



CITY Manager

April Update

I am hoping we can plan on winter being in our rearview mirror as we move into April. We all can remember years that snow events pop up in April and even May. Even after the snow days are long gone you will still see the remnants from the long winter in the streets. You will see storm drains collecting leaves and debris and you will see a lot of dirt on the streets. This is from those really cold days over the winter when we had to use sand to mix with our salt on the frozen roads. The streets are looking a little rough right now. But, soon the street sweepers will come through and beautify all of our streets in the coming weeks. Enjoy your April!

Adopt A Flower Bed- This year Together Otsego Prospers (TOP) will continue a tradition of adopting out the City flower beds to local families. The City will plant the flowers in the middle of May and will water the flowers throughout the summer. If you adopt a flower bed you will be expected to weed and deadhead the bed periodically throughout the summer. It doesn't take a whole of and time and effort and it allows you to help your community. If you are interested please email the nonprofit at: togetherotsegoprosper@gmail.com.

Social Media Posts- If you follow our Facebook page you may have some questions about some of the decisions that are made in relation to the page. These decisions are made with years of experience and advice from our attorneys. Some of the popular questions are listed and answered below:

1. Why do you not allow comments on your page? Our page is intended for informational purposes only. We intend on bringing information to the public, we do not seek out information to be brought to us through our page. After years of being harassed, attacked and lied about in the comments; we decided to remove comments as an option for those who are not included in the post. We researched that option with our attorneys. They stated it is legal as long as we limit comments on all posts and are not selective on which posts that we remove comments. In response to that we decided to remove comments from all posts going forward.

2. Why do you not promote local businesses on your page? This item has been discussed many times. It boils down to the fact that if we promoted any businesses or restaurants we would be obligated to promote all businesses and restaurants. We must treat everyone equal and cannot offer one establishment more promotion than another. So, with that in mind, we would have to monitor Facebook 24/7 to assure that we are not missing any posts from our local businesses. That is why we have stayed out of the business of sharing and posting promotions from our businesses. It has nothing to do with a lack of will to promote our local businesses. It is all about needing to treat everyone fairly. Now if it is a specifically sponsored event within the City that we have permitted, we will promote those events if possible.

Spring Leaves- We are often asked "Why don't you have a spring leaves pickup?" We intentionally do not schedule a spring leaves pickup. The concern with scheduling a spring

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leaves pickup is that if that becomes the tradition or custom in Otsego; people will plan on that pickup and not feel the urgency to pick them up in the fall before the winter. And I think we all know how messy leaves can be over the long winter if they are not cleaned up! That is why we are so adamant about our residents getting their leaves out by the road when we do multiple pickups in the fall. I think in 2025, we made 3 trips around. Leaves are endless and I know some of those Maples seem to hold on to them longer every year. But, you should know that you can bring leaves to the transfer station at any point; it is available to residents behind the DPW Garage on N. Farmer St. 24/7.

Storm Drains- During this time of year you will likely see storm drains flood in the streets during and after rain events. This can occur at any point of the year but it is particularly possible within the spring months due to the collection of leaves and debris in the storm drains. As rain and snow melts the leaves and debris slowly work their way towards the drains and eventually get caught up in the grates. If you want to give us a hand and clear those as you are walking by them, that would be great. Even outside of the spring season, you will find flooded streets during major rain events. It is usually more about how fast the rain comes down than how much. Our storm sewer system is built to handle a substantial prolonged rain event. When we start getting multiple inches of rain within an hour or so, you will see standing water in some of our streets and you should drive very carefully through the water.

M89 Resurfacing- Many of you are probably already aware that M89 (Allegan St.) is not owned by the City, it is owned by the State of Michigan. Many have previously asked about repairing potholes and unfortunately, we are unable to apply any maintenance to the road (whether it is needed or not). Those decisions are made in Lansing. The good news is that they have planned for that road to be resurfaced this year. They will not be re-sculpting the road or sidewalks as they did many years ago. It will be a simple “mill and fill”. They will pull off 2”+ of asphalt and will apply new. This maintenance provides roughly 10 years of additional life. The work could be completed as early as July. They will come in to complete some sidewalk repairs in May. Keep an eye out for road signs to prepare for the construction and/or detours.

What do I do if I have a sewer blockage?- If you ever experience a sewer blockage; sorry, that is not fun for anyone. The first thing you should do is call city hall or the non-emergency 911 number during afterhours. There is the chance that we have a blockage in our sewer main which is causing your blockage. After it is inspected by a City employee we can inform you if the blockage is in the City owned main or if it is in fact in your private service line. If the blockage is in the City main, we will jet it and clear the blockage; if it is on the service line you would have to hire a contractor. While it is usually in the service line, the off chance that it is located in the main, you would not have to waste any money with a contractor. The blockages are almost always from the growth of tree roots in the lines.

Aaron Mitchell
City Manager

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