



## WASHTENAW COUNTY

220 NORTH MAIN ST. • P.O. BOX 8645 • ANN ARBOR, MI • 48107-8645

### MEDIA RELEASE

March 18, 2021

#### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Diane Heidt | [heidtd@washtenaw.org](mailto:heidtd@washtenaw.org) | 734-222-6741

### Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners Declares a Local State of Emergency

**Ann Arbor, MI** - The Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners unanimously passed a resolution declaring a local state of emergency within Washtenaw County as of March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2021 to continue through December 31, 2021 due to the sustained presence of COVID-19.

"While we are excited by the progress being made regarding increased vaccine supply, the pandemic is by no means over," said Sue Shink, Chair of the Board of Commissioner and Commissioner for District 2. "We want to make sure we are continuing to provide a framework to allow our residents working, volunteering and participating in local government to do so safely."

At the end of March, the amendment to Michigan's Act 276 of 1976, the Open Meetings Act, allowing public bodies to meet entirely remotely will expire, but permits that if a local state of emergency is declared then public bodies can continue to meet remotely through December 31, 2021. The Board of Commissioners recognizes the persistent presence of COVID-19 in Washtenaw County and its continued threat to the community. By declaring the local state of emergency, public bodies like appointed boards and commissions and other local elected bodies may still meet remotely to avoid unnecessary exposure to the members of the body and the public.

"The safety of the Washtenaw County as a whole is paramount, and the state of emergency ensures the continued security of our residents and community partners," said County Administrator Gregory Dill, "I would also like to thank our local labor partners for working well into the evening with us so we could get the resolution passed as quickly as possible."

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You can stay up to date on the latest [county news](#) and the work of the Board of Commissioners by visiting [Washtenaw.org/BOC](http://Washtenaw.org/BOC), or by following them on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), and [Instagram](#).



## Pittsfield Charter Township

6201 West Michigan Avenue, Ann Arbor, MI 48108

Phone: (734) 822-3135 • Fax: (734) 944-6103

Website: [www.pittsfield-mi.gov](http://www.pittsfield-mi.gov)

### Office of the Supervisor

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#### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 15, 2021

Contact: Mandy Grewal, Supervisor  
[grewalm@pittsfield-mi.gov](mailto:grewalm@pittsfield-mi.gov), 734.822.3135

#### Public Safety Millage: Election Scheduled for May 4<sup>th</sup>

Pittsfield Township, MI (March 15, 2021): Pittsfield Township, with the third highest population, has one of the lowest tax rates (6.5 mills) in Washtenaw County while being one of only two full-service municipalities providing water, sewer, rubbish, parks and recreation, public safety (police and fire), assessing, and building services.

Township taxes have remained unchanged since November 2009 with the exception of the increase in Public Safety Millage approved by voters in 2011. Now, 10 years later, the Township is requesting approval of an increase to the Public Safety Millage from 1.95 to 3.95 which translates to an additional \$60 for the median household in Pittsfield Township.

The 3.95 Public Safety millage will ensure that for the next decade, Pittsfield Township can:

- Maintain the current level for all other Township taxes into the next decade just as they've maintained the total Township millage rate at 6.5 mils for the last decade.
- Continue providing the Gold Standard in Public Safety services, which includes a response time of 5 minutes or less and a nearly 90% rate for solving major crimes
- Maintain its position as one of two full service communities in Washtenaw County with one of the lowest tax rates

Failure to approve the 3.95 Public Safety Millage will require Pittsfield Township to reduce its services ranging from police and fire to community development and sustainability.

For more details and information, please visit: <http://www.pittsfield-mi.gov/publicsafety>

If you have any questions, please contact [supervisor@pittsfield-mi.gov](mailto:supervisor@pittsfield-mi.gov); 734.822.3135

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## **Tens of millions of dollars in stimulus money expected to pour into Washtenaw County**

By Ryan Stanton - March 15, 2021

ANN ARBOR, MI — Tens of millions of dollars in federal stimulus money are expected to pour into local government coffers in Washtenaw County under the American Rescue Plan.

The \$1.9 trillion aid package signed by President Joe Biden last week includes \$350 billion for state and local governments, and \$10.3 billion of that could be coming to Michigan, according to preliminary estimates shared by officials.

That could translate into nearly \$2 billion in direct federal aid to Michigan's 83 county governments, including nearly \$72 million for Washtenaw County, said County Treasurer Catherine McClary, citing preliminary estimates shared by the Michigan Association of Counties.

McClary also cited a list shared by the Michigan Townships Association with the following aid estimates for Washtenaw County's cities and townships:

- Ann Arbor — \$11.85 million
- Chelsea — \$530,000
- Dexter — \$470,000
- Milan — \$600,000
- Saline — \$920,000
- Ypsilanti — \$2 million
- Ann Arbor Township — \$450,000
- Augusta Township — \$720,000
- Bridgewater Township — \$170,000
- Dexter Township — \$650,000
- Freedom Township — \$150,000
- Lima Township — \$390,000
- Lodi Township — \$650,000
- Lyndon Township — \$270,000
- Manchester Township — \$470,000
- Northfield Township — \$860,000
- Pittsfield Township — \$3.84 million
- Salem Township — \$620,000
- Saline Township — \$220,000
- Scio Township — \$1.77 million
- Sharon Township — \$180,000
- Superior Township — \$1.41 million
- Sylvan Township — \$300,000

- Webster Township — \$670,000
- York Township — \$910,000
- Ypsilanti Township — \$5.45 million

U.S. Rep. Debbie Dingell's office shared preliminary estimates that match up with that list, though the county's allocation was estimated at about \$71.3 million, slightly lower than the amount cited by the counties association.

Officials note all estimates are preliminary and they're waiting for final calculations from the U.S. Department of Treasury.

The preliminary calculations came from the House Committee on Oversight and Reform, Dingell's office said.

Ann Arbor officials have expressed concerns Royal Oak, a city of about 60,000 residents in Oakland County, could receive \$29.7 million, while Ann Arbor, with twice the population, may get less than half that, and Lansing, slightly smaller than Ann Arbor, could get over \$50 million, according to early estimates.

"Something seems way off," said Ann Arbor Mayor Christopher Taylor, calling the city's amount proportionately inadequate.

Local officials said they're not sure how the numbers are being calculated and they're looking to Dingell, D-Dearborn, for help looking into the matter. Dingell said she's working closely with the Department of Treasury to ensure Ann Arbor and other 12th District communities receive equitable funding.

"Our local governments have led us through one of the most trying years in American history and they deserve federal funding," Dingell said in a statement. "If any of the communities in our district aren't receiving equitable funding, we will fight to make sure they get the dollars they deserve."

One theory for why the preliminary calculation for Ann Arbor is disproportionately low is the city does not directly receive federal Community Development Block Grant dollars and instead participates in the Washtenaw Urban County, Taylor said, though he's not sure if that explains it.

Those questions aside, Taylor said he's grateful the federal government has decided to step up and assist local communities challenged by the COVID-19 pandemic.

He doesn't see it as a windfall, but rather desperately needed aid for communities that are hurting, he said.

Ann Arbor officials last month predicted a budget shortfall of over \$10 million for the next two fiscal years, and city officials have been wrestling with how to make cuts while also maintaining the city's commitment to its 2030 carbon-neutrality goal, putting more money toward pandemic-related community needs, and investing in potential new programs such as unarmed responses for mental health emergencies.

"We are obviously under substantial budget pressure and we will be next year," Taylor said. "We've had substantial revenue shortfalls as a result of COVID. We've had some increased expenses, too, as a result of COVID, so we're going to be making sure we're using whatever stimulus money we get to reduce the likelihood of layoffs and to serve as a cushion until revenues resume their structurally expected level."

Local governments are expected to be able to use the stimulus funds to cover costs through 2024 for responding to the pandemic and addressing its negative economic impacts, providing premium pay for workers performing essential functions, providing government services affected by revenue reductions during the pandemic, and investments in water, sewer and broadband infrastructure, according to information McClary and Dingell shared with local officials.

Local governments are expected to receive the first half of their allocations within 60 days and the other half a year later, and they must provide periodic reports to the Treasury Department accounting for use of the funds. If money is used incorrectly, funds can be recouped by the treasury.

The county is continuing to collect information about spending guidelines, County Administrator Greg Dill said.

Dill said his office will provide a recommendation to the county board in the coming weeks that includes continued support for COVID-19 response, economic recovery support, general fund budget support and infrastructure needs.

Scio Township Supervisor Will Hathaway said he hasn't had a chance to talk to his colleagues about how to use the potentially \$1.77 million that may be coming to his township.

Each community has been hit by the pandemic in different ways, he said, adding he wants to take a careful look at where the stimulus money is needed most.

"The needs vary so much from community to community," he said. "I know that there are a lot of businesses — restaurants and other businesses — that have been suffering in Scio Township, and the money that's coming directly to individuals as part of this legislation is going to help a lot of people. But part of the problem with the impact of the pandemic is it fell so unevenly on different people and different businesses, so I think that's part of the challenge is finding the people who really need help the most and making sure they get it."

Pittsfield Township Supervisor Mandy Grewal said she views the potentially \$3.84 million that may be coming to Pittsfield as a one-time influx of revenue to use for one-time projects that enhance quality of life, including anything from non-motorized transportation projects to other sustainability initiatives.

“We’re going to be very thoughtful in how we use these dollars,” she said.





# LEGACY Land Conservancy

*Protecting and Preserving  
Southern Michigan*

March 13, 2021

Dear Preserve Neighbor,

This spring Legacy plans to conduct a prescribed burn at our Lloyd and Mable Johnson Preserve on Platt Road. We plan to burn much of the property's recently restored tallgrass prairie. Legacy has contracted with PlantWise, LLC for implementation of this work. PlantWise is a Michigan company that has conducted safe prescribed burns on well over 500 properties in their 23 years.

Prescribed burns are used as a management tool to reduce the number of invasive species and give native plants a competitive advantage. Timing of these burns is important in determining the success of inhibiting non-native growth, while stimulating native plants. Prairie habitats are especially adapted to and dependent on fire. Shown to the right is a photo from a prescribed burn at Washtenaw County's River Raisin Preserve. This photo shows a typical prairie burn in terms of flame height.



Prescribed burns require specific weather conditions so we cannot give the exact date of the burn in advance. On the day of the burn there will be signs located on nearby roads, and the township and the local fire departments will be notified. If you would like to be notified the day of the burn, please contact me. You are also welcome to come and watch! Let me know in advance if you would like to attend and I will follow up with a meeting time and place when that information is available.

Legacy is excited about restoring the ecologies of our preserves and happy to answer any questions or concerns you may have. I can be reached directly at 734-780-6402 and [allene@legacylandconservancy.org](mailto:allene@legacylandconservancy.org).

Sincerely,

*Allene Smith*

Allene Smith  
Land Stewardship Manager  
Legacy Land Conservancy

RECEIVED  
MAR 16 2020

BY: .....