

# 2020: The Year in Review

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The following pages contain a summary of Hartland Township's various activities and accomplishments. In reflecting on the past year, it is also helpful to review the big picture.

## *Vision Statement*

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Hartland Township is a place where residents, businesses and civic leaders are partners in building a unique community that is family-oriented, attractive and inviting. We are a community that proudly invests in enhancing our history, our character and our natural environment, and serves with fiscal responsibility and excellence.

## *Mission Statement*

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To provide quality services, to exceed expectations, to steward the resources entrusted to us, and to promote and protect our environment and the health, safety and welfare of all who live, work or visit Hartland Township.

## *Values*

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- Accountability
- Community
- Excellence
- Integrity
- Service
- Stewardship

The COVID-19 outbreak is one of many events that have made 2020 a year like no other for Hartland Township. From the ensuing public health crisis—its toll on sustaining Township operations, mental health, and local business operations, to name just a few—to the increasing urgency to provide assistance by adjusting governing parameters to promote and support the community, the year has brought more change than many could have imagined.

It can be difficult to target a return to normalcy when there are still so many challenges ahead. But in a year of unprecedented change, we also feel hopeful, having seen time and time again the power of the Hartland Township community collectively working through this crisis, sometimes against all odds. As 2020 has concluded, we share this look at some of the year's milestones.

The following pages are intended to provide a quick reminder of the many issues Hartland Township faced and results achieved throughout last year.

- Awarded **Five-Star Honored Community** by University of Michigan-Dearborn eCities program.
- Promoted “**Hartland Living**” brand in conjunction with the Partners in Progress, growing it into a reliable community resource with continued social media content and management.
- Successfully completed three elections during an ongoing pandemic, **providing safe and accessible** polling locations. Absentee ballot usage and overall voter turnout increased to record highs.
- Researched and prepared an ordinance for restaurants and retailers to utilize outdoor space during mandated shutdowns. Our community was one of the first in the State to successfully implement such standards.
- Improved the Township website to promote real-time updates on hall closures, meeting notices, etc.
- Again, received Township’s Moody **bond rating** at Aa2 (third highest possible).
- Completed another timely audit for FY20, even during a period of remote work.
- Highlighted **Township achievements** with “Hartland in Hindsight” series. The series of 20 articles reviewed the past decade of accomplishments, highlighting its growth while demonstrating what makes the community an exceptional place to live, work and play.
- Identified **water bond surplus**, with plans to issue refunds after May 2021 bond payment.
- Enhanced Settlers Park through completion of the **mountain biking trail** Phase III (making it a destination biking trail system).
- Began early preparation for FY 22 budget ahead of schedule, in anticipation for another approval at the end of FY21.
- Completed audio and visual upgrades to the Township meeting chambers, including installation of a new LED projection system.
- Hosted **State of the Community** address virtually, including updates from all “Partners in Progress” and recognizing the annual Volunteer of the Year.
- Actively promoted decade Census, with exceptional response from residents.
- Promoted **public safety** by proactively installing protective screens and social distancing measures for reopening after Covid-19 remote work orders.
- Sponsored Hartland Area Chamber of Commerce Polo Classic & Golf Outing.

- Hired several **excellent team** members: Casey Louis (Reception), Melynda Bernardi (Communications Director), Michael Luce (DPW Director), and Robert West transitioned into the Manager role.
- Reviewed several site plans, including Brennan office building/residence at the corner of Hartland and Crouse, Koppert Biological expansion, Rural King/Noble Appliance condominium request, Bella Vita private road, Hartland Senior Center Living Planned Development, Newberry Place Planned Development, Hunter's Ridge, Redwood Planned Development Concept Plan, Villas of Hartland Planned Development preliminary plan, Undercoating business at Hartland Commerce Center, Biggby Coffee drive-through, and worked with several restaurants to expand outdoor seating patios.
- Processed 362 total **permit** applications, even with material shortages during the pandemic.
- Capital Projects Progress:
  - Completed the Spranger Field Improvements including facility rehabilitation and new field fencing around the perimeter of the ballfields.
  - Completed the design for the M-59 East corridor water main extension designed to service future developments while providing a public benefit to the existing water users.
  - Completed the design of the M-59 sidewalk connector in anticipation of 2021 construction.
- Implemented many new or added-value **services & policies in response to COVID-19**:
  - Remote work policy during mandated shutdown, remaining 100% available to residents and taxpayers during normal business hours.
  - Received Board approval to waive utility late-fees for those experiencing hardship during the initial months of the shutdown.
  - Developed Township COVID response plan in compliance with Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS).
  - Implemented multiple Township Hall safety enhancements including countertop screens and PPE stations.
- Researched & studied many other **important issues & ideas** for policymaking decisions:
  - Success of voter approved fire millage in August of 2020.
  - Water system expansion (M-59 east) feasibility & financing options.
  - Future policing options for a growing community.
  - Extensive options to explore resolution regarding ongoing sewer litigation.
  - Repealed sidewalk maintenance ordinance, rules & Zoning Ordinance regulations.
  - Continued policing discussions with neighboring townships & county officials.

- Improving meeting room audio-visual technology, broadcast video quality & reliability.
  - Board Room & lobby updates (technology and furnishings).
  - Improving Cable Channel 20 broadcasts to public.
  - Zoning ordinance landscape & architectural standards – industrial & light industrial.
- Departments achieved many other important projects, goals & milestones:
    - Treasury – Increased customer use and satisfaction with online payments and use of ACH direct payments for both utilities and tax payments.
    - Planning – worked on several zoning ordinance amendments (light standards, lake lots, sidewalk maintenance, LED menu boards, fence regulations for swimming pools etc.); examined ordinances for small cells (5G).
    - Assessing – 801 property inspections (1.4% greater than department goal of 12%); along with 285 personal property inspections. Again, achieved a perfect score on Audit of Minimum Assessing Requirements (AMAR).
    - All Departments – Successfully set up for remote work at onset of shutdown within 72 hours (one weekend), with almost no interruption in service to the public.
- Continued to build **relationships** with our major partnerships and contracts: Livingston County Drain Commissioner, Fire Authority, Hubbell-Roth-Clark, Economic Development Council of Livingston County (EDCLC) & Ann Arbor SPARK, Hartland Enrichment & Recreation Organization (HERO), Hartland Area Youth Athletic Association (HAYAA), Hartland Community Soccer Association (HCSA), Hartland Youth Lacrosse (HYL), Livingston Land Conservancy, Huron Cemetery, Senior Center, Foster Swift, Beauchamp, Horizons Landscape, Priess, BS&A, I.T. Right, and Wood
- Officials & staff also **served** with the Hartland Senior Center Advisory Council (chair), Hartland Area Community Council (treasurer), HERO, Winterfest (chair), Hartland Farmers Market (market master), Michigan Municipal Treasurers Association (MMTA), Education & Legislative Committees, Michigan Government Finance Officers Association (MGFOA) Accounting Standards & Legislative committees, Livingston County Clerks Association (president), EDCLC Board of Directors & Executive Committee (chair), Ann Arbor SPARK Board of Directors & Executive Committee, Michigan Municipal Executives (MME) Ethics Committee (chair), Michigan Municipal Risk Management Authority (MMRMA) State Pool Committee (vice chair), Rotary Club and Optimist Club (treasurer)
- Ever improving **communications** with the residents, businesses, Board, Manager and staff
- Countless other routine services, day-to-day customers, tasks, phone calls, emails, etc.