



Pittsfield Charter Township

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Office of the Supervisor

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Promoting Inter-Connectivity

This past week, the protests sweeping our nation in demand for equity and social justice has shifted the primary focus from the Great Pandemic. This mass movement highlights how important it is for our communities and nation to engage in deliberative action to improve equity.

Since I became the first person of color to hold the position of Supervisor a decade ago, I have dedicated myself to hard-coding a culture of respect and inclusivity in Pittsfield Township such that we are, currently, the 8th most diverse suburb in the State of Michigan.

This is a result of many years of consistent and persistent work that has broken down physical barriers and inter-connected our community such that all Pittsfield residents, regardless of age, race, socio-economics, or physical abilities are actively included into the fabric of our community. While no community is perfect and much work remains to be done, especially as the equity discussion becomes more mainstream, we are fortunate to live in a community such as ours.

As an example of continual improvement and not resting on past achievements, at our meeting last Wednesday, the Pittsfield Township Board of Trustees gave approval to begin implementing yet another greenway project – Platt Road Greenway, Phase II. While the first phase of this greenway, in 2009, was historic insofar as it kicked off our past decade's work of installing a vast, inter-connected network of non-motorized amenities supported by pedestrian crossings, this second phase is historic because it marks the first expansion of these amenities into the more rural, southern portion of Pittsfield Township.

Given our steadfast commitment to continuous public engagement, we will be hosting our first virtual public forum to obtain your feedback on the project design this week so we may leverage the over \$1 million in grant funding we acquired, earlier this year, for installation of this latest non-motorized project: Pittsfield-mi.gov/PRGII. The proposed project connects into the southernmost public park – Wall Park – and will allow thousands of residents to safely walk/bike to not just the Township Hall and the Farmers Market but a multitude of recreational spaces including Prairie Park, Pittsfield Preserve, Lillie Park, Marshview Meadows Park and the historic districts we've established in the last six years – Sutherland-Wilson Farm Museum and Harwood Heritage Farm.

We have worked very hard, over the past decade, to build strong relationships with you – Pittsfield Township residents – and the Pittsfield Township team, which includes our first responders, that serve you. This hard work has allowed us to create an environment of respect and inclusivity wherein the focus, as noted above, is on breaking down barriers to inter-connect our community.

So, even as we struggle with so many health (mental and physical) and social justice challenges, let us remain focused on the positive; on what we have and how we can come together as a community to both celebrate it and make it better in the future as we outline a blueprint for Respectful, Inclusive, Sustainable, Equity in Pittsfield Township.

Mandy Grewal, Ph.D.
