

THE CITY OF JACKSON

2015 Annual Report



Welcome to the City of Jackson, Michigan!

It is our pleasure to present to you the 2015 City of Jackson Annual Report. As you will see, we are committed to providing outstanding services to our residents and making Jackson a great place to live, work and play.

In keeping with the established goals of enhancing the quality of life for residents, strengthening the City's economy, sustaining City finances and ensuring the public health, safety and welfare of our constituents, our City staff dedicated their efforts to further accomplishing these goals once again in 2016.

Through our continued programs aimed at reducing blight in our neighborhoods, increasing property values within our community and bolstering economic development activity, the future looks bright in Jackson.

We take pride in the fact that the residential housing market is improving on the heels of the city's demolition program. A \$4 million boost highlights the first increase in home values since the housing crash in 2008. In the coming year, home values are expected to increase by more than 4 percent.

New downtown developments such as two new restaurant and apartment spaces along Michigan Avenue and an apartment complex/grocery store on Louis Glick Highway shows the private sector is beginning to take a chance on Jackson - a welcome improvement from years past.

In the coming year, we will continue to address the City's challenges in a cost-effective manner. We will continue pursuing economic development projects that will enhance the success of our community.

As we strive for a better tomorrow, we continue to celebrate the positive developments in Jackson today.



Handwritten signature of Mayor Bill Jors in black ink.

Mayor Bill Jors

Handwritten signature of Vice Mayor Derek Dobies in black ink.

Vice Mayor Derek Dobies

The **TREASURER/INCOME TAX/CLERK'S OFFICE** is located on the first floor of City Hall. Business hours are Monday through Friday between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Citizens may pay property taxes, income taxes, water bills, special assessments and parking violations in our office, through the mail or on our website, www.cityofjackson.org.

Andrew (Randy) Wrozek, Jr., has been our elected treasurer for the past 33 years, and he has been appointed Clerk by the City Council to go along with his Treasurer duties. He and his staff are dedicated to customer service and are cross-trained to accommodate citizens with all transactions and questions they may have about City government.



Since 1970, the City of Jackson has had an income tax. All residents making \$600 or more must file and pay a 1 percent tax to the City. All non-residents working in the City must pay a .5 percent tax on earned income. Businesses must pay a 1 percent tax.

Income tax forms are sent in the mail to people who have filed the previous year. You may download a form from our website or obtain one from our office or at the library.

The Clerk's office maintains the records of more than **22,000 registered voters** and, with the help of many elections inspectors, conducted two elections in 2015. This office issued annual business licenses and received payments for Administrative Hearings Bureau cases and invoices issued by all City departments. Monthly and daily permits for city parking lots and parking decks were also sold.

All official records are maintained in this office, which is also responsible for accepting claims, certifying resolutions and codifying ordinances.

The **ASSESSOR'S OFFICE** is responsible for appraising and assessing all real and personal property in the City of Jackson. We answer inquiries from residents, property owners, mortgage companies, prospective buyers, businessmen, appraisers and government agencies.

We provide information on assessment procedures, amount of taxes, lot sizes, lot splits, legal description, owners of land and qualifications for filing of state exemptions. Additionally, the Assessor's office tracks and verifies principle residential exemptions, updates property ownership information, creates special assessment rolls, maintains property tax maps, collects and analyzes sales data, defends assessments before the Michigan Tax Tribunal and maintains a computerized appraisal system.

The **CITY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE** is a full service law office, delivering a complete range of legal services to the City's elected and appointed officials and departments.

The City's legal department consists of the City Attorney, two Assistant City Attorneys, one staff attorney and two legal support professionals.

The department's duties include:

- Defending the City, its officials and employees against lawsuits
- Addressing citizen complaints
- Administering the insurance programs of the City
- Handling the defense of real and personal property tax cases in the Michigan Tax Tribunal
- Handling approximately **1,500 District Court criminal prosecutions** annually
- Prosecuting zoning, housing and other blight-related ordinance violations in the City's Administrative Hearings Bureau
- Collecting accounts receivable

In addition, all resolutions, ordinances and contracts involving the City are written or reviewed by the City Attorney's Office.



The **HUMAN RESOURCES DIVISION** serves the City's workforce and the job-seeking public.

The personnel department is responsible for customer service, recruitment, benefits administration, compensation, unemployment and workers' compensation, employee law compliance and employee and labor relations for the City's four unions and the non-union workforce.

In 2015, the department posted **39 jobs** and provided personnel services to more than **2,430 customers** by walk-in appointments or telephone calls.

The department continues to provide counsel and compliance to the City of Jackson which is required by federal health care reform mandates.



The **DEPARTMENT OF NEIGHBORHOOD & ECONOMIC OPERATIONS** is responsible for implementing and enforcing City programs promoting the vision and goals of the Jackson City Council. NEO is instrumental in implementing Jackson's Overall Economic Stabilization program, which includes administration of building permits, dangerous building enforcement, building and housing inspections, planning and zoning administration, homeowner rehabilitation, housing code enforcement, federal grant funds, economic development, brownfield redevelopment, blight ordinance enforcement and engineering.

NEO also provides staffing for various board and commissions, including the Historic District Commission and the Building Code Board of Examiners and Appeals, among others.

The Building Division is responsible for enforcing the State Construction Code. Staff reviews building and site plans, issues permits, conducts inspections, issues certificates of occupancy, enforces the sign and zoning ordinances and condemns dangerous properties throughout Jackson.

In 2015, NEO issued **589 building permits** with an estimated construction value of more than **\$30.3 million**, nearly double the value posted in 2014. In addition, 392 electrical, 281 plumbing and 449 mechanical permits were issued. NEO staff also oversaw the demolition of **208 housing units** (or 144 residential structures), 11 garages and seven commercial buildings.

NEO provided more than **\$560,000** in rehabilitation loans to complete 24 rehab or emergency hazard projects for low- to moderate-income homeowners. In an effort to keep neighborhoods clean and livable, inspectors wrote 964 garbage citations, 158 inoperable vehicle citations and 82 tree/weed violation citations.

Nearly 3,800 non-owner occupied housing units were inspected by NEO, including 51 tenant complaints that were responded to.

NEO maintains two residential property registries: the Non-Owner Occupied Residential Property Registry (NOORPR) and the Foreclosed, Vacant or Abandoned Residential Property Registry. During 2015, **423 NOORPR registrations** were processed recording 438 buildings containing 1,043 housing units. More than 40 newly foreclosed, vacant or abandoned residential buildings were registered in 2015.



PICTURED: 222 N. Wisner St. **BEFORE** and **AFTER** rehab.

JACKSON POLICE

36,448 Service Calls

4,922 Citations

1,240 Traffic Crashes

47 Sworn Officers

The last year proved to be another busy one with numerous changes at the **JACKSON POLICE DEPARTMENT**. With the retirements of Deputy Chief Holda, Sergeant P. Gross and officers Albrecht and Scarpino, the department saw the hiring of six new officers and three new police recruits. This is the first time the department has sponsored recruits since 2007.

A number of promotions at the department were made to include officers Garcia and Flint promoted to Sergeant, Lieutenant Hitt promoted to Deputy

Chief and KayCe Parsons promoted from the chief's assistant to records management supervisor.

Other initiatives with the department include a Citizen's Police Academy and a Joint Reserve Academy with the Jackson County Sheriff's Department. For the first time, JPD had members sent to the academy from the Albion, Mason and Stockbridge departments. The department also strengthened its relationship with Jackson Public Schools by assigning officers to each school to conduct daily visits and build strong relationships with the students and staff.

The **JACKSON FIRE DEPARTMENT** has been providing service to our community for **126 years**. The staff includes **17 full-time firefighters** and two civilian administrative personnel.

The fire suppression division is a group of highly trained individuals with specialized skills which are utilized in many emergencies such as fire suppression, emergency medical services, hazardous material incidents, urban search and rescue, white-water rescue and swift-water rescue incidents.

The city's fire department is currently Michigan's Region 1 Hazardous Material Team, providing four firefighters to this specialized unit that provides regular coverage to nine counties during large-scale hazardous material emergencies. The department is also represented by nine members in the Michigan urban Search and Rescue Team for Region 1. This team handles the extrication and stabilization of building collapse due to natural disasters.

The department's supervisory staff takes a proactive approach in representing the city on various boards including the Local Emergency Planning Committee, Region 1 Hazardous Material Board and Local Planning team, Allegiance Fire Safety Sub-Committee and the Baker College Fire Science Program Advisory Committee, among many others.

The department also provides fire investigation for the City of Jackson.



The **JACKSON PARKS, RECREATION & CEMETERIES DEPARTMENT** continues to work to maintain and improve our 26 City of Jackson parks and area trail system. The department also strives to work with volunteers and organizations to add value to our community.

The Jackson Parks Department is currently working with city staff and private business and investors to complete two projects that began in 2015:

ELLA SHARP PARK GOLF COURSE: A reforestation project began on the southeast side of the park in December 2015 following an extensive tree survey of the area. The project is sponsored by a grant from the Weatherwax Foundation.

HORACE BLACKMAN PARK and CP FEDERAL CITY SQUARE: Horace Blackman Park was updated extensively in 2015, with updates including new park property, landscaping, sidewalks, parking, benches, tables, lighting, food vendor spaces and hookups, as well as areas designated and designed for special outdoor events. In 2016, the City will begin construction on the CP Federal City Square which will be the home of the Glidden Parker History of Electricity Mural. The City Square will promote rotating art exhibits, concerts, movies and much more.

The Jackson Recreation Department provides a variety of athletic, enrichment and special event programs throughout the year for area residents of all ages. The department is looking forward to a new variety of programs starting in the spring of 2016.

The recreation department believes in providing quality programs and facilities to the Jackson community. Those interested can pursue a variety of leisure activities, many of which are free and within walking distance of City homes. For more information, check out www.jacksonparksandrec.org or the department Facebook page under “City of Jackson Parks, Recreation and Grounds”.

The City of Jackson owns and operates Mt. Evergreen and Woodland cemeteries, with both considered historical landmarks. The cemeteries are fully operational and staff will help in organizing roughly **100 funerals** annually.

The City of Jackson has secured more than **\$600,000** in grants from the State of Michigan Department of Natural Resources to help provide a multi-use path from the Martin Luther King Center to downtown and from Ella Sharp Park near Park Road to New Leaf Park on Fourth Street.

The **FINANCE DEPARTMENT** handles all centralized accounting and finance functions of the City. These include responsibilities relating to the preparation of budgets, financial statements and audit schedules on a monthly and annual basis.

In addition, the Finance Department processes payroll, accounts payable and accounts receivable on a regularly scheduled basis. The department also serves as administrative staff for the City's three pension plans whose net assets currently approximate **\$81 million**.

In recent years, the Finance Department has also acted in an administrative oversight capacity for the City's Management Information Systems Department and - most recently - for water and sewer billing as well as the Public Works fiscal staff. Finance Director Phil Hones also acts as the City's purchasing agent.

A summary of the activity during 2015 include:

- Issued nearly **4,750 payroll checks** to roughly 560 different employees (192 full-time and 368 part-time) for a total payroll of approximately **\$14 million**
- Maintained records for approximately **375 pensioners** with benefits payments of more than **\$9.8 million**
- Issued more than 5,900 accounts payable checks to vendors totaling nearly \$68 million
- Processed about 1,700 invoices for various City charges totaling about \$5.5 million

The City of Jackson recently received the "Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting" for its comprehensive annual financial report for the latest fiscal year. This certificate of achievement is a prestigious national award recognizing conformance with the highest standards for preparation of state and local government financial reports. In order to be awarded, a government unit must publish an easily readable and efficiently organized comprehensive annual financial report, whose contents conform to program standards. The City has received this award for **24 straight years**.

In 2002, the City was successful in upgrading its general obligation bond rating to the "A" category. This improved rating has saved thousands of dollars in interest charges on the bonds issued relating to the Consumers Energy Headquarters Project as well as several other new issues and refinancings since then.

In 2012, Standard & Poor's affirmed the City's rating on its general obligation bonds and upgraded the City's outlook from "stable" to "positive".

In 2013, the City was again upgraded to an "A+" rating with a "stable" outlook on all of its general obligation debt. This most recent upgrade was the result of the City's commitment to financial stability through public policy and its commitment to reducing health and pension costs.

FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2015

	Revenues	Expenditures
General Fund	22,412,231	21,687,779
Special Revenue Funds		
Major Street	5,661,611	5,193,436
Local Street Fund	1,108,801	741,246
Ella W. Sharp Park Operating Fund	696,043	693,030
Public Improvement Fund	1,046,685	969,111
Building Department Fund	493,243	457,805
Housing Code Enforcement Fund	666,983	799,931
Building Demolitions Fund	2,480,119	1,291,202
Blight Elimination Grant	1,516,112	1,516,112
212 W. Michigan Ave. Demo Fund	17,500	17,500
Drug Law Enforcement Fund	13,925	39,798
Police/Fire Grant Funds-Variou	90,505	90,504
CDBG Funds	2,284,970	2,522,155
SAFER Grant Funds	650,518	650,518
Recreation Activity Fund	260,510	220,493
Recreation Millage Fund	232,583	260,487
	17,220,108	15,463,328
Debt Service Funds		
City Hall Refunding Debt Service Fund	651,445	627,107
Building Authority Debt Service Fund	51,550	51,550
DDA TIF Debt Service Funds	248,325	248,325
BRA TIF Debt Service Funds	1,025,273	1,025,273
	1,976,593	1,952,255
Capital Project Funds		
Capital Projects Fund	360,465	329,956
Brownfield Redevelopment Authority Fund	1,059,750	1,157,478
DDA Project Fund	837,098	352,466
Special Assessment Capital Project Fund	372,646	418,489
	2,629,959	2,258,389
Enterprise Funds		
Ella W. Sharp Park Golf Practice Center Fund	52,940	52,916
Automobile Parking System Fund	295,371	31,682
Parking Assessment Fund	111,617	88,836
Stormwater Utility	671,749	671,749
Parking Deck Fund	278,946	731,388
Sewage Fund	4,628,308	4,223,921
Water Fund	7,711,143	6,599,703
	13,750,074	12,400,195
TOTAL OPERATING FUNDS	\$57,988,965	\$53,761,946

*Operating Funds do not include Internal Service or Trust & Agency Funds

**Above amounts include transfers to and from other funds

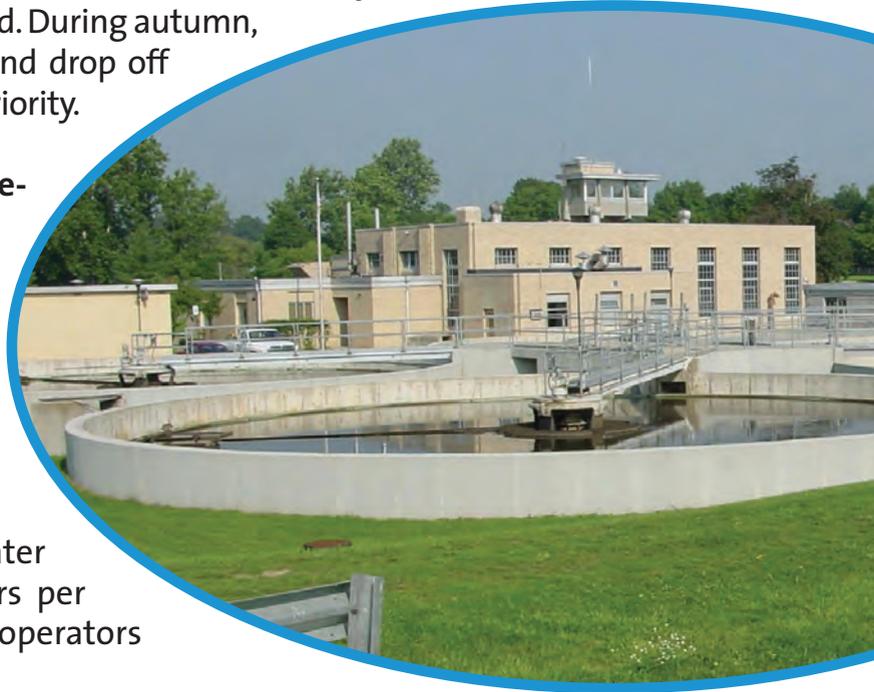
The **DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS** handles the city's streets, sewers and catch basins year-round. During autumn, the department provides a leaf pickup and drop off program. In winter, snow removal is the priority.

Accounting, Utility Billing and Water Meter Service & Reading

The Public Works Fiscal Services and Utility Billing staff sent out **70,033 bills** this year for water and sanitary sewer service for a total amount of **\$9,710,091**.

Treatment Plants

The City of Jackson water and wastewater treatment plants are operated 24 hours per day, seven days per week by certified operators and maintenance staff.



The water treatment plant treats and softens the drinking water that is supplied to more than 50,000 residents and businesses in the City and Blackman Township. In 2014-15, the water treatment plant produced and **delivered 2.62 billion gallons of safe drinking water** to customers. The water is tested daily in the City's certified testing laboratory according to EPA and state regulations.

The wastewater treatment plant provides service to more than 85,000 residents and business in the City as well as parts of Blackman, Napoleon, Spring Arbor, Sandstone, Rives and Summit township, as well as the state prison. The wastewater coming into the plant the last fiscal year averaged roughly 9.3 million gallons per day, or **3.4 billion gallons of water treated last year**.

Streets, Sanitary Sewers, Water Distribution System, Forestry and Motor Pool

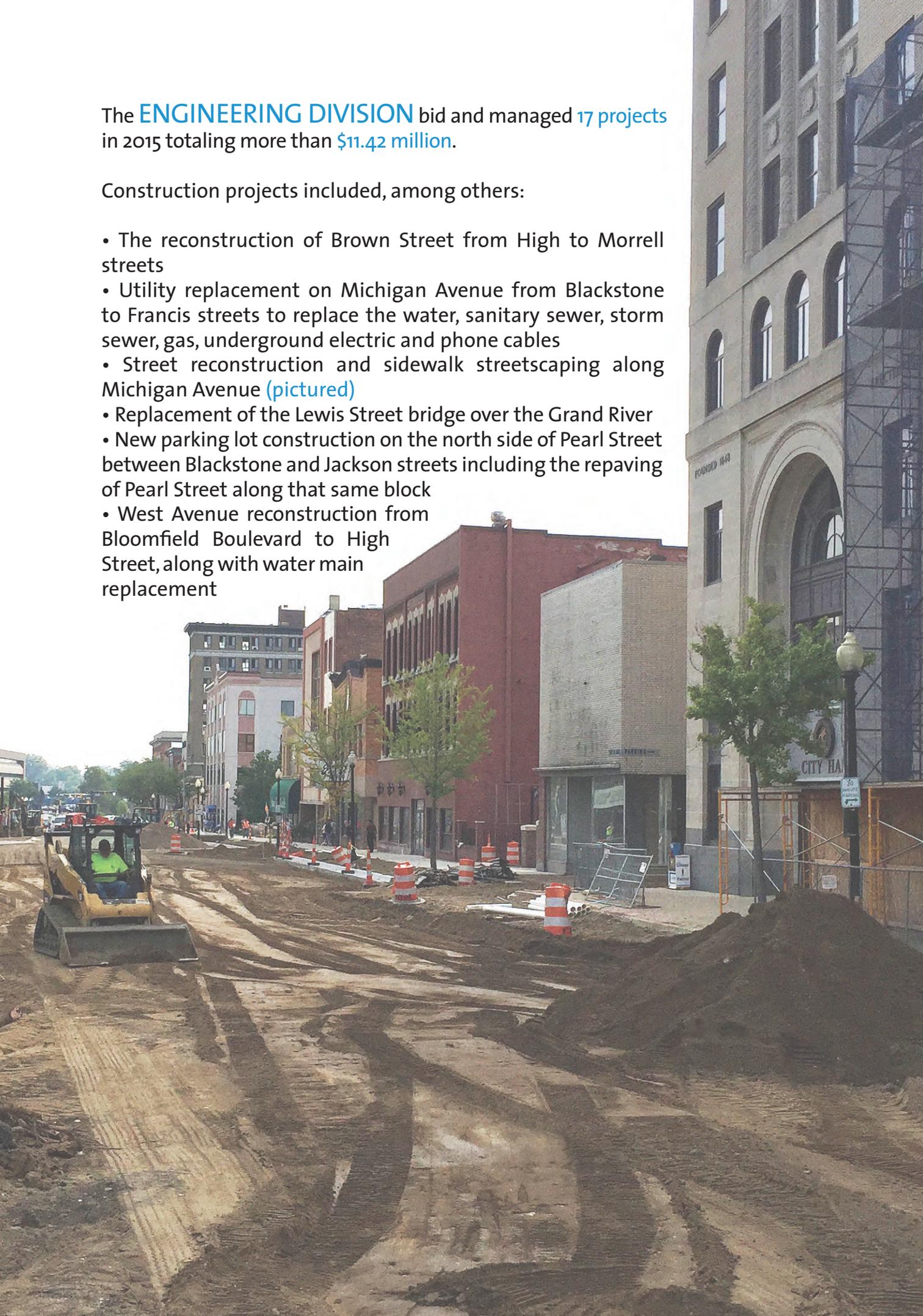
The Public Works maintenance crews are responsible for maintaining 100.85 miles of local streets, 54.27 miles of major streets and 8 miles of state highways in the City. Maintenance activities include street maintenance and repairs, including more than **2,500 tons of asphalt patching**, snow and ice removal, forestry activities that include tree trimming and removal, street sign repair and replacements, storm sewer maintenance and repairs as well as sanitary sewer collection system repair and maintenance.

The water distribution system staff is responsible for maintaining 244 miles of water main, 1,670 hydrants and 2,412 valves. This past year, crews repaired **44 water main breaks**, exercised 414 water main valves, replaced five water main valves, repaired 178 hydrants, **replaced 17 hydrants**, installed 25 new water services, **repaired 46 water service line leaks**, replaced 46 curb stop valves and retired 18 water mains and water service lines. Personnel also **responded to nearly 900 calls for service** related to water metering and delivery.

The **ENGINEERING DIVISION** bid and managed 17 projects in 2015 totaling more than \$11.42 million.

Construction projects included, among others:

- The reconstruction of Brown Street from High to Morrell streets
- Utility replacement on Michigan Avenue from Blackstone to Francis streets to replace the water, sanitary sewer, storm sewer, gas, underground electric and phone cables
- Street reconstruction and sidewalk streetscaping along Michigan Avenue (pictured)
- Replacement of the Lewis Street bridge over the Grand River
- New parking lot construction on the north side of Pearl Street between Blackstone and Jackson streets including the repaving of Pearl Street along that same block
- West Avenue reconstruction from Bloomfield Boulevard to High Street, along with water main replacement



City of Jackson Councilmembers



Mayor Bill Jors



City Manager Patrick Burtch



WARD 1 • Arlene Robinson



WARD 2 • Freddie Dancy



WARD 3 • Daniel Greer



WARD 4 • Craig Pappin



WARD 5 • Andrew Frounfelker



WARD 6 • Derek Dobies