

Feb. 13, 2026

## Executive FY 2027 state budget presented

Gov. Whitmer's eighth and final executive budget recommendation was presented this week, beginning the budget process for the state's fiscal year 2027 budget.



The proposed \$88.1 billion budget includes a general fund total of \$13.6 billion, down from the proposed \$15.3 billion in FY 2026, and a school aid budget total of \$21.4 billion. The general fund recommendation is lower, given the pressures on this year's budget due to declining revenues and federal changes. To address the \$1.8 billion funding gap, the executive budget is proposing a mix of reductions and efficiencies (\$630 million), a withdrawal from the state's rainy day fund (\$400 million) and new revenues (\$780 million).

The budget proposal holds statutory revenue sharing harmless for townships, cities and villages, keeping funding at the current fiscal year's level of \$333 million. Constitutional revenue sharing, per revenue estimates, is expected to be \$25 million below current year. This decrease is not due to the overall state's sales tax revenue collections—which are trending upward. The distribution is lower than it would have been because of road funding approved last year that removed the sales tax collection on motor fuel and replaced it with a fuel tax increase. The executive proposal also contains a continuation of \$50 million in public safety revenue sharing grants to local governments that originated in the current budget. Distribution is based proportionately on violent crime data for each local unit.

With property tax reform being a major topic for 2026, the executive budget recommendation also includes property tax relief for seniors in the form of a tax credit, impacting the state budget. Detailed information on the FY 2027 executive budget proposal can be found on the [State Budget Office website](#), including the presentation, briefing papers and proposed budget language.

As the budget process progresses, MTA will keep members informed as we partner to maintain stable funding to provide essential services in light of rising costs and budget pressures.

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## Drone surveillance exemption bill moves

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## UPCOMING MTA TRAINING

February [Board of Review Trainings](#): Spots are still open for basic, advanced & online options!

Feb. 18: *Now You Know* lunchtime webinar [Cloud Control: Navigating Data Center Impacts](#) (For officials & staff from MTA-member townships & counties only)

March 10: FREE live Q&A, 11 a.m. [The Compliance Countdown: Is Your Website Ready?](#)

March 17: [2026 MTA Capital Conference](#)

March 18: *Now You Know* lunchtime webinar [Squeaky Wheel Maintenance: Using Policies to Turn Complaints into Constructive Input](#)

April 20-23: Registration is open for [MTA's 2026 Annual Educational Conference & Expo](#) at the Grand Traverse Resort

Legislation to allow a governmental entity to use an unmanned aircraft system to inspect a telecommunications tower and associated infrastructure and to participate in specific efforts in response to a declared state of emergency or disaster was approved by the Senate Local Government Committee this week. [Senate Bill 525](#), sponsored by Sen. Kevin Hertel (D-St. Clair Shores), was amended in committee to include a local state of emergency in addition to a state emergency or disaster. Current law prohibits a department, agency, board or commission of the state from using an unmanned aircraft system to surveil, inspect or collect information about a facility such as a telecommunications tower facility, grounds, antennae, shelter site or similar infrastructure. SB 525 will allow the use by specified departments or agencies to participate in a recovery, assessment or inspection effort in response to a declared state of emergency or disaster. The bill will next be considered by the full Senate.



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### Bill would modify downtown district definition

Townships that have more than one separate geographic area—on the mainland and one or more islands with a body of water between the two separate and distinct areas—could soon have statutory clarification to include an island's downtown in their downtown development authority. [Senate Bill 581](#), sponsored by Sen. Kevin Hertel (D-St. Clair Shores), would allow a municipality's downtown district to include an island's downtown if water were between the island's and mainland's downtowns. This would enable the municipalities to expand the coverage of their downtown development authorities, which use tax increment financing to fund improvements to buildings or infrastructure within downtown districts. The bill's expansion would help attract businesses to the additional districts, finance desired projects, and enable the community to access grants previously unavailable to them. The bill now moves to the full Senate for consideration.

### Advocate and engage with your legislators at 2026 MTA Capital Conference

During our **2026 Capital Conference on March 17**, your state legislators are invited to join you for lunch and conversation, providing you [a direct opportunity to engage](#) with your legislators on township issues and learn about their legislative priorities. In addition to educational opportunities throughout the day, this is a great time to reconnect (or connect) with your state elected officials to discuss the specific issues facing your communities, especially as the state legislative session year and budget discussions begin. Ensure your township's needs are heard and prioritized for

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## MTA QUICK LINKS

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the coming year. Learn more about [MTA's 2026 Capital Conference](#) and register today before the regular rate ends on March 3!



IN PERSON & ONLINE TRAINING WITH MTA

# BOARD OF REVIEW

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[CLICK HERE FOR DATES, TIMES & LOCATIONS THIS FEBRUARY!](#)

## Elective Pay program offers tax credits for clean energy projects

Elective Pay is a mechanism available for tax-exempt entities—including townships—to access federal tax credits for clean energy projects, such as solar, wind, geothermal and electric vehicle chargers. The average entity receives 30% of eligible project costs back. The Michigan Infrastructure Office offers technical assistance to help eligible entities through the filing process, with eight ambassadors throughout the state ready and available to help municipalities *for free*. [Several Elective Pay deadlines recently shifted](#), including a shortened timeline for certain projects. Find information on the [state's Elective Pay webpage](#).

## EGLE webinars cover funding recycling, groundwater resource planning

The state Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) is hosting several upcoming webinars of value to townships:

- **Using millages and user fees to fund recycling:** On Feb. 26 at 10:30 a.m., a Catalyst Communities webinar mini-series continues with a highlight on how communities can use millages and user fees to reduce waste, increase recycling capacity and promote sustainability. [Register online](#) for this 90-minute webinar for local leaders.
- **CE credit for drinking water operators:** Officials can now register for the next [Local Leaders webinar](#) on March 10 at 1 p.m., which focuses on integrating groundwater resource awareness into planning. Participants will increase understanding of the relationship between groundwater and land use so they can better plan for community and economic development. The webinar is approved for 0.1 continuing education credits in the technical category for drinking water operators.

## Unemployment portal downtime

The Michigan Unemployment Insurance Agency (UIA) is transitioning to a new tax and benefits system called MiUI, which will replace the current MiWAM. Part of this transition will require scheduled downtime when all UIA online services, offices and phone lines will be unavailable during a system update. The downtime runs from 4:30 p.m. on Feb.

18 until Feb. 22. Employers are encouraged to complete any urgent actions in MiWAM before the downtime begins. UIA has [resources](#) for employers to prepare for the launch of the MiUI that will remain online during the system update.

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## Reminders for clerks

- **Public comment on new campaign finance rules:** The state Bureau of Elections (BOE) is seeking public comments until March 6 on three new rule sets. Comments can be sent to [Elections-PublicComment@Michigan.gov](mailto:Elections-PublicComment@Michigan.gov), and there is a public hearing on March 6 at 10 a.m. in the Binsfeld Senate Office Building in Lansing. The new and updated rulesets are on [Campaign Finance Reports](#), [Contributions, and Expenditures](#), [Campaign Finance Committees](#), and [Disqualification from Ballot Based Upon Contents of Affidavit of Identity](#).
  - **Alternate addresses:** BOE reminds elections staff that when a voter requests an absent voter (AV) application or ballot be sent to another address that is not their permanent address, clerks must record that address as an **alternate address** in the Qualified Voter File (QVF) rather than a permanent address to avoid triggering an update to the voter's driving record. This process is detailed in the [quick guide](#) on adding alternative addresses in the BOE's eLearning Center.
  - **2026 AV application, calendar:** The [AV ballot application](#) for 2026 elections is now available. The [August-November 2026 Election Date Calendar](#) is also available to view or download, or by subscribing to the [Google Calendar](#) maintained by BOE.
  - **Dropbox requirements:** Regardless of installation date, a township clerk must use video monitoring of each AV drop box during the 75 days before each election and on Election Day to ensure effective monitoring of each drop box.
  - **Upcoming launches of electronic pollbook, military portal:** An updated early voting electronic pollbook (EPB) program will be used in the May 2026 election with training materials coming later this month. The Electronic Delivery and Return Portal, which will allow active-duty military service members stationed outside of the U.S. to request and return an AV ballot electronically, is going live in the QVF in the next few weeks.
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## Volunteer for Cooperative Lakes Monitoring Program

The Michigan Clean Water Corps is looking for volunteers for the [2026 Cooperative Lakes Monitoring Program](#) (CLMP) program. CLMP volunteers play a key role in tracking Michigan's lake health by monitoring water quality, invasive species and habitat conditions in Michigan lakes. Volunteers receive detailed instructions, training



and equipment, and the data they collect is added to a public database that includes lake information dating back to 1974. There is an in-person volunteer training in Muskegon on May 1-2 and an online version for May 7. [Register](#) for a training session to play a part in protecting Michigan's thousands of inland lakes.

// FREE MTA Q&A WEBINAR ON WEBSITE ADA COMPLIANCE

🕒 TUESDAY, MARCH 10, 2026 @ 11:00AM

## The Compliance Countdown: 🕒 Is Your Website Ready?

CLICK TO BEGIN REGISTRATION NOW



Kyle Shumaker



### Ride MTA's winter webinar wave

Bundle up and join the flurry of registrations swirling in for this season's webinar lineup. MTA is delivering a blizzard of timely topics packed with fresh insights—available live and on demand. Don't get left out in the cold, use the links below to register today:

- **Cloud Control: [Navigating Data Center Impacts](#)** held live on Feb. 18 at noon (*for MTA members only*). Get timely insights into data centers, including legal considerations that help you identify risks and respond lawfully.
- **FREE MTA Q&A—[The Compliance Countdown: Is Your Website Ready?](#)** Join live on March 10 at 11 a.m. (*everyone welcome!*). The deadline to meet new federal Americans with Disabilities Act accessibility requirements impacting all township websites is quickly approaching. Learn what “accessible” means, how to tell if your website is compliant and how to keep it compliant.
- **Squeaky Wheel Maintenance: [Using Policies to Turn Complaints to Constructive Input](#)**, coming to you live on March 18 at noon. Gain techniques for evaluating complaints, distinguishing problems from noise and proactively channeling the squeak into constructive input.

### Federal updates for week of Feb. 9

Check out the National Association of Towns and Townships [Weekly Legislative Update](#) for the latest on federal actions impacting townships.



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