



Pittsfield Charter Township

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Office of the Supervisor

Promoting Equity & Sustainability Through Infrastructure Improvements

While a number of different projects, ranging from the Carpenter Road rain garden to the electric vehicle charging stations at Township Hall, were completed in July, the biggest news came last week when - after 10 years of relentless advocacy - the capacity enhancement project for Michigan Avenue received the green light for 2022 construction! This is the largest infrastructure improvement project in Pittsfield's history and doubles the county/state/federal grants received by Pittsfield Township, since 2009, from \$20 million to a historically unprecedented \$40 million - an average of about \$4 million/year in grant funding!!

Pittsfield has evolved, mostly since 1990, as a result of development pressures due to our proximity to Ann Arbor/Ypsilanti/Saline. For the first time, in 2011, we adopted a Master Plan that outlined the pattern of this development in order to articulate a vision that is pro-active rather than reactive to these pressures. Since then, adoption of form-based districts, preservation efforts, and implementation of a robust multi-modal transportation network has delivered a land use pattern wherein Pittsfield Township has the most diverse housing stock in Washtenaw County while daily amenities such as health care and groceries along with recreational opportunities are increasingly available in close proximity to where we live and can be accessed via walking, biking, and transit.

This concentrated, mixed use, multi-modal development pattern was originally intended to reduce sprawl and preserve/expand green spaces while meeting the needs of our aging population and millennials. This year, the Great Pandemic has given us another reason to appreciate this model of localized self-reliance. However, in order for the local destination centers to be positive additions to our community's landscape, there is a need to address the issue of traffic congestion. To that end, we complemented the adoption of form-based districts, in 2011, with an aggressive plan to retrofit all the primary arterial roads in Pittsfield Township. With the approval of the Michigan Avenue project, I can now report that since first taking office in 2009, we have retrofitted and improved every single primary arterial road - whether under the jurisdiction of Washtenaw County Road Commission or MDOIT - by resurfacing, making safety and capacity improvements, and adding sidewalks/greenways/bike lanes/pedestrian crossings. Every single primary road has been or will be improved by 2022: Maple, Oak Valley, Waters, Ellsworth, Textile, Lohr, Ann Arbor-Saline, State, Moon, Platt, Carpenter, Washtenaw, Packard, Golfside, Clark, Crane, Munger, Merritt, Fosdick, Warner, Morgan, Campbell, Marton, Thomas, Bemis, and Michigan Avenue!

While milestone achievements, such as the receipt of over \$20 million for bridge replacement and providing for a 5-lanecross-section with non-motorized amenities along Michigan Avenue, deserve a comprehensive review, our community continues to face many challenges. Other segments of Michigan Ave need improvements to fully address the issue of traffic congestion along the corridor and capacity improvements are much needed on other arterial roads such as Bemis, State, Oak Valley, Ellsworth, and Golfside. Also, the challenges we currently face due to the Great Pandemic and ongoing racial injustices need to be addressed by working to strengthen our partnerships with not just our county/state/federal stakeholders but, most importantly, with you - community residents - so we may all work together to promote equity and sustainability in Pittsfield Township.

Mandy Grewal, Ph.D.
