



SPECIAL MEETING OF THE CHARLOTTE CITY COUNCIL

111 E. Lawrence Ave, Charlotte, MI 48813 (517) 543-2750

6:00 pm, Thursday, May 14, 2026

Interested persons can participate in-person or via Zoom

Connect to Zoom from your computer, tablet, or smartphone

Website: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84323850068>

One tap mobile: +16465588656, 843 2385 0068#

Telephone: (312) 626-6799 Webinar ID: 843 2385 0068

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Roll Call**
- 3. Pledge of Allegiance**
- 4. Absence of Council Members**
- 5. Public Comment** - Limit presentation to five (5) minutes. Attendees desiring to address council who are participating with ZOOM may raise their hands now or if attending via a phone call, press *9 (star nine) on your keypad
- 6. Approval of Agenda**
- 7. Discussion Items**
 - a. Interview City Manager Candidates, 6:05 pm – Vestor Davis, 6:50 pm – Howard Fink, 7:35 pm Scott Czasak and then potential selection for further consideration.
- 8. Mayor and Council Comments**
- 9. Adjourn**

~Alicia A. Smith, City Clerk

ADDRESSING THE CITY COUNCIL

Comments shall be made only during times set aside for that purpose.

Each citizen may speak for up to 5 minutes during each public hearing and comments period.

Comments made during public hearings shall be relevant to the subject of the public hearing.

Comments shall be made from the podium unless otherwise directed by the Mayor.

Comments shall be directed to the Mayor and Council members.

Speakers shall begin by stating their name and indicate if they are a resident or non-resident of the City.

Speakers shall refrain from using vulgarity, hate speech or “fighting words.”



Candidate #1

VESTER DAVIS JR.

April 6, 2026

City of Charlotte
111 E. Lawrence Avenue
Charlotte, Michigan 48813

Re: City Manager Search

CONFIDENTIALITY REQUESTED

Dear Search Committee:

I am writing to express my strong interest in the City Manager position for the City of Charlotte, Michigan. I have more than ten (10) years of public sector executive experience and a proven record of strategic leadership, community engagement, fiscal responsibility, and organizational excellence that makes me well-suited for this special opportunity. I am attracted to Charlotte's vibrant culture, educational environment, seasoned staff, and interest in balancing growth and preservation of history.

Highlights of my career achievements include:

- Secured and managed over \$5 million in grant funds to support housing, public parks, small businesses, and local infrastructure.
- Substantially impacted economic development through the implementation of local business engagement activities.
- Initiated strategic master and park plans for community growth and enhanced quality of life.
- Boosted employee morale and welfare through the implementation of employee surveys, mental health programs, compensation studies and other employee engagement efforts.
- Nurtured local government relationships with local, state, and federal elected and appointed leaders.
- Exhibited volunteerism by serving community organizations.

I have obtained a bachelor's and master's degree in the field of public administration from Grand Valley State University located in Allendale, Michigan. I also have advanced certificate trainings in the areas of public finance, zoning administration and economic development and verifiable skills human resource management, collective bargaining negotiations, and effective community development. My facilitation skills have led to the execution of formalized strategic plans while maintaining an exceptional level of financial integrity and transparency. I am currently pursuing a graduate degree in finance from Western Michigan University to prepare myself to effectively lead during these uncertain and complex economical times.

Please review my attached resume for additional details pertaining to my career advancements and achievements in public service and ability to serve the residents of Charlotte. If you have any questions, please contact me by phone at [REDACTED] or e-mail [REDACTED]. Thank you for your time and consideration of my application. I am highly intrigued by the opportunity to join your team!

Sincerely,

Vester Davis Jr., MPA

VESTER DAVIS JR.

Mobile Phone: [REDACTED]
E-mail: [REDACTED]

Accomplished professional with a demonstrated ability to deliver efficient and effective results. Formally trained in managing non-profit and public organizations, Vester is highly skilled at working collaboratively with local, regional and state officials which have led to positive community outcomes. Vester is a team player with strong management and communication skills. Vester is a candidate for credentialed status by the International City/County Management Association (ICMA). Below is an overview of skill sets possessed:

- *Project management*
- *Consensus building*
- *Organization and self-direction*
- *Life-long learner*
- *Skilled at building partnerships*
- *Adaptive leadership skills*
- *Creative and innovative problem solver.*
- *Grant management skills.*

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

INTERIM SUPERINTENDENT, 2026-present **Texas Township, Kalamazoo, Michigan**

As the interim superintendent, I assist the board with ensuring a continuity of quality service delivery, financial awareness, and provide high-performing leadership. Oversee the implementation of work tools and approaches to execute capital improvement projects. I manage personnel operations, including the hiring, firing, and evaluation of key staff members.

Responsibilities:

- Facilitate the planning, organizing, coordinating, distribution and administration of public goods and services.
- Arrange short term and long-term projects for the soon to be permanent manage.
- Communicate project updates and ensure board decisions are executed.

SPECIAL PROJECTS MANAGER, 2025 **City of Hastings, Hastings, Michigan**

As Special Projects Manager, I assist the city manager with implementation and development of city services, research community development tools and approaches to fundraise for capital improvement projects.

Responsibilities:

- Facilitating the planning, organizing, coordinating, and administration of public services road improvement millage (coming soon).
- Developing advertisements for competitive contracting to fulfill city services.

CITY MANAGER, 2020-2024 **City of Springfield, Springfield, Michigan**

As City Manager, I ensure all city services are delivered effectively, efficiently, and equitable. I work collaboratively with elected and appointed officials, local non-profit and for-profit agencies, and manages resources to fulfill the desires of the elected body.

Accomplishments:

- Facilitate the planning, organizing, coordinating, and administration of public services.

- Leading the implementation of an equitable spending plan of the city's \$540,000 American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding allocation.
- Implement the city's updated park plan, master plan, and corridor planning process.
- Guided the policy adoption process for regulating adult use marihuana establishments within city limits.
- Retained over \$300,000 in home repair funds from the Michigan State Housing Development Authority.
- Implemented an Employee Assistance Program and enhanced employee recognition programming.
- Leveraging the city's annual county-wide park millage funds to renew, refresh, and reinvigorate park amenities.

CITY MANAGER, 2018-2020

City of Stanton, Stanton, Michigan

In this role I managed the day-to-day operations of all city services and resources to fulfill the wishes of the elected body.

Accomplishments:

- Manage several roles for the agency including human resources, finance, zoning and planning, and street administration.
- Revised and implemented a new personnel manual, updated the city website including the addition of revamped forms and community information.
- Obtained a \$30,000 grant award from Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) to rehabilitate homes and enhance local parks.
- Obtained a \$300,000 grant award from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF) for the Veterans Memorial Park Development Project.
- Earned a Michigan State University Extension Citizen Planner Certificate for planning and zoning administration.
- Initiated a new approach to the city's blight elimination program.

ASSISTANT TO THE CITY MANAGER, 2014-2018

City of Grand Haven, Grand Haven, Michigan

The Assistant to the City Manager is a member of the executive staff for this full-service city. As such, the Assistant to the City Manager supports the City Manager and other departments in the daily functions of all city services. In the manager's absence, assumed all responsibilities of that office.

Accomplishments:

- Assigned the role of grant management specialist. To date, I have secured and managed more than \$ 3.5 million in federal, state and local grant funds for infrastructure and recreation improvements.
- Provided property management for all city-owned properties (20) on lease or license agreements.
- Implemented an employee recognition program for all city employees.
- Led the City through the Michigan Economic Development Corporation's Redevelopment Ready Communities Program®.
- Served as Community Development Manager and Zoning Administrator.
- Prepared meeting minutes, staff reports and made recommendations to various Boards and Commissions.

EDUCATION

Master of Public Administration, Grand Valley State University (GVSU), School of Public, Nonprofit and Health Management

- Dean's List Recognition
- Served on the Young Alumni Council
- Annual GVSU Community Outreach Volunteer

Bachelor of Science, Grand Valley State University, School of Public, Nonprofit and Health Management

Michigan State University Extension Citizen Planner Certificate
Michigan State University Extension Zoning Administrator Certificate
Michigan State University Extension Facilitative Leadership Certificate
Michigan Economic Developers Association Basic Course Certificate
Michigan Infrastructure Council Asset Management Certificate

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS AND ASSOCIATIONS

- International City/County Management Association (ICMA), 2012 – Present
- Michigan Municipal Executives (MME), 2014 – Present (current board member)
- Michigan Municipal League – Professional Development Committee, Committee Member, 2016-2022
- Michigan Municipal League – Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee, Committee Member, 2022-2023
- Stanton Rotary member, 2018-2020
- Michigan State University Extension Facilitative Leadership Training - 2023
- City of Battle Creek Airport Board, 2022 - 2024
- Calhoun County Economic Development Corporation, 2022 – 2024
- Calhoun County Materials Management Committee, 2024 – 2024
- Southcentral Michigan Planning Commission, 2024 - 2024

VESTER DAVIS JR.

Professional Reference List

Sam Janson, City Manager
City of North Muskegon

Rebecca Fleury, City Manager (Retired)

Pat McGinnis, City Manager
City of Portage

***Rachael Winnie**, City Manager
City of Stanton

Scott Smith, City Attorney
City of Wyoming

*Denotes a former subordinate.



Candidate #2

Attention Manager Freed, Search Committee, and Charlotte City Council;

I am pleased to submit my application for Manger with the City of Charlotte. I bring over 20 years of experience in municipal management, with a strong focus on planning, zoning, and economic development. During my tenure with Park Township, my team led significant organizational improvements, developed new municipal parks, resolved longstanding community issues, and successfully secured numerous grants.

I am well versed in municipal zoning and planning and have extensive experience in economic and community development. After earning my Master's degree in Urban Planning and Public Policy, I founded a community and economic development consulting firm. Our clients included the City of Whiting, Gary, Hammond, the East Chicago Empowerment Zone, and private developers. Throughout my career, I have maintained a strong focus in economic and community development, have frequently served as zoning administrator in multiple communities, facilitated company expansion efforts through tax abatement and TIF incentives, and led community wide marketing efforts.

To further strengthen my leadership capacity, I completed a yearlong executive leadership development program and later earned certification as an executive coach. This experience has broadened my perspective on municipal management and deepened my commitment to mentoring, developing, and inspiring others. I strive to be a leader who invests in their team, communicates a clear vision, and promotes continuous improvement.

I am proud of the planning documents I have authored, the grants I have secured, the parks I have helped develop, and the programs I have created. However, I believe the most meaningful measure of leadership is not the projects themselves, but the ability to foster a culture of encouragement, empowerment, and shared recognition of team accomplishments.

I would welcome the opportunity to contribute to the City of Charlotte, support the City Council and collaborate with staff across departments on how to best move Charlotte forward.

Sincerely,
Howard Fink

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of Howard Fink.

**Statement Read by Mr. Steve Spoelhoff, Park Township Supervisor at the
August 14th, 2025 Board of Trustees regular scheduled meeting:**

The next item is the Status of the Township Manager:

After nearly a decade of dedicated leadership, Manager Fink and the Park Township Board of Trustees have mutually agreed to pursue new directions. Howard Fink has decided to resign his position as Township Manager effective August 31, 2025. Howard Fink has submitted a signed Agreement with the Board, whereby in exchange for a release from Mr. Fink, the Township will pay Mr. Fink six month's salary as is generally provided in his contract.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I would like to graciously accept Manager Fink's resignation and recognize him for the great work he has done in his dedicated service and leadership to the Township. Under Howard Fink's leadership, Park Township has experienced significant progress in various areas such as parks development, public safety, infrastructure management, and organizational operations. In addition, Howard Fink has been instrumental in obtaining numerous grants for the Township.

It's my understanding that Mr. Fink has been pursuing leadership positions in other communities. I wish him well in all his future endeavors. I'm looking for a motion to approve the Separation Agreement.

Howard Fink

Education

Master of Urban Planning and Policy – University of Illinois at Chicago, Chicago, IL

Bachelor of Arts in Communications – DePaul University, Chicago, IL

Management and Supervisory Institute – Ivy Tech Community College, IN

Leadership Northwest Indiana

Lead 24/7 – Executive Leadership Program (Year-long)

Discovery Coach Certification – Certified Executive Coach

Numerous workshops and presentations on local government management, urban planning, and community development topics.

Professional Experience

Interim Administrator

Kalamazoo Lake Sewer and Water Authority, Saugatuck Michigan, November 2025 to February 2026

As the Chief administrative Officer of the Authority, I oversaw all operations, contracts, budget, and was the primary support staff to the Board.

- Developed the authority's Capital Improvement plan and annual budget.
 - Supported the Board as they transitioned to a full-time administrator.
 - Coordinated contracts and engineering projects.
-

Township Manager

Park Township, MI (Pop. 18,855) | Jan 2017 – August 2025

As Chief Administrative Officer, oversaw all township operations and drove strategic initiatives aimed at improving service delivery and government administration. Key contributions include:

- Supervised our planning consultants and assisted in numerous planning related projects including;
 - Resolved a decade-long zoning and land use dispute in Macatawa Park, a wealthy residential neighborhood that included the Van Andel family.
 - Facilitated zoning and master plan amendments and improved our historic neighborhood planning efforts.
- Negotiated and implemented changes in health insurance, retirement benefits, and salary administration. Switched health insurance from a fully insured market plan to a partially self-funded government pool. Implemented State hard caps under P.A. 152. Responsible for all HR

functions and employee benefits. Well versed in retirement benefits and tax deferred savings accounts.

- Spearheading a massive parks and recreation expansion focused on original programming content and a new community center facility.
- Led the creation / design of a new lakefront park and 70-acre Cooper Van Wieren Nature Preserve and bike park. Secured over \$2.5M in DNR park grants for new development and renovation.
- Institute parks and bike path asset management planning and analysis to help guide infrastructure improvements.
- Spearheaded the development of a multi-functional community park (former airport), including pickleball courts, a music venue, and nature trails.
- Negotiated a \$4.7M insurance settlement, surpassing the initial \$2.4M offer by \$700K through enhanced legal and engineering analysis.
- Led the transfer of township's water utility to Holland Board of Public Works, ensuring professional management, reduced infrastructure risks, and long-term rate stabilization.
- Facilitated zoning and master plan amendments, resolving a decade-long dispute in Macatawa Park and improving historic neighborhood planning.
- Re-organized staff responsibilities for key planning and zoning functions, streamlining operations and enhancing efficiency.
- Designed and implemented the Holland State Park Safety Consortium to improve water safety and reduce drowning.
- Led the creation of a Marine Safety Division and transitioned the fire department from Paid on Call to full-time staffing.

Township Manager

Northfield Township, MI (Pop. 8,245) | May 2013 – Jan 2017

Successfully transitioned Northfield from a full-time board to a Council-Manager government, overseeing all aspects of township administration:

- Led the acquisition of a 27-acre lakefront park and downtown redevelopment strategy.
 - Overhauled health insurance programs, implementing High Deductible Savings Plans and switching retirement plans to MERS, saving 50% in administrative costs.
 - Established a municipal civil infractions code enforcement program, improving compliance efficiency.
 - Led the first-ever codification of township laws, improving governance and legal clarity.
 - Spearheaded a \$100K savings in insurance and service contracts through competitive bidding.
 - Staff support and coordinate the efforts of the Downtown Development Authority. Worked on resolving the TIF capture issues resulting from miscalculations on parent and child Parcels.
 - Negotiated over \$450K in unpaid personal property tax collections and expungements. Utilized a 12-year tax abatement incentive to attract a lighting and solar panel manufacturing company
-

Town Administrator

Town of Merrillville, IN (Pop. 35,246) | Dec 2008 – Apr 2013

Provided executive leadership and managed operations for the Town of Merrillville's government and finances:

- Negotiated a new trash hauling contract, saving \$360K annually while increasing service revenue by \$200K.
 - Created a stormwater utility generating \$1.1M annually for environmental improvement projects.
 - Led the transition to fully insured health insurance, cutting costs by over 20%.
 - Managed a \$1.5M TIF bond for Town Hall renovation and a \$2M bond for road construction.
 - Played a pivotal role in relocating Modern Drop Forge, resulting in 240 new jobs and a \$25M investment.
-

Community Development Director

Town of Merrillville, IN (Pop. 35,246) | Jun 2006 – Dec 2008

Led economic and community planning efforts to position Merrillville as a premier destination for business investment:

- Attracted \$60M in new office, retail, and industrial development, creating 750 jobs.
 - Expanded TIF districts to fund major infrastructure improvements and drive development.
 - Secured \$400K in annual revenue through a new rental property registration ordinance.
 - Partnered with building trades unions to install solar panels at Town Hall, fostering sustainability.
-

Founding Partner

Community Design Economics, Chicago, IL | Feb 2005 – Feb 2007

Led a consulting firm specializing in community and economic development. Key projects:

- Managed retail revitalization planning for downtown Gary, IN, reversing disinvestment trends.
 - Facilitated a community planning process in Gary, IN, using innovative tools like a Monopoly-style game to enhance participation.
-

Notable Projects & Achievements

- Whiting, Indiana: Developed a comprehensive commercial redevelopment plan, boosting retail attraction and industrial development.
 - Rogers Park, Chicago: Authored a retail revitalization plan focused on marketing, zoning, and business retention strategies.
-

References

Chief Bill Wagner – Former Police & Fire Chief, Northfield Township | [REDACTED]
Chief Scott Gamby – Fire Chief, Park Township | [REDACTED]
Mr. Jerry Hundsburger, Former Supervisor, Park Township, [REDACTED]
Mr. Jim Gerard, Former Supervisor, Park Township, [REDACTED]
Mr. Terry DeHaan, Former Trustee, Park Township, [REDACTED]
Mr. Sam Iaquinto – Former Planning Commissioner and Trustee, Northfield Township | [REDACTED]
Mr. George Jacob – Former Supervisor and Trustee, Park Township | [REDACTED]
Ms. Janet Chick – Trustee, Northfield Township | [REDACTED]
Ms. Connie Vander Schaff – Finance Director, Park Township | [REDACTED]
Mr. Dan Martin – Partner, Thrun Law Firm | [REDACTED]

Key Skills

- Leadership & Team Building
- Parks and Recreation Development
- Infrastructure and Asset Management
- Project Management and Parks Construction Oversight
- Strategic Planning & Economic Development
- Budgeting & Financial Management
- Zoning & Master Planning
- Conflict Resolution & Negotiation
- Community Engagement & Stakeholder Relations
- Grant Writing & Fundraising



Candidate #3

SCOTT RYAN CZASAK, MPA

CITY MANAGER | MUNICIPAL EXECUTIVE

Strategic and results-driven municipal executive with more than 20 years of public sector leadership experience at the local, state, and federal levels. Currently serving as Chief Administrative Officer for a full-service Michigan municipality with responsibility for \$10M+ in annual budgets, multi-department operations, infrastructure systems, economic development initiatives, and policy implementation. Recognized for securing major infrastructure financing, strengthening operational accountability, advising elected officials on complex policy matters, and leading organizations with transparency, professionalism, and community engagement.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

CITY MANAGER | City of Caro, Michigan | 2022–Present

- Chief Administrative Officer for a full-service city (population 4,328) operating under the council-manager form of government.
- Direct development and administration of \$10M+ annual budget across 14 funds, ensuring balanced operations and long-term fiscal stability.
- Lead and evaluate 25+ full-time employees across six departments, along with volunteer fire personnel and part-time staff.
- Oversee municipal operations including public works, water, wastewater, public safety coordination, finance, and community services.
- Advise City Council on policy development, ordinance amendments, capital planning, and strategic priorities.
- Secured \$12M in Clean Water State Revolving Fund financing for major wastewater infrastructure improvements.
- Obtained \$500,000 Small Urban Transportation Fund and \$250,000 MDOT Schedule B funding for transportation improvements.
- Directed development of new municipal well and arsenic treatment system upgrades to ensure safe drinking water.
- Serve as Zoning Administrator; review site plans, issue permits, conduct inspections, and ensure regulatory compliance.
- Led ordinance amendments addressing marijuana regulation, food trucks, snow removal, electronic message signs, and camping.
- Coordinated with Michigan Land Bank to secure \$175,000 in demolition funding for blight removal at no cost to residents.
- Research, prepare, and administer state and federal grants supporting infrastructure and community initiatives.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR | Escanaba Downtown Development Authority | 2020–2022

- Directed operations of the Downtown Development Authority with oversight of \$250,000+ annual budget.
- Administered grant-funded downtown enhancement and infrastructure projects.
- Managed Escanaba Marketplace and biweekly Farmers Market operations.
- Collaborated with business owners, residents, and elected officials to strengthen economic vitality.

LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR | Michigan House of Representatives | 2015–2018

- Directed legislative strategy and policy development; managed more than a dozen bills signed into law.
- Analyzed complex legislation & advised elected official on committee and floor matters.
- Oversaw daily office operations, staff supervision, and constituent services.
- Maintained strong relationships with state agencies and community stakeholders.

LEGISLATIVE ASSISTANT / SCHEDULER | U.S. House of Representatives | 2010–2012

- Researched and analyzed federal policy issues to support legislative development.
- Managed district office operations and coordinated public engagement initiatives.
- Organized scheduling, travel logistics, and stakeholder meetings.

ADDITIONAL PUBLIC SERVICE EXPERIENCE

- Chair, Township of Ford River Planning Commission (2022) – Initiated Master Plan review and facilitated zoning discussions.
- Historical Commissioner, Township of Macomb (2013–2014) – Developed Oral History Project and assisted in Historical Village planning.
- Enumerator & Quality Control Enumerator, U.S. Census Bureau (2019–2020).
- Substitute Teacher, Professional Education Services Group (2008–2010).
- Campaign Consultant, Icon Consulting (2004–2022) – Strategic planning, budgeting, compliance, and stakeholder engagement.
- Intern, U.S. House of Representatives (2004).

EDUCATION

- Master of Public Administration (MPA), Local Government Management – Oakland University
- Bachelor of Arts (BA), Political Science – Oakland University
- Associate of General Studies (AGS) – Macomb Community College

PROFESSIONAL CREDENTIALS

- Certified Public Manager – Saginaw Valley State University
- Certified Master Citizen Planner & Zoning Administrator – Michigan State University
- Professional Downtown Manager – Michigan Downtown Association
- Market Master Certification – Michigan Farmers Market Association
- Fellow – Michigan Political Leadership Program, Michigan State University

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- International City/County Management Association
- Michigan Municipal Executives
- Michigan Association of Planners

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

- Board Member, Disability Network of Eastern Michigan
- Member, Rotary Club – Distinguished Service Citation Recipient
- Board Member, Caro Area Chamber of Commerce

SCOTT R. CZASAK

[REDACTED]

REFERENCES

1. **ROBERT ESCHENBACHER, CITY OF CARO MAYOR PRO-TEM (FORMER),** [REDACTED]
2. **TISHA JONES, CITY OF CARO COUNCILMEMBER (FORMER),** [REDACTED]
3. **KAREN MOORE, CITY OF ESCANABA MAYOR PRO-TEM,** [REDACTED]
4. **CHRISTOPHER ARNDT, ONEIDA TOWNSHIP TRUSTEE,** [REDACTED]
5. **KEVIN GORDISH, FORD MOTOR COMPANY ANALYST/BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE,**
[REDACTED]