



Mayor's Office

Bill Bazzi
Mayor

October 8, 2025

An open heartfelt resignation letter from Dearborn Heights Mayor Bill Bazzi:

Last night, I was confirmed by the U.S. Senate to serve as the U.S. Ambassador to Tunisia. I am honored and appreciate President Donald J. Trump's nomination and trust in me to serve our country in this capacity. It is with a heavy heart that I now resign from the position of Mayor of the great City of Dearborn Heights. Although my tenure as Mayor began with a global pandemic and unprecedented floods which we had never experienced in our lifetime, I feel blessed to have been chosen during these challenging times to serve the resilient people of Dearborn Heights, Michigan.

I extend my heartfelt appreciation to every resident who welcomed me and challenged me as I knocked on doors, and those who came through my door at City Hall; to the diligent team of directors and staff members whom I had the pleasure of working with; to the countless new businesses that chose to invest in Dearborn Heights; to the educators who invited me to visit their schools and share experiences with some remarkable kids; and to the students whom my wife Nadia and I have worked with on various local and global volunteer service initiatives throughout the years. One of our greatest joys has been watching students grow, graduate, and move on to represent our City as successful passionate young ambassadors for good.

In listening to the concerns of our residents and businesses owners over the years, my tenure as Mayor has been rooted in establishing a safe and harassment-free environment where policies and procedures are followed, cronyism "wasta" and the pay-to-play system is eliminated, a fair contract bidding process is instilled, and accountability of *all* departments at *all* levels is expected. This foundation is the cornerstone for employees, residents, and businesses to flourish. I hope our residents and business establishments will hold those who proceed me to the same standards.

Again, the love, concern, and dedication I have for my community will remain, regardless of my title or where I am physically located around the world. My purpose is to continue serving in capacities which make an impact, promote peace, economic prosperity, and diplomatic partnerships, which benefit our Country and enhance global relations.

As I reflect on my time as Mayor, I am grateful and proud of the accomplishments of this administration – along with the challenges we persisted through. Despite the obstacles, my administration garnered approximately \$60 million in grants, with approximately \$75 million in infrastructure projects.

My administration took office in the face of some monumental challenges, including:



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- An unprecedented COVID pandemic which nearly paralyzed the nation, our economy, and workforce – along with nearly all our local municipal operations.
- The catastrophic flooding in 2021 with 2 major storms (a 500-year storm, followed shortly afterward with a 100-year storm). These unprecedented storms and resulting floods devastated our flood-prone areas, destroying countless homes – particularly along and near the Ecorse Creek.
- We also faced the challenge of dealing with a grossly antiquated information technology system, with severely underpowered equipment, outdated computers, and outdated software and systems that did not support the needs of a 21st Century Municipality.
- We further investigated the extent of the deterioration of many of our infrastructure assets – crumbling bridges, 80+ year old water mains that had become fragile with age and neglect and were breaking at a rate of 2-3 times faster than adjacent communities were experiencing, along with deteriorating streets and city buildings.

Through the efforts of several new management-level employees, along with some dedicated longstanding staff members who wanted better for our City, we have seen the pendulum shift with countless successes:

FLOODING & FLOOD MITIGATION

- As we have been *effectively* working with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, we are finalizing the design phase (currently at 90%) for a large detention basin which will be located on the city property near Powers Street and Inkster Road. Once the basin is constructed, “overflow” stormwater will be diverted to this 1,000,000 + gallon basin (which will be known as the “Powers Basin”) during heavy rainfalls, where it will be stored and released back into the creek in a controlled fashion, to alleviate downstream flooding.
- The construction of additional, smaller basins as well as rain gardens and Bioswales is underway and currently in the planning phase near the Ecorse Creek. Similar to the larger Powers Basin, these additional efforts are also designed to hold storm water for controlled release back into Ecorse Creek.
- With the support of FEMA flood mitigation grant funding, we were able to purchase approximately 25 flood-prone homes from the homeowners, along and near Ecorse Creek, and demolish these structures. This gave beleaguered homeowners the option to affordably relocate out of the flood zone. The vacant properties now have deed restrictions prohibiting future construction on them and serve as undeveloped rain gardens that will help absorb some overflow water from the creek. We continue to pursue funding opportunities that will allow us to purchase and demolish additional homes in the future.



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- Reconstruction is currently in the design phase on 2 bridges over Ecorse Creek (on Hipp and Polk Streets), which have been shown to restrict the flow of water and cause back-ups during wet weather events. Once completed, these areas will see significantly higher water flow.

ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION

- We are also working on our mandated Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) separation initiative. Three of the city's 6 CSOs have been completely separated – which now prohibit the overflow of discharge from the sanitary sewer system into our rivers. Work will continue on the remaining 3 CSOs.
- Also, for the first time in our city's history, we have implemented a city-wide initiative for the full replacement of all lead drinking water service lines. We have successfully secured grant funding to help cover a major portion of the replacement cost.
- We are further preparing comprehensive and *effective* city-wide Storm Water and Flood Mitigation, Master Environmental and Infrastructure Resiliency plans, also paid for with a 80% grant from the State.

DRINKING WATER SERVICE

- We have successfully replaced miles of aging water mains – many of which are 80+ years old, which have been the source of many (very expensive) broken water main repairs. Many of the replacements were completed using the innovative “pipe bursting” method, which inserts a composite pipe within the full length of the old main. This proven process eliminates the need to excavate and remove the old line, thereby greatly reducing construction costs and duration.
- Our city-wide water meter replacement initiative is currently underway— approximately 60% of the meters have already been replaced. These new meters will provide a much more accurate assessment of the amount of water used and help identify water leaks with accurate billing.

STREET IMPROVEMENTS/SCHOOL CROSSINGS

- We completed full pavement replacements on 12 local streets, with 3 more full replacements underway.
- A full city-wide placement of safety markings at all school street crossings has been completed.



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- Our city-wide “school safety zones” project is currently underway, which will create “safety zones” markings near all schools (in addition to the intersection-specific markings mentioned above).
- Construction is scheduled for November of 2025 for a new school crossing/signal device on Beech Daly Road near Crestwood High School. This is funded through an 80% state grant.
- We successfully implemented the conversion of our street lighting from conventional mercury-vapor bulbs to LED bulbs – providing for more intense light while saving thousands of dollars in energy costs annually.

RECREATION

Warren Valley Golf Course

We put this project out for bid and brought a new investor to completely renovate, lease, and run the previously deteriorating Warren Valley Banquet and Golf Course, which has been transformed into a world class gem in our City. To date, the investor has personally funded approximately \$7 million into this project.

Van Houton Park

We completely renovated Van Houton Park with a new playscape which is ADA compliant, along with new equipment for autistic children.

Daly Park

We built a new outdoor fitness court at Daly Park with a grant through Priority Health and the National Fitness Campaign and city parks funds.

Weddel Park

We repaired and made new playscape additions at Weddel Park for a safer and more fulfilling play experience.



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PUBLIC SAFETY

Police Department

Early on during my tenure as Mayor, I onboarded a law enforcement transition team with a combined 75 years of local and federal law enforcement expertise to establish policies and ensure protocol and the law is followed. This team of top brass professionals worked tirelessly to institute fairness in promotion practices and the treatment of officers, provide a threat free work environment, put more officers on the road, provide training, and hold those who violate their oath and the law accountable, regardless of the circle they belong to.

These measures were established to work in the best interest of our PD and residents:

- Advocated to successfully keep our 911 Emergency Dispatch Center in *our* city
- Initiated and secured the use of body cams for *all* Police Officers
- Eliminated the culture of ticket-fixing which has cost the taxpayers millions
- Instituted a new state-of-the-art interactive video-based training simulator, which is designed to enhance the quality of officer response techniques
- Dismantled what has been known for years as the “Golden Circle,” to allow all members of the PD to be held accountable for misconduct and have an equal opportunity for promotions
- Supported and ultimately passed a sweeping reform to the Police Officer’s contract making up for years of substandard wages
- Brought in and fully supported an external review by the U.S. Department of Justice (COPS Office) for over a year, to assess and develop a customized action plan for a law-abiding world-class police department. The areas of focus included:
 - Community-engagement and problem-solving strategies
 - Accountability and oversight systems
 - Recruitment, hiring, retention, and promotion practices
 - Employee safety and wellness
 - Organizational learning and data-informed practices
 - Internal and external communication



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After this invited partnership with the Department of Justice (COPS Office) in collaboration with our DHPD transition team, we are on track to continue our department's adherence to best practices, policies and the law—which prioritize the safety and wellbeing of our officers and the residents we have sworn to protect.

This advancement is evident by our CompStat analysis and data, along with nearly two dozen police officers there were hired. Many of these outstanding members of our PD have been making their mark of excellence both within our department and among the community. These individuals, along with some of our dedicated longstanding PD team members who have been working with us every step of the way, deserve a culture where all (including PD leaders) are held to the same standard of fairness, transparency, accountability and adherence to law.

Many of these extraordinary officers have proudly taken the lead and developed several new programs for a more effective wave of community policing:

- Established the first Dearborn Heights Explorer Program for students interested in law enforcement careers to provide hands-on experience, training, and mentorship
- Partnered with the Team Wellness Center, a Southeast Michigan human service organization that assists us with housing and other services to help mentally ill prisoners (this also keeps more officers on the streets for calls and service)
- Created a successful “Behind the Badge Academy”—first summer youth program designed to provide a close-up look at the law enforcement profession and operations
- Coordinated countless school initiatives and special event engagements

Fire Department

- For the first time in several years, the Dearborn Heights Fire Department is operating at a “fully staffed” level of firefighters.
- After considerable assessment and study, we determined that the Dearborn Heights Fire Department headquarters building, which was built to substandard conditions in 1999 needed to be demolished. We were successful in securing commitments for \$10.5 million in grants and earmarks toward the design and construction of the new facility. However, proposed building sites which were recommended by my office, the DHFD leadership and the City Engineer were repeatedly rejected by our City Council. Therefore, the project has been put on hold – putting the city's ability to collect the (time-sensitive) grant funding in jeopardy.



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TECHNOLOGY

- Our new Technology Director has made remarkable strides in modernizing our antiquated Information Technology operations/processes, while vastly improving our website, computer software features, and the security of our system against hackers.

PERSONNEL

To improve efficiency and best practices, save money, and secure more funding for our city, my administration created new positions comprised of seasoned, subject matter experts as full-time employees dedicated to our City. (Some of these positions were either non-existent or previously contract positions at excessive costs.)

- **Information & Technology Director**
- **City Engineer**
- **City Attorney**
- **Police FOIA coordinator**
- **Police Crime Analyst**
- **GIS Coordinator**
- **Accountant**
- **HR Specialist**
- **Cable Manager**
- **Grant Funding Scout***

* For the first time in the city's history, we procured the services of a (contract) professional Grant Scout to help us locate /identify and match opportunities for available Federal, state as well as private funding grants, and to assist us with the application process. The amount secured totals \$40 million to date and benefits several city departments.

INFLUX OF NEW BUSINESSES INVESTMENTS

This administration's elimination of bureaucratic "red tape" and needless delays saw an unprecedented wave of new innovative businesses which opened throughout our City and welcomed an array of patrons throughout the region.

At this time, I look back at the accomplishments we have achieved together as a community with pride. It has been heartwarming to be in the company of those who truly had the best intentions at heart for our community, with no desire for personal benefit or gain. I wish each of you, our residents, our business owners, those who visited our community, our volunteers, and our staff the very best. I appreciate each of you for making my tenure as Mayor a challenging, successful, fulfilling, and impactful one. As there



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are many great projects currently in progress for the remarkable and resilient people of Dearborn Heights, I hope those who proceed me will continue the momentum and move the pendulum in the right direction.

Yours in service,

Bill Bazzi

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City of Dearborn Heights