



Pittsfield Charter Township

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Office of the Supervisor

Gratitude & Resilience

Typically, November in Pittsfield Township is a month of expressing gratitude and thanks - to the over 100 local government Pittsfield employees that work extremely hard each day to deliver the Gold Standard of Public Service; to the many volunteer residents that serve on Township Boards/Commissions/Committees to help make our community a better place for everyone; and, of course, at a personal level, to our friends and family as we gather together to celebrate Thanksgiving.

As with everything else this year, these traditions that define the month of November will look and feel different as the pandemic counts surge once again! As such, I'd like to write this month about co-joining our need/desire to express gratitude and spend time with friends/family with the need, in 2020, to be not just resilient but emotionally resilient. Pandemic fatigue combined with the inability, for many of us, to connect with family/friends requires a different type of mental strength than the one we conjured up in the early months of the pandemic.

As we enter the colder months without the comfort of long-standing traditions, we must discover a deeper and longer-term source of mental strength that fuels our emotional resilience. For me, that source derives from being part of the Pittsfield community where we have established strong bonds of mutual trust. Some might say it is because Pittsfield has some of the most diverse land uses, housing stock, business sector, and demographics in Washtenaw County. With this, we have learned the basic truth: each of us doesn't have to look the same, vote the same, dress the same, etc., for us to trust that we will all pitch in to make our community a safe and welcoming place for everyone.

Working from that basic and common premise of trust, each one of us has contributed, in our own way, to making Pittsfield home; where we feel safe, welcome, and included. Over the last decade, we have built and earned that trust with each other by: transitioning from a community that historically had a reputation for racial profiling to one where we haven't had a single incident despite major upheavals both regionally and nationally. We've also provided public transit access to most residents with a focus on the most vulnerable without adding a monetary burden on anyone; provided local, healthy food options, especially to the food insecure; invested in infrastructure to provide safe drinking water for all, especially in the oldest residential neighborhoods; improved road conditions in a geographically equitable manner; expanded our housing stock to include multi-unit dwellings; and, most importantly, inculcated a culture of inclusivity and respect for all in Pittsfield Township.

So, let's give gratitude for and derive our resilience from the community that we have built together on the foundation of mutual trust. We are all in this together and will come out of it a more sustainable and equitable community by continuing to trust and work with - not against - each other. Most recent examples of this work are outlined in the fall Pittsfield Post. If you haven't received it due to ongoing postal delays, please check it out at: <https://www.pittsfield-mi.gov/post>

Thank you for your trust and for partnering with each other and Pittsfield Township's local government as we continually work together to enhance the quality of life for all in our community. Let's keep this focus and trust and use it to fuel our emotional resilience while expressing our gratitude in more virtual and unique ways this year. As always, remember to be kind and patient with yourselves and each other. Happy Thanksgiving!!
