

(For September 2018)

## Around the City . . . . . with City Manager David Thayer

Over the last three years, my office has received numerous calls from city residents complaining about the deer eating their flowers, destroying their gardens, and generally being a nuisance. From August 28, 2016 to August 28, 2018, we have had 59 deer/car accidents within the City. In response, I am organizing a Town Hall meeting to discuss deer over population issues. Specifically, I want to hear from our constituents about the seriousness of the issue, what the City can do to address raised concerns, what the State can do, and what each resident can do.

I believe the City can review its ordinances on hunting including one that would allow property owners to invite guests to hunt on their lands, to decide whether to open some of the city owned property for hunting, and to better enforce the prohibition of baiting. It has been established and reinforced, that the City does not want to allow the use of firearms for hunting within its boundaries. The State could work with the City to create a Comprehensive Deer Management Bow Hunt (DMH) and grant special permits for the taking of antlerless deer. Residents can help by restraining from activities that attract deer to their property, specifically feeding and baiting.

The Town Hall meeting will take place on Tuesday, September 25, 2018 at 7:00 p.m. at City Hall in Council Chambers. I will limit discussion to issues pertaining to deer over population and control measures.

A positive sign of economic growth and prosperity in a city is when one starts to hear complaints about the lack of parking. I am proud to announce that is where I find myself today. Several businesses have opened this last year in our Central Business District with six more planning to do so by this fall. Soon, all of our storefronts will be full again. After the existing

commercial space is consumed, we will see new building taking place. I am very hopeful we will be able to attract that destination business anchor to the former Wardo site. Whatever we can do to increase foot traffic on Genesee Street, the stronger our recovery to commercial economic viability will return. With the redesigning and restriping of the three city parking lots along Maple Street, we were able to increase the number of parking spaces by almost 25%. Business owners can help increase on-street parking by encouraging their employees to park in one of the city parking lots. Once we get potential customers on our “Main Street”, we do not want to lose them because they cannot find convenient parking. We will be installing directional signage to the city parking lots.

We had another successful large item pickup program last Saturday. We filled and compacted one, 30-yard and three, 40-yard dumpsters along with a garbage truck that holds roughly the capacity of two, 40-yard dumpsters. This is the 7<sup>th</sup> program that I ran and as you drive around the city, you can see its impact on blight. I am very proud of our residents understanding the need to limit the program to city only customers. When I approached a vehicle to verify city residency, 99% had their ID ready. Several of the 1%, I had to turn away.

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