

May 1, 2026

## Townships can apply until June 19 for state Fire Equipment Grants

Townships can now apply for a grant for the purchase of fire equipment or fire gear through the state's [competitive Fire Equipment Grant Program](#) for on-call, part-time or volunteer firefighters. The program is funded by a one-time \$8 million appropriation in the current-year state budget, with a minimum of \$4 million to be distributed to local units of government with *predominately* on-call, part-time or volunteer fire departments. Grant awards cannot exceed \$50,000 for a single local government and grant expenditures must be incurred between Oct. 1, 2025, and Sept. 30, 2030. Awards are contingent on available funding and may be lower than requested. In addition to township fire departments, fire authorities or commissions established by a municipal resolution, motion or charter are also eligible.



To apply, a completed Fire Equipment Grant Program Application (Form 5874) must be submitted, along with a proposed grant budget detailing how funds will be used. Townships [can request an application](#) via the state's eSignature Solution system. **Applications must be submitted electronically by June 19, 2026**, via eSignature.

More information, including an [online application guide](#) and [application instructions](#), can be found by visiting the [Fire Equipment Grant Program webpage](#). Call (517) 335-7484 or email [Treas-FireGrant@michigan.gov](mailto:Treas-FireGrant@michigan.gov) with questions.

## Revenue Sharing Trust Fund receives unanimous support in Senate

Thank you to all MTA members who signed one of the over 500 cards of support and/or contacted their state senator in favor of the Revenue Sharing Trust Fund bills. Senate Bills [559](#), [561](#) and [912](#), sponsored by Sens. Jeremy Moss (D-Bloomfield Twp.), John Cherry (D-Flint) and Veronica Klinefelt (D-Eastpointe), were unanimously approved by the Senate on Thursday (37-0). The legislation would establish a dedicated fund and earmark a portion of the state's sales tax to the fund, ensuring a stable and reliable funding stream for local governments. Establishing a Revenue Sharing Trust Fund is a top priority for MTA and for Michigan's townships. Local governments need stable, sustainable funding to invest in their communities, strengthen quality public safety, maintain infrastructure, plan effectively and create vibrant quality of life where residents want to live and local economies can thrive.

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## UPCOMING MTA TRAINING

This May: [Planning & Zoning Primer](#), 4-8 p.m.:

May 6—[Lawrence](#), Van Buren ISD

May 13—[Frankenmuth](#), Bavarian Inn Lodge

May 18—[Harbor Springs](#), The Highlands

May 13: *Now You Know* lunchtime webinar [Dig up Your Township's Cemetery Ordinance](#)

Coming in June: [Election Ready](#) afternoon workshops:  
June 4—[Kalamazoo](#), WMU Fetzer Center

June 16—[Marquette](#), NMU

June 17—[Gaylord](#), Treetops Resort

June 23—[Frankenmuth](#), Bavarian Inn Lodge

June 24—[Online](#), 1-5 p.m.

**ALLIED SERVICE PROVIDERS**

MTA thanks all 37 senators for their unanimous support on this important legislation, including bill sponsors for their leadership in advancing this critical tool benefiting all communities across the state. The bills now move to the House for consideration. MTA encourages township officials to reach out to your [state representative](#) to secure support for this vital measure.

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## House Republican property tax plan receives first hearing

As shared last week, nine House Republican-sponsored bills and a House joint resolution (HJR) were introduced in the state House in late April to provide broad property tax reform and make major changes to Michigan's tax structure:

- [House Bill 5872](#) would eliminate the uncapping or "pop-up" tax when the property is sold. Currently, when a property is sold, its taxable value resets to match the current market value.
- [HB 5873](#) would eliminate the six mills State Education Tax.
- [HB 5874](#) would repeal the state real estate transfer tax.
- [HBs 5875, 5876](#) and [5877](#) would amend statutes to reflect the repeal of the state real estate transfer tax.
- [HB 5878](#) would eliminate ALL personal property taxes, including utility personal property taxes.
- [HB 5879](#) would require public utilities to provide a correlating reduction in residential rates.
- [HB 5880](#) would create a 6% sales tax on "luxury" services to be deposited in a dedicated fund with distribution to the state's School Aid Fund and **remaining funds** allocated to local units of government.
- [House Joint Resolution T](#), a constitutional amendment, would eliminate the uncapping (pop-up tax) for all property when sold.

All but HB 5880 received a hearing this week in the House Government Operations Committee. Under HB 5880, the revenue replacement mechanism, schools would be held harmless and remaining revenue generated would go to local units of government; however, if the revenue is not sufficient funds to hold local units harmless, **the amount for local governments would be prorated.**

Fiscal projections estimate a \$4.9 billion reduction in total property tax revenue, while the proposed new sales tax on services would generate roughly \$4.7 billion. Although MTA supports property tax reform, this proposal as currently structured does not provide a reliable, stable funding source for Michigan's local governments. MTA maintains that any reform should protect local governments from revenue losses and urges our members to convey this position to their [state representative](#).

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 MICHIGAN'S EXPERTS IN WEB DEVELOPMENT

### Recreational authority changes to include forestry pass second chamber

Local governments could create a local forest and recreation authority to own, govern and manage non-state public lands for forestry and recreational purposes under legislation approved by the Senate this week. House Bills [4694](#) and [4695](#), sponsored by Rep. Greg Markkanen (R-Hancock), would expand the purposes for which a recreational authority can be created and the powers and responsibilities of such an authority. The bills are intended to help communities, particularly those in the Upper Peninsula, by offering more flexibility and increased local options to have a say in the future of their forested outdoor recreation areas. The bills are permissive, requiring local government consent to create the authority and would not restrict any powers or duties of any existing authorities. A third bill, [HB 4798](#), also sponsored by Rep. Markkanen, would amend the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act to include a recreational authority in the definition of a local unit of government or public authority. The bills will be enrolled and presented to the governor for expected signature.



THREE LOCATIONS IN MAY | 5 - 8 P.M.

## Planning & Zoning Primer

May 6 | Lawrence, Van Buren ISD

May 13 | Frankenmuth, Bavarian Inn Lodge

May 18 | Harbor Springs, The Highlands

**CLICK FOR MORE INFO!**

### Free asset management course for local officials

The Michigan Infrastructure Council is offering a free, self-paced online course designed to help elected officials and municipal staff make confident, data-informed decisions about roads, water systems, public buildings and other essential infrastructure to support their community's future. The course can be completed in 2.5 hours and comes with a companion guide containing a quick reference version of the content. Learn more about the Asset Management Essentials Course on the [program's website](#).

### Unclaimed property report due by first business day in July

Michigan's Uniform Unclaimed Property Act, Public Act 2 of 1995, requires holders of unclaimed property, including uncashed checks or forgotten bank accounts, to report and

remit property belonging to owners who cannot be located or for whom there is no known address. Townships holding unclaimed property are required to comply with PA 2 by providing the Michigan Department of Treasury's Unclaimed Property Division with complete and accurate information on an annual unclaimed property report, which is due by the first business day in July. Treasury's [Manual for Reporting Unclaimed Property](#) contains general instructions, a summary of new reporting requirements, a detailed list of all reportable types of property, what to do if you do not have unclaimed property to report or if you have not reported unclaimed property previously that should have been reported, and other important information. For questions regarding responsibilities to report unclaimed property, call (517) 636-6940 or email [TreasUPDReporting@michigan.gov](mailto:TreasUPDReporting@michigan.gov).

Also, did you know that even townships may be owed unclaimed property? A quick search of the state's [Unclaimed Property website](#) for "Twp" and "Township" shows that more than 1,200 townships have unclaimed money waiting for them. Is your township one of them? Find out today!

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The advertisement banner for Black Rock Technologies features the company logo 'BLKRK' in a white box on a black background. To the right of the logo, the text 'BLACK ROCK TECHNOLOGIES' is written in white. Below this, a green banner contains the text 'AFFORDABLE AND RESPONSIVE TECH SUPPORT FOR MUNICIPALITIES' in white. At the bottom left, contact information is provided: a phone icon followed by '(734) 338-8658' and an email icon followed by 'info@black-rock.tech'. On the right side of the banner, there is a green outline map of Michigan with a circuit board pattern overlaid on it.

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### **Energy management grant opportunity**

Through the state [Community Energy Management Program](#), local governments are eligible for grants of up to \$50,000 for projects that improve energy efficiency, expand renewable energy and grow local capacity for long-term energy management. The reimbursement-based grant does not require a match, and selected recipients must expend all funds by Aug. 31, 2027. The [application](#) will remain open until all \$750,000 available in FY 2026 is allocated, so townships are encouraged to apply soon.

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### **Clerk reminders from the BOE**

- **May 5 election support** is available from the Bureau of Elections (BOE) by calling (800) 292-5973 and following the prompts for local clerks or administrators on May 1-3 from 8 am to 5 pm, May 4 from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. and May 5 from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m.
- **Questions about early in-person voting?** A frequently asked questions [webpage](#) is available on the state's website, and is reviewed and updated regularly. Clerks may share a link to this page via their Elections website, social media or any other way they communicate with voters.
- **Election Day registration** is available to anyone in line to register and vote by 8 p.m. on Election Day. Precinct inspectors should also be reminded that the absent voter (AV) ballots for voters in line at the close

- of polls will be sent to the precinct or AV counting board after all voting is completed.
- **Offline backup reports** must be provided for each early voting site to ensure a precinct list is available in the event of a power outage, loss of internet service or any other access interruption.
  - **Emergencies** that impact election activities can occur, but clerks may not shorten or extend polling hours unless explicitly directed by the proper legal authority. If any emergency occurs that could interrupt the voting process, clerks should take direction from local law enforcement and contact BOE as soon as possible. Clerks can access an [emergency response plan template](#) via [BOE's eLearning Center](#) to support planning for Election Day emergencies.
  - **Mandatory training updates:**
    - o 2026 election cycle preparation in-person training will take place in all 83 Michigan counties between May 18 and June 24. Election officials can register for any training; it does not have to be within their own county. Registration is available via eLearning.
    - o The Address Confidentiality Program Act (ACPA) established protections for survivors of violent crimes and impacts the way participants receive election mail and appear in the Qualified Voter File (QVF) and electronic pollbooks. All QVF users are required to successfully complete the ACPA training in eLearning no later than May 15 to maintain QVF access.
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### **Play It Forward grants offer opportunity for access to inclusive playgrounds**

Is your township considering a playground project? You can apply now for a once-in-a-



decade [“Play It Forward” grant opportunity](#) investing \$1 million in inclusive play across Michigan. Applications are now open to receive up to \$100,000 toward inclusive playground development. The grant seeks to celebrate the 10-year partnership between inclusive play advocate [Unlimited Play](#) and Little Tikes Commercial, and includes planning, design and advocacy services and publicity to help the chosen playgrounds serve as national examples of community-driven play for all. A limited number of Michigan communities will be selected. The application deadline is June 30.

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### **Take a look back at #MTA2026**

MTA's 2026 Annual Conference & Expo is in the history books, and we thank all attendees, sponsors, exhibitors, guests, speakers and more who helped make the township event of the year an unforgettable one! You can take a look back at #MTA2026—or check out the event, if you weren't able to join us last week—[here](#). All photos can also be downloaded for free (thank you to our Conference photographer David Trumpie!). Mark your calendars for next year's MTA Annual Conference & Expo, April 19-22, back at

the Grand Traverse Resort in Acme Township (Grand Traverse Co.).

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### Federal update for week of April 27

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

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