



A Citizen's Guide to Wayne County Government

2023-2024 Edition

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

Message from the Chair of the Wayne County Commission



Welcome to the 2023-24 edition of A Citizen's Guide to Wayne County Government. This handy booklet is designed to provide you with helpful information on county services, departments and officials.

Wayne County every day provides services from parks and recreation to health care, road repairs, veterans' programs and Meals on Wheels delivery to homebound seniors – and much more – to a population of nearly 1.8 million people.

That represents a total population larger than that of 12 U.S. states. Many of you may have benefitted from Wayne County's many programs and services without even realizing it.

This guide is designed to let you know what programs and services the county provides and how you can access them as well as how you can contact your representatives in county government.

I hope you will find it useful and will keep it on hand for quick reference.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alisha R. Bell".

ALISHA R. BELL

Chair

Wayne County Commission

Inside this Guide

Overview

Message from Chair Bell Page 2

Structure of county government Page 4

County government

Wayne County Commission Pages 5-6

Wayne County Charter Page 7

County finances

How county is funded Page 8-9

Wayne County Commission

Wayne County Commissioners Pages 10-12

Elected officials

Wayne County Executive Page 13

Elected heads of departments Pages 14-16

Executive departments, county phone numbers Pages 17-19

General Information

County services Page 20

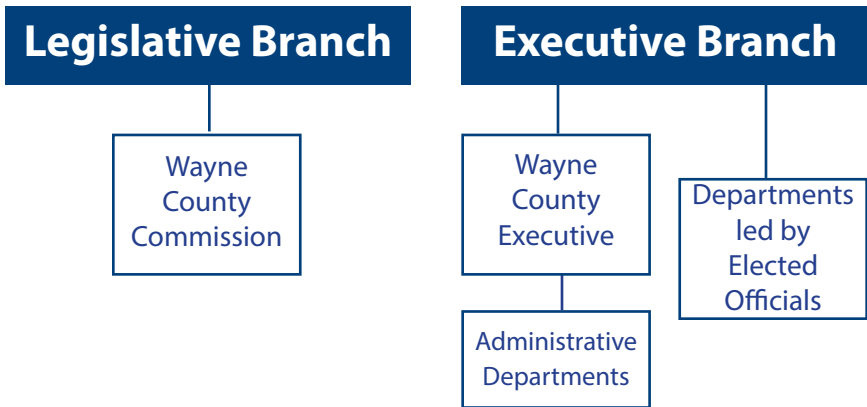
County property taxes Page 21

History of Wayne County Page 22

AG, Ethics Board, Women's Commission Page 23
Youth Council

County Map Back cover

Basic structure of Wayne County government



Wayne County government has **two branches**, the **executive** and **legislative**. While Wayne County Circuit Court and Probate Court have an administrative relationship with the county, they are state courts. The county charter does not provide for a judicial branch of county government.

The **Wayne County Commission** is vested by the county charter with all legislative authority. The **Wayne County Executive** is the head of the executive branch, in charge of all county departments **except** those headed by **other elected officials** -- the County Clerk, Treasurer, Prosecuting Attorney, Register of Deeds and Sheriff.

The relationship between the Wayne County Executive and the Wayne County Commission is very much like all executive-legislative relationships, such as that between a mayor and city council in larger cities.

The Wayne County Executive has administrative authority, in essence running the day-to-day activities of the county, but the approval of the Wayne County Commission is required for many functions of the executive branch.

Wayne County Commission

The Wayne County Commission is the **legislative branch of county government**. Its chief role is to approve the county's annual budget and to enact ordinances and adopt resolutions. It also approves contracts, appointments and rules.

The county charter gives the county executive the administrative power to direct and control county functions and operations. **The commission provides checks and balances** on the executive branch with its authority over the budget, ordinances and contracts.

There are **15 Wayne County Commissioners** elected from separate geographic districts of similar population. The average commission district includes 116,000 people. The boundaries for the 15 districts are adjusted every 10 years with population figures from a new census.

Commissioners serve **two-year terms** and are elected in partisan elections held every even-numbered year. Since commissioners are elected in districts, rather than at-large countywide, they also serve as the direct representatives in county government for the people who reside in their districts.

If a resident has a question or concern related to county government, the commissioner who represents the district in which they reside may be their first step in getting it resolved.

Contact your commissioner

You can find your Wayne County Commissioner in the listing of commissioners that follows this section, by viewing which communities are included in their district.

Phone and email information is listed for each commissioner.

To send mail to a commissioner, address it to them at:
500 Griswold, 7th Floor
Detroit, MI 48226.

How the Wayne County Commission conducts business

The Wayne County Commission operates under a committee system, with eight standing committees established to review and make recommendations to the full commission regarding contracts, ordinances and other items within each committee's designated area of responsibility.

The eight standing committees are: Audit; Economic Development; Government Operations; Health & Human Services; Public Safety, Judiciary & Homeland Security; Public Services; Ways & Means; and Seniors and Veterans Affairs. Each has five to seven members. Special committees include Rules, Behavioral Health and Criminal Justice Complex. The commission also oversees the Benefits/Staffing Task Force and Youth Council.

The commission can also meet as a Committee of the Whole, during which all 15 commissioners hold extensive discussion on items in a committee setting.

The full commission holds two regular meetings each month, usually on the first and third Thursdays at 10 a.m. The Wayne County Commission has its offices and **holds its meetings in the Guardian Building**, 500 Griswold, in downtown Detroit. All meetings are also available via **Zoom** and the commission's **YouTube** channel.

The commission elects a chairperson at the beginning of each two-year term. The chair oversees the commission's departments, serves as its personnel director, makes all committee appointments, and sets the schedule and agendas for, and presides over, all full commission and Committee of the Whole meetings. A schedule of meetings and more information about the commission can be found at **www.waynecounty.com/commission**.

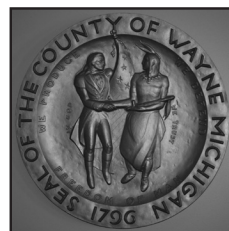
Wayne County Home Rule Charter

PREAMBLE

We, the people of Wayne County, by God's grace, and with gratitude for His blessings, for the land rich in natural resources that we inhabit, for the freedom we enjoy governing ourselves in a democratic society, and for our role in putting the World on wheels, and being confident that we will overcome all present and future challenges, adopt this Home Rule Charter for the purpose of providing more efficient, responsive and accountable government.

So begins the **Home Rule Charter for the County of Wayne**, as approved by voters on Nov. 3, 1981. The charter changed governance of the county by replacing the 27-member Wayne County Board of Commissioners with the 15-member Wayne County Commission and establishing an elected chief executive officer, the Wayne County Executive.

Less remembered today is that two questions were before voters: adopt the charter and provide for an elected county executive, or adopt the charter and provide a chief administrative officer to be appointed by the Wayne County Commission. Both questions were approved but the elected county executive received more yes votes and the version was adopted.



Written by an elected Wayne County Charter Commission, the charter sets the framework for the county's government. It is very much like the Constitution of Wayne County, having come from the people, and can be amended only by a vote of the people, who have approved amendments to the charter seven times since its adoption. The county charter can be viewed online by looking under [News & Resources](#) on the Wayne County Commission's website at **www.waynecounty.com/commission**.

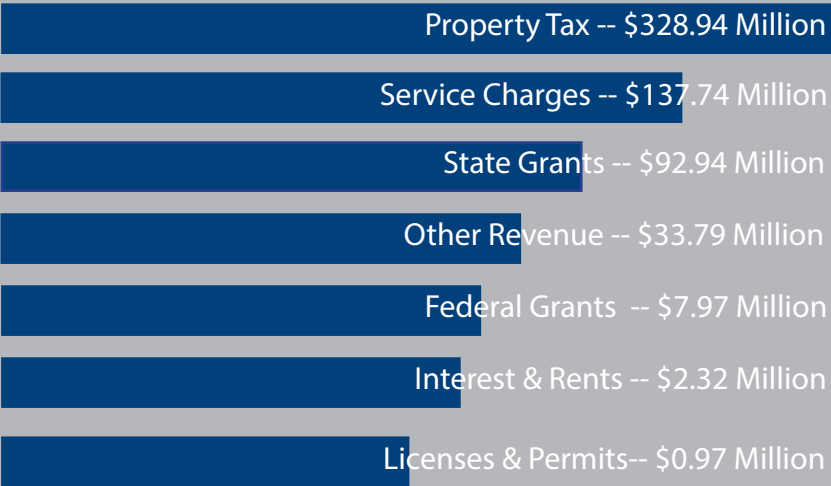
How Wayne County government is funded

Wayne County operates under an October 1-September 30 fiscal year to conform to both the state and federal government budget cycles. Under an ordinance adopted by the Wayne County Commission in 2011, the county prepares multiple-year budgets to improve budgeting and forecasting and provide more stringent fiscal control over county spending.

Wayne County’s annual budget appropriation is approximately \$1.82 billion for 2022-23. Of this amount, approximately \$1.19 billion represents funding for **specific, non-discretionary purposes**, such as road maintenance, mental health services and wastewater treatment projects, and cannot be diverted for other purposes. A major portion of this funding is passed on to the county from other governmental agencies.

The balance of the county’s \$1.82 billion budget -- approximately \$637.80 million -- is more discretionary and is derived from the **general fund**. The general fund is responsible for funding the functions of government, including criminal justice, health and welfare and general government, **many of which are mandated under the county charter and state law**.

Sources of County’s General Fund Tax Revenue



Source: 2022-23 FY Budget

The amount of property tax each taxpayer pays is determined by the taxable value of the property and the county's millage rate, currently levied at the total combined rate of 7.8220 mills.

Wayne County's property tax revenue peaked in the 2007-08 fiscal year, as the county collected more than \$389 million in property taxes. But property tax collections have declined, caused by significant decreases in both residential and industrial property values. For the 2022-23 fiscal year, property tax collections are projected to be \$329 million.

Estimated percentage of General Fund expenditures

General Government -- 35.4 percent

Includes Prosecutor, Treasurer, Register of Deeds, Clerk and the County Executive. In addition, general government includes expenditures for internal departments such as management and budget, legal and human resources.

Public Services -- 0.1 percent

Environmental services.

Public Safety -- 30.9 percent

Includes jail operations and homeland security.

Judiciary -- 19.7 percent

Wayne County Third Circuit Court and Probate Court; county contributes funding although courts are operated by the State of Michigan.

Health & Welfare Services -- 7.5 percent

Indigent health care; Medical Examiner's facility.

Legislative -- 2.3 percent

Wayne County Commission operations.

Non-Departmental -- 4.1 percent

Liability payments, building rental, etc..

Source: 2022-23 FY Adopted Budget

Wayne County Commissioners



Tim Killeen

D - Detroit

District 1: Detroit (part), all Grosse Pointes, Harper Woods

(313) 224-0920

tkilleen@waynecounty.com



Jonathan C. Kinloch

D- Detroit

District 2: Detroit (part)

(313) 224-0916

jkinloch@waynecounty.com



Martha G. Scott

D- Highland Park

District 3: Detroit (part), Hamtramck, Highland Park

(313) 224-0878

mscott2@waynecounty.com



Cara A. Clemente

D- Lincoln Park

District 4: Detroit (part), Ecorse, Lincoln Park, Melvindale, River Rouge

(313) 224-0886

cclemente@waynecounty.com



Irma Clark-Coleman

D- Detroit

District 5: Detroit (part)

(313) 224-0942

iclark@waynecounty.com

Wayne County Commissioners



Monique Baker McCormick

D-Detroit

District 6: Detroit (part), Redford Twp.

(313) 224-0884

bakermccormickstaff@waynecounty.com



Alisha Bell

Chair

D-Detroit

District 7: Detroit (part)

(313) 224-0936

abell3@waynecounty.com



David Knezek

D-Dearborn Heights

District 8: Dearborn Heights, Garden City,
Inkster

(313) 224-0930

davidknezek@waynecounty.com



Terry Marecki

R- Livonia

District 9: Livonia (part), Northville, Northville
Twp., Plymouth Twp. (part)

(313) 224-0946

tmarecki@waynecounty.com



Melissa Daub

D- Canton Twp.

District 10: Canton Twp., Plymouth, Plymouth
Twp. (part)

(313) 224-0882

district10@waynecounty.com

Wayne County Commissioners



Al Haidous

D-Wayne

District 11: Belleville, Flat Rock, Huron Twp.,
Romulus, Sumpter Twp., Van Buren Twp., Wayne
(313) 224-0944

ahaidous@waynecounty.com



Glenn S. Anderson

D- Westland

District 12: Livonia (part), Westland
(313) 224-8855

district12@waynecounty.com



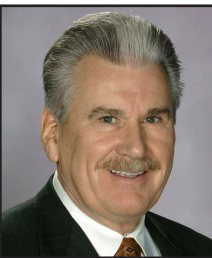
Sam Baydoun

Vice-Chair Pro Tempore

D-Dearborn

District 13: Allen Park (part), Dearborn
(313) 224-0934

sbaydoun@waynecounty.com



Raymond E. Basham

D-Brownstown Twp.

District 14: Brownstown Twp., Gibraltar,
Rockwood, Taylor, Woodhaven
(313) 224-0876

rbasham@waynecounty.com



Joseph Palamara

Vice-Chair D-Grosse Ile Twp.

District 15: Allen Park (part), Grosse Ile Twp.,
Riverview, Southgate, Trenton, Wyandotte
(313) 224-0880

jpalamar@waynecounty.com

Wayne County Executive

Commonly known as the Wayne County Executive, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is designated in the county charter as the **head of the executive branch of county government**, “vested with the executive and administrative power of the county,” controlling county operations and functions.

The charter states that “the CEO shall supervise, direct and control functions of all departments of the county except those headed by elected officials, and shall coordinate the various activities of the county and unify the management of its affairs.”

The county executive submits a proposed budget for all of county government to the Wayne County Commission for its deliberation and approval each year. Likewise, the county executive submits contracts to the commission for approval, along with certain appointments.

The CEO has veto power over ordinances and resolutions adopted by the commission, which may be overridden by a two-thirds vote of the commission.

Comparing it to city government terms, **the county executive can be likened to being the “mayor” of the county.**

The Wayne County Executive serves terms of four years and is elected by voters countywide on a partisan ballot in November of the year coinciding with the election of the governor of Michigan.

The Office of the Wayne County Executive is on the 31st floor of the Guardian Building, 500 Griswold, in downtown Detroit.



Warren C. Evans
Wayne County Executive
wcevans@waynecounty.com
(313) 224-0286
D - Canton Twp.
Term Expires 12/31/26

Wayne County Elected Officials



Cathy M. Garrett

Wayne County Clerk
D-Detroit
cgarrett@waynecounty.com
(313) 967-6938
www.waynecounty.com/clerk
Term Expires 12/31/24



Kym Worthy

Wayne County Prosecutor
D-Detroit
kworthy@waynecounty.com
(313) 224-5777
www.waynecounty.com/prosecutor
Term Expires 12/31/24



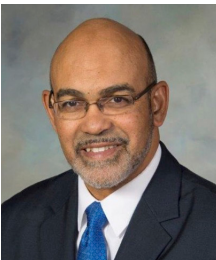
Bernard J. Youngblood

Wayne County Register of Deeds
D-Grosse Pointe Farms
byoungblood@waynecounty.com
(313) 224-5850
www.waynecounty.com/deeds
Term Expires 12/31/24



Raphael Washington

Wayne County Sheriff
D-Detroit
rwashing@waynecounty.com
(313) 224-2222
www.sheriffconnect.com
Term Expires 12/31/24



Eric Sabree

Wayne County Treasurer
D-Detroit
esabree@waynecounty.com
(313) 224-5990
www.waynecounty.com/treasurer
Term Expires 6/30/25

Administrative departments headed by elected officials

The Michigan Constitution, Article VII Sec. 4, states that all counties shall have an elected sheriff, clerk, treasurer, register of deeds and prosecuting attorney.

The Wayne County Charter sets up these officials' realms as departments of the executive branch and expressly states that the county executive is in charge of executive branch departments except those headed by elected officials.

Clerk

The county clerk is responsible for administering federal, state and county elections conducted in Wayne County. The Wayne County Clerk, among many other constitutional and statutorily mandated functions, serves as the keeper of the records for the county.

The county clerk is clerk of the Circuit Court and clerk of several county boards, including the Board of County Canvassers, Concealed Weapon Licensing Board and County Plat Board. Other functions of the clerk are primarily recordkeeping in nature. For example, the clerk must keep transcripts of births and deaths, issue marriage licenses, and record and index all business assumed names, co-partnership certificates, notary public appointments and discharge of military personnel.

The Wayne County Clerk's Office is in the Coleman A. Young Municipal Center, 2 Woodward Ave., Detroit.

Prosecuting Attorney

The prosecutor is responsible for prosecuting all violations of state criminal laws within the county and representing the county in appeals connected before the Michigan Court of Appeals, the Michigan Supreme Court and federal courts.

The Wayne County Prosecutor's Office is in the Frank Murphy Hall of Justice, 1441 St. Antoine, Detroit.

Sheriff

The Sheriff is the jailer for the county. The principal duties of the department involve the operation of the county jails, the serving of processes and law enforcement in county parks, on the waterways, in Circuit Court and on secondary roads.

The county charter states that the department may also contract with units of government within the county to provide services, with the approval of the Wayne County Commission.

The administrative offices of the Wayne County Sheriff are located in Detroit's Midtown district at 4747 Woodward Ave.

Register of Deeds

The first constitution of the state of Michigan, adopted by the Congress of the United States in 1836, established the office of Register of Deeds.

The Register of Deeds is the official recording officer for all legal papers and instruments pertaining to the transfer and encumbrances of all lands and properties within the county. More than a half-million documents are recorded each year by the Wayne County Register of Deeds.

The Wayne County Register of Deeds office is in Detroit's Greektown, on the 7th floor of 400 Monroe St.

Treasurer

The Treasurer is custodian of all money, collector of county taxes, disbursing agent for certain tax funds to local communities and school districts, investment officer of funds belonging to and under the control of the county and performs other duties concerned with interrelated fiscal matters of the numerous county departments and agencies.

The Wayne County Treasurer's office is in Detroit's Greektown, on the 5th floor of 400 Monroe St.

Administrative functions under direction of Wayne County Executive

Public Services

Wayne County's 1.75 million residents and countless visitors enjoy a world-class infrastructure network. The county is committed to maintaining and improving a multi-billion dollar inventory of roads, buildings and land. The mission of its Environmental Services Group is to create, foster and maintain a clean and safe land and water environment by providing services for cost-effective drainage systems, wastewater management and solid waste management.

Contact: (313) 224-7600

Website: www.waynecounty.com/dps

Corporation Counsel

The mission of Corporation Counsel is to provide legal representation, litigation, legal advice and counsel and Human Relations business certification services to benefit departments and elected officials, so they can legally fulfill their duties.

Contact: (313) 224-5030

Website: www.waynecounty.com/corpcounsel

Management and Budget

The mission is to provide financial services, information and asset protection, and budget services to elected policymakers, departments, administrators and the public.

Contact: (313) 224-0420

Website: www.waynecounty.com/mb

Economic Development

A premier gateway to the global marketplace, Wayne County has the workforce, infrastructure, and industrial assets to design, build and ship just about anything with this region leading the way in innovative fields like mobility.

Contact: (313) 224-0739

Website: www.waynecounty.com/econdev

Health, Human and Veterans Services

The department's mission is to coordinate and administer health, educational, youth, veterans and social services to residents and communities to address the social determinants of health and community wellness by reducing and eliminating disparities and inequities related to social and environmental justice.

Contact: (734) 727-7101

Website: www.waynecounty.com/hhs

Homeland Security and Emergency Management

This group takes the lead role in coordinating the county's responsibility to plan, analyze, conduct and maintain programs to preserve and protect lives and property from major emergencies and disasters of all types.

Contact: (734) 728-3711

Website: www.waynecounty.com/hsem

Information Technology

The focus is to design, develop and maintain the county's information processing infrastructure. This includes setting countywide computer standards and methodologies and assisting departments with the design and implementation of technology applications to enhance operations.

Contact: (313) 224-0354

Website: www.waynecounty.com/technology

Personnel/Human Resources

The mission is to acquire and retain talent through development of solutions aiding internal and external stakeholders.

Contact: (313) 224-5901

Website: www.waynecounty.com/phr

Senior Services

It provides advocacy, financial hardship and nutrition services to seniors and their families so seniors can live as independently as possible and maintain their quality of life.

Contact: (800) 851-1454

Website: www.waynecounty.com/svs

Juvenile and Youth Services

The Juvenile and Youth Services Division strengthens community safety by providing a range of intervention and treatment services. The divisions are responsible for planning, supervision, care and payment for juvenile justice services.

Contact: (313) 224-0810

Website: www.waynecounty.com/hhs

Veterans Services Division

The Veterans Services Division is purposed to provide financial hardship and support services to Wayne County honorably discharged veterans and their families to meet their basic needs.

Contact: (313) 224-5045

Website: www.waynecounty.com/hh

Indigent Defense Services

The department will manage the county's indigent defense system, including both the public defender office component and the private assigned counsel component of felony cases assigned to criminal defense counsel.

Contact: (313) 224-????

Website: www.waynecounty.com/ids

Wayne County Phone Numbers

County Executive.....	(313) 224-0286
County Clerk.....	(313) 967-6938
County Prosecutor.....	(313) 224-5777
County Treasurer.....	(313) 224-5990
Register of Deeds.....	(313) 224-5850
Sheriff.....	(313) 224-2222
Veterans Services.....	(313) 224-5045
Senior Services.....	(800) 851-1454
Parks Division.....	(734) 261-1990
Report a Road Hazard.....	(888) 762-3273
Health Services.....	(800) 935-5669
WIC Program.....	(734) 727-7156

At a glance: What services does our county government provide for us?

Counties provide many of the vital organizational and recordkeeping functions of government, along with basic services that affect us day to day.

The county is the **keeper of vital records**. Property transactions and deeds are recorded through the office of the register of deeds. Birth and death records are kept by the county clerk, who also issues marriage licenses, records and indexes all business assumed names, notary public appointments and more.

Elections are administered and certified by the county, another primary function of the county clerk, who also oversees campaign finance reporting for county and local candidates for office. County taxes and all delinquent property **taxes are collected** by the county through the treasurer's office, which can also support local communities with loans to make up for unpaid local taxes.

The county provides **jail services** and **public safety functions** and road patrols through the Sheriff's office. Along with arresting and jailing those who break the law, the county provides for the **prosecution of major crimes** through the prosecutor's office. Criminal, civil and other cases are decided in Wayne County Circuit and Probate courts.

Whether with plows, patching crews or mowers on medians, the county is responsible for many miles of **road maintenance**.

The county operates a **public health department**, provides **medical examiner's** services, coordinates **programs for senior citizens** like Meals on Wheels, provides **veterans services** and operates a **county parks system** with recreational activities.

While this list is by no means complete, it does give a good sampling of the services provided by Wayne County government.

Wayne County property taxes

Here's a breakdown of the Wayne County property taxes paid by residential property owners (tax rates listed are mills).

5.6483 Operating Millage: Permanent, as authorized in the county charter voters approved in 1981 for basic operations.

0.9529 Voted Operating Millage: Voters approved additional tax for basic operations. It was last renewed in 2020, through 2025.

0.0368 Soldiers and Sailors Relief: Sometimes called veterans millage. Authorized by state law in the late 1800s for counties to create a veterans relief fund.

0.2459 Parks Millage: Approved by voters and dedicated to the county parks system. Last renewed in 2020, through 2025.

0.9381 Jail Millage: Approved by voters and dedicated to the county jail system. Last renewed in 2022, through 2031.

7.822 mills total Wayne County property tax

A "mill" is a unit that is used to calculate how much property tax is paid. One mill is equal to \$1 of tax for every \$1,000 of a property's taxable value, which is roughly calculated to be one-half of the property's actual value. Taxable value is multiplied by the millage rate to determine the amount of property tax due.

To determine how much property tax you pay to Wayne County, multiply your property's taxable value by 0.007822.

The charter-authorized operating millage is on summer tax bills. All other voter-approved county taxes are on winter tax bills.

Some items listed on tax bills may have "Wayne County" in the name, but are not taxes for Wayne County government. Taxes for Wayne County Community College District, the Detroit Zoo, Detroit Institute of Arts and transit authorities **are not Wayne County taxes.**

The evolution of Wayne County

The origins of county government can be traced to England. In the United States, the beginnings of our region's government began with the Northwest Land Ordinance of 1787, which created settlement policy and governance framework for what was then known as the Northwest Territory, which eventually would become Michigan, Ohio, Illinois, Indiana and Wisconsin.

Territories would create counties when an area reached a certain population density, according to "Michigan In Brief." **Wayne County was created in 1796**, with boundaries including most of today's Michigan, portions of Illinois and Wisconsin and a strip of land across what is now northern Ohio and Indiana. It was named after Revolutionary War hero General "Mad" Anthony Wayne.

The boundaries of Wayne County changed frequently in the early 1800s, starting with the establishment of the Territory of Indiana in 1800, which reduced Wayne County by roughly half. By the end of 1826, the boundaries of Wayne County were set as they are now. By 1897, the current boundaries of Michigan's 83 counties were in place. Today, Wayne County covers 622 square miles with its 34 cities and nine townships.

Michigan's counties were formed throughout the 1800s to establish government over the unorganized territory and to encourage settlement by surveying the land and dividing it into sections for easier sale. According to the Citizens Research Council of Michigan, counties were originally organized as administrative arms of state government, providing local services and keeping records.

After being established during the days of the Northwest Territory, county government in Michigan was institutionalized in the state constitution in 1835, written in preparation for Michigan's statehood in 1837. It has continued to be recognized in the subsequent state constitutions of 1850, 1908 and, most recently, 1963.

Legislative Auditor General

The Office of Legislative Auditor General is referenced in the Wayne County Home Rule Charter and tasked with producing accurate, complete and timely audits and reviews to assist the Wayne County Commission in its oversight and operational responsibilities. The audits are financial and operational, examining procedures used by county agencies, finding areas at risk and working with the agencies on corrective action plans to improve operations. For more information visit **waynecounty.com/commission** and click on the Departments tab at the top.

Wayne County Ethics Board

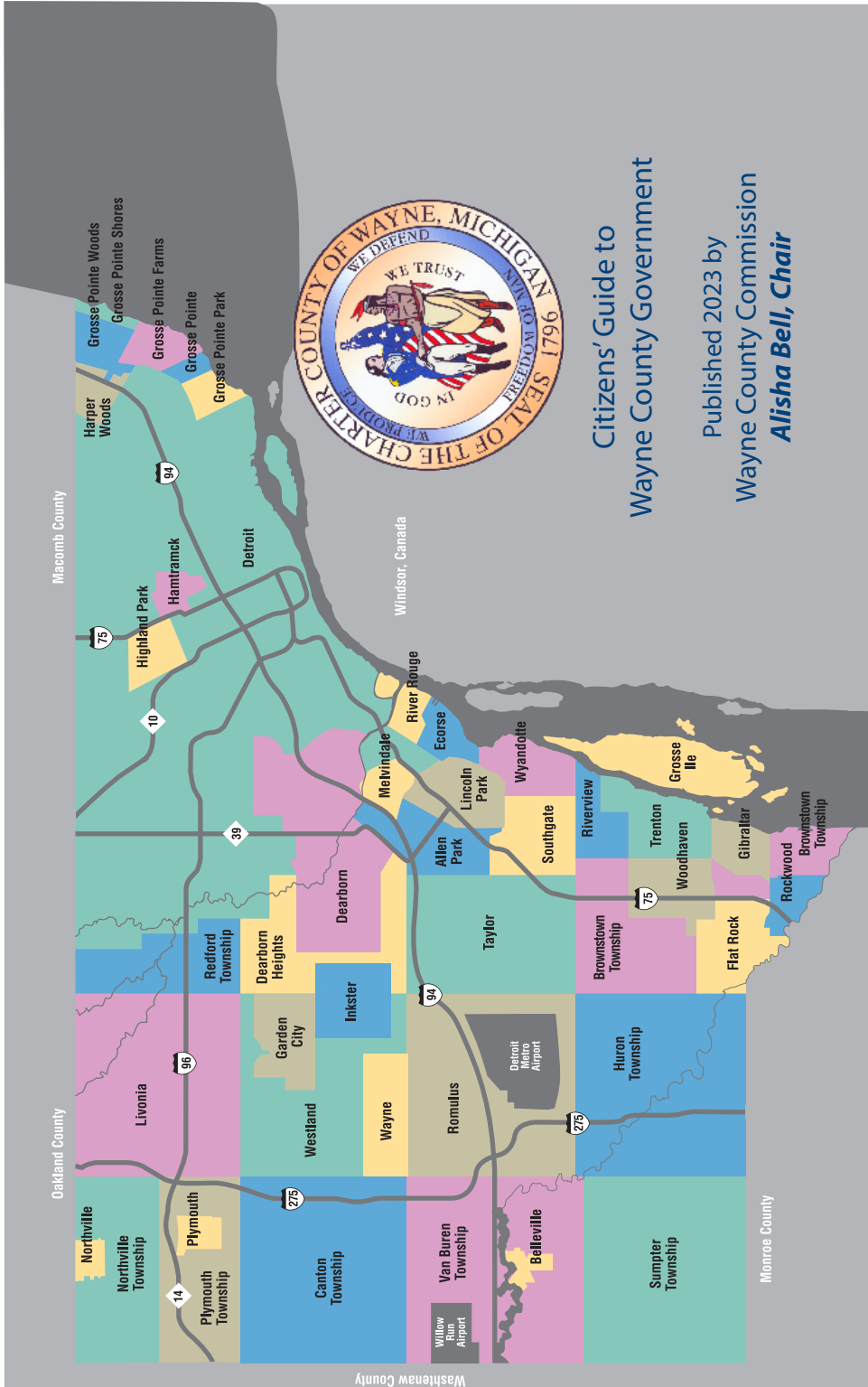
The seven-member Wayne County Ethics Board was established in the Wayne County Ethics Ordinance, which was adopted by the Wayne County Commission in April 2012 and amended in December 2014. The ordinance is the product of an ethics task force to create a comprehensive ordinance that sets into law standards of conduct and defines ethical behavior for county employees and vendors. For more information visit **waynecounty.com/boards/ethicsboard**.

Wayne County Women's Commission

The Wayne County Women's Commission was formed in 2021 by Wayne County Commission Chair Alisha Bell, under a recommendation from resident Sarah Roberts, to look at issues including employment, earning power, health care and child care and make recommendations designed to better the lives of women living in Wayne County. All 19 members are volunteers who will serve two-year terms without pay.

Wayne County Commission Youth Council

Wayne County Commissioners in 2020 unanimously supported a resolution by Commissioner Monique Baker McCormick to create the Wayne County Commission Youth Council program, which is dedicated to promoting youth education, community involvement and civic interaction.



Citizens' Guide to Wayne County Government

Published 2023 by
Wayne County Commission
Alisha Bell, Chair