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Friends,

I hope you enjoyed my prior communications regarding finances, roads, safety, water, and waste. Below, I discuss some of City Hall's quality of life initiatives. There are plenty of other areas of City action and interest, but I think we can all agree that it is time for my Annual Report to come to merciful end!

ERRATA

Before moving on to the main event, please see below some corrections. An intrepid resident has observed two errors in my discussion about the Gelman plume:

- 1) I wrote that "Per above, DEQ requires cleanup action if drinking water contains 7.2 ppb." State law does not require "cleanup action". The Section 201 rules are titled "Cleanup Criteria Requirements for Response Activity Rules", but full "cleanup" is not required by polluters if that threshold is exceeded. Instead, polluters must ensure that the risk of exposure be mitigated. Depending upon the nature of the exposure, this mitigation action may be achieved through cleanup or provision of alternate water supply or other action.
- 2) I identified the Waterworks dioxane discovery as occurring "this fall". It was reported in October 2016 rather than October 2017.

Environmental Action

The value of sustainability runs through many City departments and Council actions – you see them in our discussions of Climate Action, Street Trees, Storm water, Parks, and so forth. Outside of these traditional areas, we implemented a number new policies this past year that should benefit our environment for years to come.

The transportation sector makes up 32% of Ann Arbor's community-wide greenhouse gas emissions and the City should lead by example when it comes to climate action. City Hall needs to contribute to community-wide greenhouse gas reductions through its own operations. To that end, we have updated our Green Fleets Policy to meet the objectives of fuel-efficient, low-emission and low-cost fleet operations.

Twenty percent 20% of the Climate Action Plan (CAP) 2025 electrical savings goal is slated to be met with solar photovoltaics (or equivalent). State code, however, prohibits us from mandating greater energy efficiency on private developments and improvements. We must, therefore, take steps to lead by example. In May 2017, we adopted a policy requiring all renovations of city facilities that are included in the Capital Improvements Plan to comply with current Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) criteria for existing buildings and incorporate solar power and other alternative/renewable energy sources to the greatest extent possible; and that all new city facilities achieve a minimum of LEED Silver certification and incorporate solar power and other alternative/renewable energy sources to the greatest extent possible.

Finally, in keeping with our commitment to honor and meet Paris Climate Agreement goals, and my endorsement of the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy and U.S. Climate Mayors initiatives, we have committed the City of Ann Arbor – the municipal organization – will meet the 100% clean and renewable goal for all Scope 1 and 2 City operations (per The Greenhouse Gas Protocol) by 2035 or sooner through a combination of energy efficiency measures, renewable energy sources and optimal business practices. This will not alone meet our Climate Action Plan goals – City municipal government operations account for only 1.3% of total community-wide greenhouse gas emissions – but it will be an important contribution to the community's effort.

Ann Arbor Train Station

Ann Arborites demand better rail service. It's good for the environment, good for the economy, and good for our quality of life. The existing Ann Arbor rail station opened in 1983 and is even today the busiest in the state based on data collected by the Michigan Department of Transportation. The existing station is undersized by current Amtrak design standards and is frequently unable to accommodate existing passenger volumes. During peak periods, the existing Amtrak station operates above its designed capacity for all arriving and departing passengers. The station is equipped with 60 seats in the waiting area, but a typical train boarding 80-120 passengers overwhelms the waiting area. There is no checked baggage service, no baggage storage, no baggage carts, and no lockers. Based on the trend in ridership, the existing station cannot support future Amtrak intercity passenger rail demand and could not handle further increases in passenger traffic resulting from future expansion of intercity passenger rail service or the introduction of commuter rail service.

Parking facilities at the existing station are inadequate during peak periods of rail traffic, do not function well, and may cause potential passengers to choose another mode of transportation due to the inconvenience. There are limited spaces available for long-term parking which are located on the opposite side of the tracks and require passengers to walk a significant distance and down stairs to access the station. Additionally, existing traffic on Depot Street, immediately adjacent to the station, can act as a deterrent. Pedestrian and bicycle access is limited at the existing train station. The station is located away from the activity centers in Ann Arbor which does not encourage walking to and from the station. Downtown Ann Arbor, U-M, and the denser employment centers and residential neighborhoods that are located to the south and southwest are at a greater walking distance than one half mile—the national walking tolerance average to fixed guideway transit. Additionally, the Broadway Street Bridge may act as a barrier to pedestrians due to the elevation change that requires pedestrians to use the stairs to access Broadway Street. The City's 2009 Transportation Plan Update recommends integrating rail services with enhanced transit in Fuller Park, on the southern side of Fuller Road.

We have been working with Federal Rail Administration and Michigan Department of Transportation for some time to develop plans for a new Ann Arbor Train Station and have finally received the Draft Environmental Assessment Report. This report identifies Fuller Road as the preferred alternative for that station. The Public Review portion of the process has concluded and now we await Federal Railroad Administration's (FRA) comments. After these comments and the Environmental Assessment Report is itself finalized, we will conduct the Preliminary Engineering (PE) and ultimately obtain FRA's formal Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). Thereafter, we will coordinate with MDOT and FRA for Final Design and Construction Resources. Much of the text below is taken from the draft report itself.

Despite a recent decline in ridership from low gas prices, long-term projections still indicate significant future growth in rail usage. Indeed, this year saw a 10%+ increase in ridership. Even absent major improvements to the Wolverine service, annual intercity rail ridership at the station is projected to increase to 209,000 by 2035. If the improvements that are currently under consideration for the Wolverine service are implemented, including increasing the frequency of intercity passenger rail service

beyond the current 3 daily round-trips, improving travel time by installing higher speed service, construction of new stations elsewhere, and purchasing new vehicles, ridership at the station could grow to up to 969,000 passengers, with ten daily round-trips per year in less than 20 years.

Additionally, the Regional Transit Authority of Southeast Michigan (RTA) is proposing commuter rail service linking Ann Arbor and Detroit along the same rail right of way. Should the proposed commuter rail service be implemented, the RTA projects that an additional 143,320 to 229,950 passengers per year would use the station for work commute trips and other intra-metropolitan area travel. Combined intercity passenger rail and commuter rail passengers could result in nearly 1.5 million total passengers per year using the station in 2040.

The purpose of Ann Arbor Station project is to provide an ADA-compliant intermodal facility that will accommodate existing and future intercity passenger rail ridership; improve intermodal connectivity within the City of Ann Arbor and its neighboring communities, and accommodate proposed commuter rail between the City of Ann Arbor and neighboring jurisdictions; add ADA-compliant parking; and improve the integration of the station within the City of Ann Arbor. The Federal Rail Administration approved draft report identifies Fuller Road is the most effective location to meet those need – it has more space for necessary parking, better access for the mass transit that will be necessary to move commuters from the station to other areas of the City, and it is right next to the highest employment center and most visited location in the County, the UM Health System.

It is anticipated that the footprint of the station and associated parking structure would be limited to the current footprint of the U-M Parking Lot to the south of Fuller Road, land that has been used as a parking lot since 1993 – land between Fuller Road and the existing rail road tracks, not on the Fuller Pool / Huron River side of Fuller Road. The proposed station would not replace or remove from service any green-field parkland.

If constructed, approximately 3.2 acres (5.4%) of Fuller Park would experience permanent impacts from construction of the parking structure, redesigned driveways, added turn lanes, and storm water infiltration improvements. These areas would be permanently converted from a surface parking lot serving the park and the U-M Medical Center to an intermodal facility. The station building would be within the rail right-of-way immediately south of the park, above the tracks. The proposed multi-level intermodal facility and parking structure would be constructed in the location of the existing parking area; this structure, along with station elements such as taxi stands and bus bays internal to the intermodal facility, would be constructed in the park property. Approximately 1,000 feet of the multi-use path would be permanently realigned to accommodate the intermodal facility and driveways and provide safe crossings for pedestrians and bicyclists to access the station or traverse the park.

In addition, a multi-level intermodal operations and parking structure would accommodate intermodal transit operations, 50 spaces of short-term parking, 870 long-term parking spaces for inter-city passenger rail, 150 spaces for parks users parking and an additional 250 day parking spaces for commuter rail, if commuter rail would be implemented for daily use.

The site would also include storm water management and collection systems. Multi-modal access would be provided north of the tracks and along adjacent streets. Bicycle and pedestrian access would be available via the bridge link from the station to the sidewalk at grade to East Medical Center Drive and to the Washtenaw County B2B Trail on the north side of Fuller Road across the street from the proposed station building.

The intersection of Fuller Road/East Medical Center Drive/Maiden Lane currently experiences traffic congestion in the peak hours. The City of Ann Arbor is in the process of developing a design solution for this intersection that is not part of this project. These improvements include the construction of a multilane roundabout as identified in the City's Capital Improvement Program, and are expected to take place prior to construction of the Ann Arbor Intermodal Station.

Current estimates for Ann Arbor Station completion are approximately \$87M, a figure that would be split 80/20 between the federal government and local jurisdictions. This means that local partners (potentially, Michigan Department of Transportation, AAATA, Greyhound, University of Michigan, and the City of Ann Arbor) would need to contribute approximately \$17M.

We have a long way to go before Ann Arbor Station is a reality, but I am committed to doing what I can to move the project forward, so long as we can do so in a financially prudent manner. Expanded rail service, particularly the prospect of providing commuter service to reduce the number of cars coming into Ann Arbor, is a necessary element of advancing environmental sustainability and improving our quality of life. It's a complicated endeavor, but worth the effort.

Climate Action

To state the obvious, we will not stop climate change here in Ann Arbor. We can, however prepare ourselves for its effects and do our part to reduce our community's use of greenhouse gases. We are already altering the mix of our new street trees in anticipation of a warmer climate, and our storm water system will need to evolve to accommodate even greater precipitation.

With the federal government's shameful renunciation of the Paris Climate Accords, local action has become more important than ever. To this end, I signed a Compact of Mayors pledge, which states in part that:

"We will continue to lead. We are increasing investments in renewable energy and energy efficiency. We will buy and create more demand for electric cars and trucks. We will increase our efforts to cut greenhouse gas emissions, create a clean energy economy, and stand for environmental justice. And if the President wants to break the promises made to our allies enshrined in the historic Paris Agreement, we'll build and strengthen relationships around the world to protect the planet from devastating climate risks."

Ann Arbor adopted a Climate Action Plan in 2012. City operations accounts for less than 2% of Ann Arbor's GHG emissions. Our residential, business, and transportation sectors each account for around 25%, with the balance being generated by the University of Michigan. To achieve our CAP goals, we must reduce emissions in other sectors.

Our Energy Commission, Environmental Commission, Ann Arbor Climate Partnership have proposed a set of programs that would accelerate our progress on Climate & Energy issues. The challenge is that these initiatives would require \$750K - \$1M more, annually, to fully implement. With the passage of the County Mental Health, Sheriff, Rebate Millage (see below), we will have that funding for the next eight years, at least.

This year our sustainability efforts have included action in the following areas:

Rain Ready Ann Arbor. As noted above, climate change's most immediate impact in Ann Arbor has been increased precipitation. To meet this, we have incorporated rain gardens into our right of way designs, adding funding in the drainage fund to protect and expand the "urban forest," and incorporated appropriate drainage and storm water retention criteria into site plans. While there is no specific budget line item for "Rain

Ready Ann Arbor," all of these components are integrated into how we do business in a program that the Environmental Commission, Energy Commission Ecology Center, and Huron River Watershed Council all agree is an "established program with high efficacy." The program's successes resulted in an improved rating from FEMA which will most likely reduce insurance rates for the community.

"EnergySmart" Ann Arbor. The FY18 budget made permanent the \$165,000 that had previously been provided as a non-recurring expenditure pursuant to amendments brought forward by myself, Councilmember Briere, and others over the years to promote weatherization and energy efficient appliances through rental inspections.

A2 Solar. Currently, arrays that are affixed to the home are considered to be fixtures that increase the value of the property, thus increasing property taxes. I have testified in Lansing in support of legislation to exempt residential solar arrays from these taxes. I am hopeful that we can make this progress and reduce an inappropriate barrier to Ann Arbor residents who want to add solar to their home.

A2 Green Grants. The FY18 budget includes \$100,00 to launch a Neighborhood Partnering Program to provide small grants to community groups to pursue locally-driven, sustainability/service projects.

County Millage – County Services, plus in Ann Arbor Substantial New Funding for Climate Action, Pedestrian Safety, and Affordable Housing

This November, the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners put an eight year, 1 mil Public Safety, Mental Health, Rebate millage proposal on the ballot. Voters in Ann Arbor voted YES by overwhelming margins.

This millage will fund the County's Community Mental Health services (38%) and the Washtenaw County Sheriff (38%). The balance of millage funds raised, 24%, will be rebated to the seven Washtenaw County communities that already provide police or law enforcement services. For Ann Arbor that means a distribution of approximately \$2.3M/yr.

In Ann Arbor, we put \$46.5M a year to safety services and law enforcement – more than half of our unallocated General Fund budget. Ann Arbor residents continuously report feeling safe in their neighborhoods and downtown, and crime is factually at historic lows. Additionally, mental health and public health services, although incredibly important, are County functions and not within the purview of City Hall. On the other hand, we have many longstanding community priorities for which we have either zero, or woefully insufficient, recurring funding.

In light of these conditions and the interest of transparency, I co-sponsored, with Councilmembers Ackerman, Smith, and Frenzel, a resolution to commit to the voters in advance how Ann Arbor would spend rebate monies. This Use Resolution passed 8-3.

Specifically, for the duration of the millage we pledged to use rebated monies as follows:

- Twenty percent (20% -- \$450K+) will be applied to improve bicycle and pedestrian safety through the installation of new street lighting in accordance with approved plans, installation of pedestrian-activated signals, filling of sidewalk gaps, construction of protected and/or buffered bicycle facilities (in accordance with approved Transportation and Non-Motorized Master Plans), and funding of trail and other off-road active transportation connections (including the B2B and/or Treeline Trails). As you know from above, Ann Arbor already spends millions per year on pedestrian/bicycle safety infrastructure, but we have a long ways to go before we meet our mobility and safety aspirations; and
- Forty percent (40% -- \$900K+) will be applied to support the construction, renovation, and capital improvements of affordable housing assets (including the Broadway Apartments and Swift Housing Project) and the establishment of a sinking fund to provide for utilities connection fees, environmentally sustainable systems, and other infrastructure costs for future projects to effect the goals of the Affordable Housing Needs Assessment. According to the Affordable Housing Needs Assessment, Ann Arbor needs 2800+ units of new affordable housing before 2035 if we are to avoid permanent economic stratification. City Council adopted this Needs Assessment as a document to guide our planning on a vote of 10-1. The Housing Commission recently estimated that the \$5M from the Library Lot sale would leverage between 200 – 500 units of permanent affordable housing. Over the eight years of the millage, the \$7M+ of rebate monies that we will devote to affordable housing will, I believe, enable us to take great steps forward towards our affordable housing goals; and
- Forty percent (40% -- \$900K+) will be applied to effect the goals of Ann Arbor's Climate Action Plan including but not limited to funding EnergySmart Ann Arbor efforts in the areas of home audits, education and other programs that serve to improve energy efficiency and reduce consumption, Charge Up Ann Arbor! programs which support electric vehicle charging infrastructure, group buys and fleet conversions, and Solar for All programs providing discounted individual solar purchases for owned residential and commercial properties and community solar offerings. Ann Arbor has an ambitious Climate Action Plan, but local climate advocates estimate that to implement that plan would require \$800K - \$1.1M per year.

I am incredibly grateful that Ann Arbor residents decisively supported this millage and am so excited about the progress we will be able to achieve in these three critical areas. Funding will not arrive until December 2018 and so next year will be spent planning how to best deploy this new funding.

Library Lot

The surface of the underground parking structure next to the library, across from the Blake Transit Center and the Federal Building is an underutilized transition zone between Main Street and State Street.

In May, City Council voted to sell the air rights to the Library Lot to CORE Spaces. We are in the process of finalizing the purchase and sale contract. When that document is finalized, CORE Spaces will proceed with the development of a site plan. Assuming that the site plan complies with the D-1 zoning, and assuming further that CORE does not request Planned Project treatment in order to bring forward beneficial design elements, the City Council will be legally obligated to approve the site plan.

I voted in favor of selling the air rights to CORE Spaces. Please see below my prepared remarks that accompanied my vote:

[[The question before Council is whether to sell the air rights to CORE Spaces under a contract that will bring forward a site plan subject to a number of conditions.

- Purchase Price of \$10M
- 43 units of permanent workforce housing
- 311 units market rate housing
- 131 Hotel Rooms
- 17,000 sq ft+ Office Space
- Up to 196 parking permits @ the Library Lot Structure, at 120% of market rate
- Up to 85 parking permits @ the Fourth & William Structure, at 120% of market rate

- Up to 85 off-peak permits (3:30 pm – 9:00 am) @ various locations, at 120% of market rate
- 12,000 sq. ft Public Plaza with design amenities such as a splash pad approved by PAC/City Council
- Equivalent of Gold certification under LEED Version 2009
- Estimated tax payments of \$2.4M+/yr – around \$650K to Ann Arbor, and around \$300K to the General Fund.

I love Ann Arbor the way it is, and like many of us, I do not always welcome change; but part of our job as elected officials is to understand that the world is changing and that Ann Arbor is not immune. We strive then to do the best we can, to retain that which is best in our community today while also working every day to improve our community for the future – to improve basic services and to enhance quality of life for all residents.

When I talk with people in Ann Arbor about the largest challenges facing our City, two consistently come to mind – the lack of affordable housing and concerns about the City's ability to provide services to residents in the future.

With respect to housing, Ann Arbor is at risk of irreversible economic stratification – neighborhoods without workers, teachers, or other middle class residents, not to mention the residents who need supportive services. Our Affordable Housing Needs Assessment teaches us that we need 2800 units of new, affordable housing over the next 18 years to turn the tide. We need to take consistent action if we are to meet this goal.

With respect to our finances, due to Michigan's local-government hostile tax structure, our revenues do not keep up with our expenses. The cost to provide the same services increases at around 2% each year; revenue growth generally increases at around 1% per year. We need to take consistent action to expand our tax base if we are to continue to provide the services that residents rely upon, much less make them better, as residents demand.

The proposal would effect a significant improvement in both arenas.

We have committed to use half of the purchase price (\$5M) to support our Affordable Housing Fund, presently at zero, will be leveraged to support projects for hundreds of residents through Ann Arbor's Housing Commission and elsewhere to house middle/low-income residents. It will not solve the problem, but the anticipated 200 - 500 new units of permanent affordable housing will be an important and crucial step to address a structural and profound challenge in our community.

The project, once finalized, will pay approximately \$2.4M in property taxes annually. The City of Ann Arbor will receive around \$650K per year, of which around \$300K or so will go to the General Fund, \$70K to our roads and sidewalks, \$100K to our solid waste service. By way of scale, the discretionary General Fund Budget presently stands at approximately \$80M – an additional \$300K/year in recurring income would be sufficient to fund approximately 3 - 4 employees to provide service to residents, be it AAPD, park mowings, or rental inspections. \$1M/year will go to our public schools, hundreds of thousands to the AAATA, the County, and Washtenaw Community College. None of this resolves our structural dilemma, but goes a long way to maintaining the services that residents expect.

None of these attributes would be sufficient if the project did not also have other positive attributes.

I believe that the thousands of daily pedestrian trips generated by the building would activate and improve the downtown. Right now, the downtown (South U excepted) is essentially the Main Street Area and the State Street Area, with the narrow connection up and down Liberty Street. The connecting areas have less pedestrian traffic, less commercial activity, and by extension are less attractive for residents, businesses, and visitors.

As a former Ann Arbor City Planner wrote to us in support of the project's pedestrian and quality of life benefits "All the elements are there: a location nearly midway between downtown and campus; available parking; available transit – including a connection to Detroit Metro Airport; restaurants; tech companies, retail and banking; residences; and the library. Placing a building, designed differently from every other building in town, will create a landmark. Filling it with a hotel, offices, residences and retail will generate lots of activity." If we could activate the area dead-zone between Washington/William, between Division/Fourth, then these areas would improve considerably for residents, visitors, and workers.

The Library has not taken a position on the proposal, but in a recent communication to us, their Executive Director wrote: "The AADL Board and Administration have said for years that a vibrant and relevant Downtown Library would be benefited by a vibrant and active condition in the near neighborhood. That is not the condition at this time. A development that brings people to the area seven days a week for as many hours of the day as possible would be welcomed by the Library."

The proposal will have open space for public usage along Fifth Avenue – there are no final designs yet, but child-friendly, splash-pad-style amenities are consistent with current proposals. Some, as you know, believe that park alone at this location would be attractive. I don't share this view. Our current urban park, Liberty Plaza, does not meet our community aspirations. The Parks Advisory Commission took a long and careful look at urban parks and concluded that the Library Lot lacks most of the attributes necessary to make an urban park successful – generally speaking, eyes on the park with present and independent, active uses facing the park on at least three sides. The Library Lot has none.

If we do not activate the site with a building, any park we create there will I believe replicate the failures of Liberty Plaza on a much larger scale. We already do not have the resources necessary to successfully program Liberty Plaza; the plain truth is that we would have to make substantial cuts to existing parks programs / activities if we were to bring anywhere near the hundreds of thousands of dollars that would be necessary to program a stand alone, isolated park on the Library Lot.

Further, the geometry of the site, with the underground parking structure taking the place a tree's roots would need to grow and thrive, prohibits shade trees or substantial contiguous green space. The image of a grand park or commons at that location is lovely and it would be have been great if our streets were first laid out with that in mind. They were not. The alley to the north, the Blake Transit Center and the Federal Building to the West, the Library facing Fifth Avenue to the South and the large lot, small footprint buildings to the East make such a proposal, regrettably, not reality-based. Finally, the Library staff and board members have consistently and strenuously expressed caution about the use of the library lot as a park, citing concerns about usage and security.

There has also been some concern expressed about the commitment of parking permits over time. If the building moves forward in 2020 or so, there will be a material number of parking permits allocated to CORE Spaces. It has been observed that there is a replacement cost of around \$12M for these spaces. This does not tell the whole story because CORE will be paying a 20% premium for those spaces. If CORE takes the maximum allotted permits, for the maximum time, they will pay \$75M – to maintain the apples to apples comparison, that equates to a net present value of \$26M – far in excess of the \$12M replacement figure. It pays for itself, and then some.

Although one cannot deny that the reallocation of permits from the general market to CORE will create some disruption, there will I believe continue to be tight, but sufficient parking downtown for visitors, residents, and workers.

Finally, let me address character. The proposal does not today include a site plan. There are general renderings available, but I hope and expect that a final project will differ considerably from today's images. The petitioner, CORE Spaces, has received strong praise in our community for their public engagement success on their Huron Street project (presently under construction next to The Graduate, the old Campus Inn). I fully expect that they will conduct a thorough open process to explore creative options that will meet some of the Liberty Street-side concerns of residents and businesses.

I love Ann Arbor the way it is. We are not Chicago or Detroit, and I don't want to be. We are a small city with a world class university and a burgeoning local economy. But I also know that we cannot stop change. Much of our downtown is protected by Historic District designations. These designations ensure that many of our streetscapes will remain as is, in perpetuity. This is a tremendous good, but it also means that these portions of the downtown cannot adjust to meet current and future needs. We have been able as a community to meet these needs to date by increasing density, where we can, to fight sprawl and to activate and improve the downtown for everyone. The addition of a building at this location will create change, but I believe that change will be positive.]]

Deer Cull

Last year, as most of you know, Ann Arbor conducted its second deer cull.

City contractors killed almost 100 deer January 2017. No shooting occurred within 450 feet of occupied structures without resident approval.

Going forward, the City Council approved a deer management plan that includes culling up to 300 deer and sterilizing between 40 and 60 does. We also approved the continuance of studies of deer impact on Ann Arbor's parks and natural areas. With full implementation, the plan will cost a little more than \$350K.

The 450 foot, no-shoot zone has previously been required by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. This year, however, MDNR has determined that that boundary does not increase the safety of culls and so did away with that requirement. The City, going forward, will not observe the 450 foot limit. If, however, a resident affirmatively communicates to the City that they object to shooting on a parcel that borders their own, the City will not shoot on the adjacent parcel.

Reasonable people can differ on the cull, but in my view the cure – shooting and killing within the city, with our parks and adjacent to homes – is worse than the disease. I voted "No"; it passed on a vote of 10-1.

National Climate & Ann Arbor

Finally, I'd like to talk a bit about where we are today as a country, and how that affects us here in Ann Arbor.

People will often observe that we live in difficult times; in complicated times. This is true, but it is not complete. We, I believe, live in shameful times. We live in times when the president and his advisors and supporters spew and defend racist vulgarities. We live in times when the president and his supporters wage active and ongoing attacks on science, when the president and his party can support a credibly accused pederast for Senate, when truth and language itself are under constant attack. These men in the White House and those who collaborate with them, pollute our national honor and do active and enduring harm to us as a people and a nation. Only when America and Americans recognize this stain, when we know to look with shame upon these men today and this legacy of racism and division with shame, only then will we as a country be on the long road to redemption.

To respond to national currents, Ann Arborites have raised our voices and marched. We have joined protesters throughout the country in the coordinated Women's March and Science March. We have marched to affirm and declare our unwavering support for immigrants and families within our community -- our beloved friends, neighbors, and colleagues -- who are at risk of seizure and senseless deportation. I am often proud of the work and values of our community, but during these peaceful and powerful protests I have seen Ann Arbor at its best.

In City Hall, these national issues do not often arise, but the Council has declared Ann Arbor a "Welcoming City" and has passed several resolutions and an ordinance inspired by the ACLU Freedom City Action Guide. These policies and rules ensure that we do not inquire into or retain immigration information, that local resources are used to enforce local and state laws only, that ICE detainer requests are denied, and that AAPD and City staff's relationships with immigrant communities remain strong.

We're far from perfect in Ann Arbor, but we are a community that values pluralism, that welcomes and embraces people of all kinds, no matter race or ethnicity, nation of origin, religion or its absence, sexual orientation, gender identity, or ability. We know that these differences can and ought to strengthen us in good times and in bad. In short, we in Ann Arbor have faith in a common future and love for our neighbor and we will not give up on either.

Closing

Thanks for reading and letting me know what you think about these topics and any I missed. I hope you have a great 2018!

Best,

Christopher

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