



City Manager Position Available — Apply by: **April 11, 2014**



## Mount Pleasant, MI

Population: 26,016

Find your next job and home in the City of Mount Pleasant, Michigan, a vibrant city where amenities and opportunity intersect with a small-town environment. Originally founded by homesteaders in the mid-nineteenth century, it has a long history. The City offers a quaint and thriving

downtown and is home to a wide variety of professional, cultural and recreational opportunities. Probably the best known is Central Michigan University as it sits in the core of the City. The Soaring Eagle Casino and Resort is just outside the City limits. The City government has a stable and progressive City Commission, strong finances and good prospects for the future. The City is looking for someone to succeed its recently retired City Manager and build upon the City's tradition of excellence and stability. You are invited to join this exciting city as it continues to be the ideal place to live, work, and enjoy recreation.

The City is surrounded not only by farmland, but also thriving commercial and business properties, residential housing and numerous shopping opportunities. If you ask Michiganders to describe where Mount Pleasant is, they will hold up a hand (representing the Lower Peninsula of the State of Michigan) and point to the center of that hand. The City lies 70 miles to the north of Lansing, the state's capitol and is bisected by US 127 (running north to south) and Highway 20 (running east to west). Grand Rapids is located just 85 miles to the southwest, Detroit 160 miles to the southeast and the Mackinac Bridge to the Upper Peninsula is 160 miles due north. The City has a municipal airport (with a 5,000-foot runway).



For commercial air service, one needs to travel to Saginaw, Lansing, Flint, Grand Rapids or Detroit.

In terms of attractions, Mount Pleasant and the surrounding environs have much to offer. There is the aforementioned Soaring Eagle Casino and Resort which offers a variety of cultural activities, world class entertainment in concerts and shows, excellent dining opportunities as well as a spectacular spa. They have recently expanded with the addition of the Soaring Eagle Waterpark and Hotel which is fun for the entire family. Central Michigan University's Chippewa teams have been successful in the Mid-American Conference (Division I-A). Detroit is one of only twelve U.S. cities to support all four major American professional sports and a little more than a two hour drive. Those teams include the Detroit Tigers (MLB), Detroit Red Wings (NHL), Detroit Lions (NFL), and Detroit Pistons (NBA). The University of Michigan and Michigan State University are relatively close. Thirteen golf courses lay within a half-hour drive and the City offers many recreational activities with over 300 acres of City-maintained parks in eight different locations, primarily along the Chippewa River. Isabella County surrounds the City and hosts another 900 acres of parks. Nearby are a plethora of lakes, streams, and the Chippewa River flows through the heart of the City of Mount Pleasant. The Le Tour de Mont Pleasant, Michigan's largest bicycle race, adds a little spice to the area and lasts three days.

Michigan experiences all four seasons, so with cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, and snowmobiling in the winter, canoeing and kayaking in the summer and hunting and fishing all year long, there's something for everyone. The downhill ski slopes begin about an hour north. City and community organizations provide a range of recreational and athletic programs for youth and adults alike, including soccer, volleyball, basketball, baseball, football, skating, hockey, golf, and more.

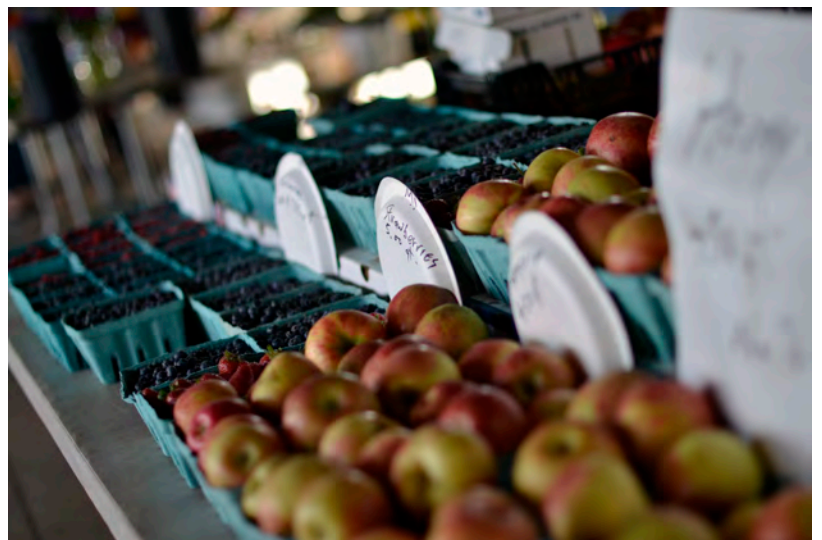
Life is never dull with the Soaring Eagle Casino and Resort attracting big-name artists, comedians, and music groups to the area. Central Michigan University hosts a variety of arts and cultural events as well as student productions. Beyond that, Mount Pleasant is home to a great deal of history – the Ziibiwing Center of Anishinabe Culture and Lifeways Museum highlights the important



The City of Mt. Pleasant has a large presence within the softball community and have hosted the Michigan ASA State Championship Tournament for several years.



City of Mt. Pleasant  
Spray Park



The Farmer's Market thrives in Spring, Summer and Fall. Folks gather in Town Center and Island Park to purchase fresh produce from local farms.

Table I: Climate Data for Mount Pleasant, Michigan

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Year
Average High °F	32	35	46	59	70	79	83	71	74	62	49	36	59
Average Low °F	19	21	29	39	49	60	64	63	55	43	34	24	42
Precipitation Inches	1.95	2.01	2.28	2.95	3.48	3.61	3.37	3.00	3.26	2.52	2.78	2.45	34.42

Source: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

influence of the Saginaw Chippewa Indian peoples in the region. The center sponsors community events throughout the year.

Life truly is pleasant in the City. Mount Pleasant has a wonderful downtown with a variety of shopping and dining opportunities. More can be found surrounding the City and still more in the larger cities that are within driving distance. The Mount Pleasant Discovery Museum opened in December 2012 and is aimed primarily at families and children of all ages. Along with other cultural amenities, there are over 60 churches in Isabella County representing various religious denominations.

More importantly, the people are friendly and Mount Pleasant has a wonderful, small town feel. Residents are family-oriented and the schools are excellent. Medical care is outstanding and crime is very low. The violent incidents to which many urban dwellers are accustomed to are very rare here and the community is shocked and actively concerned when they occur.

The City's residents have chosen one of the State's most "walkable" and safe communities where the arts are celebrated, parks are protected, and the entrepreneurial spirit is supported. The cost of living is very reasonable. The average home sells for approximately \$130,000 and prices have a large range of around \$90,000 to \$250,000, although larger properties are available.

## History

Prior to the mid-1800s, Central Michigan was occupied by the Native American Ojibwa (Saginaw Chippewa) Tribe. Settlers of European descent began to move into the area around 1854, with the Federal Government's "Graduation Act," which allowed land purchases at low prices. Surveyor, timber-logger, and teacher David Ward took this opportunity and purchased land from the U.S. government, which he concluded would allow for a nice town. The U.S. government encouraged more settlement less than a decade later, offering free land through the Homestead Act of 1862. The City was incorporated in 1889.

During this same period, the Federal Government entered into two treaties with the Saginaw-Chippewa Tribe to set aside land in Isabella County to provide allotments to tribal members. Some of that designed land overlapped the area being settled by non-Indians. The jurisdictional confusion created by this overlap was finally resolved in 2010 with a historic set of agreements that have become a model for other communities dealing with similar issues.

Even before incorporation, Mount Pleasant had attracted the interest of business-minded people. The Central Michigan Business School began as a community-funded project in 1882 and became what is now Central Michigan University (CMU). Other arts and library projects were begun by early citizens, a mark of the City's community spirit.

Oil was discovered in the area in 1928, and the local people benefitted. Although the oil reserves are now largely depleted, oil's place in the City's history is still apparent in the high school's mascot, the Oilers, and in the City's seal, which reflects the fact that Mount Pleasant is known as the Oil Capitol of Michigan.

The population expanded most rapidly between the 1950s and 1970s, spurring economic development in the area. It slowed slightly in the 1990s but has increased again in the twenty-first century. In recent decades, Mount Pleasant has more firmly entrenched itself as a very livable community. The City has nearly 13,000 registered voters.

## Climate

Mount Pleasant offers four seasons and generally has a continental climate (mild to warm summers and cold winters). The City averages 30 inches of rain and 36 inches of snow annually. Table I (above) provides specifics.

## Demographics

As of the 2010 census, the majority of residents of Mount Pleasant were White (87.6%). The rest of the population is composed of African American (3.9%), Asian (3.0%), and



Native American (2.0%) populations, as well as 3.5% of other races or more than one race. Those of Hispanic ethnicity composed 3.3% of the City's total population. Due to the large student population at CMU and Mid-Michigan Community College, the median age for the City was 22. As can be seen in Table II, the City's population is concentrated between the ages of 10 and 30.

Table II: Population by Age

Age Bracket	Percent
Under 10	6.6 %
10 to 20	25.3 %
20 to 30	39.2 %
30 to 40	6.9 %
40 to 50	6.0 %
50 to 60	6.4 %
60 to 70	4.3 %
70 +	5.5 %

Source: U.S. Census

There are a total of 8,376 households, of which families with children under 18 living at home are just under 19% of the population and married couples living together slightly under 25%. About 63% of the households in Mount Pleasant are non-families, a number that is primarily due to the university presence.

Over 92.5% of the adult population have a high school diploma or equivalent and slightly over 40% of those over the age of 25 have at least a bachelor's degree. The median household income was \$27,407 and mean household income was \$47,134 in 2012. The statistics again are skewed somewhat due to the large student population within the City limits.

## Geography

Mount Pleasant is in the center of the Lower Peninsula of Michigan and rests 770 feet above sea level. The total incorporated area of the City is 7.8 square miles and is surrounded by vibrant farmlands, and more directly surrounded by a thriving township. The northern half of the City lies on tribal reservation land.

## City Manager

## Commerce

The City is friendly towards businesses, especially in the education and entertainment industries. The City also has a limited industrial sector. Table III depicts the top ten employers for Isabella County (of which Mount Pleasant is the largest city).

Table III: Principal Employers

Employer	# of Employees
Soaring Eagle Casino and Resort	4,287
Central Michigan University	2,461
McLaren – Central Michigan	700
Mount Pleasant Public Schools	582
Delfield Company	480
McBride Quality Care Services	450
Morbark Inc.	415
Walmart	375
Community Mental Health	362
Meijer	354
Total	10,466

Source: Mount Pleasant CAFR

Economically, the City is gaining ground. Unemployment has dropped significantly since the original stages of the "Great Recession," from a high of 9.1% in 2009 to just 6.0% in 2012 (more recent statistics are not available).

## The Government

Mount Pleasant features a true council-manager form of government. The City Commission is composed of seven members, who annually select one of their members to be the mayor and one to be vice-mayor. All are elected at large and serve staggered three year terms. The seats of the current mayor and vice mayor are up for election in November 2014. Although the Commission members do not agree on everything, they are respectful of one another and forward thinking. They genuinely want the best for their city and to protect its assets. Unlike many other cities, they have maintained the infrastructure, even during the Great Recession. The Commissioners hold the staff in high regard.

The City Manager is appointed by the Commission and serves at its pleasure. The individual functions as the City's CEO and manages day-to-day operations according to the policy direction of the local elected officials. The City Manager position has traditionally been very stable. Over the past 30 years the City has had three City Managers.



From 1999 to 2006 the City's millage rate was 15.45 mills. A small increase occurred in 2007-2008 (0.5) to cover bond payments for renovation of the Historic Borden Building (of which City Hall occupies a large portion) and a small decrease in 2009 (0.2). In 2014, the millage rate increased to 16.25 mills with the 0.5 addition dedicated to capital improvements. In 2014, the projected general fund expenditures exceed the revenues by approximately \$500,000 but adequate funds exist in the fund balance to cover the shortfall. A \$1.7 million "rainy day" assigned fund balance exists and the unassigned fund balance is projected at \$471,000 as of December 31, 2014.

Table IV: Mount Pleasant Staffing (FTE)

Division	2005	2013
City Manager	2.50	3.00
Admin & Finance	19.00	16.75
Community Services	19.00	15.00
Public Safety	55.00	48.00
Public Works	39.00	35.75
Total	134.50	118.50

Note: Does not include Paid on Call Fire.

Source: 2014 Budget

The City's 2014 General Fund Budget is approximately \$11,600,000 and the total budget is approximately \$40 million. Both numbers have changed very little since 2011. The City employs 118.50 FTEs (see Table IV). If Paid-On-Call Firefighters are included, it brings the total to 134.50.

The City has five unions and relationships between the union and the City are excellent. Generally, staff turnover is virtually non-existent; however, due to retirements there have been several changes in the senior leadership over the last few years. People work well together and are customer service oriented.

## Challenges and Opportunities

While Mount Pleasant has not experienced the financial challenges that many other cities have, that is not to say it came through the Great Recession unscathed. It had to reduce its budget by over \$1 million. As can be seen in Table IV, staffing has been reduced by almost 12%. On the whole, property values, and the resulting revenues, have remained relatively constant. The same cannot be said for state-shared revenues. Over the past ten years the City has suffered a \$1 million loss. Consequently,

money is tight and the City Manager will need to work with the City Commission to manage the funds wisely.

The City is largely built-out and opportunities for annexation are virtually non-existent. The most notable exception is a City owned 300 acre parcel in the City's northwest corner which was a state mental health facility and before that a boarding school for Native Americans. The land is not without issues, however. The Tribe is very interested in making sure that anything of historical and archeological significance is treated appropriately and approximately \$5,000,000 is needed to demolish the existing buildings on the City owned land. All in all, the property is viewed as a 20 year effort. Further, while there are some thoughts, it is not known what the best and most likely use for the land might be, but the City is working on a development plan.

The Tribe and the University are both integral parts of the community and have been good partners with the City, yet both also present some issues. The former is protective of its members and their rights, as it should be. That can, however, cause some tricky policing issues. Gambling at the casino



and the resulting revenues also bring their own set of issues. The Tribe does provide revenues to the City in the form of what are essentially grants.

Central Michigan University is also a key part of the community and the City enjoys a strong working relationship with CMU staff. CMU has approximately 20,000 students, who create a large market for rental housing properties. The City has put some incentives in place to aid in redevelopment of neighborhoods and works with rental properties on an ongoing basis. The City and CMU use their growth as an opportunity and are always looking at avenues to mesh the university and the family life styles within our community.

Finally, Mount Pleasant is a regional center and enjoys the boost to local businesses from the surrounding township. People may live in the surrounding township where taxes are slightly lower and still utilize many of the City facilities and activities.

## The Ideal Candidate

Mount Pleasant offers a remarkable opportunity for any city management professional seeking a stimulating work environment. The Commission is seeking a strong leader who is also an outstanding manager. It wants someone who will partner with it and who will win their confidence as well as that of the community. The individual will be a team player who is honest, open and forthright. He/she will be transparent and provide the elected officials with accurate, unfiltered information, not just the information he/she feels they need to know to reach a predetermined conclusion. The individual will not be afraid to speak truth to the elected officials, diplomatically of course. The selected candidate will understand that the Commission expects to be kept informed equally and that there should be no surprises.

The City is pleased with its staff and corporate culture and is seeking someone to carry that culture forward. It is not looking for a change agent. Still, it wants the next City Manager to examine its operations critically and to be creative. In other words, it expects the individual to bring new ideas but also respect what is already here. Good judgment will be imperative as will be a strong work ethic. An engaged, hands-on leader who allows their staff to take risks and function independently



The City of Mt. Pleasant and Central Michigan University partner to strengthen our community, provide value added activities and better service the citizen and student populations.



will be an asset to the staff. Being able to remain calm in a storm and a good sense of humor are also important.

The ideal candidate will be customer service oriented and recognize that the residents expect to have access to the manager. He/she will realize that while the customer is not always right, the individual does deserve a good explanation of why something cannot be done as well as help in finding an alternative solution. Strong communications skills (verbal, written, and listening) will be important. It will also be important that the manager have outstanding interpersonal skills. In addition to building and maintaining strong relationships with the elected officials and the staff, the selected candidate will need to work in partnership with the University, the Tribe, the surrounding Township and the County to retain strong relationships and visions for the future.



The weekend of June 6th through the 8th, 2014, is scheduled for the 6th annual Le Tour de Mont Pleasant bicycle race!

The individual will understand the community's vision of being a family friendly, walkable town. The next manager will have experience creating a strategic plan that will implement that vision and the new Master Plan. The ideal candidate will be someone who is inspiring, upbeat and positive. He/she will be a mentor and enjoy developing his/her staff into all that they can be. The individual will delegate and expect to be kept informed. Accountability, deadlines and proper resource management will be important to the individual. He/she will be decisive and always make a decision that is best for the community and not for one element. The selected candidate will be someone who is always looking toward the future and how to best position the community.

The individual will immerse him/herself in the community. He/she will understand that it is important to be seen and accessible. The ideal candidate will be comfortable in a crowd and represent the City well. Additionally, it is desired that the next manager will continue the City's tradition of having long tenured managers.

Knowledge of finance, planning, zoning and economic development are important. At a minimum the individual should have a Bachelor's degree in a relevant field and a Master's degree is preferred. At least five to seven years' experience as a City Manager or Assistant is desired.

## Residency

The City of Mt. Pleasant requires the City Manager to live within 20 miles from the nearest City limit.

## The Past City Manager

The prior manager retired after seven and one-half years as manager and served a total of 31 years in several roles at the City.

## Compensation

The salary range is \$110,000 to \$130,000, depending on qualifications. Benefits are excellent.

## Confidentiality

If a candidate wishes to have their name and information confidential, a formal request must be

made during the application process. In accordance with the Michigan Open Meetings Act, Act 267 of 1976, under section 15.267 Close sessions; permissible purposes, sub-section (f). The City Commission is not permitted to discuss candidates in a closed session meeting, unless the candidate has specifically requested confidentiality. If the candidate does not request confidentiality, the City Commission will discuss the candidate in an open public meeting prior to the interview.

If confidentiality is requested the candidate's name and application information may remain confidential until the names of the finalists are released to be scheduled for formal interviews.

It is anticipated the selection process will involve an open forum public participation component.

## How To Apply

E-mail your resume to [Recruit38@cb-asso.com](mailto:Recruit38@cb-asso.com) by April 11th. Faxed and mailed resumes will not be considered. Questions should be directed to Colin Baenziger at (561) 707-3537.

## Schedule

Candidates will be screened from April 12th to June 9th. Interviews will occur in June 23rd and 24th with a selection shortly thereafter.

## Other Important Information

Mount Pleasant is a drug-free, smoke-free workplace and we value diversity. As an Equal Opportunity Employer we strongly encourage minorities and women to apply.

COLIN BAENZIGER & ASSOCIATES  
EXECUTIVE RECRUITING



City Manager  
Mount Pleasant, MI