



To advance the quality of life of all residents through a commitment to responsible growth, and value-driven municipal services that promote the relationships among economic vitality, environmental stewardship, and social equity. (Adopted 2/14/2017)

# NEWSLETTER

May 2019

**Oshtemo Township Board of Trustees**  
**Supervisor**  
 Libby Heiny-Cogswell 216-5220  
 libbyhc@oshtemo.org  
**Clerk**  
 Dusty Farmer 216-5224  
 dfarmer@oshtemo.org  
**Treasurer**  
 Grant Taylor 216-5221  
 gtaylor@oshtemo.org  
**Trustees**  
 Cheri L. Bell 372-2275  
 cbell@oshtemo.org  
 Deb Everett 375-4260  
 deverett@oshtemo.org  
 Zak Ford 271-5513  
 zford@oshtemo.org  
 Ken Hudok 359-0787  
 khudok@oshtemo.org

**Township Department Information**  
**Assessor:**  
 Kristine Biddle 216-5225 [assessor@oshtemo.org](mailto:assessor@oshtemo.org)  
**Fire Chief:**  
 Mark Barnes 375-0487 [mbarnes@oshtemo.org](mailto:mbarnes@oshtemo.org)  
**Ordinance Enf:**  
 Rick Suwarsky 216-5227 [rsuwarsky@oshtemo.org](mailto:rsuwarsky@oshtemo.org)  
**Parks Director:**  
 Karen High 216-5233 [khigh@oshtemo.org](mailto:khigh@oshtemo.org)  
 Rental Info 216-5224 [oshtemo@oshtemo.org](mailto:oshtemo@oshtemo.org)  
**Planning Director:**  
 Julie Johnston 216-5223 [jjohnston@oshtemo.org](mailto:jjohnston@oshtemo.org)  
**Public Works:**  
 Marc Elliott 216-5236 [melliott@oshtemo.org](mailto:melliott@oshtemo.org)

**Township Customer Service Hours**  
 Monday - Thursday  
 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
 Friday  
 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.  
 (1st Thurs of each month at 9 a.m.)  
**(269) 375-4260**  
**We will be CLOSED**  
**May 27- Memorial Day**  
**July 4 and 5 - Independence Day**

## Welcome to Our Newest Full-Time Firefighters!

 **PROOF OF RESIDENCY REQUIRED FOR SERVICES**  
**2019 Dump Day Schedule**  
 Township Hall Parking Lot  
 7275 W. Main St. 9 a.m.-3 p.m.  
 Yard waste, kitchen garbage, dead animals, hazardous materials, or large quantities of building materials cannot be accepted.  
 May 11 and 25 June 29  
 July 27 August 31  
 September 28 October 26  
 November 23—LAST DAY  
**Fall Leaf Drop Off Days**  
 Nov 9 and 23  
 **Shred Day**  
 10 AM-NOON  
 September 14

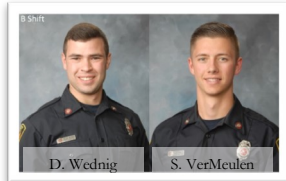


**Shane Chambers** – Interned with the Oshtemo from January 2017-January 2018, and then served as an Paid-On Call firefighter from January 2018-January 2019. Shane became Driver Operator in 2019 and is also a sworn Parking Enforcement Officer.  
**Adam Bennett** – Served as an Paid-On Call firefighter from August 2017-January 2019, including service prior to 2017.

**Scott Fuller** – Interned with Oshtemo from January 2014-January 2015, and then served as a Paid-On Call firefighter from January 2015-January 2019 before becoming a full time firefighter. He became a Driver Operator in 2016 and is also a sworn Parking Enforcement Officer.



**Brian Toepper** – Served as a Paid-On Call firefighter from January 2015-January 2019. Brian became a Driver Operator in 2019.



**Drake Wednig** – Interned with Oshtemo from January 2017-January 2018, and then served as an Paid-On Call firefighter from January 2018-January 2019.  
**Sam VerMeulen** – Interned with the Oshtemo Fire Department from February 2016-January 2017, and then served as an OFD Paid-On Call firefighter from February 2017-January 2019. He is also a sworn Parking Enforcement Officer.

For information about joining our Paid-On Call fire program, email [oshtemofire5@gmail.com](mailto:oshtemofire5@gmail.com)

**WE NEED YOUR OPINION!**  
 The Oshtemo Board is exploring single hauler trash service for the entire Township. This opportunity has the potential of **lowering your trash service bill by up to 40%**. Please take the survey at  
<https://tinyurl.com/oshtemotrashhauler>  
 Or call 375-4260 to take the survey over the phone.

**How will consolidated dispatch be funded?**  
 Please visit the notice board at [www.oshtemo.org](http://www.oshtemo.org) to see how you can help the Township and the County with funding decisions for Consolidated Dispatch.



## From Supervisor Libby Heiny-Cogswell: *Spring, Spring at last!*

What is going on in the Supervisor’s proverbial ‘neck of the woods’? Many positive efforts and some challenges keep things hopping:

HR is heavily involved in hiring, including: completing the hire of a General Maintenance person; interviewing candidates for two part-time Seasonal Parks and grounds positions; and seeking candidates for the Public Works (PW) Technical Specialist. (We are sad to convey PW’s Jamie Baker, whom many of you have been in contact, left the Township. He is starting a research management position at WMU. We wish him tremendous success).

The 2019 construction season (for sewer, roads, and non-motorized) has a flurry of rapid-fire ongoing discussions to iron out final details. Our excellent Township professional staff are working to see efforts to fruition, handling an inordinate amount of necessary coordination— developing and reviewing the legal contracts, researching and sometimes making amendments for inter-agency requirements, following public expenditure laws, coordinating with contractors, and informing the public. Additional specific project information is found elsewhere in the newsletter.

The GEEOC (government efficiency committee) continues work drafting information for use by the Township Board. The effort is continuing, albeit more slowly given the need to focus time to hire a public works support.

All the ‘regular’ work in the Supervisor’s Office continues! The Supervisor’s Office provides support to all departments through its central management and coordinating role, and through regular meetings with regional partners.

It’s Spring and the parks are ready. At the Township Office, we enjoy seeing the view out our windows of the beautiful Township Park and its heavy use!

I appreciate the feedback received during the April Supervisor Open Office hours. As a direct result of one resident’s input, the Capital Improvements Committee is exploring further policy development. The next Supervisor Open Office Hours is scheduled for June 3<sup>rd</sup>, from noon to 2 pm.



## From Clerk Dusty Farmer:

Elections in Oshtemo seem so far away, but we are busy preparing, training, and planning for the four expected elections in 2020. During our preparations we are working with the Secretary of State to incorporate Proposal 3. Some of our municipal neighbors will have elections this year, and we are eager to learn from them about what works and doesn’t work during implementation. No-reason absentee voting and the ability to register to vote up until and including election day will be challenging, but they are challenges we accept and look forward to implementing!

Some residents are asking, “What do I need to do with all of these changes?” Check your voter registration at [www.michigan.gov/vote](http://www.michigan.gov/vote) or call my office at 269-216-5224. You should also check to make sure you are on the permanent absentee list maintained by Oshtemo. If you are registered to vote, and you are on the permanent absentee list, you don’t have to do anything further! You will receive your application to vote about 6-8 weeks before each election. After you fill it out and send it back, we will send your ballot when it is ready.

If you find out you are not registered, or would like to have your name placed on the permanent absentee list, call my office at 216-5224, email [oshtemo@oshtemo.org](mailto:oshtemo@oshtemo.org), or stop into the Oshtemo Township Hall to fill out an application. We will have you ready to vote and on your way in no time!



## From Treasurer Grant Taylor:

The transition in the Treasurer’s Office is now complete. We have settled our 2018 Tax collection totals with the Kalamazoo County Treasurer without issue. To help prepare for the upcoming 2019 summer tax season, we have hired a new Treasurer’s assistant to replace the open position. Look for an upcoming newsletter featuring our new Treasurer’s Assistant, Cheryl Moeslein, who comes to us from St. Joseph, MI. If you stop into the office, please be sure to welcome her to Oshtemo!

Moving forward, the Treasurer’s Office will be updating our investment policy and investment positions. This will maximize potential interest revenues on Township holdings. We are also working with the Clerk’s Office to update our processes to include more digital record keeping procedures and streamlined services for Oshtemo taxpayers. If you have any questions about taxes or anything else about the Treasurer’s Office, email [gtaylor@oshtemo.org](mailto:gtaylor@oshtemo.org), or call 269-216-5221.

## Parks Department—



Oshtemo  
Friends of the Parks

### Earth Day Volunteers Spruce Up Oshtemo Parks

Five local groups volunteered time and materials to pick up litter, pull weeds, rake leaves, and spread mulch in celebration of Earth Day. Employees from engineering firm **Fleis & VandenBrink** and students from **Kalamazoo Youth Advancement Academy** worked in the gardens surrounding the gazebo at Flesher Field. **Handley's Tree Service** donated all of the mulch used for the project. **Boy Scout Troop 292** picked up litter along the roads surrounding Drake Farmstead Park, and **Cub Scout Pack 247** picked up litter at Flesher Field. We appreciate their support to keep Oshtemo's parks beautiful! If your group would like to volunteer, contact Karen High, Parks Director, at [khigh@oshtemo.org](mailto:khigh@oshtemo.org) or (269) 216-5233.



Cub Scout Pack 247



Kalamazoo Youth Advancement Academy



Fleis & VandenBrink

### Planning a Summer Celebration?

Oshtemo Township's parks and community buildings are great for gatherings and get-togethers! **Oshtemo Township Park** and **Flesher Field** each have a large picnic shelter that can be reserved. They are clean, affordable, and have plenty of space for fun and games. Or check out the unique indoor event spaces at the **Oshtemo Community Center** and **Grange Hall**, now available to the general public and with the option of serving alcohol. Both offer air conditioning and shelter from rain, so your guests will be comfortable no matter what the weather brings. **More details, rental applications, and reservation calendars** are available online at [oshtemo.org/parks-and-recreation-facilities/](http://oshtemo.org/parks-and-recreation-facilities/) or call the Township Hall at (269) 375-4260.



### New Park Gets A Boost from Businesses and Volunteers

Construction of a picnic shelter, walking trails, and parking lot at Drake Farmstead Park, 927 North Drake Road, will begin later this summer. Several local businesses and organizations are already busy getting the site ready. Volunteers with **Oshtemo Friends of the Parks** are removing trees, primarily invasive Black locusts, in the area where improvements will be constructed. Smaller tree

trunks are being saved for fence and sign posts in the park. Larger trunks are being sawn into lumber by a local sawmill. A **Boy Scout with Troop 292** will use the lumber to build benches for the new park. **Handley's Tree Service** is chipping the branches and leaving the chips on site for surfacing the walking trails. Local contractor **LD Docsa Associates, Inc.** is providing heavy equipment and a skilled operator to pull out the stumps and haul them away. These businesses and volunteers are giving their time, expertise, and services as a donation in support of the new park. Their assistance stretches the grant funds received from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund for park improvements. If you'd like to help, contact Karen High, Parks Director, at [khigh@oshtemo.org](mailto:khigh@oshtemo.org) or (269) 216-5233.



Handley's Tree Service



## Public Works—

### 2019 Road Projects

On the adjacent page is a map of all the planned roadwork projects in Oshtemo Township by the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), the Road Commission of Kalamazoo County (RCKC), and Oshtemo Public Works. The projects represent approximately \$7.3M of work to improve the roads and build sidewalks.

The impacts to travel on these roads will vary. Chip seals typically impact traffic for one day while the chips are applied and a second day later in the summer when the fog seal is applied. Mill and hot mix asphalt (HMA) overlays typically impact traffic for a couple of days. Road reconstruction can impact traffic for several weeks, especially if the road reconstruction is associated with sewer construction. And sidewalk construction can cause periodic lane closures. We will be coordinating with the other road agencies to ensure adjacent projects do not compound traffic issues.

### Mandatory Sewer Connections

In 2018, the Public Works Department issued over 300 sewer connection notices to property owners that have sewer available but have not yet connected. To date, 31 properties have connected. The Township offers a 20-year payment plan for the sewer connection fees, and there are low interest loans from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) for homeowners with limited incomes. Contact Public Works or visit the [Public Works Webpage](#) for more information. Additionally, the Public Works Department highly recommends getting multiple estimates from contractors as estimates have varied widely depending on the contractor's schedule.

### USDA Sewer Expansion Project

Please search "Sewer Expansion" on the Township webpage for more extensive information on sewer expansion, including the Frequently Asked Questions information. Or, go to-- <https://www.oshtemo.org/officials-and-departments/public-works-department/sewer-expansion/>

Phase I Final Contract Documents are 98% complete, pending permit review. Work continues in earnest with staff and consultants reviewing, revising, and re-submitting plans to the Road Commission, a process that began in July 2018. Road agency design changes now require that the previously permitted public sewer design plans be resubmitted for approvals by required parties: the DEQ, the City of Kalamazoo, and USDA. This extended review process has upset our plans for substantial completion of the sewer in 2019. Phase I is now proposed to occur over two construction seasons, 2019 and 2020. Late project bidding will cause the extent of 2019 work to depend on contractor availability. Currently, variance requests to the Road Commission on the sewer main depth through a short roadway valley and the entrance drive radiuses at a new sewer pump station continue to be obstacles before beginning construction of the sewer utility within the public right-of-way.

Once a contractor has been selected, we will immediately ask for a detailed construction schedule to accomplish the work in the six affected neighborhoods (Beech Ave, Skyridge Plat, Whitegate Farms Plat, Fairlane Plat, Sunset Rd & Meridian Ave, and West Main Street & 7th Street). We will host public meetings with each of the neighborhoods to discuss the detailed schedule, address concerns like maintaining vehicular access and controlling dust, and explain the process for letting the contractor know where you want your sewer lead located.

The Phase 2 application was submitted and accepted by the USDA last fall. Survey crews were in the five affected neighborhoods last winter documenting the topography (Country Club Village Plat, 11<sup>th</sup> Street, KL Ave, Frie Ave & O Park St, and all of Westport). Engineering design of the Phase 2 sewer project is underway. At roughly "50% completion" more information will be available to residents. Many pre-construction steps, including securing USDA grant and/or loan funding, remain in 2019 and 2020.

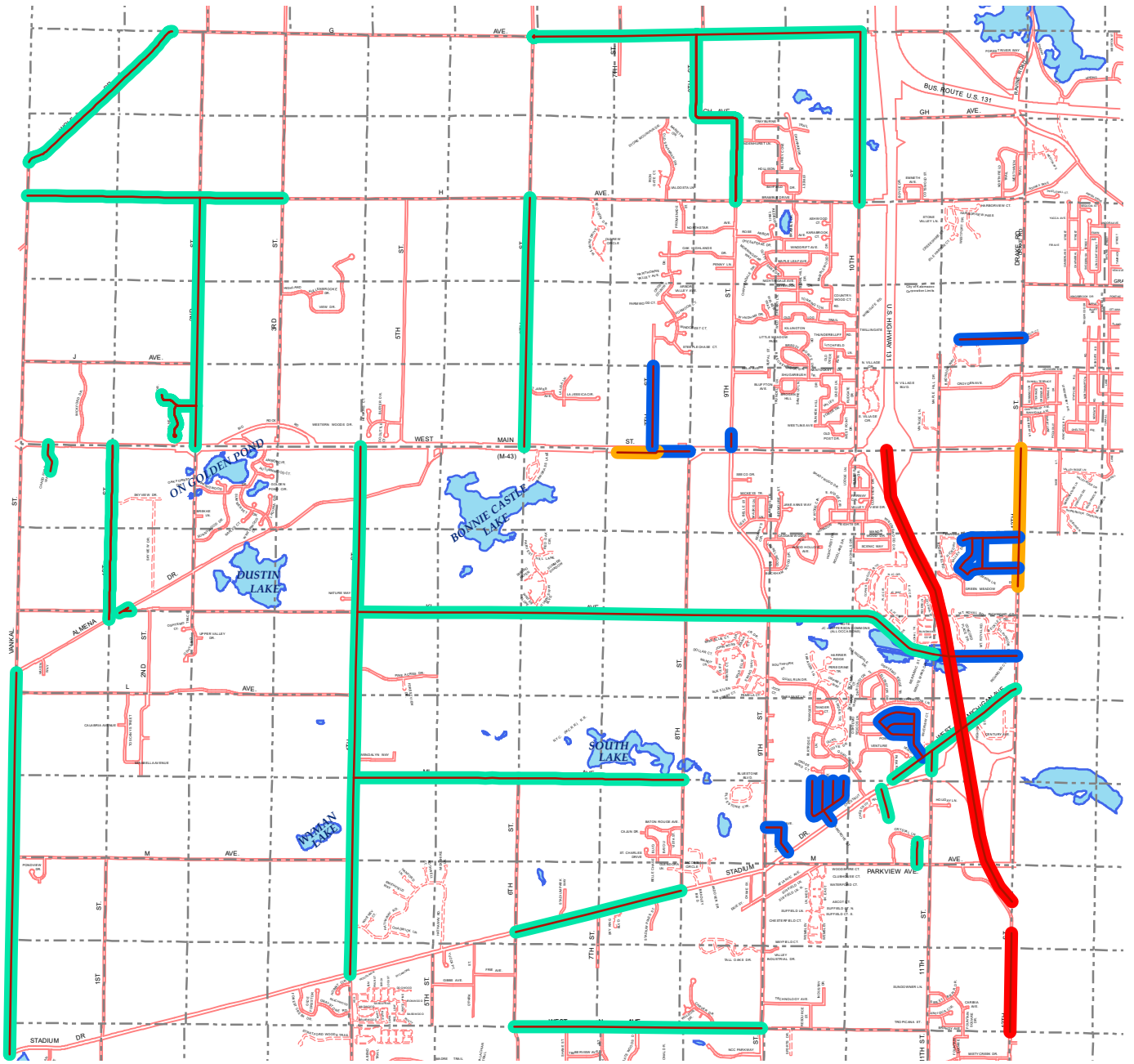


### Drake Road Sidewalk





Construction has started! Sidewalk construction started at the Drake Road and Green Meadow Drive intersection and will proceed north. The sidewalk should be completed on the west side of Drake Road by the end of June. In July and August, the sidewalk on the east side will receive curb ramp improvements to make the sidewalk more ADA-accessible. The remaining portion of the Drake Road path, from Green Meadow Drive to Stadium Drive, is still delayed due to Amtrak.

### Stadium Drive Sidewalk

Stadium Drive sidewalk construction will start in 2020 from 11<sup>th</sup> Street to approximately Quail Run Drive. Oshtemo received a \$260K grant for this portion of the sidewalk. The remaining portion, from Quail Run Drive to 8<sup>th</sup> Street, will likely occur in 2021. MDOT has no more 2020 grant money, and it is worth waiting one year for the estimated \$600K grant.



**Road Maintenance**

Treatment	
	Crack Fill / Chip Seal / Fog Seal (\$1.46M)
	Mill / HMA Overlay (\$3.52M)
	Road Reconstruction (\$1.47M)
	Sidewalk (\$850K)

**2019 All Roadway Projects  
(MDOT, RCKC, and Oshkemo Twp)**



Date: 4/19/2019



## Oshtemo Fire and Rescue — Severe Weather Season

Spring has finally arrived and so will typical spring severe weather. Oshtemo Fire and Rescue would like to remind our community members that “a failure to plan is a plan to fail”. Prepare your home and family by knowing what to do before severe weather strikes, where to go when it does and how to help yourself when many friends and neighbors are simultaneously in need. Twenty-five confirmed tornados have hit Michigan from 1950 to 2017. We are not immune.

An important part of preparedness is to stay aware of changing local conditions and to tune into the National Weather Service when conditions deteriorate. An easy method is to download an app to your phone. Here are some options:

- Tornado by the American Red Cross (FREE)
- The Weather Channel (FREE)
- StormEye (FREE)
- TornadoSpy+ (\$2.99)
- NOAA Weather Radio (\$3.99)

Learn more from the American Red Cross at: <https://www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/types-of-emergencies/tornado.html>



## Oshtemo Police—

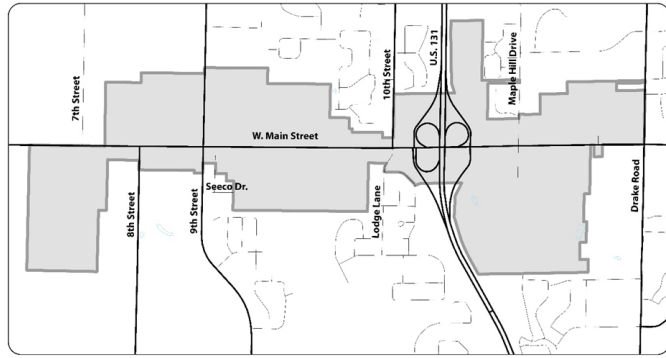
Spring has arrived. Typically around this time of year residents and travelers start getting out to local parks, trails and shopping areas. The Kalamazoo County Sheriff's Office and Oshtemo Township would like you to keep a few safety tips in mind when outside enjoying this beautiful weather.



1. Larceny from vehicles tend to go up this time of year. Hide valuables from plain sight or take them with you. Park in well-lit areas that are not secluded.
2. Solicitors in Oshtemo Township need to obtain a license from the Township Clerk before going door-to-door. You have a right to ask to see their solicitation license. Sometimes these persons can be pushy. Do not allow people you do not know into your home.
3. Bicycles and parts are in demand! Always lock your bicycle through its frame and the front wheel to an approved bicycle parking rack in high traffic area. Leave your bicycle in a visible, well-lit area and check on your bike regularly. To report the theft of a bicycle contact the Kalamazoo County Sheriff's Office at 269-488-8911.
4. Lastly if you are traveling outside of Oshtemo Township this spring or summer and would like a Deputy to stop in and do a property check on your residence please fill out a property request check form in the Township Office.

The Kalamazoo County Sheriff's Office and Oshtemo Township wish everyone a safe and enjoyable Spring/Summer. As always please program the Kalamazoo Consolidated Non-emergency phone number into your phones 269-488-8911 and use 911 in any emergency.

## Planning Department — West Main Corridor Improvement Authority



Proposed West Main Corridor Improvement Authority  
Charter Township of Oshtemo  
Kalamazoo County, MI

Proposed CIA Development Area

West Main Street, from Drake Road west to approximately 7<sup>th</sup> Street is a premier commercial corridor in Oshtemo Charter Township. It contains many of the major retail, restaurant, and local service establishments in our community. Because of its attractive economic draw, additional businesses are interested in developing within this corridor. While the Township has worked to proactively plan for this new development, revenue to address existing and potential future impacts is not readily available.

The Corridor Improvement Authority (CIA), Public Act 57 of 2018, is designed to assist local communities with funding improvements in commercial corridors. The Act allows the use of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) to make capital improvements within an established commercial district. TIF is not an increase in annual taxes. Properties within the District will pay their usual tax payments to the Township. What the Act does permit is the

use of the taxes resulting from increased property values to pay for improvements within the established Authority boundaries.

This powerful tool is one of the only options for Townships to make targeted public improvements within an area. Michigan planning laws do not allow the Township to levy impact fees or development extractions, which help to pay for off-site public improvements that benefit the new development. Utilizing TIF funds within the potential Authority area would allow the Township to address specific public improvements that would not likely be funded by other means.

The boundaries of the possible District are properties along West Main Street from Drake Road west to the Township Hall. If the Authority is ultimately approved by the Township Board, some possible projects include:

- West of US-131 – Extend Seeco Drive west approximately 1,200 feet then move north to connect to West Main Street where it will intersect with a new mid-block traffic light between 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> Streets. Include nonmotorized facilities and public water and sewer within road right-of-way. Finish the nonmotorized connection between 8<sup>th</sup> Street and the Public Library.
- East of US-131 – Work with the Michigan Department of Transportation to implement their transportation study between Drake Road and US-131. This may result in road improvements to West Main Street, re-alignment and closure of curb cuts, and new roads which parallel West Main. Construct nonmotorized connections on Maple Hill Drive and other needed non-motorized paths. Consider the development of a new neighborhood park and recreation facilities in the area.

A public hearing on the West Main Corridor Improvement Authority will be held on May 14<sup>th</sup> at 7:15 PM before the Township Board. All are welcome to provide input on the possible establishment of this new District.

### Oshtemo Village Gateway

The Oshtemo Township Downtown Development Authority (DDA) has been working over the past five years to make improvements to the northwest corner of 9<sup>th</sup> Street and Stadium Drive. In January of 2014, the DDA purchased the Citgo Gas Station property, which was located at 6520 Stadium Drive, and then had the building demolished by October of that same year. In 2017, the DDA entered into an agreement with the Oshtemo United Methodist Church to demolish the vacant car wash they owned at 6532 Stadium Drive, the property to the immediate west of the DDA site. The demolition of the car wash occurred in 2018, leaving both parcels vacant for redevelopment.

The DDA has recently approved a plan for the beautification of this corner in partnership with the Oshtemo United Methodist Church. To begin, all of the existing concrete and asphalt will be removed. Fill dirt will be brought to the property to allow elevated landscape forms to be created, which will be seeded with grass. A parking lot will be developed on the Church's property and a new stone sign will be placed on the Township's site, as a welcoming and identifying symbol for the Oshtemo Village. Sidewalks will be developed along 9<sup>th</sup> Street and Stadium Drive, with a connector sidewalk through the DDA property. This sidewalk will also include respite stops with pedestrian benches. Both properties will include a variety of landscape beds for grasses, annuals, and perennials. The overall aesthetic will be more natural in appearance, providing an attractive addition to the Oshtemo Village area.





## Oshtemo Friends of the Parks

7275 West Main Street  
Kalamazoo, MI  
(269) 216-5233

# 2019 EVENTS AND PROGRAMS

- FREE -

## MUSIC IN THE PARK

Flesher Field, 3664 South 9th Street

June 23 - Yolonda Lavender

Soul-based music with gospel, r&b, hip-hop, blues and jazz influences

July 14 - Schlitz Creek Bluegrass Band

Bluegrass with some bite

August 18 - Kanola Band

Authentic N'awlins music from traditional dixieland to zydeco...it's always a party with Kanola

6:00 - 7:30 p.m.

Kids can enjoy a free craft, fire fighter obstacle course, and more!

Food available for purchase or bring a picnic.

New family program in partnership with Kalamazoo Public Library!

### ENCHANTED FOREST FESTIVAL

Wednesday, June 26

5:30-8:30 p.m.

Visit the enchanted forest for games, stories, treats, crafts, and more!

Wear your costume for our magical creature parade.

Weather permitting.

## FITNESS PROGRAMS

Yoga in the Park at the Flesher Field gazebo  
Wednesdays at 7 p.m.

Tennis Lessons and Camps at Township Park

Fee required for fitness programs.

For more details, visit [oshtemo.org/events](http://oshtemo.org/events) or look for us on Facebook.

## FREE PROGRAMS

in partnership with Kalamazoo Public Library, held at Township Park

Stroller Walks • June 21 & July 19 • 10:30 a.m.

Teen 'Amazing Race' • June 18 • 12:30 - 2:30 p.m.\*

Teen 'Space Art with Bonus Saves' July 11 & 12 • 10:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.\*

Adults: 'Movement for the Movement' June 11 & August 13 • 5:30 p.m.\*

Families: Jim Gill Concert • July 17 • 6:30 p.m.

Families: Drum and Dance with Rootead August 5 • 6:30 p.m.

\*Registration at Kalamazoo Public Library required.

- [www.kpl.gov](http://www.kpl.gov) -

## OPEN HOUSE AT DRAKE FARMSTEAD PARK

927 North Drake Road  
Saturday, October 5  
from 12 to 4 p.m.





# MAY 23-27



## Oshtemo Rotary



## Family Festival

### Maple Hill Mall Kalamazoo

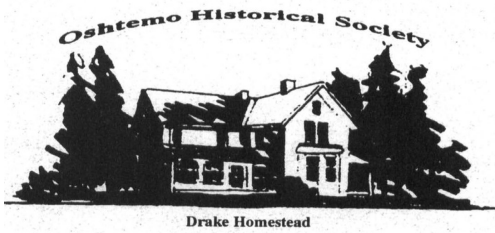
**BUY ONLINE BEFORE MAY 23**

**SAVE \$10 ON ARMBANDS!**



[skerbeck.com](http://skerbeck.com)





## *OSHTEMO HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWS*

We invite you to join us to learn about local history. Our programs are free and you do not need to be a member to attend. We meet at the Oshtemo Township Hall, 7275 W. Main St., unless otherwise stated.

Mark your calendars for the following:

**May 16th** – Retired Col. Jim Spackman will share information and history on **Fort Custer, the historical society and museum, and the current uses of the original fort property.**

**June 20th** – **Cheff Therapeutic Riding Center**, presented by Whitney Feltner. Hear about the first therapeutic riding center built especially for the purpose of serving those with special needs in North America.

For more information about the Oshtemo Historical Society, please visit our website at [www.oshtemohistoricalsociety.org](http://www.oshtemohistoricalsociety.org)

www.facebook.com/oshtemotownshi  
www.oshtemo.org  
Ph 375.4260 Fax 375.7180  
Kalamazoo, MI 49009  
7275 West Main Street

