



# Mid-Year “State of the City” Progress Report 2007

Presented to the Mt. Pleasant City Commission  
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## Defining Success

The City Commission of Mt. Pleasant established eight core visions in 2005 that have guided the organization’s budgeting and program development over the past two years.

- ***Keeping Youth, Schools, Parks and the Overall Community Safe***
- ***Supporting Economic Development***
- ***Developing a Strong Downtown***
- ***Encouraging Neighborhood Stabilization***
- ***Accepting Cultural and Economic Diversity***
- ***An Awareness of the Needs of the Vulnerable Populations***
- ***Maintaining a Family-Friendly Community***
- ***Portraying an Energetic and Festive Atmosphere***

Late in 2006 the City Commission adopted the community’s long-range Master Plan which coordinated the residents’ vision of their preferred future in six strategic areas.

- ***A healthy downtown with diverse activities***
- ***Livable neighborhoods with owner-occupied housing***
- ***Strong public facilities concentrating on pedestrian access, traffic safety and a vital airport***
- ***Enhanced parks and coordinated recreation activities***
- ***Attraction of higher-paying jobs***
- ***Concentrated Public Safety response***

Each department and division within the “company” is accountable and responsible for moving the organization forward in a coordinated fashion to make progress in meeting our community’s vision for its future. The organization incorporated the strategic areas and core visions into its planning and goal setting for 2007.

In addition, each department accepts responsibility to continuously improve the processes and programs that make up our “work day” functions. Each department selects certain aspects of the functions they are charged to perform to evaluate with the aim of improving efficiency, effectiveness or citizen responsiveness.

## **Identifying Progress**

*Much progress has already been made by the City's 128 employees in moving our community forward in 2007. Following is a thumbnail sketch of some of the most notable accomplishments to date.*

### **A. Healthy Downtown with Diverse Activities**

1. Increased progress on West Broadway Revitalization Project (Borden Building) site remediation and on *Riverplace* site plan approval.
2. Completed goal-setting process with the Downtown Development Board resulting in more streamlined and accountable committee structure.
3. Re-direction of revenue sources to link more closely to DDB priorities.
4. Main Street Live every Friday night.
5. Saturday Farmers' Market.
6. Reconstructed Broadway Street with newly-relined sewer leads to all businesses in the affected area.
7. Overlay on Main Street and re-striping of on-street parking.

### **B. Livable Neighborhoods with Owner-Occupied Housing**

1. Set aside \$100,000 for anticipated establishment of a neighborhood enterprise zone. Once ordinances are adopted to create such a zone, the City may be in a position to design an incentive program to convert older core neighborhood rentals back to owner-occupied.
2. Marketing 22 new residential units in Eastpointe IV. Have sold eight.
3. *Riverplace on Broadway* expected to add 24 condominium units to downtown.

### **C. Strong Public Facilities**

1. Increased general fund "savings account" to \$1.9 million assuring the financial stability to create and maintain public infrastructure and to invest in economic re-development.
2. Creation of community-wide Earth Day event with ten partners county-wide.
3. Began design to rebuild the Mt. Pleasant Municipal Airport terminal to better serve the dramatic increase in corporate jet traffic.
4. Partnership with the Township's Eastside DDA and the Tribe to bring a water line to the Airport to better support fire safety, another requirement for increased traffic.
5. Reconstruction of Russell and Maple Streets.
6. Creation of a business plan for a septage receiving station to establish a new enterprise and revenue stream.

#### **D. Enhanced Parks and Coordinated Recreation Activities**

1. \$200,000 Access Recreation grant combined with \$200,000 in City funds to create new trail joining Chipp-a-Waters Park with our new wetland area.
2. New Commission committee to re-open investigation into a community pool and related facilities.
3. Cooperation with private non-profit organization for the construction of basketball and volleyball facilities at the CRC site.
4. Grant application submitted to rebuild Oak Street bridge as an emergency exit from Island Park, and refurbish the tennis courts and Farmers Market Pavilion.
5. Recruited and managed Junior Olympics Softball tourney with 85 teams, creating nearly 5,000 visitors and upwards of \$1 million in spending.
6. Sustained PEAK program through a combination of scholarships, fees, tuition, fundraisers, and Tribal two percent contributions after termination of federal funds.

#### **E. Attraction of Higher-Paying Jobs**

1. Instituted Brownfield and OPRA incentives that have led to the demo and rebuilding of several businesses such as Qdoba and McGuirk's new Pickard Street development.
2. Agreement between the Mt. Pleasant SmartZone and the Mid-Michigan Innovations Center.
3. Reorganization of the Community Services Division and selection of an economic development director to target the Division's resources toward redevelopment, commercial assistance and continued improvement of the community's image and quality-of-life measures.

#### **F. Concentrated Public Safety Response**

1. Creation of a downtown beat with an officer on bike patrol during summer months.
2. Creation of an Access Management Plan incentive for Mission and Pickard Street businesses to improve traffic flow and reduce accidents by reducing the number of drive openings.
3. Creation of a formal police liaison with Central Michigan University athletic teams.
4. Rewrote Housing Licensing Code and updated fire/inspector training, creating greater consistency in code compliance and interpretation.

## **TOWARD SERVICE IMPROVEMENT**

*In addition to the new initiatives that are designed to move Mt. Pleasant toward its best possible future, the employees have made significant strides to improve the work they perform each day in serving our residents. Among the dozens of process improvement efforts we have undertaken to increase effectiveness, efficiency or citizen responsiveness are these:*

### **Building Safety and Code Enforcement**

Re-sort functions and priorities to address responsibilities with reduced staffing.

(Reduced Code staff from three positions to two.)

- Analyze enforcement activities in terms of reactive and pro-active options; time required; neighborhood needs; and impact. Reassign areas and functions.

### **Parks, Buildings and Grounds**

Evaluate current “standard of care” program used for seasonal work order process.

(Reduced Parks staff from three full-time to two.)

- Adjust and re-set baseline. Correct system.

### **Downtown Development**

Save time and money and increase effectiveness in customer communication methods.

- Added automatic editing feature to new website.

Analyze workload in relation to DDB goals and find ways to better target Director’s time.

- Created volunteer committees with specific charges, trained and shifted responsibilities.

### **Finance Division**

Overriding Goal: Create budget process and document that more clearly communicates the organization’s financial commitment to meeting community and Commission strategic plans and annual goals.

- 2008 proposed budget document will include departmental responses to Commission’s annual goals.
- Continued assessment of organizational structure needed to initiate outcome-based measurement system while retaining service standards.

## **City Clerk/Risk Management**

Provide timely customer service with less staff oversight.  
(Reduced staff from one full-time to one half-time.)

- Creating “Cemetery on the Web”

## **Assessing Department**

Reduce confusion or inaccurate reporting of Principal Residence Exemption (impacts revenue).

- Establish method to compare rental licensing data against assessing information; identify overlapping addresses; investigate and correct if necessary.

Increase timely response to requests for information on comparative data from realtors and residents.

- Web hits climbed to 1,500 in June. Calls into department drastically reduced.

## **Information Technology**

Improve work flow and accountability.

- Inventoried all duties and responsibilities, created work tree with time commitment estimates, and reorganized duties by employee strengths.

## **Human Resources**

Improve compliance with new State day care license requirement for PEAK.

- Created new flowchart system to track schedule and completion of each step in State’s process.
- Developed “Road Map” for applicants as they went through testing, licensing and hiring process.

## **Treasurer Department**

Increase efficiency of repetitive processes to respond to staffing reorganization while retaining high service standards.

- Purchased high speed printer with greater memory which reduced time to print tax bills from several days to six hours.
- Investigated changing utility billing cycles to spread work evenly throughout month. With current software, change would result in decreased customer service and no net time savings.

## **Fire Department**

Improve access to patients/victims in crowd situations such as football stadiums, festivals, tailgates, “Western Weekend”, etc.

- Trained in bike response and created emergency medical pack designed for transport on foot. Has proven to cut time in getting to patient in large crowds and reduces interference and “gawkers” that gather around emergency vehicles.

## **Police Department**

Improve speed and timeliness (24/7) of communication with media sources during emergencies and reduce staff time involved for repetitive calls.

- Established pager alert system shared by all local media outlets, local law enforcement and Central Dispatch at no cost to City.

## **Street Department**

Increase quality and longevity of street striping and painting jobs. Evaluate quality and longevity of jobs over last several years and compare to price of equipment, cost of training, and hours necessary to do work in-house.

- Purchased equipment and have begun to do work in-house this year.

## **Water Department**

Overriding Goal: Prepare for immediate and accurate response during emergencies.

- Increase speed and security of radio communication by securing FCC “localized” broadband license in the name of the City that can be reserved exclusively for emergency responders.
- Reduce labor requirements for operation of generators by investigating automated radio frequency generator response unit that will eliminate need to have employee on standby.

## **Waste Water Treatment Plant**

Big Goal: Financial Stability. Reduce expenses and/or increase revenues.

- Evaluate/create new septage receiving business.