Dear Friend,

COVID-19 continues to force major changes in our lives and overcoming this pandemic will continue to take time.

My heart breaks for all those who have lost loved ones to this horrible virus and I continue to keep them – and all of you – in my prayers.

The impact of COVID-19 on Wayne County families has been devastating, but county officials at all levels have been working together from the start to help ease its impact.

As we deal with the impact of COVID-19, I am working closely with the county executive’s office, county health officials and my fellow commissioners to provide a safe, financially sound path forward.

We have also fought for a greater county role in nursing home inspections to better protect our most vulnerable residents.

County health officials are also working hard every day to assure our first responders have the protective equipment they need to safely perform their duties.

The economic impact of COVID-19 has also been devastating, but we have worked hard to help our local businesses. Through a partnership with TCF Bank, we also provided an additional $2 million in financial aid for our county’s small businesses. That raised the total amount available to $14 million. County finances have also suffered a major blow.

As Chair of the commission’s Ways & Means committee, I have spent countless hours grappling with a projected $152 million deficit for the current budget year, which expires September 30, as well as additional losses over the next several budget years. Tough action cannot be avoided, but we have been working hard to keep essential county services in place while minimizing the impact of furloughs and layoffs on our valued county staff.

Ways & Means meetings, as well as those of the full Wayne County Commission, are being conducted on Zoom for the time being. The meeting ID number for Ways & Means is 223 497 5895. For full commission meetings it is 859 966 4354.

These are unprecedented times, but by working together we will not only meet today’s challenges but those still to come.

Please continue to practice social distancing and to follow all health-related orders to slow the spread of COVID-19.

As always, you can call or email me with your concerns and I will continue to keep you updated on these and other county issues through my Facebook page.

My best to you, please stay safe,

Ilona Varga
Wayne County Commission - District 4
County continues essential services

Essential Wayne County health services are continuing as stay-in-place orders remain in place.

Wayne County WIC nutritionists are available by phone to answer questions around nutrition and child feedings.

Anyone who has an upcoming appointment will be contacted via phone by a WIC staff member who will provide assistance on how to access services remotely.

Certifications and re-certifications will be temporarily conducted over the phone. If you have a certification appointment currently scheduled, you will receive a phone call from a WIC nutritionist prior to your appointment.

WIC Cards will be delivered through the U.S. Postal Service.

WIC breastfeeding counseling, the Healthy Families America and Early On home visiting programs, the Safe Sleep Program and Children’s Special Care services also continue.

Immunization services have been reduced but could return with the lifting of stay-at-home orders. HIV/STD program services continue through telemedicine.

Wayne County steps up and allocates funding to assist small businesses

The Wayne County Commission recently expanded the county’s COVID-19 Small Business Relief Fund by allocating an additional $2 million, which added to the TCF Bank match, and increased potential funding to $14 million for loans available to small businesses.

“So many owners of small businesses have been hard hit by stay safe orders put in place to slow the spread of COVID-19,” Commissioner Ilona Varga said. “While some businesses are returning in some fashion as part of the recovery rollout, many of them still need help. This action should provide much-needed assistance for small businesses at this critical time.”

The loan program is a partnership between the county and Wayne County-based TCF Bank. It provides low-interest loans of up to $50,000 to eligible businesses. While the program initially targeted small business in low-income census tracts, it is now available for businesses in every county community.

Businesses can learn more about the program and apply for loans by contacting one of the 15 TCF Bank and Chemical Bank banking centers located in Wayne County.

Loan applications and a list of banking centers are available at tcfbank.com/waynecounty or chemicalbank.com/waynecounty.

Everyone needs to be counted in 2020 Census

If you have yet to complete your 2020 Census form, please take the time to fill out the information as it is vitally important in determining everything from how much federal revenue Wayne County will receive to how county, state and U.S. Congressional districts are drawn.

Once you received the Census form, you can respond in one of three ways: online, by phone or by mail.

Beginning this month and continuing through July, homes that haven’t responded to the 2020 Census will be contacted by a Census taker to make sure everyone is counted.

In December, the Census Bureau is scheduled to deliver apportionment counts to the President and Congress as required by law.

Please take time to respond to the census and make sure your friends and neighbors respond as well.

Everyone must be counted!

Upcoming road project

Schaefer Rd. between Fort St. and Bassett
Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, Commissioner Ilona Varga enjoyed her visits with members of the Lincoln Park City Council (left, top) and Melvindale City Council (left, bottom). Commissioner Varga also met with State Senator Marshall Bullock and shared conversations with the hard-working police officers from the 4th Precinct.

Updated information on COVID-19 pandemic is made readily available

Wayne County has made it easy for residents to find helpful, up-to-the-minute information on the COVID-19 pandemic through its webpage, as well as through Facebook.

Directives for the protection of yourself and others can be found on the county webpage, www.waynecounty.com. It includes a dashboard showing an up-to-the minute breakdown of the impact of the pandemic in Wayne County.

The dashboard includes information for all Wayne County communities, excluding Detroit, which maintains its own statistics. It includes information on new cases, fatalities and breakdowns by gender. Information is updated at 5 p.m. each day. A link is also provided through the Wayne County Commission Facebook page.

An official report from the Wayne County Department of Health, Human & Veterans Services is also released each day and shared via the Wayne County Commission Facebook page. For more information go to Google and search Wayne County Health Department of Health, Human and Veterans Services.

This report includes updated information from the county and state, as well as from federal and international health officials, regarding the COVID-19 pandemic.

Food banks offer assistance during COVID-19 pandemic

With so many people struggling financially during the COVID-19 pandemic, local food banks and food drives are stepping up to help those in need.

A complete list of available Wayne County food pantries and programs can be located on the Great Start Wayne website at greatstartwayne.org/findhelp-food.

Additional information is also made available by contacting:

**Gleaners Food Bank** – gcfb.org or call 866-GLEANER (453-2637).

**Forgotten Harvest** – forgottenharvest.org or call (248) 967-1500.
Frequently requested County phone numbers
Commissioner, Distrcit 4, ILONA VARGA...............................(313) 224-0886
Executive, Warren C. Evans.....................................................(313) 224-0286
Clerk, Cathy Garrett..................................................................(313) 224-6262
Treasurer, Eric Sabree...............................................................(313) 224-5990
Sheriff, Benny Napoleon..........................................................(313) 224-2222
Register of Deeds, Bernard Youngblood..................................(313) 224-5850
Prosecutor, Kym Worthy...........................................................(313) 224-5777
Report Road Hazard.................................................................(888) 762-3273
Veteran’s Services.....................................................................(313) 224-5045
Senior Citizen Services.............................................................(734) 326-5202
Health and Human Services.......................................................(734) 727-7000