

At Your Service



A Newsletter for the Citizens of Midland, Michigan

April 2006

Eastman Traffic Improvement Options *What Citizens Had to Say*

To postpone, or not to postpone?

That was the question – at least, one of them – that was considered by the 704 citizens who voiced their views on whether or not the City of Midland should make improvements to traffic-heavy Eastman Ave. between Wackerly St. and Commerce Dr.

The results from City-provided Roadmap Response Forms were almost equally split: about 49% of respondents said they wanted the City to move ahead with making changes, while 41% said they wanted to wait. Just under 10% of the respondents didn't give a preference.

When making the choice between holding off or moving ahead with improvements, citizens took into consideration three different improvement options proposed by independent traffic consultants DLZ Michigan, Inc.



Citizens Show Interest in Midland's Future in Unique Way

Nearly 60 Meetings in a Box took place throughout March as part of the City's two-year process to revamp Midland's Master Plan. Citizens met in homes, businesses and other locations throughout the community to discuss where they think Midland could be 20 years from now in terms of growth, development and character.

Even though Meetings in a Box are done, there are still opportunities to voice your views. Two workshops are planned for mid-May at the Midland Holiday Inn. Comments shared through Meetings in a Box will form discussion points for the workshops, which will take place May 17 and 18 from 7-10 p.m. To register for one of the two workshops, visit the City's website or call the Planning Department at 837-3374.

Citizens not only provided their comments – about 3,500 of them! – on the proposed options, but they also offered many other suggestions regarding Eastman Avenue traffic issues. Some of these ideas were shared during a report on Roadmap Response Form results that was presented at the January 23 City Council meeting.

Because of the overwhelming number of comments and ideas from the community, Council decided that City staff and the City's traffic consultants should take some time to analyze and explore them. Findings from that analysis will be reported at a future Council meeting.

For more information on the results of the Roadmap Response Form survey, visit the City's website (www.midland-mi.org); look for the Eastman Avenue link under the What's New / Updates heading. A hard copy of the Roadmap Response Forms report is also available at the Grace A. Dow Memorial Library's Government Information Center.

You can also view Council's discussion of this report via streaming video on the City's website. Look for the January 23, 2006, Council meeting.

Have We Got a Deal for You!

Springtime can bring with it a flood of rummage sales. Before you place a rummage or yard sale sign on your front lawn or on any property in Midland, read on to find out the City's regulations for proper placement of such signs within the city limits.



Section 8 of the Zoning Ordinance prohibits off-premise advertising signs. In addition, Section 22-2(a) of the City's Code of Ordinances prohibits the placement of signs that advertise such things as open houses, business or contractor services, and rummage sales in the public right-of-way (generally defined as the area between the sidewalk and the curb, or – if there is no sidewalk – about 15 feet or more from the curb line to a home). Exceptions to this rule can be authorized by City Council when signs are deemed to be in the public interest.

Regulations regarding sign placement have been necessary for a few reasons: one is aesthetics; the other is safety. Signs can be attractive and helpful in advertising a business, sale or event, but if used improperly, they can be distracting to motorists and a potential danger to the public as well as an eyesore in our community.

Despite these concerns, Midlanders in 2005 asked the City Council to consider changing the rules as they relate to rummage and yard sales. Citizen comments on the issue pointed out that such sales promote sound environmental practices by recycling and reusing goods that might otherwise end up in the City's Sanitary Landfill.

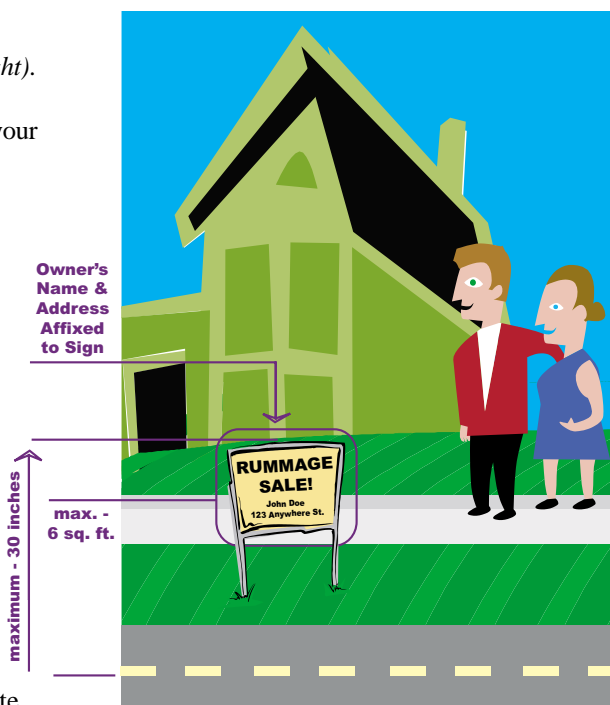
With this in mind, in September 2005, City Council adopted a resolution that allows for the placement of rummage and yard sale signs in the public right-of-way as long as the following requirements are met:

- The new maximum size allowed for signs is six (6) square feet (*see right*).
- A sign can be no taller than 30 inches from the crown of the roadway (*see right*).
- Each sign must list the owner's name and address (*see right*).
- Before placing any signs on the outlawn in front of any property other than your own, you must obtain permission from the property owner.
- Signs placed in the right-of-way may not obstruct or interfere with vehicular or pedestrian traffic.
- Rummage sale signs are allowed from Thursday at 8:00 a.m. to Monday at 8:00 a.m. during the week of the sale. By Monday at 8:00 a.m., they must be removed.

These new sign regulations will be in force until the fall of 2006, during which the City Council will consider a report evaluating the effects of this change on the community.

Citizen input will be an important part of this evaluation process. You're welcome to fill out an easy-to-use form on the City's website at www.midland-mi.org, or contact the City of Midland Building Department at 989-837-3383 with your comments.

For information on other types of signs and the City's regulations regarding their use and placement, refer to Section 22-2(a) of the Code of Ordinances, and Article 8 of the Zoning Ordinance. Both can be found on the City's website.



Have We Got An Opportunity for You!

Midland City Council is seeking individuals to apply for openings on several City boards and commissions.

Applications can be located on the City's website (www.midland-mi.org), or interested applicants can call the City of Midland staff liaison for a hard copy application. The deadline to submit applications is Friday, April 28, at 5 p.m., for board terms that will begin June 30, 2006. Most terms of service are three years in length. Completed applications can be sent to the City Manager's Office, 333 W. Ellsworth St., Midland, MI 48640.

Cable Access Advisory Commission: Two openings: Citizen-at-Large and Media Professional. Staff Liaison: Ron Beacom, 837-3474

Library Board: One opening for a Citizen-at-Large position. Staff Liaison: Melissa Barnard, 837-3430

Local Officers Compensation Commission: Two openings for Citizen-at-Large positions. Staff Liaison: Selina Tisdale, 837-3310

Parks & Recreation Commission: One High School Student and Two Citizen-at-Large openings. Staff Liaison: Marty McGuire, 837-6930

Planning Commission: Open opening for a Citizen-at-Large position. Staff Liaison: Jon Lynch, 837-3374

West Main Street Historic District Commission: Three Citizen-at-Large openings. Staff Liaison: Daryl Poprave, 837-3374

Zoning Board of Appeals: One Alternate Member and Two Citizen-at-Large openings. Staff Liaison: Daryl Poprave, 837-3374