State under the School Bond Qualification and Loan Program (the "Program"). The School District currently has \$115,325,000 of qualified bonds outstanding and \$0 of qualified loans outstanding under the Program. The School District does not expect to borrow from the Program to pay debt service on these bonds. The estimated computed millage rate required to be levied to pay the proposed bonds may change in the future based on changes in certain circumstances. *(Pursuant to State law, expenditure of bond proceeds must be audited, and the proceeds cannot be used for teacher, administrator or employee salaries, repair or maintenance costs or other operating expenses.)*

NOTE: FARMINGTON HILLS PRECINCT 27 IS LOCATED WITHIN THE BOUNDARIES OF THE CLARENCEVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT. THE BALLOT FOR PRECINCT 27 WILL NOT INCLUDE ANY OF THE ABOVE SCHOOL BOND PROPOSALS.

GENERAL ELECTION INFORMATION:

Important Dates:

Saturday, November 2, 2013; 2pm – Deadline to request an absent voter ballot to be mailed – a signed application must be received by the Clerk's Office by 2pm on Saturday in order for the Clerk to mail out a ballot. The City Clerk's Office is open 8:30am until 2pm on Saturday, November 2nd.

Monday, November 4, 2013; 4pm – Deadline to obtain an absent voter ballot in person at the Clerk's Office

Absent Voter Ballot applications are available either by calling the City Clerk's Office at 248-871-2410 or you may download an application from the City website at www.fhgov.com. You are eligible for an absent voter ballot if you meet any of the following criteria: Are 60 years of age or older • Are physically unable to attend the polls without assistance of another • Are appointed as a precinct worker in a precinct other than your own • Expect to be absent from the community in which you are registered on Election Day • Cannot attend the polls because of the tenets of your religion • Cannot attend the polls because you are confined to jail awaiting arraignment or trial

CONVENIENT DROP BOXES: There is a drive-up drop box for all election materials located near the federal mail box on the Eleven Mile Road side of the Police Station. Avoid parking, walking and inclement weather by utilizing this drop box. There is also a walk-up drop box on the south side of City Hall that is directly connected to the City Clerk's Office.

Barry Brickner – Candidate for Mayor

Barry Brickner, the current Mayor of Farmington Hills, was elected in November, 2011 and is running for his second and final term as Mayor.

Mayor Brickner was first elected to City Council in 1999, and re-elected to Council in 2003 and 2007. He served as Mayor Pro Tem in 2001 and 2007. Prior to his Council election, he served for four years on the Planning Commission. He is currently on the Brownfield Redevelopment Authority and is Chairman of the Board of Southwest Oakland Cable Commission.

He is a member of the Grand River Corridor Improvement Authority and serves as the delegate to the Southeastern Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG). He is a member of the Michigan Municipal League (MML) and the National League of Cities (NLC), where he is on the Information Technology and Communications Steering Committee. He is the council liaison to the Eight Mile Boulevard Association, where he was past Chair. Mayor Brickner is on the Board of Directors for the Greater Farmington Area Chamber of Commerce. He participates annually in the River Day event and Rebuilding Together event.

A practicing attorney for over 37 years, Mayor Brickner has lived in Farmington Hills with his wife, Cheryl for 30 years. They have two grown daughters, Kelly and Dr. Shawn.

Mayor Brickner is very proud of the work done by Council and staff that keeps Farmington Hills one of the best and safest cities in Michigan and would like to continue working with Council to maintain our city.



Samantha Steckloff – Candidate for City Council

Samantha Steckloff brings a fresh, energetic perspective to hometown leadership. From her participation in the first Farmington Hills After-School Program, to helping establish the Mayor's Youth Council, she is dedicated to putting the needs of the City's residents first. A current member of the Parks and Recreation Commission, she continues to dedicate her time and energy to the city she loves.

Samantha has gained a deep knowledge of public policy and its effect on residents through her work on the Commission on Children Youth and Families, the Committee to Increase Voter Participation and from revered leaders like Aldo Vagnozzi and State Representative Vicki Barnett (her mother). She also served as Miss Farmington/Oakland County in 2003 and 2007.

As a city council member, her priorities are to maintain a quality of life that attracts newcomers to Farmington Hills when buying a home or starting a new business and addressing the needs of our growing senior population. She will work to fill foreclosed homes with new families to stabilize neighborhoods and grow property values. As a homeowner herself, she pledges to treat every tax dollar with care, to deliver the highest quality services at the lowest possible price, to carefully review all City expenditures and to carry on the legacy of the great community leaders who came before her.

Samantha is a 2002 Harrison High School high honors graduate and a 2006 graduate of Purdue University. She works at Wayne State University as its Enrollment Management Coordinator.



Christopher McRae – Candidate for City Council

Christopher McRae is running for City Council. A third generation Farmington area resident, he has a strong interest in the continued well-being of the City. He is a sales manager with Gasser Bush Associates, a Livonia-based manufacturers' representative agency in the construction industry. He graduated from Farmington High in 1984 and University of Michigan Engineering in 1989.

Service to the City has been a constant throughout his adult life. He was elected to Council from 1999-2003, including a year as Mayor Pro-Tem, and served as Arts Commission liaison. He chaired the successful Library millage campaign in 2005. He was a board member of Farmington Youth Assistance, including two terms on the executive committee. He is a vice-chair of the Brownfield Redevelopment Authority. In 2005, he was appointed to the Zoning Board of Appeals and to the Planning Commission in 2007, for which he currently serves as chairman. He has served as a Rebuilding Together House Captain for several years through his church and coached softball with NFWB.

Christopher sees the biggest challenge for the city as the redevelopment and revitalization of the commercial areas of the city. This requires a fresh look at all factors including zoning, impact on traffic, and demographics. He will bring his experience with City staff, business perspective, and an ability to work with people of different opinions to the Council.

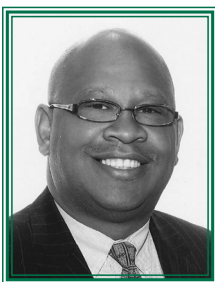
Christopher lives in the Woodbrook subdivision with his wife Maureen, daughters Megan and Kiera, who attend North Farmington High School, and their two dogs.



Biographies and photos submitted by candidates. Placement of candidate profiles on this page selected at random.

Michael Bridges – Candidate for City Council

Michael Bridges' personal history may well be a prototype of the American success story. His personal history has taken him from janitor to successful professional. In 2008, Michael was elected to the City Council.



Following his election to the City Council, Bridges has been very active. During his term, the City has been named a Safe City for five consecutive years, City services have not declined, and the City has received a triple AAA bond rating. Bridges pledges if re-elected, his primary objective will be to maintain these benchmarks.

He also spearheaded the formulation of a task force consisting of the cities of Farmington Hills, Farmington, and the Farmington Public Schools. This task force has two principal objectives - to investigate opportunities to share services and maintain open and cooperative relations with these governmental bodies. He also has been active promoting transparency and accountability in government by insisting that the City Council agendas be published in area newspapers prior to the Council meeting. Also, he has proposed a revised City manager performance evaluation process.

Bridges is running for re-election because he believes he has the necessary experience, leadership, and vision to maintain the City of Farmington Hills' excellent quality of life.

Bridges has a passion for his family, a passion to succeed, and a passion to serve the community. He is a currently a board member with Transportation Riders United - a mass transit advocacy organization. Mike is also a member of Michigan Municipal League and National League of Cities.

William A. Miller III – Candidate for City Council

William A. Miller III is a candidate running for Farmington Hills City Council in 2013. He was born and raised in Michigan and is a hard working Business Representative for the International Union of Operating Engineers Local 324.



He worked for Redford Township in the Department of Public Services as Special Projects Coordinator. Volunteered by helping feed meals to families in need, helped with the Goodfellows, is a member of the Sons of the American Legion. He belongs to a small group of men who volunteer to help those in need with small projects.

William graduated from Redford Union High School and graduated from the Apprenticeship Program of Operating Engineers Local 324 as a Certified Crane Operator. William was promoted to the position of Business Representative and helps protect the interest of all of his members.

William's interest in running for City Council came when he learned that a small local business in Farmington Hills, that has been open for over 60 years, was going to close. Many residents also share deep concerns over rezoning in the City. After speaking to many residents, William realized the community needed a stronger voice. William's view of a council member is to be a voice for the people.

William went personally and got all of the required signatures necessary. He feels that it is important to talk to the community and get their approval to run. He supports the Police and Fire Departments, also small businesses.

William is married to his lovely wife Sarah Miller and has a daughter Ava. If you would like to reach out to him personally to discuss any open issues you have, please email him at william.a.milleriii@gmail.com.

Valerie Knol – Candidate for City Council

Valerie Knol is running for Farmington Hills City Council. For eight years, Valerie served on the City Council of our sister city, the City of Farmington. From 2007-09, she served as Mayor where she promoted strong management efficiency and collaboration with neighboring communities to maintain high quality services during challenging economic times. During her tenure as Mayor she laid the groundwork and helped lead efforts to revitalize Downtown Farmington.



Valerie was also recently appointed by the Oakland County Board of Commissioners to serve on the Oakland County Zoological Authority.

Committed to our community, Valerie currently serves on the Farmington Hills Beautification Committee and has served on the board of the Farmington Players Theatre, the American Association of University Women, the Farmington YMCA, and the Greater Farmington Area Chamber of Commerce. Additionally, she has been active with the Farmington Area Jaycees, and the Farmington Area Founders Festival Committee.

Valerie is currently a senior staff member of the Michigan House of Representatives and previously worked in a management capacity in the auto industry with Johnson Controls for over ten years. Valerie received a B.S. from Western Michigan and her Master's Degree from Eastern Michigan University.

Valerie's unique experience, common sense leadership, record of cooperation and long service to our community make her exceptionally qualified to serve on City Council. She understands that fiscal stability, efficient high-quality city services, responsible redevelopment, and effective collaboration with neighboring communities and local organizations are the foundation of a strong community.

For more information, visit www.ValerieKnol.com.

Thomas P. Wolverton – Candidate for City Council

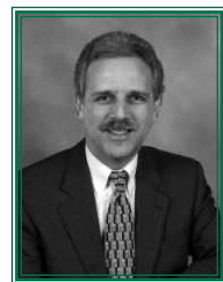
Thomas P. Wolverton is a retired teacher who taught for over 35 years at Grosse Pointe and Redford Union. Mr. Wolverton received a Juris Doctor degree in 1984. Thomas practiced real estate law for about twenty years. Thomas P. Wolverton has a business degree with a major in Accounting. Currently, Thomas is a volunteer Art Commissioner in Farmington Hills.



Thomas P. Wolverton, JD, is fiscally conservative and has many skills that will be beneficial to being a Farmington Hills Council-person. Thomas has been a resident of Farmington Hills for over 20 years. Mr. Wolverton loves and wants to give back to the community. Thomas P. Wolverton is a member of the State Bar and the Oakland County Bar. Thomas P. Wolverton, JD, will do a great job on the Council and appreciates your vote.

Steve Schwartz – Candidate for City Council

Steve Schwartz is running to bring his 35 years of municipal experience to the City Council. Website: www.votestevschwartz.com



Priorities:

(1) To preserve neighborhoods, Farmington Hills needs a plan to combat foreclosures and to prevent blight. City Council should adopt an inspection program so that rental homes are well maintained and repaired safely. Businesses on Orchard Lake and Grand River should be renovated without intruding on neighborhoods.

(2) Ensuring Farmington Hills' financial stability is critical. In order to maintain a high level of police, roads and other services, the City must explore ways to use technology, share services with other communities and avoid long-term debt.

(3) SMART bus service should be maintained. City Council should allow residents to vote to continue this vital service for seniors, the disabled and students.

Experience: Steve is a former County Commissioner. He currently serves on the Planning Commission and Grand River Corridor Improvement Authority. He previously served on the Zoning Board of Appeals and Committee for Non-Motorized Transportation. He owns his own law firm, specializing in municipal labor relations, representing 11 units of government. He was Assistant City Manager for Birmingham and Director of an organization monitoring a cable television franchise.

Education:

Law Degree (Wayne State University) (magna cum laude), Masters of Urban Planning (University of Michigan), Bachelors, Government (Clark University)

Personal:

A 17-year resident, Steve is married to Cindy. Daughters Melissa and Jaclyn are graduates of MSU and North Farmington High.

George Varghese – Candidate for City Council

"Be the change that you wish to see in the world" - Mahatma Gandhi. This is what George believes in and why he is running for office.



With a B.S. in Mathematics and postgraduate diploma in Computer Applications, George Varghese has more than 25 years of working experience across the globe before finally settling in Farmington Hills over 12 years ago.

He currently works as a Program Director with excellent knowledge of Budget and Finance handling large projects on behalf of clients and oversight of major operations using expertise and experience as a certified Project Management Professional (PMP).

Key accomplishments would include:

- Review existing processes and implement efficiencies bringing savings to be used in other projects.
- Vendor oversight to ensure they meet or exceed Service Level Agreements (SLA)
- Lead large cross functional teams to bring them to one common goal

George is committed to making Farmington Hills the most desirable city to live in. He believes in:

- Getting alternate funds to the City through State and Federal Grants
- Economic Development: Incentives to companies and startups thus creating more jobs and taxes coming into the city
- Support for School district to improve curriculum and implement better education practices to attract more families into the City
- Assistance for the elderly
- Transparent Government
- Improve Public Safety

George volunteers at his church and has coached elementary basketball and soccer. He is married for over 18 years with two children who study in Farmington Public Schools.

Erik Lindquist – Candidate for City Council

Erik Lindquist was among the first in the race for City Council.



Lindquist has served Farmington Hills continuously for seven years as a leader on the Zoning Board of Appeals, appointed by Mayors Barnett and Ellis. He is Treasurer/Director of the non-profit Finnish American Cultural Corporation, and member of the Finnish Center Association on 8 Mile. Erik's a Farmington Elk, and volunteers for South Oakland Shelter here, via St. Clare / St. Alexander churches. Farmington City Council selected Erik to serve on the Civic Theatre Committee. Their comprehensive recommendations and reports built the foundation for the Civic's preservation and current resurgence.

Lindquist founded his solo law practice here in 2011, representing small businesses, homeowners, and entertainers. Previously, he advised large corporate clients in-house, including Comerica, General Motors, Disney, and EMI-Capitol Records.

Lindquist holds a Juris Doctorate (winning an award in Constitutional Law) and Political Science degrees, with emphasis on Latin America (his mother was born in Nicaragua). Lindquist managed hundreds of employees in a prior career, before law school.

Maintaining our quality of life and standing up to Lansing are the compelling reasons Erik Lindquist is needed on City Council. His invaluable combination of experience as a procurement attorney and a manager will be of great benefit to the City.

Erik and his wife Dina (lifelong Farmington Hills resident) share a home with three felines. The Lindquists chose Farmington Hills to be nearby Dina's parents in familiar, safe surroundings. Lindquist enjoys adult fast-pitch baseball, basketball, music, and social media (ErikLindquist.org).