**16**Spring 2025

# CHECKING IN WITH FERNDALE





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Fern and Learn - Back Cover

**On the cover**: Skate on at the Geary Park Skate Jam! This annual event returns to the Geary Skate Park on Saturday, June 7, 2025, from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Read all the details on page 8.

#### STAY CONNECTED

Ferndale City Hall 300 East Nine Mile Road Ferndale, Michigan 48220

Current Hours: Monday - Thursday 8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.



248-546-2525



information@ferndalemi.gov



ferndalemi.gov

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Facebook.com/Ferndale.Michigan



Facebook.com/FerndaleParksandRec



Facebook.com/FerndalePoliceMI



Facebook.com/FerndaleSpecialEvents



@FerndaleMich



@FerndalePolice

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#### CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE

#### WELCOME TO THE NEW CITY MANAGER

The City of Ferndale is thrilled to welcome Colleen O'Toole as the new City Manager. After a stringent national search effort between City Staff and City Council—including several rounds of researching, surveying, interviewing, and discussion—City Council unanimously appointed O'Toole at the Monday, February 10, 2025, public meeting.



Colleen O'Toole City Manager

O'Toole brings 8 ½ years of City Manager experience to Ferndale with a **City Manager** concentrated focus on finance, economic development, and capital improvement. Her previous positions include the City Manager for Saline, Michigan, and Durand, Michigan. She is familiar with BS&A, the City's budget tool, and has extensive grant research and writing experience. O'Toole's job experience and personal values align perfectly with the wants and needs of the City of Ferndale.

O'Toole is no stranger to government operations, having grown up with two parents as civil servants. Throughout childhood, she witnessed community commitment and learned how an active participant solves community challenges. After receiving her master's in public administration from DePaul University in 2009, she pivoted from the public to the private sector to pursue that community-driven focus. She feels a sense of accomplishment knowing her job helps other people.

O'Toole's immediate priorities for the City are tackling the upcoming May election and Headlee Override Proposal, the fiscal year budget cycle, and the upcoming union negotiations. "I am here to help ease the community's concerns during a sensitive time and ensure that we are making the best use of our tax dollars," stated O'Toole. "I hope to advocate for residents and your experience in this community, and I want to see Ferndale continue to thrive." She shared that her goal is to protect and steward the community's quality of life in the years ahead.

When asked why she chose the City of Ferndale, she mentioned that Ferndale stood out more than any other community for its policies, activities, and inclusiveness. "Ferndale acts on its values, not just speaks," O'Toole noted. She sees the public, staff, and Council aligned on these values. Colleen is especially excited to bring her wife and kids to the community to experience Ferndale's unique events, diverse businesses, and inclusive parks.

O'Toole also cited the positive impression of the interview process from City staff, City Council, and the public, for teaching her the core values of the community. While discussing the appointment decision, City Council praised O'Toole for her experience, preparedness, and detailed approach.

Ultimately, Colleen wants the community to know she is here to serve you. Please feel free to reach out at cotoole@ferndalemi.gov or call 248-546-2399.

#### **FERNDALE HEADLEE OVERRIDE 2025**

# WHAT IS THE PROPOSAL?

On Tuesday, May 6, 2025, Ferndale voters will be asked to renew the voter-approved 2015 Property Tax Proposal.

- This renews the City's authority to levy 5.4452 mills for operational funding that would otherwise expire in December 2025.
- This is 1.1644 mills above the 2024 voted millage rate.

# WHAT IS THIS PAYING FOR?

The expiring millage makes up approximately 14% of the funds that pay for essential services like **Police, Fire, and Public Works.** These services make up nearly 60% of the City's General fund. This funding will allow the City to maintain and improve these essential services for the residents.

#### HOW WOULD THIS IMPACT MY PROPERTY TAXES?

For 90% of single-family, residential property owners in the city, the impact is expected to be between approximately \$70 and \$175 per year. For more information on how to calculate your individual tax impact, please visit the City's website.

# HOW HAS THIS CHANGED SINCE NOVEMBER?

Residents, we've heard you! Thanks to your input, City Council and staff made some adjustments to the proposal.

Your feedback has inspired the following changes:

This override proposal has been reduced by 3 mills.

This funds essential services. No new buildings are associated with this proposal.

This override expires in 10 years.

#### THANK YOU TO OUR PUBLIC SERVICE STAFF!

May is one of our favorite months because we get to recognize our incredible public service officials—the true core of Ferndale services. Please join us in recognizing and celebrating our Fire, Police, and Public Works Departments.

#### INTERNATIONAL FIREFIGHTERS' DAY

International Firefighters' Day is Sunday, May 4, 2025, and we're proud to recognize our amazing Ferndale firefighters. These heroes navigate dangerous situations to keep the community safe. They work incredibly hard to take care of Ferndale and we couldn't be more grateful. Thank you to all of our firefighters for everything you do.



#### NATIONAL POLICE WEEK

We would like to offer our heartfelt acknowledgement to the Ferndale Police Department as they observe National Police Officer Memorial Day on Thursday, May 15, 2025. This is an important day of National Police Week, which recognizes officers who have lost their lives in the line of duty. Thank you to our Police officers for your service and dedication to the community.

#### NATIONAL PUBLIC WORKS WEEK

"People, Purpose, Presence." These are the words that honor the Public Works Department (DPW) during the 2025 National Public Works Week from Sunday, May 18, 2025, to Saturday, May 24, 2025. DPW enhances Ferndale's quality of life through their variety of skills and services. We are so grateful for their dedicated efforts and critical service to the community.



Thank you to our Fire Department, Police Department, and Public Works Department for keeping Ferndale safe, healthy, and secure. We appreciate you!

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#### **PUBLIC WORKS**

# TRASH AND RECYCLING DELAYS

The following holidays impact weekly curbside garbage and recycling collection:

- Memorial Day, Monday, May 26, 2025
- Independence Day, Friday, July 4, 2025

There will be no pickup on the dates above, so please set your containers out one day late for the rest of the week.



#### INFRASTRUCTURE UPDATES

#### ROADS

Each year, DPW oversees the repairs and surfacing of roads and streets. 2025 marks the final year of the ten-year 2015 Road Bond—a plan implemented to replace all residential streets. View the schedule of the remaining streets at <a href="https://erndaleconstructionschedule">bit.ly/ferndaleconstructionschedule</a>.

#### **WATER AND SEWER**

The Water Main Improvement Program continues this year with water main replacements in the areas of Mahan, Brickley, and Shevlin (between Lennox and Chester). The City also addresses sewer mains with the Sewer Improvement Program, a project that ensures the sewers can move sewage and prevent basement backups. Last year, the City lined approximately 8,000 linear feet of older pipe guided by the results of the 2024 Sewer Televising Program.

#### LEAD SERVICE LINE REPLACEMENTS

The lead service line replacements are on schedule. 2,100 lines have been replaced thus far—this year, DPW is anticipating another 500. Residents can help expedite the construction process by reporting their home's plumbing materials through the self-reporting tool. DPW is thankful to those who have helped get the word out. For more information about this program, visit <a href="https://bit.ly/ferndaleselfreporttool.">bit.ly/ferndaleselfreporttool.</a>



#### YARD WASTE

Yard waste season begins on Monday, April 7, 2025, and runs through Friday, December 19, 2025. Please put your grass clippings, leaves, small sticks, and weeds in a labeled-reusable container or a brown kraft bag. Labels are available at the DPW yard or Ferndale City Hall. Yard waste is collected on your regular trash day.

#### **SUSTAINABILITY**

# RESIDENTIAL COMPOST PROGRAM

The spring is the perfect time to sign up for the residential compost drop-off program. Reduce the amount of waste sent to landfills, the level of greenhouse gas emissions, and the number of rodents and pests near your trash while turning your food scraps into healthy soil. Compost food scraps, coffee grounds and filters, meat, bones, eggshells, and BPI-certified products. Do not

ferndalemi.gov/government/
services/sustainability

zerowaste@ferndalemi.gov

300 East Nine Mile Rd

248-336-4236

include pizza boxes, plastic bags or packaging, non-BPI labeled compostable products, and produce stickers. Sign up at <u>bit.ly/ferndalecompost</u>, bring your food scraps to one of the six drop off locations, and rinse and repeat.

#### **SPRING CLEANING**

If you're refreshing your wardrobe this spring, consider how much you buy and whether it is second-hand. The fabrics you choose and how you discard them makes a big environmental impact. Clothing made from 100% natural fibers like cotton, hemp, or wool is easier to recycle—unlike synthetic blends that persist in landfills for hundreds of years. You can also consider repairing clothing or repurposing items before donating. Thank you to the Ferndale Environmental Sustainability Commission (FESC) for this information.





#### FREE WILDFLOWER SEEDS

Ferndale is in bloom! The FESC worked with Oakland County Parks and Recreation and the Oakland County Cooperative Invasisive Species Management Area to create a wildflower seed mix for Ferndale residents to support ecosystems and pollinators, assist stormwater runoff, and enhance biodiversity. Sign up for the program at <a href="mailto:bit.ly/ferndalewildflowerseeds.">bit.ly/ferndalewildflowerseeds.</a>
Stop into City Hall to grab a packet or coordinate with Zero Waste Manager Logan Applebee at zerowaste@ferndalemi.gov.

# PARKS & RECREATION

#### **GET INVOLVED**

Get out in the sun and have some fun! Parks and Recreation has lots of events, sports, and programs for all ages.

- Sponsors, volunteers, program coordinators, and coaches are always encouraged.
- If you're passionate about parks, lend your voice to the Parks and Recreation Commission.





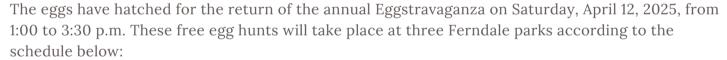






#### **EVENTS**

#### **EGGSTRAVAGANZA**



- Wilson Park: 1:00 p.m. for bunnies 1-4 years old
- Geary Park: 1:30 p.m. for bunnies and rabbits of all ages
- Martin Road Park: 2:00 p.m. for bunnies and rabbits of all ages

Children can gather as many prize-filled eggs as they can find. Be sure to keep your eye out for the special golden egg. The Easter Bunny will hop in, so be on the look out!

#### SAFETY TOWN BIKE RODEO

In recognition of Bike Safety Month, the Parks and Recreation Department, Police Department, and Fire Department are hosting a free Bike Rodeo safety event on Thursday, May 22, 2025, from 6:00 to 7:00 p.m. in Garbutt Park's Safety Town area. Kids and adults can learn about CPR, first aid, and bike licensing, decorate their bikes, and enjoy free snacks and giveaways. Kids who bring their bikes can ride them through Safety Town to learn about traffic control elements like stop signs, traffic lights, and more.





#### **GEARY PARK SKATE JAM**

Drop in to the Geary Park Skate Jam on Saturday, June 7, 2025, from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at Geary Park, in partnership with Modern Skate and Surf. Skaters can compete in four categories—skateboarding, inline skating, BMX, and scootering. Attendees can enjoy a vibrant atmosphere of vendors, music, games, activities, apparel, and food trucks. This is a super exciting event, whether you're ready to skate on or view some action-packed competitions.

#### **MOVIE IN THE PARK**

Grab your popcorn—it's time for a free movie in the park. The Parks and Recreation Department is excited to treat the community to several movies at Harding Park and Martin Road Park. The movie selection will be announced closer to showtime. Snacks are also available for purchase.

The tentative schedule is as follows:

- Pajama Movie Party: Thursday, June 12 | 7:30 p.m. | Detroit Curling Club at Martin Road Park
- Park It Night: Thursday, July 17 | 8:30 p.m. | Harding Park
- Movie on the Hill: Thursday, August 14 | Sundown | Martin Road Park



#### **SPORTS**

WHAT	WHEN	WHERE	MORE
Youth Baseball/ Softball	Registration opens in April 2025, games begin in June 2025	Ferndale and surrounding fields	<ul> <li>Services co-ed teams from ages 3-14, a girls' softball league from grades 3-8, and a travel Major League Division ages 13-14</li> <li>Jerseys and hats are provided</li> </ul>
Adult Softball	Registration is open now, games begin in May 2025	Martin Road Park	<ul> <li>Mid-level and recreational league for both co-ed and men's teams</li> <li>\$650 for twelve games which covers umpire fees, a scorebook, a rulebook, and softballs</li> </ul>
Adult Drop-In Soccer	Registration is open now, games are from Monday, May 5, 2025, to Monday, June 9, 2025, from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.	Geary Park	This is a free program

Get your head in the game and join a team at **bit.ly/ferndaleamilia**. This is a great opportunity for fun, skill development, and team building.

#### SENIOR PROGRAMS

If you or someone you know is 55+ years old, you're qualified for the Ferndale Senior Group! This is a great place to socialize, make friends, get involved, travel, and have fun. Whether exploring Eastern Market, experiencing the elegance of Meadowbrook, staying in the Grand Hotel on Mackinac Island, or all of the shopping, dining, and museums in between...there's something for everyone.

Members must be 55+ years old and pay a membership fee of \$15 which includes a bi-monthly newsletter. Residents 65+ years old can also receive a discounted parking pass of \$10. Reach out to Parks and Recreation or contact Senior Group President Jeannie Davis at jeanni111@comcast.net for more information.

#### WHAT'S NEW AT OUR PARKS?

#### HARDING PARK

We're so excited about Harding Park! The Parks and Recreation Department was awarded a \$100,000 Land & Water Conservation Fund Grant from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources to help renovate the in-line rink at Harding Park. More details are coming soon.

#### **WILSON PARK**

Wilson Park is ready for spring! The Wilson Park Improvement Project is officially over and open for all visitors. Enjoy the new pavilion, playground structures, walking path, drinking fountain, landscaping, trash and recycling bins, and benches. Thank you to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Oakland County, the Ralph C. Wilson Foundation, the American Academy of Dermatology, and America in Bloom by CN.



There's no need to chase your tail—get a dog park membership! Wilson Park's Dog Park is the oasis for our four-legged friends, complete with safe key card access, fenced play areas for dogs of all sizes, sitting areas, water stations, waste pickup stations, urine-resistant shrubbery, and more. An annual membership is required by completing a one-time dog safety course, submitting the Dog Park Membership Application, providing updated vaccination records and licensing information, and paying the \$40 application fee (\$65 for pups from different cities). Visit <u>bit.ly/ferndaledogpark</u> for more information.

#### **MARTIN ROAD PARK**

The planning process for the Martin Road Park Service Building is underway. This facility will be a vital support hub for the park with ADA-accessible and family restrooms to accommodate the Splash Pad and other park activities. There will also be a concession stand and essential storage space. The tentative construction schedule is late 2025 with an anticipated completion in fall of 2026. Stay tuned for more updates.

Make a splash at the Martin Road Park Splash Pad this spring and summer from Friday, May 23, 2025, until Labor Day, Monday, September 1, 2025. Bathrooms will be open from mid-May until early October.

#### **PARK AND PAVILION RENTALS**

Spring is a great time for celebrations in the sun. Reserve a park or pavilion for the 2025 season—including Geary Park, Martin Road Park, Harding Park, Wanda Park, Wilson Park, and Schiffer Park. Contact 248-544-6767 Ext. 519 or visit **bit.ly/ferndaleparkandpavilion** to sign up.

#### **ELECTIONS**

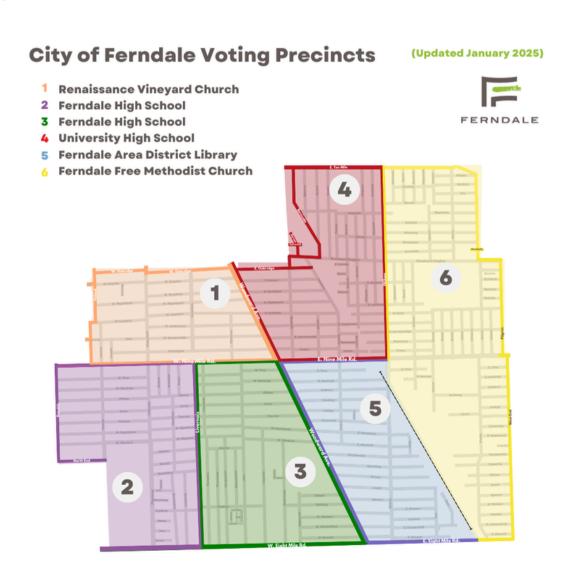
#### MAY 6, 2025, ELECTION

The Tuesday, May 6, 2025, Election will see two items on the ballot—a City of Ferndale Headlee Override Millage proposal (all precincts) and a Ferndale Public Schools Bond proposal (precincts 1–5).

# PRECINCT CONSOLIDATION

The City of Ferndale has consolidated voting precincts from nine to six precincts. If you live in Precincts 7, 8, or 9, you have been assigned a new precinct number, but only some of these voters have been assigned a new polling location. View the map below to determine your precinct and polling location. Impacted voters should have received new voter ID cards in the mail.





#### **RUNNING FOR CITY COUNCIL OR MAYOR**

The City of Ferndale's General Election on Tuesday, November 4, 2025, will include one Mayoral and two City Council positions. Each candidate must be at least 25 years old, a United States citizen, and a Ferndale resident since Saturday, November 4, 2023, or longer. Interested candidates must collect and return 100-150 verified signatures from registered Ferndale voters on official nominating petitions. Those interested in running for a position can retrieve a candidate packet from the City Clerk's Office at City Hall during normal business hours. The deadline to file the nominating petitions and Affidavit of Identity is Tuesday, July 22, 2025, at 4:00 p.m.

#### **POLICE**

# STREET CORNER ROUNDTABLES

Hang out with the Ferndale Police Department at a park! This is a great opportunity to ask questions, address concerns, and enjoy the warm weather.

Reach out to the department for more information.

#### **BLOCK PARTIES**

You can also invite the Ferndale Police Department to a block party. The Police Department can join in on the fun in a patrol car for the neighborhood to check out.











#### **EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS FOR YOUTH**

The department also offers educational presentations and discussions for children and youth to establish relationships and build trust with the next generation. Please reach out to the department if you are interested in hosting a program.







#### FIRE

# OPEN BURN PERMIT REMINDER

Don't forget that backyard fires require an Open Burn Permit. Please fill out the form and schedule an inspection at

<u>bit.ly/ferndaleopenburnpermit.</u> Pay careful attention to the safety guidelines.

# information@ferndalemi.gov Fire Station 1: 1635 Livernois Fire Station 2: 1070 E. Nine Mile

#### **FIREWORKS**



Before you start the celebration, please be mindful of these firework regulations. In the spring and summer seasons, fireworks can only be used on:

🎇 The Saturday and Sunday immediately preceding Memorial Day until 11:45 p.m.

Sunday, June 29, 2025, to Saturday, July 5, 2025, until 11:45 p.m.

Please keep in mind that any fireworks, firecrackers, and noisemakers used outside of the dates and times above will result in a civil infraction. If you experience an issue with fireworks outside of the allotted times, please contact the Police non-emergency line at 248-541-3650.

#### **HOME SAFETY INSPECTIONS**

The Fire Department is here for the safety of you and your loved ones. Schedule a free complimentary virtual home inspection for the exterior and interior of your home. Complete the inspection at <a href="https://bit.ly/ferndalehomesafetyinspection">bit.ly/ferndalehomesafetyinspection</a>.

#### **CITY PLANNING**

#### **SEECLICKFIX**

If you have an issue to report around the City, visit **bit.ly/ferndalescf**.

#### **OLHSA**

The story of the Oakland Livingston Human Service Agency Home Chore Grant for Ferndale seniors, low-income residents, and people with disabilities continues. After extensive surveying and collaboration between OLHSA, City Council, and City staff, the focus areas are narrowed down to porch repairs, roof repairs, plumbing, furnaces, and yard cleanup. Please keep in mind that there are specific qualifications needed to apply. Preference will be given based on emergency needs, income level, and first-time applicants.

View more qualification and application information at <a href="mailto:bit.ly/ferndaleolhsa">bit.ly/ferndaleolhsa</a>. You can also stop into Ferndale City Hall or the Parks and Recreation Office at Incubizo to pick up an application. For assistance receiving the form, please contact Parks and Recreation Senior Coordinator Alicia Pardo at 248-544-6767 x 503 or apardo@ferndalemi.gov.

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#### **EVENTS: SPRING 2025**



#### **APRIL**

- Thursday, April 3 Fern and Learn Begins (back cover)
- Monday, April 7 Yard Waste Season Begins (pg. 6)
- Saturday, April 12 Eggstravaganza (pg. 7)

# MAY

- Saturday, May 3-Sunday, May 4 Cinco de Mayo Festival
- Sunday, May 4 Firefighters' Day (pg. 4)
- Tuesday, May 6 Special Election (pg. 3)
- Thursday, May 15 National Police Week (pg. 4)
- Saturday, May 17 Ferndale Recycling Drop-Off Station
- Sunday, May 18 National Public Works Week (pg. 4)
- Thursday, May 22 Safety Town (pg. 7)
- Friday, May 23 Martin Road Park Splash Pad Opens (pg. 9)
- Monday, May 26 City Hall Closed in Observance of Memorial Day
- Saturday, May 31 Ferndale Pride

#### JUNE

- Saturday, June 7 Geary Park Skate Jam (pg. 8)
- Thursday, June 12 Pajama Movie Party (pg. 8)
- Thursday, June 19 City Hall Closed in Observance of Juneteenth

#### **DOWNTOWN FERNDALE**

Spring has sprung in Downtown Ferndale! Step out and enjoy the sunshine around Downtown Ferndale at one of our amazing stores, restaurants, and service providers. There are so many great things happening throughout the spring and summer. Visit downtownferndale.com to stay in the know or follow us at @downtownferndale on Facebook, Instagram, and Tik Tok.

Please note, all events are subject to alteration or cancellation. Visit the City's website and social media channels for more information.



Cinco de Mayo





Martin Road Splash Pad



Geary Park Skate Jam

#### CITY COUNCIL



Raylon Leaks-May Mayor rleaksmay@ferndalemi.gov



**Laura Mikulski** Mayor Pro Tem lmikulski@ferndalemi.gov



**Donnie Johnson** Councilmember djohnson@ferndalemi.gov



**Rolanda Kelley** Councilmember rkelley@ferndalemi.gov



**Greg Pawlica**Councilmember
gpawlica@ferndalemi.gov

#### **GET INVOLVED**

For information about how to attend or access meetings, visit our meetings portal at bit.ly/ferndalecitymeetings.

#### **CITY COUNCIL**

Every second and fourth Monday 7:00 p.m.

#### **PLANNING COMMISSION**

Every third Wednesday 6:30 p.m.

#### **CIVIL SERVICE BOARD**

Every third Thursday 8:00 a.m.

# ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSION ADVISORY COMMISSION

Every first Monday 6:30 p.m.

## ARTS AND BEAUTIFICATION COMMISSION

Every third Thursday 6:00 p.m.

#### BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS

As Needed

### DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Every second Thursday 8:00 a.m.

# ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION

Every first Monday 6:00 p.m.

## PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

Every first Wednesday 6:30 p.m.

Please note: Meeting dates and times may change. Visit **ferndalemi.gov** for up-to-date meeting information.

#### **SEEN ON SOCIAL**









Contact Reilly Coleman, Communications Specialist, at rcoleman@ferndalemi.gov or 248-546-2525 Ext. 132, for more information.

Let's get learning! The Fern and Learn Program returns for the third year in a row. This is a great opportunity to get to know staff from the following departments: City Manager's Office, Police, Fire, Public Works, Finance, Parks and Recreation, Zero Waste, City Clerk's Office, Communications, Community and Economic Development, Downtown Development Authority, Human Resources, and IT.

This weekly program is on Thursday evenings from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. beginning on April 3, 2025, and ending on June 5, 2025. Sessions will mostly be held in the City Council Chambers at City Hall, but some locations may vary.

It's not too late to sign up! Visit **bit.ly/fernandlearn2025**.