



HILLS HIGHLIGHTS

Winter 2024 #103

Mayor
Brad Baxter

Mayor Pro Tem
Lauren Fisher

City Commissioners:
David Fisher
Susan McCarthy
Alice Buckley

City Manager
David Hendrickson

City Hall
45 East Long Lake Road
Bloomfield Hills, Michigan
48304-2322
Telephone: 248.644.1520
Facsimile: 248.644.4813
www.bloomfieldhillsmi.net

City Office Hours:
7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Monday – Thursday
8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Friday

Non-Emergency:
Police and Fire: 248.644.4200

Emergency: 911

City Commission Meetings:
Second Tuesday of every
Month at 7:30 p.m.

Planning Commission Meetings:
Second Tuesday of every
Month at 4:00 p.m.

**Zoning Board of
Appeal Meetings:**
Third Tuesday of every
Month at 4:00 p.m.



LETTER FROM THE MAYOR

By: Brad Baxter, Mayor

As the new Mayor of the City of Bloomfield Hills, I would like to introduce myself. My name is Brad Baxter and my wife and I along with our three daughters have lived in the city for 20 years. One of my first visits to a City Commission meeting was when our youngest daughter wanted to have pet chickens and at 8 years old, she came before the commission to state her case. With a desire to serve in my community, I served on the Zoning Board of Appeals for five years, and then as a City Commissioner for four years, Planning Commission for one year, and most recently, joined the board of Preservation Bloomfield. Over the years I have come to appreciate the many benefits of living in the city, such as access to great schools, and the natural and architectural beauty of the area. Much of what we do on the Planning Commission has to do with maintaining the special character of the city. Serving on the City Commission, I have come to appreciate how well the city is run by operating at or under budget and planning for the future as well. And to that point, I am pleased to say that the city received high marks on its recent financial audit with no issues. Maintenance of roads and utilities is a never-ending expense, but the city has taken a more hands-on approach making this process more efficient. Public Safety and Fire remain high priorities for the city and as such, an investment was made in a new fire truck last year which has already proven to be helpful with its new capabilities. Woodward Avenue noise continues to be a challenge in the summer months, but our City Manager, Chief of Police and Public Safety Officers continue to work collaboratively with neighboring communities, state representatives, and residents to hopefully resolve this issue. And now, with the new county-wide millage for regional transit passing (a majority of Bloomfield Hills residents voted in favor), the city is working with SMART and MDOT to incorporate new bus stops with safety as a first priority. On my agenda for 2024 are some city ordinance reviews that will further enhance the beauty of the city longer term, in keeping with the Master Plan. Looking forward to seeing you at one of our meetings!



A Focus on Service

By: David Hendrickson, City Manager

Although we have a small staff, each person who works for your city is dedicated to providing the best service possible. I enjoy hearing our front office staff's friendly, kind, and helpful interactions with residents and customers. Our objective is to give residents and visitors the attention they deserve through informative and efficient solutions to their questions or concerns.

Examining current innovations has helped us provide improved access through our website, geographic information system, and financial technology. Residents can conduct much of their city business through our website at their convenience. Our online services include paying property taxes, obtaining building permits and dog licenses, scheduling inspections, and reporting concerns. Residents and those doing business in our city can review our ordinance requirements by accessing the city code through our website. A catalog of past agendas and minutes for the city commission, planning commission, and zoning board of appeal meetings can also be found online. All city commission meetings are recorded and can be viewed by accessing the video link on our website.

We publish relevant current issues on the city's website; such as road and infrastructure projects, voting and tax information, and we also utilize our e-newsletter format and direct mailing newsletters to share relevant updates with the community.

Innovative trends may drive organizational change, but time-proven service delivery models can be the most effective. This understanding has helped us reorganize the Public Safety department to provide more officers on duty, improved equipment and training, and enhanced supervision. Combining our restructured Public Safety department with established and valued relationships with surrounding municipal public safety partners, helps the city provide a best-practice service model for our community.

Building and construction activity is a constant in our city. Our staff spends a great deal of time helping homeowners and contractors navigate the building process by communicating the ordinance requirements and the city's expectations. A goal for 2024 is to elicit feedback from those who have gone through our building process. We are developing a survey questionnaire designed to identify what we do right and how we can improve.

Don't hesitate to contact me if I can be of service.



Get your 2024 Dog License



Michigan Law requires all dogs to be rabies vaccinated and licensed at four (4) months of age. Dogs must be licensed within 30 days of obtaining ownership or within 30 days of the dog turning 4 months of age.

Dog licenses are renewed annually, with a valid rabies certificate required to purchase the license.

Residents can purchase the annual dog license either:

- In-person at City Hall during regular business hours
- Online by making payment (www.bloomfieldhillsmi.net Online Services) and emailing the rabies certificate and payment verification to ap@bloomfieldhillsmi.net . We will mail your dog tag if purchased online.



Maintaining Financial Integrity

By: Sandra Barlass, Finance Director / Treasurer

What do you think of when you hear City Finance or Treasury? If you are like most citizens, you think of taxes, budgets, and audits, and rightfully so. The City of Bloomfield Hills Finance & Treasury Department bills and collects tax revenue, develops and monitors the annual budget, and assists the outside, independent auditors in developing the yearly financial report.

However, the department also serves other roles, all working together to maintain the city's financial integrity and provide fiscal services to our citizens. The finance department's responsibilities are categorized into four primary areas: Finance, Treasury, Purchasing, and Human Resources. Each category has specific functions that collectively achieve the utmost fiscal health.

Treasury

Tax Billing and Receipting of 1,890 Parcels, twice yearly

- Tax Billing
- Tax Collections
- Tax Roll Maintenance
- Distribute Taxes to Taxing Authorities
- Annual Settlement of Delinquent Taxes
- Special Assessment Administration
- Investments and Cash Management
- Debt Management
- Revenue Receipting

Purchasing

Follows the City Commission approved Purchasing Policy

- Manage Purchases to Safeguard Budget Limits
- Vendor Contract Monitoring
- Accounts Payable
- Vendor Management
 - † Certificate of Insurance
 - † Form W9
 - o Filing Annual 1099s

Human Resources

Process Payroll & Benefits for 40 FT & 4 PT Employees

- Administer Payroll and Benefits
- Employee Services: W-2s, Open Enrollment, New Hire On-Boarding and Terminations/Retirements
- Workers Compensation and Disability Leave Administration
- Maintain OSHA Requirements
- Retiree Benefits Processing

Finance

Budget of ~\$20M across Seven Funds

- Budgeting and Forecasting
- Infrastructure and Capital Planning
- Pension & OPEB Monitoring
- Annual Audit & Year-End State Reporting
- Property & Liability Risk Control
- Grant Management
- Dog License Administration

Each year, the city department heads meet with the City Manager to discuss goals for the upcoming year. This past year, the Finance Department contributed to achieving our team's goal of providing improved customer service by implementing additional online payments for convenience to our residents and businesses and enhanced our miscellaneous billing process. We added an E-lockbox feature for online banking tax payments, which can help deliver timely deposits and avoid unnecessary penalties. We introduced online open enrollment for our employee benefits, providing accessibility and time savings. Additionally, we began sending notices for unpaid or short-paid taxes to prevent delinquencies and collections with Oakland County.

Throughout all our job functions, the Finance and Treasury Department is an integral part of the administrative team committed to responsibly managing your tax dollars and delivering quality customer service.

Clerk's Corner

By: Amy Burton, Assistant City Manager / City Clerk

2024 Election Dates

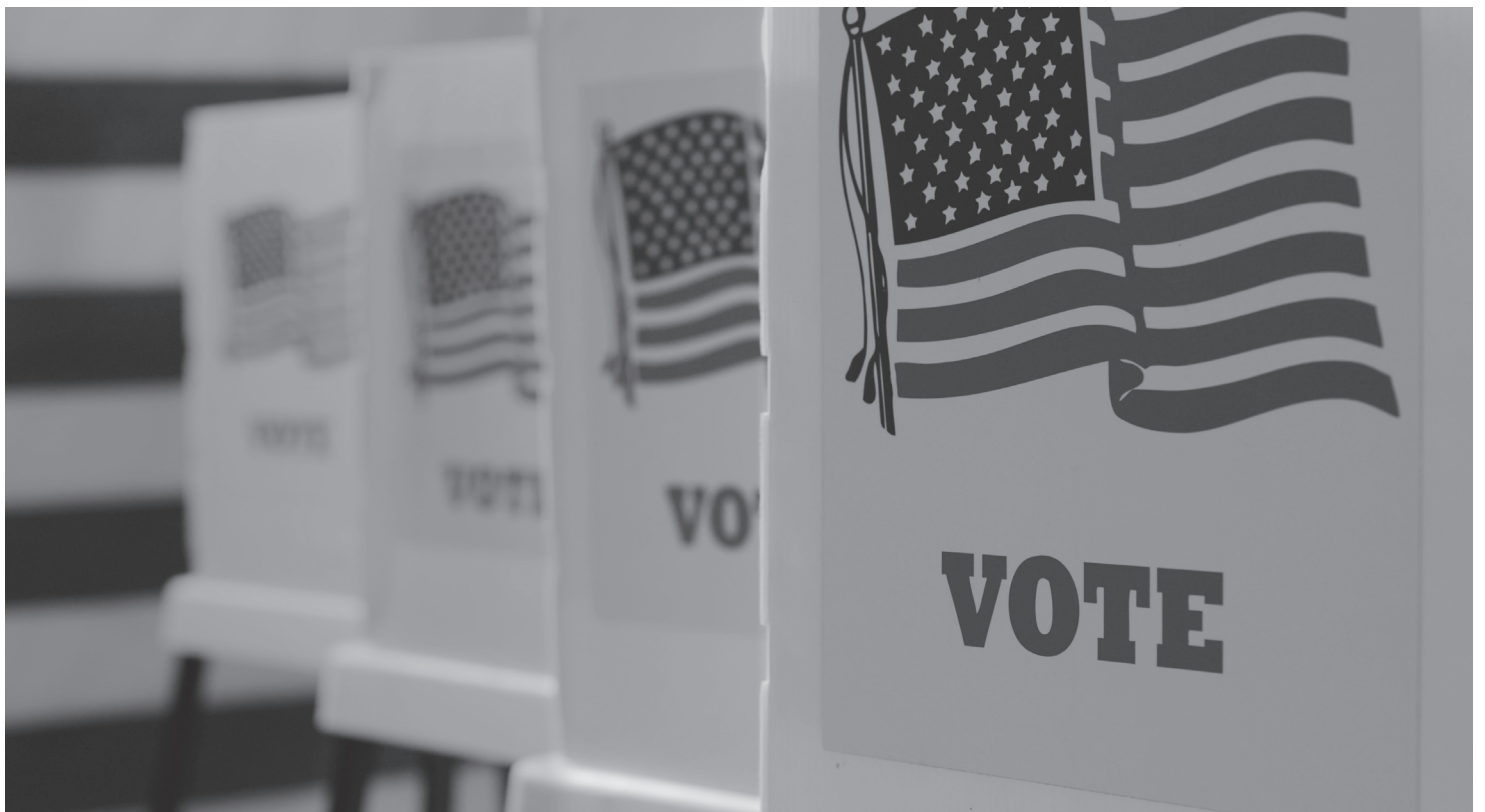
February 27, 2024 – Presidential Primary Election

August 6, 2024 – Primary Election

November 5, 2024 – General Election

The City of Bloomfield Hills City Clerk's Office is committed to conducting secure and safe elections. Our dedicated city staff and the entire team of election inspectors and volunteers are eager to serve the voters of our community leading up to and on Election Day. If any City of Bloomfield Hills' voters would like to learn more about our preparation for and the operations on Election Day, I welcome the opportunity to connect and share more about the election process. I can be reached via email at aburton@bloomfieldhillsmi.net or at the office at (248) 530-1403.

Absentee ballot drop box location



Three Options for Voters – How would you like to cast your ballot?

1. Vote by Mail – Receive an Absentee Ballot

Voters have two options to receive a ballot by mail:

- *Request an Application for Absentee Ballot* – Qualified voters must complete an application for absentee ballot and return it to the City Clerk's office for each election to receive a ballot by mail.

OR

- *Join the Permanent Absentee Ballot List* – Qualified voters on the permanent absent voter ballot list will automatically receive a ballot for EVERY election. Voters on this list will no longer be required to complete an application before each election to receive the absentee ballot. Absentee ballots are NOT forwarded by the United States Post Office, even with an active mail forwarding order. If you are on the Permanent Absentee Ballot list and you will be traveling leading up to an election, it is important to contact the Clerk's Office to discuss your options on how to efficiently receive your absentee ballot.

How to return an absentee ballot

- By mail using the pre-paid postage on the provided ballot return envelope
- By utilizing the ballot drop box at City Hall (secured and under 24/7 surveillance)
- By depositing the ballot in the secured ballot container inside City Hall during regular business hours

Don't forget to sign and seal your absentee ballot!

2. Early Voting – Vote In Person, Before Election Day

In November 2022, Michigan voters approved a constitutional amendment that gives voters the right to vote in person at early voting sites before state and federal elections. Early voting allows a voter to cast a ballot before Election Day, in an experience similar to voting on Election Day. Voters are issued a ballot to mark, which will then be inserted by the voter directly into a tabulator at the early voting site. Early voting ballots are not tabulated until 8:00 p.m. on Election Day.

Just like voting on Election Day and voting via absentee ballot, there are multiple security reviews and checks and balances in the Early Voting process. Strict security protocols are enforced to make sure the election is secure.

Early Voting will be held at Bloomfield Hills City Hall 45 E. Long Lake Road, in the City Commission Room. Early Voting will be available for 9 consecutive days, beginning the second Saturday prior to a state or federal election through the Sunday prior to a state or federal election. Early Voting is not available on the Monday immediately before Election Day. Early Voting will be open from 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. for those 9 consecutive days.

February 27, 2024 Presidential Primary Early Voting

Bloomfield Hills City Hall – City Commission Room
Saturday, February 17, 2024 – Sunday, February 25, 2024
8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

3. Election Day

Election Day polling locations are open from 7:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Precinct 1 – City Hall Fire Station 45 E. Long Lake Road

Precinct 2 – Congregational Church of Birmingham 1000 Cranbrook Road

Voters can only vote on Election Day in their assigned precinct, verify your voter status and precinct location before voting through the Michigan Secretary of State Voter Information Center at www.michigan.gov/vote or scan the QR code to the right.





Thank You to Our Volunteers

By: Lauren Fisher, City Commissioner

As we approach the upcoming elections, there is a valuable opportunity for you to be a guardian of our voting system and contribute to the smooth functioning of our local government. Have you ever considered becoming an election inspector? I encourage you to step forward as an election inspector to ensure continued fair and transparent elections in the City of Bloomfield Hills.

We are very fortunate to have a city run by a top-notch team led by Dave Hendrickson, City Manager, and Amy Burton, Assistant City Manager/City Clerk. We are also grateful for the Bloomfield Hills' residents who have already offered to help run this Election and all those who have selflessly done it in the past. As you can also read in this newsletter, there are new opportunities related to Early Voting beyond the traditional Election Day. This requires more residents to lend their time to serve as an election inspector.

This is briefly what serving as an election inspector entails:

- Election inspectors complete an online training course and attend an in-person training session at City Hall. Election inspectors are paid for their time serving the City.
- Assignments range between the two polling locations on Election Day or serving in the early voting precinct leading up to Election Day.
- Contact the City Clerk's office at cityclerk@bloomfieldhillsmi.net to complete the application and training and get more information on serving as an election inspector.

I imagine becoming an election inspector is similar to jury duty. You may consider it inconvenient to commit the time to do it, but when you do, you find it interesting, worth your time, and rewarding. Similarly, I have found serving on the Planning Commission,



Zoning Board, and the City Commission to be a rewarding commitment, for which I am honored to serve alongside dedicated, admirable fellow Bloomfield Hills residents. Thank you again to all the residents who currently serve the city on a board or as an election inspector. You are an important part of making Bloomfield Hills an extraordinary city.

I hope you will consider serving your community by working as an election inspector. In conclusion, serving as an election inspector is a profound way to give back to your community, ensure the democratic process runs smoothly, and be part of the force that keeps our city thriving.



Public Safety Awareness

By: Jeff Gormley, Director of Public Safety

Over the last six months, certain areas of Oakland County have experienced increased home invasions. Bloomfield Hills is one of those areas that have experienced a higher-than-normal rate of break-ins.

Because of this increased threat, I ask everyone to be extra vigilant and closely monitor their neighborhood. No one is more aware of something that does not seem right than the residents who live there. We benefit from your calls of suspicious activity. If you see something that appears out of place, please call us at (248) 644-4200. We are more than happy to respond to any suspicious activity quickly. It is better to eliminate any concerns than to miss a dangerous situation.

We are proactive by increasing neighborhood patrols with marked and unmarked vehicles. We are also working closely with other local municipalities and our state and federal law enforcement partners to share information related to these break-ins. There have been several arrests with this help and we have learned that many of the break-ins occur in the early evening, and entry has been gained through the rear of the home and, at times, through a second-floor window.

Some essential actions our residents can take to protect their homes, vehicles, and property include

making sure they are locking their doors and windows, utilizing secondary locks, adding sliding door and window stops, and installing alarm and camera systems. It is vital to alarm all windows and doors when using alarm systems.

Lighting the perimeter of your home is a helpful deterrent, including illuminating the rear of your home. Having some of the lights activated by motion while others are on from dusk to dawn is recommended.

Be sure to lock your car doors and never leave key fobs in the car. We find that larcenies from automobiles are a crime of opportunity, and in most cases, the vehicle is unlocked. We recommend not leaving valuable items in your car, especially in plain sight.

Not relying on one approach and implementing a multi-level security plan will help you stay safe. Please store valuables in your home within a locked safe that is secured in place, or consider utilizing a bank safety deposit box if the item is seldom used.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss crime prevention further, please get in touch with me at 248-644-4200.

Hills Highlights – Available Electronically

In between the printed editions,
the City publishes electronic newsletters throughout the year.
If you are interested in subscribing to the e-newsletter, please visit the
Open Government tab on the website at www.bloomfieldhillsmi.net.



City of Bloomfield Hills
45 E. Long Lake Road
Bloomfield Hills, MI 48304-2322

Upcoming Holidays – City Hall Closed

Presidents' Day – February 19, 2024

Good Friday – March 29, 2024

2024 Bloomfield Hills City Commission:

Brad Baxter, Mayor

Lauren Fisher, Mayor Pro Tem

David Fisher, Commissioner

Susan McCarthy, Commissioner

Alice Buckley, Commissioner

CITY STAFF:

David Hendrickson, City Manager

Amy L. Burton, Assistant City Manager / City Clerk

Sandra Barlass, Finance Director, Treasurer

Jeff Gormley, Director of Public Safety

Brian Vargason, Building Official

Jamie Spivy, DPW Foreman

John Rogers, Code Enforcement Officer

EMERGENCY:

Police, Fire, Medical – dial 911

After hours (non-emergency) (248) 644-4200

CITY GOVERNMENT:

Manager's Office – (248) 530-1404

Building Official – (248) 530-1408

Clerk's Office – (248) 530-1403

Finance & Treasurer – (248) 530-1402

Police / Public Safety Dept. – (248) 644-4200

Public Works – (248) 530-1412

Where to Get Answers

CITY SERVICES:

Animal Control – (248) 644-4200

Building & Permit Info. – (248) 530-1409

Code Enforcement – (248) 530-1410

Library Service – (248) 647-1700

(Baldwin Public Library)

Police Services (Non-emerg.) (248) 644-4200

Property / Assessing Info. – (248) 858-0084

(Oakland County)

Sanitary Sewer Service & Billing – (248) 858-1110

(Oakland County Water Resources Commission)

Street Maintenance – (248) 530-1404

Trash & Waste Pick Up – GFL

(586) 772-8900 or (888) 877-4996

Voting Information – (248) 530-1403

Water Service & Billing – (248) 858-1110

(Oakland County Water Resources Commission

hours – 7:30 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.)

Water and Sewer Line Repair – (248) 858-0487

(Oakland County Water Resources Commission

hours – 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.)

OTHER SERVICES

AT&T Repair Service – (800) 515-7272

Amtrak (Info / Reservations) – (800) 872-7245

Baldwin Public Library – (248) 647-1700

Birmingham (City) – (248) 530-1800

Birmingham Public Schools – (248) 203-3000

Birmingham / Bloomfield Chamber – (248) 644-1700

Bloomfield Hills Country Club – (248) 644-6262

Bloomfield Hills Schools – (248) 341-5400

Bloomfield Township Senior Services – (248) 723-3500

Bloomfield Open Hunt – (248) 644-9411

Comcast Customer Service – (800) 934-6489

Customer Advocate – (734) 254-1557

Consumers Power (Service, Billing & Emergencies) –

(800) 477-5050

Cranbrook Educational Community – (248) 645-3000

DTE Energy – (Customer Services & Emergencies) –

(800) 477-4747

Haven (Domestic Violence Counseling) – (248) 334-1274 or

(877) 922-1274

Oakland County – (248) 858-1000

Oakland County Assessor – (248) 858-0776

or (248) 858-0740

Oakland County Health Dept. – (248) 858-1280

Oakland County Clerk / Register of Deeds – (248) 858-0581

Oakland County Treasurer – (248) 858-0611

Oakland Water Resources Commission –

main: (248) 356-6299 emergencies: (248) 624-6366

Road Commission for Oakland County – (877) 858-4808

weekday hours: 7:30 a.m. – 4:15 p.m.

After hours & weekends call – (248) 858-4895

U.S. Postal Service – 2050 South Blvd. (248) 332-3981

Village Club – (248) 644-3450

48th District Court – information & probation:

(248) 433-9373 criminal: (248) 647-1141