

**PRESS RELEASE: Under Embargo until Wednesday, January 15 2014 at 9:10am**

**Ann Arbor City Council Member Sally Hart Petersen releases the following statement:**

“It gives me great pleasure to announce that I have decided to run for Mayor of Ann Arbor.

I believe I am the best candidate who can lead the City forward to improved economic prosperity, a more collaborative relationship with the University of Michigan, and broader civic engagement. I believe my combination of leadership experience, skills and interests in the private, public, and non-profit sectors make me uniquely qualified to lead Ann Arbor into its next era of growth and sustainability.

I love Ann Arbor, it is my chosen home, and my husband and I have raised our children here. I treasure Ann Arbor’s thriving downtown and vibrant neighborhoods, parks, and variety of venues to play. The University of Michigan attracts residents and visitors from all over the world, and this contributes to diversity of thought and culture. The University also protects our economy; it sustained our City by offering stable employment throughout the “Great Recession.” As we see the economy improving, we need to ensure Ann Arbor optimizes its own opportunities for growth.

Ann Arbor needs a Mayor who can lead the City toward greater economic prosperity while also preserving those unique characteristics that make Ann Arbor such a special place. The development of a resilient economy requires an independent private sector that builds upon the strengths contributed to our community by the University of Michigan. Growing our private sector requires *responsible* development and redevelopment downtown and along our business corridors. This increases residential and commercial property values adding much needed revenue to our City in order to improve the level of city services such as public safety, roads, and clean water to Ann Arbor’s neighborhoods.

I am committed to finding avenues for shared interests with University of Michigan leadership and I believe economic growth is one of them. Inevitably, by the end of 2014 the University of Michigan will have a new President and the City of Ann Arbor will have a new Mayor. It is an opportune time to strengthen our collaboration and actively seek ways to promote purposeful growth.

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In addition to promoting growth, our next Mayor needs to be a champion of civic engagement. As a City Council Member, I have prioritized the “voice of our citizens”; surveying residents’ views with respect to City services, hosting town hall meetings, and communicating regularly via Ward 2 e-mail updates and a Ward 2 website. It is important that we make information about our City accessible and comprehensive. Open and transparent communication enables residents to trust their local government and encourages engagement. Because inclusion is an important component of civic engagement, I have also been a strong advocate for those with disabilities, serving on the Ann Arbor Commission on Disability Issues and as a member of the University of Michigan Council on Disability Concerns.

My passion for Ann Arbor is demonstrated through my commitment to private sector, non-profit, and now public sector leadership. I have served in strategic and marketing leadership positions at CFI Group, ABN AMRO Mortgage Group, and HealthMedia. I have served as President of the Tappan Middle School PTSO, Co-President of the Angell Elementary PTO, and Board Member of the Ann Arbor Art Center and the Racquet Club of Ann Arbor. Currently, I serve on the Board of the Neutral Zone and the Ann Arbor Huron Athletic Booster Club and am a Past President of the Junior League of Ann Arbor.

On City Council I have sponsored resolutions to create the Economic Development Collaborative Taskforce, request training for Council on conflict of interest and standards of conduct policy, and to promote pedestrian safety. These topics can be controversial and provocative but with improved communication and trust, we can have a productive dialogue that yields practical solutions.

I am excited to begin the process of launching my campaign. I invite Ann Arbor citizens to join me in the effort to lead Ann Arbor forward.”

***Lead Forward***

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