



Biographies and photos submitted by candidates.

Election Issue 2021

City Council Mayor Vicki Barnett

Mayor Pro Tem Jackie Boleware

Council Members Michael Bridges Valerie Knol Ken Massey Mary Newlin Matt Strickfaden

City Manager Gary Mekjian

Resident Concerns Contact Us By Email

Contact us by email at www.fhgov.com. The inquiry form requires you to fill in your contact information for a follow up. Inquiries are automatically routed to the responsible department and follow up typically occurs within 24 hours, Monday through Friday. Direct more specific or complex inquiries to the appropriate department or call 248-871-2400.

Drop Boxes

For your convenience, there are two drop boxes available for dropping off election materials, including absent voter applications and/or absent voter ballots, as well as tax payments. A tan drive-up drop box is located next to the federal post office boxes in front of Police Headquarters at 31655 Eleven Mile Road, right next door to City Hall. There is also a drop box/slot on the wall at the south entrance to City Hall. This is not a drive-up drop box, so please park and walk your materials to this drop box.



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Jon Aldred Candidate for Election to City Council



Long-time Farmington Hills resident Jon Aldred is running for City Council to be a strong voice representing the community. The last two years have had a profound effect on us all. COVID-19 lockdowns and restrictions have led to 35% of Michigan small businesses remaining closed, including many here in Farmington Hills. Mental health issues, domestic abuse, and drug overdoses have dramatically increased in the homes and families of our community.

This is why Jon is running. New challenges require new solutions to build for the future.

Now more than ever, we need strong City services – fully supporting our incredible law enforcement and public safety personnel that keep our homes, schools, and businesses safe. Jon is committed to be your advocate in Farmington Hills by defending personal freedoms, ensuring your tax dollars are spent wisely, and fighting to get our unacceptable power-outage issues resolved.

As a seasoned leader working with global engineering companies, Jon has invested his career into addressing complex problems and coaching teams to their fullest potential in order to create world-class solutions. As a Council member, Jon will apply the same data-driven, people-centric approach to keep Farmington Hills a safe and enjoyable place to live, work, and raise a family. Jon and Heather – his wife of 30 years – have raised their two children in Farmington Hills after immigrating from England in 1993. Jon feels blessed to be an American, to live in this great country, and to have this opportunity to serve Farmington Hills.

www.jonaldred.com | jon@jonaldred.com

Michael Bridges Candidate for Election to City Council



Michael Bridges is a 23-year resident of Farmington Hills. He was first elected to City Council in 2008 and was reelected in 2009, 2013, and 2017. Michael served as Mayor Pro Tem in 2010 and 2018. He is the Council Liaison to the Farmington Area Commission on Aging and is a member of the Farmington Optimist Club.

Michael is running for reelection to ensure that Farmington Hills remains a premier city for all its residents and an attractive city for businesses. He is employed at NovaCare Rehabilitation as a Business Development Manager.

His key accomplishments include:

- 1. Led the charge to change the way that the City funds local road improvements.
2. Maintained the City's AAA bond rating.
3. Maintained the City's safe city designation.
4. Proposed and outfitted all police officers with body cameras.
5. Proposed the hiring of a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Director.

Michael has a bachelor's degree from Spring Arbor University. He is married to Deborah, and they have two sons. Michael is an Orthopedic Surgery Resident Physician at Beaumont Health and Chauncey is a second-year medical student at Howard University.

Randy Bruce Candidate for Election to City Council



Randy Bruce is a 35-year resident of the City, and previously served on City Council from 2003 until 2019, including three terms as Mayor Pro Tem. Prior to serving on City Council, he was a member of the Farmington Hills Zoning Board of Appeals for eight years, including two years as chair. He has been president of the Forestbrook Hills/Pebblebrook Estates, and Saratoga Farms Homeowners Associations, and is currently a board member of the Colony Park West Homeowners Association. Randy graduated from Wayne State University in Detroit with BS, MA, and PhD degrees, and is a licensed psychologist and neuropsychologist, as well as a business owner for over 30 years. He was also an eight-year member and former chair of the Human Development Steering Committee of the National League of Cities.

During Randy's time on Council, the City was consistently named one of the safest and most financially stable cities in the State. Randy's many accomplishments while on Council include the building of the water tower, which saves over three million dollars per year; passing of a rental inspection ordinance that protects neighborhoods; founding the Intergovernmental Task Force that saved the City hundreds of thousands of dollars; eliminating the Special Assessment District for local road paving; and other financial and quality of life improvements. Randy wants to work on redevelopment issues, so that Farmington Hills remains a competitive city, which continues to attract residents and businesses. Randy and his wife Jill are proud to live and work in Farmington Hills.

Valerie Knol Candidate for Election to City Council



Valerie Knol is running for re-election to the Farmington Hills City Council. Valerie was elected to Council in 2013 and served as Mayor Pro Tem in 2016 and 2020. She serves as the Council Liaison to the Beautification Commission and the Historical District Commission. Prior to her election in Farmington Hills, Valerie served on the City Council of the City of Farmington for eight years and served as Mayor from 2007 – 2009.

A longtime volunteer in our community, Valerie served on the board of the Farmington Players Theatre, the American Association of University Women, the Farmington YMCA, the Greater Farmington Area Chamber of Commerce, and served on the Oakland County Zoological Authority.

Valerie is a Manager of State and Local Government Relations at Stellantis and previously worked as a senior staff member for the Michigan House of Representatives. Valerie received a B.S. from Western Michigan University and a Master's Degree from Eastern Michigan University.

Valerie believes quality public safety, well-maintained neighborhoods, good roads, and efficient and effective services are at the heart of a desirable community. During Valerie's service on Farmington Hills City Council, she has a track record of supporting these priorities along with responsible fiscal management.

Valerie has a strong background in planning, which is beneficial as the City encourages compatible redevelopment of commercial properties that helps maintain the character of our City. Valerie's diversity of experience, practical leadership, record of collaboration, and long service to our community make her exceptionally qualified for re-election to City Council.

Jacob Kovacs Candidate for Election to City Council



Jacob Kovacs is a successful young business owner running for Farmington Hills City Council. A Farmington Hills resident for more than 11 years, Jacob graduated from Harrison High School and Oakland Community College before obtaining a degree in Business Administration from the Mike Ilitch School of Business. A former White House intern, Jacob worked in their Management Office, helping to maintain and renovate government property.

As owner of Platinum Tile and Marble, a tile installation company in Farmington Hills specializing in residential and commercial creations, Jacob's customized work is found throughout Metropolitan Detroit, and he oversees multiple projects simultaneously. Previously, he was a project manager with Hella Electronics, an automotive supplier, maintaining sensor product relations with Ford and Lincoln locally and globally, generating millions for local businesses.

Through years of volunteering with faith-based organizations, including local outreach groups and social services, such as Good News Gang, FRPC Outreach, and Vista Maria, Jacob's activities range from dispersing provisions to the disadvantaged to supporting through dialogue, education, and group prayer.

Jacob is committed to improving the lives of those in his community by listening to their concerns then acting on them. He wants to be known as a public servant whose transparency and integrity are unparalleled. His fresh perspective includes facilitating tax cuts for individuals while protecting the interest of small business owners, all while building innovative partnerships that strengthen and expand local opportunities.

He invites you to contact him directly at 810-623-2137 or at kovacsjacob@gmail.com. For more information, please visit www.jacobkovacs.com.

Matt Strickfaden Candidate for Election to City Council



Farmington Hills City Council, citing among other reasons, Matt's enthusiasm, energy, and creative ideas, unanimously selected him as a Council member in January 2021. Matt built an award winning and successful custom home building company and coached at Farmington Gymnastics Center for almost 30 years. He was appointed as Council Liaison to the Parks and Recreation Commission by Mayor Vicki Barnett.

Matt authored the 20-year vision for the City of Farmington Hills (FH20XL - VISION) and presented it on June 14, 2021, where it was unanimously and enthusiastically supported by City Council, and this will serve as his cornerstone goal over the next four years as a Council member. Matt believes that the redevelopment of the 12 Mile Road corridor can serve as a "City Center" for Farmington Hills, and by allowing the conversion of the office buildings into owner occupied, mixed use residential and retail space, could attract more than 5,000 new families to our city. These micro-communities could include interconnected, tree-lined bike and walking trails, permanent art exhibits, projection mapping of art, videos and movies, community centers, EV charging stations, solar panels, community gardens, and so much more.

Matt believes these new communities could generate more than 20 million dollars yearly in additional general fund revenue and more than 100 million dollars in additional school aid funding to our city. Matt believes that the initiatives we could implement, with just a portion of the additional general fund revenue, could make our wonderful city truly special.

VOTE ON TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2021

City Clerk's Office

ELECTION REMINDERS

Don't forget to get out and vote in the upcoming City General Election scheduled for Tuesday, November 2, 2021.

The ballot will include the following Offices and Proposals:

- The Office of Mayor - One to be elected for a two-year term
- The Office of Council Member - Three to be elected for a four-year term
- Public Safety Millage

IMPORTANT DEADLINES

- **Monday, October 18, 2021** – Last day to register to vote in any manner other than in-person at your local Clerk's Office.
- **Tuesday, October 19 through Tuesday, November 2, 2021 until 8 p.m.** – A person may register to vote **in-person** at their local Clerk's Office with proof of residency.*
- **Friday, October 29, 2021 until 5 p.m.** – Deadline for voters to request an absent voter ballot to be mailed via first class mail.
- **Monday, November 1, 2021 at 4 p.m.** – Deadline for registered voters to request an absent voter ballot **in-person** at the Clerk's Office. Ballots must be voted **in-person** at the Clerk's Office.
- **Tuesday, November 2, 2021 until 8 p.m.** – A person registering to vote, **in-person** at the Clerk's Office, may obtain and vote an absent voter ballot with proof of residency or vote **in-person** at their assigned precinct.

***Residency verification documents within 14 days of an Election:** During the 14 days prior to each Election, and through 8 p.m. on Election Day, voters will need to register to vote **in-person** with the City Clerk's Office and provide proof of residency to be eligible to vote in that Election. Proof of residency documents must have your name and current address.

Acceptable documents (paper or electronic) include:

- Michigan driver's license or State ID card
- Current utility bill
- Bank statement
- Paycheck or government check
- Other government document

Visit the City website at www.fhgov.com to download an absent voter ballot application or call the City Clerk's Office at 248-871-2410. Sample ballots can also be found on the City website at the end of September.

PERMANENT ABSENT VOTER APPLICATION LIST

Vote in the comfort of your own home! All eligible voters can now vote by absentee ballot.

To be placed on the permanent absent voter application list to automatically receive an **absent voter ballot application** prior to each Election, call the City Clerk's Office at 248-871-2410 or email permlist@fhgov.com. Please include your name, registered address, and a contact number. Absent voter ballot applications are mailed out by the City Clerk's Office approximately two months prior to an Election.

If you have requested to be on the permanent absent voter application list and have not yet received your absent voter ballot application, please call the Clerk's Office at 248-871-2410.

ELECTION POLLING LOCATIONS MAP

For those going to the polls on Election Day, don't forget Farmington Hills has an interactive mapping application that allows residents to find their precinct location quickly and easily. The app can be accessed via the link <http://tinyurl.com/FHElectionApp>.

Residents will be directed to the Election Polling Locations map where they can enter their address. The map will then zoom into their specific polling location providing the name of the facility, precinct number, and address. The app also provides directions to the polling locations, which are open on **Election Day from 7 a.m. until 8 p.m.**

VOTE ON TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2021

31555 W. Eleven Mile Road | Farmington Hills, MI 48336

FARMINGTON HILLS
Michigan
FOCUS

Election Issue 2021

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Michigan 48334

Precinct information and maps can be found online @ www.fhgov.com.

Vicki Barnett Candidate for Election as Mayor

First elected to City Council in 1995 and Mayor in 2003 and 2019, Vicki was State Representative from 2009-2014. Her past accomplishments include purchasing the Costick Center; creating model after-school programs; expanding our park system; forming the Citizen Corps Council for Emergency Preparedness; receiving a Homeland Security grant to install a low-power emergency radio station; hosting innovative environmental workshops; championing environmentally sustainable natural landscaping and our Gold LEED Certified City Hall; requiring that new developments be compatible with surrounding neighborhoods; preventing oil and gas drilling in residential neighborhoods; and assisting County officials in building a countywide public safety communications network.

Her recent accomplishments have focused on restructuring our Community Library Board to best serve our residents, working with Farmington to build a new state-of-the-art broadband and internet network (at no cost to taxpayers), opening the Hawk Community Center, and fighting for an upgraded and reliable electric grid and storm water system.

Vicki knows that maintaining our AAA bond rating and meeting future budget challenges – especially in light of the COVID-19 pandemic – require revitalizing existing business and commercial districts. She proposes creating an Economic Master Plan and establishing a new Visioning Committee to keep Farmington Hills vibrant and sustainable well into the future.

Vicki received a Master's Degree in Business Administration from U of M - Dearborn, was President of the Michigan Municipal League, Board Member of the National League of Cities, Vice Chair of the National Task Force on Interoperability (for Homeland Security) and is involved in many community organizations.



Gina Phillips Candidate for Election as Mayor

Living on her own, working to support herself since high school, Gina married and was a young mother. Continuing as a single mom, she worked several jobs. Realizing the importance of education, she achieved her Associate Degree at Oakland Community College. She studied Interpersonal and Public Communications at Central Michigan University. Real-life experiences taught her to make tough decisions by employing logical thinking!

Gina married Steve at Governor Warner's Mansion! They chose Farmington Hills in 1997, with the high rating of schools as a primary factor. Let's return to excellence! They attend Oakland Hills Community Church and were dubbed "most active." Her sales career has included operating a successful local kitchen design business. Efficiency is her passion! She helped business develop, organize, and grow for optimum performance. Although her background is not political, she is confident life skills plus hard work will greatly benefit our community. With a strong work ethic, she strives to motivate others to improve and succeed. Performance, standards, and accountability increase with competition. The healthiest result for residents was to become that competition!

Other goals:

- Propel local businesses and owners in success.
- Ensure community decisions are kept local. Residents and business owners' input is imperative to control and chose our direction together.
- Making sure residents and business owners' concerns are addressed.
- Insist residents and businesses maintain maximum control over their property.

She lived the role of "for the people."
Now to step into "by the people."
It would be her honor to give back serving fellow citizens!



Charter Amendment Public Safety Millage

Shall the Farmington Hills City Charter be amended to allow a renewal and increase to the original voter-approved level of the additional special tax rate for public safety functions of the Fire and Police Departments by authorizing the City to levy a millage in the amount of 1.7 mills, for ten years, starting with the July 2022 levy (authorizing collection of an estimated \$6,328,528 in the first year if approved and levied), which taxes are to be used only for purposes of fire and police staffing and equipment to maintain the current levels of public safety services?

Non-Election issues of the Farmington Hills Focus Newsletter are included as part of the City's Activities Guide.