

Township Focus

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE MICHIGAN TOWNSHIPS ASSOCIATION

Show me the money

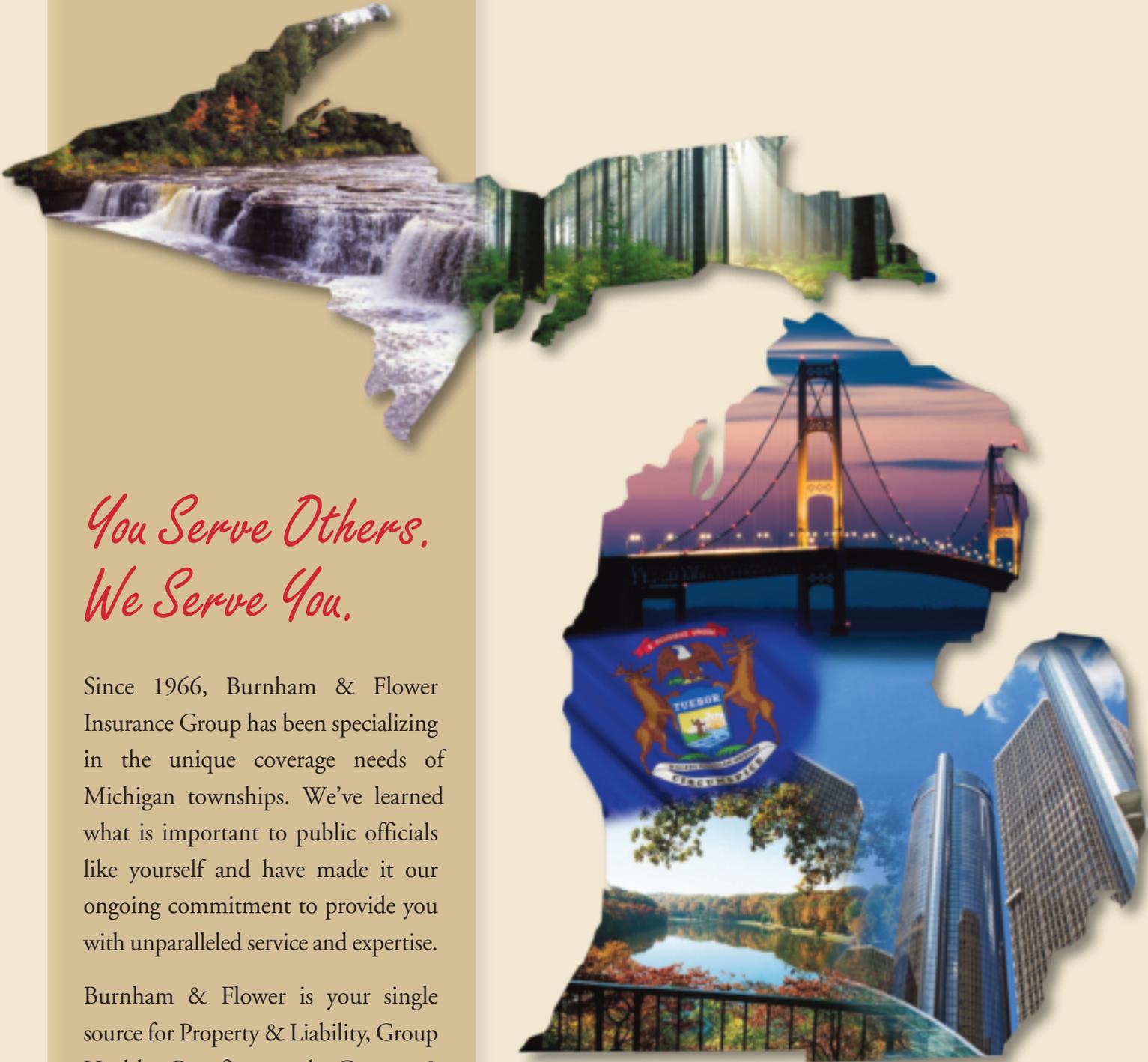
Grant guidelines for townships



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On the road to you

MTA President **Bill Deater**, myself and MTA staff, and local government experts are packing our bags and planning our fall visit to your region. Inspired by the past success of our *UP North Summits*, we will give participants an informative and enjoyable “mini-conference” experience at the halfway point in the calendar before our Annual Conference in April. At our new *Regional Summits*, you’ll get an update on the legislative matters impacting your community, timely training on the hot issues critical to townships today, have an opportunity to network with your peers, and enjoy good food and entertainment. The *Summit* schedule at right shares when we’ll be coming to a location near you. Registration details appear on page 28, on www.michigantownships.org, and were mailed to all townships last month.

Regional Summits

- Oct. 4-5—Marquette
- Oct. 10-11—Kalamazoo
- Oct. 12-13—Bellaire
- Oct. 18-19—Mt. Pleasant
- Oct. 25-26—Port Huron

We bring you this month a cover story on seeking grants for your township. Over the years, I have been a federal grant reviewer as well as having written grant applications to several agencies and foundations. Successful grant pursuits require you to understand the objectives of the grantor in distributing the funds—they are seeking specific changes in the status quo related to their mission. You need to make a compelling case for why your project or program is an appropriate investment. Compiling the requested information and setting out your application contents may be quite simple for smaller amounts or complex for larger ones. Oftentimes, your township is competing against many other applicants chasing the same limited funds. One agency I reviewed for had an average of 12 applicants for every award, and federal awards—such as those from the Federal Emergency Management Agency—could have hundreds of applicants. Often there is a matching requirement in either cash or in-kind contributions such as your staff, facilities or equipment. That match might be dollar for dollar or some multiple. You might be able to get a different funder (for example, a community foundation) to contribute to the match. I write this not to discourage you, rather to help you appreciate that getting assistance from

a competent, ethical grant-writing consultant may make the difference between a successful pursuit and a great big demoralizing waste of effort. We share our cover story as an informative step in the right direction.

I have to admit that what I know about fashion is limited to making sure my shoes match. However, I can say that you can’t go wrong buying the MTA three-season jacket, which can be monogrammed with your name and township or title on it. The reasonably priced jacket looks great and really lasts (I have a similar one that looks brand-new after six years). For each jacket purchased, approximately \$25 goes into our fund to make campaign contributions to state legislative candidates and legislators who support townships and our priorities. Please find the order form in our ad later in this issue.



Finally, we also share in this issue an introduction to the state’s new Office of Rural Development, from the director of the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, in which the newly created office is housed. MTA appreciates every effort to help our local officials and small businesses get assistance in understanding funding and technical assistance available to them. The office is focused on increasing access to broadband, affordable housing and growing jobs in rural areas, and seeks to make it easier to access education, investment and other resources.

Fall is a busy time in Michigan, I hope you can take a day or two to see us at the *Regional Summits*.

Neil



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Direct all display and classified advertising inquiries to Ashley Maher at (517) 321-6467. Member rate for a classified ad in either the magazine or on the MTA website on a monthly basis is \$1 per word. Call MTA for non-member rates. Deadlines for display and classified ads in the magazine are five weeks preceding the publication date. Send ads to: PO Box 80078, Lansing, MI 48908-0078; phone: (517) 321-6467, ext. 254; fax: (517) 321-8908; or email: ashley@michigantownships.org.

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president's round table

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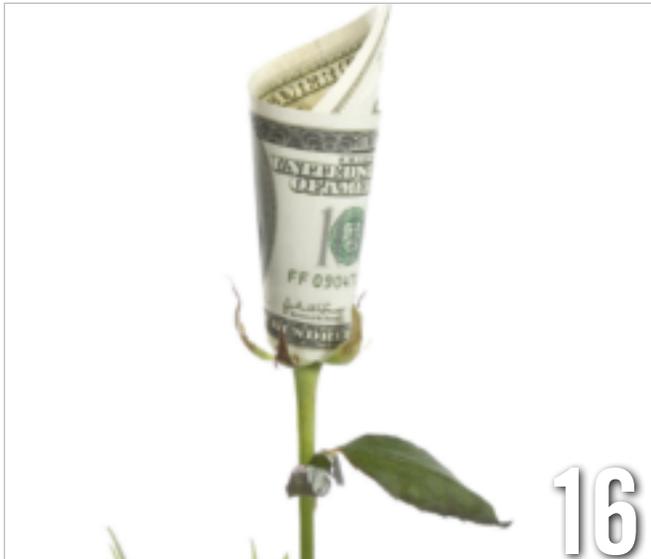
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mission statement

The Michigan Townships Association advances local democracy by fostering township leadership and public policy essential for a strong and vibrant Michigan.



featured articles

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Show me the money: Grant guidelines for townships

With limited funds and increasing costs, township officials must become more creative and resourceful to provide and improve services to residents. On the bright side, there may be more funding opportunities available now than ever before. Learn steps to take to capture some this revenue for your township.

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New state office focuses on rural development

Recognizing the unique needs of Michigan's rural communities and the challenges they face every day, a new Office of Rural Development was created earlier this year to position Michigan as a leader in problem-solving, partnership and management of issues facing rural communities to make a real difference in people's lives.



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news¬es

a compendium of noteworthy items

ON THE RISE

New report documents increasing property tax rates

Property tax rate increases have become a common response to Michigan's mix of constitutional property tax base limitations contained in the Headlee Amendment and 1994's Proposal A, according to a new report from the Citizens Research Council of Michigan (CRC).

Last year, CRC examined the combined effect of these tax limitations on the growth of local governments' property tax bases. One takeaway from that report—which was highlighted in the November 2021 issue of *Township Focus*—was that constraints placed on the tax base appeared to create additional pressure on local governments to ask voters to increase tax rates. CRC's latest report, *Local Governments Respond to Property Tax Base Limitations by Raising Tax Rates*, assesses the frequency and magnitude of tax rate increases over the past 15 years.

The analysis shows an 8.4% increase in the statewide average tax rate and most Michigan townships, cities and counties were levying higher tax rates in 2020 than they were in 2004.

According to CRC, local government officials have responded to Michigan's tax limitations, which constrain growth in the property tax base, by seeking, and often receiving, increases in tax rates. From 2004 to 2020, the average township rate increased 19%. During that same timeframe, the average county rate increased 17% and the average city rate increased 14%.

The report also noted that tax rates increased for reasons other than just constraints on the tax base (e.g., some local governments had population increases or needed to expand service provision). However, local governments cannot perpetually increase tax rates; statutory caps and taxpayer tolerance create upper bounds.

The CRC urged policymakers to address the root problem with Michigan's local finance system: Michigan depends too heavily on the local property tax to fund local government services. "The data in our new report shows that policy action [in Lansing] will be warranted soon," said CRC President Eric Lupher. "At some point, the financial health of Michigan's local governments will affect the ability of state and local government officials to engage in economic development and provide quality of life services desired by residents. That policy action could allow property tax revenue growth to better reflect economic growth and it could provide alternative tax options to ease the burden on the property tax."

EDUCATING YOUTH

Township officials can head back to school this fall, too!

Students across the state are returning to the classroom for a new academic year. Back-to-school time provides an opportunity for township officials to reach out to your area schools to offer to share information, insights and experiences about the value of township government—and the role it plays in residents' lives every day.

You can help spread the message of what township government is—and how it impacts parents, students and businesses. September is the perfect time to call or email your local school superintendent, principals or government teacher to let them know you are available as a resource. Offer to make a presentation about township government (you could even do so via Zoom or GoToMeetings—teachers and officials are pros now!). Even if you have been invited to make a presentation in years past, it's always a good idea to remind a teacher that you are available to talk with the class year after year.

By putting a "face" on local government, you are helping give students an accessible opportunity to talk with you about your various roles and responsibilities as a township official and the day-to-day operations of the form of government that represents more than 52% of Michigan's residents.

While in the classroom, discuss topics that students can relate to. Talk about fire and police protection, library services, and even local roads. High school students could soon be voting in their first election this November! The goal is to leave the students with a greater understanding of the local government that impacts their daily lives, while sharing your passion for local government with the next generation.

As a township leader, you are the expert on township government. So use that expertise and go back to school this fall—and throughout the year as well. Your efforts can have an impact on the life of a student and the future of your community. Find tools to take into the classroom at www.michigantownships.org (click on "Tools for Teachers" under the "About Townships" tab).



LET THE SUN SHINE

Township installs solar energy system, powering township building and offices

By utilizing funds gained through the Michigan Marijuana Excise Tax, **Negaunee Township** (Marquette Co.) has installed a 52-panel solar generating system on the roof of the gymnasium



portion of the township hall. According to Supervisor **Gary Wommer**, the system is capable of providing 20 kilowatts of power at full output which, during full sun periods, provides more than enough power to supply the township's building and offices, with the excess being sold to the Marquette Board of Light and Power. There is no storage capability designed into the system at this time.

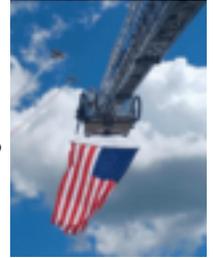
During winter months, the system will supply power at a lesser level, but will still help with township power costs, according to Wommer. "The payback for the system is currently figured to be in the 13- to 15-year period, which will give our township a return on monies that were never budgeted for," he said. The township is also planning to add two electric vehicle charging ports, and may add solar panels to its fire hall.

We want to know YOUR township's story! Send articles, updates, pictures and details of what's happening in your township to jenn@michigantownships.org.

LOCAL UPDATES FROM ACROSS MICHIGAN

Township happenings

The Wall that Heals Vietnam Veterans Memorial Replica returned to a Michigan township this summer, hosted in **Emmett Charter Township** (Calhoun Co.) for four days in July. The display was welcomed into the community escorted by first responders and hundreds of motorcycle riders. An opening ceremony featured Supervisor **Deb Belles**, military personnel and chapter members of the Gold Star Mothers of Michigan, and a flyover by the Hooligans Flight Team. Since 1996, the Wall that Heals has been displayed in nearly 700 communities, including **Roscommon Township** (Roscommon Co.) and **Clinton Charter Township** (Macomb Co.).



Jefferson Township (Hillsdale Co.) has received a more than half-million dollar loan through U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development's Community Facilities Loan Program to build a new fire barn. The new building will accommodate space for offices, training, trucks, miscellaneous equipment and an on-site, in-ground water tank to allow trucks to be filled at the station.

Email **YOUR Township Happenings** to jenn@michigantownships.org. Add MTA to your newsletter mailing list! Mail to MTA, Attn. Jenn Fiedler, PO Box 80078, Lansing, MI 48908-0078, or email to jenn@michigantownships.org.

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MTA seeking input for 2023 legislative policy platform

MTA is committed to speaking on behalf of its members. This is evident in the development of our policy platform. We are seeking review and input from our members on the Association’s legislative policy platform as we begin preparing for the 2023-2024 legislative session. The legislative policy objectives guide MTA’s government relations efforts, and are reviewed and updated annually to reflect emerging issues and goals. MTA-member officials are encouraged to review MTA’s 2022 Policy Platform and share any proposed revisions and suggested additions by Nov. 21. The policy platform can be found on MTA’s website, www.michigantownships.org, under “Advocacy.”

Member-proposed policy changes will be reviewed by MTA legislative committees for word selection and legality, and to ensure they conform with the Association’s overall goals and objectives. The proposed policies will be presented at the 2023 MTA Annual Meeting, held in conjunction with our Annual Educational Conference & Expo in April.

Contact the MTA Government Relations Department at (517) 321-6467 or legislation@michigantownships.org with questions, comments or suggestions.

mta events | september

7 *The Role of the Zoning Administrator Now You Know* luncheon webinar

12 *Emerging Issues in Emergency Services* workshop, Frankenmuth
Can't make the date? This event will be recorded and available for purchase later in September.

20 Early-bird registration deadline for MTA’s *Regional Summits* coming to five sites around Michigan in October

profile



Advertorial

Mika Meyers PLC

Privileged to serve Michigan townships

Mika Meyers PLC is privileged to serve the Michigan Townships Association and its member townships as an Allied Service Provider.

Located in Grand Rapids for more than 75 years, the firm represents numerous Michigan townships and other municipal entities. Mika Meyers has 17 attorneys who practice in the municipal law area—12 who have 20-plus years of experience serving municipal law clients. During the last 75 years, Mika Meyers has been engaged as general or special legal counsel to represent the interests of more than 100 townships located throughout the state on a wide range of legal matters, including:



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Mika Meyers PLC is proud to support the continuing education of townships, their elected officials and the members of the Association through their involvement as an MTA Allied Service Provider.

For more information, visit www.mikameyers.com or turn to the Allied Service Provider Index on page 2.

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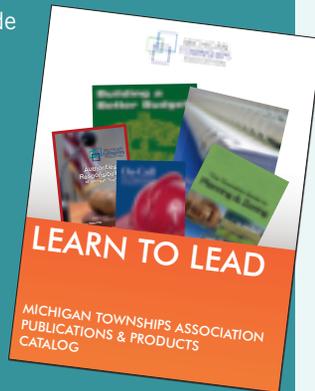
Members can choose to receive their *Township Focus* digitally

We know how much our members value their monthly copies of *Township Focus* magazine, which keeps readers up to date on key township issues, trends and resources as you serve your community. We have received some inquiries from officials who wish to receive their magazine electronically *only*. If you prefer to receive your monthly *Township Focus* via an emailed digital PDF to view or download, *instead of* a hard copy in the mail, please contact elsa@michigantownships.org. The change will take effect within two issues. Note that we also post the full issue each month on www.michigantownships.org (look under the “Newsroom” tab) and provide a link in *Township Insights* at the beginning of each month.



Free shipping on all MTA book orders!

All MTA book orders now include shipping and handling! That’s right—your publication orders ship for **FREE!** See the nearly two dozen MTA publications geared exclusively to townships—including our invaluable *Authorities & Responsibilities of Michigan Townships*, insightful *Introduction to Township Board Meetings* and more, at www.michigantownships.org/mtabooks.asp.



Make sure township information is at your fingertips—stock your township library of resources with MTA books. Questions? Email elsa@michigantownships.org or call (517) 321-6467, ext. 221.

MTA’s lunchtime learning series, *Now You Know*, offers timely updates, insights from our experts and a chance to get your questions answered all in just one hour!

Don’t miss our next episode coming:
Wednesday, Sept. 7 from noon to 1 p.m.

The Role of the Zoning Administrator

Now You Know

Your township’s zoning administrator is responsible for the overall administration of your zoning ordinance. But what exactly does that include and where do they fit into your township’s planning and zoning team? What’s the difference between their role and that of a planning commission or zoning board of appeals? Is it true they have less discretion and can incur serious personal liability? Get the answers to these questions and more in this one-hour webinar, led by MTA legal counsel from Bauckham, Sparks, Thall, Seiber & Kaufman, PC. Cost is just \$25! Register now at

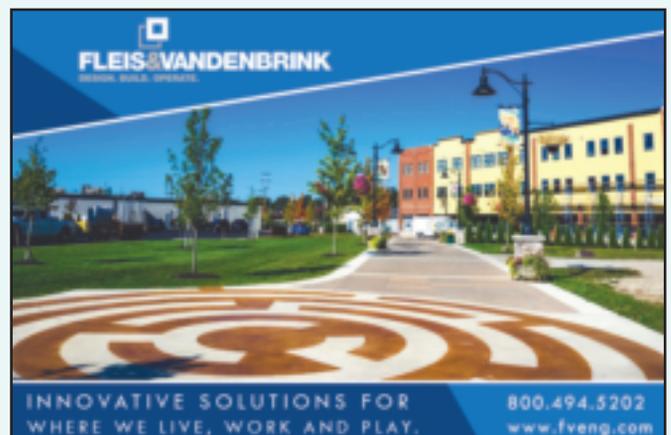
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Got township questions? MTA has answers!

MTA’s experienced Member Information Services (MIS) staff—which includes an attorney and two former local government officials—are available to answer your questions on all facets of township governance and administration. Contact MIS with questions Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Call (517) 321-6467, fax to (517) 321-8908, or email:

- MTA Director of Member Information Services
Michael Selden: michael@michigantownships.org
- MTA Staff Attorney Catherine Mullhaupt:
catherine@michigantownships.org
- MTA Member Information Services Liaison
Cindy Dodge: cindy@michigantownships.org



SEPTEMBER

By 9 Townships can establish, move or abolish a polling place for the Nov. 8 election. (MCL 168.591)

14 Summer taxes due. (MCL 211.107)

Interest of 1% per month will accrue if the payment is late for the State Education Tax and county taxes that are part of the summer tax collection. (MCLs 211.905b(9) and 211.44a(6))

Last day of deferral period for summer property tax levies, if the deferral is for qualified taxpayers. (MCL 211.51(7))

15 Deadline to amend a previously certified 2022 essential services assessment statement. (MCL 211.2057)

By 24 Clerks shall electronically transmit or mail (as requested) an absent voter ballot to each absent uniformed services or overseas voter who applied for an absent voter ballot 45 days or more before the Nov. 8 election. All requests received since Nov. 2, 2021, from a military or overseas voter

must be honored for all 2022 elections. (MCL 168.759a)

County clerk delivers absent voter ballots for Nov. 8 election to township clerks. (MCL 168.714)

By 29 Absent voter ballots must be available for issuance to voters for the Nov. 8 election. (1963 Mich. Const. Art 2, Sec 4)

29 through Oct. 18. Precinct inspectors appointed by local election commission for the Nov. 8 election. (MCL 168.674)

30 Township clerk delivers to supervisor and county clerk a certified copy of all statements, certificates and records of any vote directing monies to be raised by taxation of property. (MCL 211.36(1))

Financial officer of each township computes tax rates in accordance with MCLs 211.34d and 211.34 and township board certifies that rates comply with Section 31, Article 9, of 1963 Constitution and MCL 211.24e, Truth in Taxation, on State Tax Commission (STC) Form L-4029 on or before Sept. 30.

OCTOBER

By 11 Notice of voter registration for the Nov. 8 election published. One notice required. (MCL 168.498)

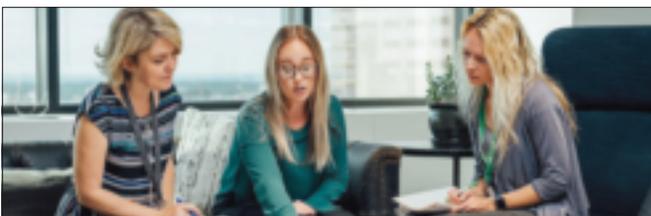
Clerk shall post and enter into the Qualified Voter File (QVF) the hours the clerk's office will be open on Saturday or Sunday, or both, immediately before the Nov. 8 election to issue and receive absent voter ballots. (MCL 168.761b)

Clerk shall post and enter into QVF any additional locations and hours the clerk will be available to issue and receive absent voter ballots, if applicable. (MCL 168.761b)

17 Assessor reports the status of real and personal industrial facility tax property to the STC. (MCL 207.567(2))

Qualified government units report to the STC on the status of each exemption granted under the Commercial Redevelopment Act (MCL 207.666), Commercial Rehabilitation Act (MCL 207.854) and Obsolete Property Rehabilitation Act (MCL 125.2794).

Deadline for assessor's annual report of the determination made under MCL 207.783(1) to each taxing unit that levies taxes upon property in the local unit in which a new facility or rehabilitated facility is located and to each holder of the Neighborhood Enterprise Zone certificate. (MCL 207.783(2))



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20 Deadline for payment to municipalities from the Local Community Stabilization Authority. Local Community Stabilization Share revenue for county-allocated millage and other millages not levied 100% in December. (MCL 123.1357(8)(a) and (c))

24 Last day to register for the Nov. 8 election in any manner other than in-person with the local clerk. (MCL 168.497)

25 through 8 p.m. on Nov. 8. In-person registration for the Nov. 8 election with local clerk with proof of residency. (MCL 168.497)

28 Write-in candidates for the Nov. 8 election file Declaration of Intent forms by 4 p.m. (MCL 168.737a)

By 29 County clerk delivers remainder of ballots and election supplies for Nov. 8 election to local clerks. (MCL 168.714)

31 Deadline for submission of New Personal Property PA 328 of 1998, Obsolete Property PA 146 of 2000, Commercial Rehabilitation PA 210 of 2005, Neighborhood Enterprise Zone PA 147 of 1992, Charitable Nonprofit Housing PA 612 of 2006, Commercial Facilities PA 255 of 1978 and Industrial Facilities PA 198 of 1974 tax exemption applications to the STC. *Note:* Applications for the above exemption programs received after Nov. 1 shall be considered by the commission contingent upon staff availability.



63

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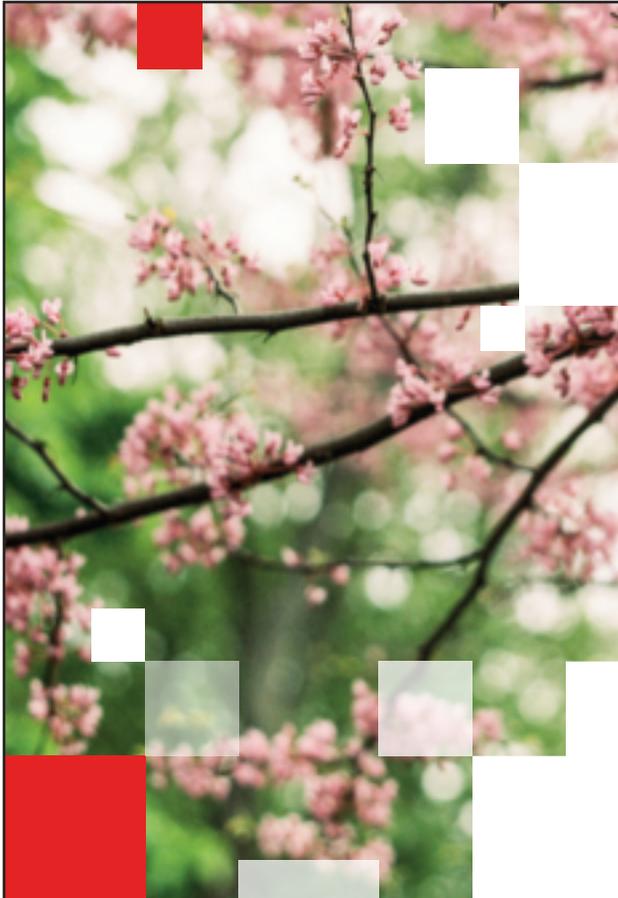
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What is the L-4029? Our clerk says the board must approve it by the end of September, but I don't know what that means.

The clerk is correct that each year, every township board in Michigan must submit its L-4029 to the county before Oct. 1. But it's more than simply submitting a form—the township board is actually voting to authorize the township's property tax rates for the township's winter tax bill.

Note that, while the township also collects the property taxes for the other taxing entities in the township, the township's L-4029 is concerned only with the property taxes that the township has authority to collect for itself. Each other taxing entity in the township on the winter tax bill must also file an L-4029 with the township clerk and the county before Oct. 1.

And taxing entities on the summer tax bill will also have to file an L-4029 but, unlike the taxes for the winter tax bill, there is no specific deadline for filing. They should file their L-4029 with the township clerk as soon as they know their rolled-back rates with as much time as possible in advance of printing the summer tax bill.



Wait—aren't the township's property tax rates set by law and the ballot questions that the electors approved?

Yes, for the most part. But the township board is still required to authorize its rates each year—and there are some circumstances that give the township board some leeway in setting its millage rates within the limits set by law. Plus, the board is responsible for knowing whether it is levying the correct rates, so it is important for each township board member to understand what “approving the tax rates” really involves.



Our county equalization department sends us our L-4029 every year, already filled out, so we shouldn't have to do anything with it, right?

Wrong. In many counties, the equalization department works to assist local units with information necessary to complete the form—and some even fill out a draft—but the township board is still required to review and vote to approve it. The township board has a legal responsibility to set its property tax rates—the county cannot do that for you—and to determine that they are correct.



What should be included on the L-4029?

The **property taxes** (millages) that the township is imposing must be reported on the township's L-4029. You are setting the rates for the property taxes that will be levied (imposed) by the township itself and then collected by the township on the winter tax bill.

A **general law township** must include its allocated millage, any extra-voted millages, and any other millages authorized by law.

A **charter township** must include its “charter millage,” any extra-voted millages, and any other millages authorized by law.

Allocated millage:

This is the 1-mill or more millage that a **general law township** automatically receives as its “Monopoly™ bank” for general operating purposes under the Michigan Constitution. It is most likely “voted” (“fixed”) on a countywide ballot question that could be for a limited term of years or without limit. It is 1 mill unless the ballot question was for a higher millage rate. In a few counties, the allocated millage is still determined annually by a county allocation board. In both cases, all townships in the county are entitled to the same millage rate—before applicable rollbacks or other reductions.

Charter millage:

The first 5 mills of a maximum of 10 mills, rolled back, that a **charter township** board appropriates as needed each year, without a vote by the electors and not limited in duration. *[Note: A charter township's millage limits are not actually expressed as 5- or 10-mills, but “1/2 of 1% of the assessed valuation of all real and personal property subject to taxation in the balance of the township” with a maximum of “1% of the assessed valuation of all real and personal property in the township” allowed by voter approval and limited to 20 years per MCL 42.27. They are commonly referred to as 5- and 10-mills, but if a charter township is nearing either limit, the legal limit would be based on the definition in MCL 42.27.]*

Extra-voted millage:

Additional millage approved by the electors for general operating or specific purposes. The Headlee Amendment to the Michigan Constitution that took effect Dec. 23, 1978, prohibits a local government unit from levying “any tax not authorized by law or charter when this section is ratified or from increasing the rate of an existing tax above that rate authorized by law or charter when this section is ratified, without the approval of a majority of the qualified electors of that unit of Local Government voting thereon.” (Article 9, Section 31, Michigan Constitution of 1963)

Charter townships: The second 5 mills that a charter township may levy, up to a maximum of 10 mills total, must be extra-voted. A charter township does not have to exhaust its first 5 mills before using the voted 5 mills, and many charter township boards prefer to go to the voters for specific program or service millages, limiting the “charter millage” they levy for the township's general operations purposes.

Millage authorized by law:

Millage authorized without a ballot question: In a constitutional exception to the Headlee Amendment requirement that taxes must be approved by the voters, Article 9, Section 31 provides that where authorization existed in statute before the effective date of the Headlee Amendment for a levy by the township board of a millage without a vote of the electors, that authority still exists, even if a millage was never actually levied before that date. Rare, but at least one known example is MCL 247.670, which authorizes up to 3 mills for maintenance or improvement of county roads or widening of state trunk line highways.

Millage authorized by ballot question other than a millage question: For example, Public Act 345 of 1937 authorizes the levy of a millage for specific fire/police pension purposes where the voters have approved a retirement system under the act.

Are special assessments reported on the L-4029?

Generally, **special assessments** are not reported on the L-4029 (by definition, they are not property taxes). But there are a few types of ad valorem special assessments that Michigan Department of Treasury encourages local units to report on the L-4029 because they may be claimed by residents for a property tax credit on their Michigan income tax.

MCL 206.512a states that, for the purposes of the homestead property tax credit, the following ad valorem special assessments are defined as “property taxes”:

“Property taxes” means, for the 2003 tax year and tax years after the 2003 tax year, general ad valorem taxes due and payable, levied on a homestead within this state including property tax administration fees, but does not include penalties, interest, or special assessments unless the special assessment is levied using a uniform millage rate on all real property not exempt by state law from the levy of the special assessment and complies with 1 of the following:

(a) The special assessment is levied in the entire city, village or township, and is levied and based on state equalized valuation or taxable value.

(b) The special assessment is for police, fire or advanced life support [PA 33 of 1951], is levied in the entire township excluding all or a portion of a village within the township, and is levied and based on state equalized valuation or taxable value.

Treasury indicates that they should be entered separately from the millages—on a lower line of the L-4029—with “SAD” or “Special” and the authorizing act identified along with the rate, to distinguish it from the property taxes. A special assessment is not subject to any of the rollbacks.

What are the ‘rollbacks’?

For townships, there are two “rollbacks” that could reduce the actual millage rate, and may reduce the actual revenues resulting from the millage rate. Several columns on the L-4029 show how the millage rate has been reduced previously and how it is being affected for the current tax year:

Column 5 shows the rate of each millage after all rollbacks were applied for the previous tax year.

Column 6 shows the current-year Headlee millage reduction fraction (a decimal number of 1.000 or less that attempts to prevent the tax from being increased by inflation).

Column 7 shows the resulting rolled-back millage rate for the current tax year.

Column 8 shows the Truth in Assessing rollback for townships. It is usually just a 1.000 (no change to millage rate) but it could be less than 1 if the township’s state equalized valuation exceeds its assessed valuation for the current year.



Is what we see in Column 9 Maximum Allowable Millage Levy* what we are going to levy?

Well, it is, as it says, the maximum allowable millage levy. But it is not automatically what you may or must levy.

There is another possible limitation on the millage rates, but you won’t see it spelled out on the L-4029—it’s “hidden” in the little asterisk in the title of Column 9. The Base Tax Rate (BTR) Reduction Fraction is calculated by the assessor on Form L-4034 for any township that levied more than 1 mill for operating purposes in the previous tax year. It potentially reduces the maximum allowable rate for the township’s millages unless the township has complied with the Truth in Taxation requirements.

MCL 211.24e still requires that a Truth in Taxation hearing be held, with a large notice in the newspaper, each year or more often, if the tax rates are being increased (by a new millage, for example). Until 1994, that was the only option to be able to avoid the BTR reduction.

But the law was amended in 1994 to allow a township to turn your **budget public hearing** into a Truth in Taxation hearing if the township includes the following sentence in the budget public hearing notice that must be published in the newspaper at least six days before the hearing for a general law township or seven days before in a charter township: **“The property tax millage rate proposed to be levied to support the proposed budget will be a subject of this hearing.”** That sentence must be published in at least 11-point bold-faced type.

If a township includes that sentence and does it every year, then you never have to worry about the BTR reduction or Truth in Taxation. And the board may levy the full amount of each millage rate stated in Column 9.

If the ballot question voters saw used language that stated the millage levied would be “up to” the voted amount, a township board could choose to levy less than the full amount or not levy it at all for the current tax year. It does not “cap” or permanently reduce the rate going forward, like a rollback, but it gives a board more flexibility in aligning what it is levying with its actual needs. A board should work closely with the township’s attorney for their comfort level with this approach and drafting millage language to accomplish it.

Hello, MTA ... ? provides general information on typical questions asked by township officials. Readers are encouraged to contact an attorney when specific legal guidance is needed. Member township officials and personnel may contact MTA Member Information Services with questions or requests from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., weekdays, at (517) 321-6467 or fax (517) 321-8908.



When should townships begin working on next year’s budget?

The timeline depends on your township’s fiscal year. General law townships can have either an April 1 to March 31 or a July 1 to June 30 fiscal year. A charter township may adopt a calendar year or use April 1 to March 31 as its fiscal year. All townships must adopt a budget prior to the start of their fiscal year; otherwise, no spending may legally occur.

Budget timelines for charter townships are clearly outlined in MCLs 42.24 and 42.27. At least 150 days before the beginning of the fiscal year, charter township department heads must supply the chief administrative officer (supervisor or superintendent) with a departmental budget. The chief administrative officer then presents a compiled budget to the township board at least 120 days before the beginning of the next fiscal year. The board must hold a public hearing on the budget. Notice of the hearing must be published at least seven days before the hearing. The budget must be approved and adopted before the beginning of the fiscal year. If operating on a calendar year, the charter township board must hold the public hearing on the proposed budget before Dec. 15.

For general law townships, the Michigan Uniform Budgeting and Accounting Act (Public Act 2 of 1968; MCL 141.421, *et seq.*) indicates that a schedule should be developed by the local unit and it must “allow adequate time for review and adoption” by the township board. It is important for your township to begin the process early enough to allow productive communication between the township’s departments, administration, board and constituents in your area. The general law township must hold a public hearing on the budget and publish notice of the hearing at least six days in advance in a newspaper with general circulation in the township. This is a chance for the public to review, comment and get clarification on the budget. However, only the township board has the power to approve and adopt the budget.

The public hearing component of the budget adoption process is critical to the utility of the budget. A budget first and foremost should be informative, rather than just a financial tool. A taxpayer should be able to look at a budget and know where revenues are coming from, where the expenses are going, what benefit those expenses are providing, and be able to evaluate the financial health of the township.



How can the budget improve our financial health?

A township’s fund balance has an important relationship with the budget. In the world of accounting, fund balance is the difference between what we own and what we owe others. When a township has assets

greater than its liabilities, it has a positive fund balance. Budgets are vital for this as they appropriate what the expenses and revenues will be for that fiscal year. Contrary to the spending habits of our federal government, municipalities in Michigan are prohibited from spending more than they bring in (PA 262 of 1978). Called deficit spending, this practice is detrimental to the financial health of an entity over many years. So, wherever your township is at in the budget cycle, the goal should be to adopt a budget that promotes a healthy fund balance in the current year and into the future of the township. Townships can consider using long-range budgeting—projecting revenues and expenses three to five years in the future. This gives the township an opportunity to plan for upcoming projects, set target fund balance amounts, facilitate financial transparency with the residents of the township, and more.

The state’s *Uniform Budget Manual*, available at www.michigan.gov/treasury, is a valuable resource for adopting budgets. MTA’s *Building a Better Budget* book, available in the online MTA Store on www.michigantownships.org or by calling (517) 321-6467, ext. 221, also covers the entire budgeting process, including estimating revenue and expenditures, strategic planning and trend projections.

Information provided in *Financial Forum* should not be considered legal advice, and readers are encouraged to contact their township auditor and/or attorney for advice specific to their situation.

Need more budgeting resources? MTA’s got you covered!

- Our Online Learning Center features several helpful webinars—available on demand to watch at your convenience—including “Building a Better Budget,” “Exploring Township Revenue Sources,” “Spending Public Money” and “Budgeting ... It’s a Process.” Start exploring at <https://learn.michigantownships.org>.
- The “Index of Topics” in the “Answer Center” on the members-only side of our website offers samples, resources and information on budgeting, strategic planning and a whole lot more.



Legislative lowdown

A quick look at critical bills MTA is following as they move through the legislative process. For updates, look to our *Township Insights* e-newsletter, emailed weekly to all member officials.

HB 4014: Speed limits—Modifies procedure for establishing speed limits. *MTA supports.*

HB 4084: Unlawful dumping—Revises criminal penalties and civil fines for unlawful dumping of garbage. *MTA supports.*

HB 4115: Liquor license—Allows a local unit to adopt a resolution for on-premises liquor licensees to sell alcoholic liquor between 2 a.m. and 4 a.m. *MTA monitoring.*

HB 4129: Elections—Requires secretary of state to post on Department of State website a list of local clerks who are not current with continuing education training. *MTA monitoring.*

HBs 4132-4133: Elections—Creates felony penalties for knowingly submitting an absent voter (AV) ballot application using another person's name and personal information, and for submitting an AV ballot application with the intent of obtaining multiple AV ballots for a person. *MTA monitoring.*

HB 4134: Elections—Allows increase in allowable precinct size and requires permanent absent voter list. *MTA supports.*

HB 4135: Elections—Requires absent voter counting boards in cities and townships with more than one election precinct. *MTA monitoring.*

HB 4192: Elections/replacement candidates—Modifies the process for appointing a replacement candidate. *MTA opposes.*

HB 4197: Local preemption—Prohibits local laws that prevent local officials from cooperating with federal authorities regarding an individual's immigration status. *MTA opposes.*

HBs 4211-4212: Law enforcement—Increases penalties for disarming a law enforcement officer of a firearm. *MTA monitoring.*

HBs 4454-4461: Solid waste—Revises Part 115 solid waste law to

create materials management plans, and places more emphasis on recycling and composting of materials. *MTA supports.*

HB 4491: Elections—Provides authority for county clerks to remove deceased individuals from the Qualified Voter File. *MTA monitoring.*

HBs 4523-4524: Local rail grant separation program—Creates a local grade separation grant program for the separation of motor vehicle traffic and railroad traffic. *MTA supports.*

HB 4530: Elections—Eliminates May and August election dates, and creates June primary. *MTA monitoring.*

HB 4722 & SB 446: Land use/local zoning preemption—Amends Michigan Zoning Enabling Act to preempt local units of government from zoning short-term rentals. *MTA opposes.*

HBs 4766-4771: Asbestos abatement—Revises laws that govern asbestos abatement in Michigan. *MTA supports.*

HB 4822: Workers' compensation—Provides for workers' compensation for COVID-19 presumption for police, firefighters and emergency medical personnel without positive test result. *MTA opposes.*

HB 4839: Elections—Allows a township clerk to offer an annual absent ballot application that could be used for any or all elections held during a calendar year. *MTA supports.*

HB 4845: Elections—Requires the secretary of state to conduct signature verification training for county, city and township clerks. *MTA supports.*

HB 4885: Removal from office—Modifies the gubernatorial removal process of local government officers from office. *MTA monitoring.*

HB 4908: Gaming—Allows veterans organization to conduct charity game using a video charity game dispenser and allocates net proceeds to include reimbursement to local units for disabled veterans property tax exemption. *MTA supports.*

HB 5282: Elections—Prohibits intimidation of an election inspector or preventing an election inspector from performing his or her duties. *MTA supports.*

HB 5293: Land use/zoning preemption—Preempts local zoning authority for child foster care institutions for a state licensed facility up to 10 children. *MTA opposes.*

HBs 5300-5302: Medical marijuana—Creates special medical grower license for certain caregivers, limits to one location, requires registration and tracking of product, and provides municipal authority for civil enforcement. *MTA supports.*

HB 5329: Property taxes—Provides an opt-out option to designated assessor requirement. *MTA neutral.*

HB 5335: Elections—Requires city and township clerks to provide challengers in each precinct or absent voter counting boards with a visible challenger identification badge. *MTA neutral.*

HB 5675: Township authority—Allows the option for township supervisors to perform marriages (*creating parity with mayors*). *MTA supports.*

HBs 5683-5684: Sales and use taxes—Provides sales and use tax exemptions for pet food. *MTA opposes.*

HB 5697: Tax tribunal—Provides privacy of taxpayer information for Michigan Tax Tribunal proceedings. *MTA opposes.*

HB 5702: Personal property taxes—Eliminates all personal property taxes, without a revenue replacement. *MTA opposes.*

HBs 5706 & 6060: Marijuana—Allows Cannabis Regulatory Agency to contract with Indian tribes regarding marijuana operations and provides allocation of the excise tax. *MTA monitoring.*

HBs 5921, 5923-5925: FOIA requirements—Modifies Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requirements including required acknowledgement of FOIA request within two days, requires waiver or reduction of fee for request of a public record if would primarily benefit the general public, requires specific information about a record to be included in written denial, and requires a \$500 fine to public body if denial challenged in court and new basis raised for denial. *MTA opposes.*

HB 5922: FOIA requirements—

Requires disclosure of FOIA coordinator's name and contact information. *MTA neutral.*

HB 5972: Water resource improvement district—Modifies the definition of water resource improvement district to include certain water trails for tax increment financing. *MTA monitoring.*

HB 5981: Zoning preemption—Preempts local zoning, including special land use permit, for qualified residential treatment programs in residential zones for up to 25 children. *MTA opposes.*

HB 6062: Public notices—Creates Local Government Public Notice Act. *MTA supports.*

HB 6071: Polling locations—Expands the types of locations that may be used as polling places. *MTA supports.*

HB 6124: Election challengers—Provides election challenger training for county clerks, political parties and other organizations, and requires election challengers to be trained. *MTA supports.*

HBs 6133-6134: Revenue sharing—Creates the Revenue Sharing Trust Fund for statutory revenue sharing. *MTA supports.*

SBs 22-23: Elections—Limits millage elections to November elections. *MTA opposes.*

SB 61: Shoreline permits—Provides for expedited permit processing during high water. *MTA supports.*

SBs 130-133: Elections—Moves the May and August election dates to March and June with primary to be held the Tuesday following the first Monday in June. *MTA monitoring.*

SBs 273 & 278: Elections—Provides for regulation of absent voter (AV) ballot drop boxes and modifies collection for AV ballots deposited in an AV ballot drop box. *MTA opposes SB 273.*

SB 279: Elections—Modifies and revises the number of election challengers allowed in combined absent voter counting boards. *MTA monitoring.*

SB 292: Elections—Requires the secretary of state to establish election challenger training and requires election challengers to be trained. *MTA supports.*

SB 306: Elections—Requires the secretary of state to prepare, submit and post on website a report of county, city and township clerks who are not current with training or instruction required. *MTA monitoring.*

SB 308: Elections—Requires the secretary of state to provide signature verification training for clerks and election inspectors. *MTA monitoring.*

SBs 319-320: Septic system loan program—Modifies Strategic Water Quality Initiative loan program and fund to create a municipality loan program and a resident loan program. *MTA supports.*

SBs 429-431: Land use/local preemption—Preempts local units of government on zoning and all regulation of sand and gravel mining operations, and places jurisdiction under the state Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy. *MTA opposes.*

SB 441 & HB 5326: Property tax assessments—Clarifies valuation of wind energy systems. *MTA supports.*

SB 442 & HB 4875: Land use—Modifies conditions under which zoning ordinance may prohibit aggregate mining. *MTA supports.*

SB 449: Unfunded mandates—Creates the Headlee Unfunded Mandates Prohibition Act specifying a local unit of government would not be obligated to provide a new activity or service or increased level of activity or service required by state law unless the state appropriates the necessary funds to the local unit of government. *MTA supports.*

SB 563: Beach safety—Requires municipalities to post information on beach safety and anti-drowning techniques from state on website if they maintain a website. *MTA supports.*

SBs 729-730: Personal property tax exemption—Exempts from personal property tax new broadband equipment that resolves lack of service. *MTA opposes.*

SBs 783 & 1084: Property taxes—Replaces process for disabled veterans property tax exemption with an income tax credit and requires the state to reimburse local units of government. *MTA supports.*

SBs 805-806: Property tax exemptions—Modifies the filing for eligible manufacturing personal property tax exemptions and the distribution of the Local Community Stabilization Share retroactively for businesses that missed the exemption filing deadline. *MTA opposes.*

SB 807: Property tax exemptions—Provides, for 2021 year only, a process for owner of personal property that would have qualified for an exemption if failed to file due to COVID-19 to obtain an exemption and holds local units of government harmless. *MTA supports.*

SB 820: Local preemption—Prohibits local units of government from imposing a ban on the use of natural gas or installation of natural gas infrastructure. *MTA opposes.*

SB 846: Disabled veterans property tax exemption—Modifies affidavit filing requirements for disabled veterans property tax exemption. *MTA monitoring.*

SB 881: Property tax exemption—Extends automatic poverty exemption for 2021 tax year through 2022 tax year for properties exempt in 2019, 2020 or 2021 tax year, and allows board of review to grant a partial poverty exemption equal to 75% reduction in taxable value. *MTA monitoring.*

SB 956: Property tax exemption—Provides tax exemption for personal property comprising certain consumer goods handling systems. *MTA opposes.*

SBs 957-958: Use and sales tax exemptions—Exempts collection of the use tax and sales tax on fully automated consumer goods handling systems. *MTA opposes.*

SBs 972-973 & 1029: Sales and use tax suspension—Exempts sale of fuel from sales and use tax at the pump from June 15 to Sept. 15, 2022. *MTA opposes.*

SBs 1060-1062: Property taxes—Provides for the replacement revenue to local units for personal property tax exemption for the small taxpayer exemption between \$80,000 and \$180,000 that takes effect in 2023. *MTA supports.*

Show me the money!

Grant guidelines for townships

As a township official, you might be asking yourself, “How can we fund our needed township projects? What resources are there for our capital improvements plan (CIP)? How do we get our share of the grant dollars out there? With limited resources, how do we optimize our chances of winning grants?”

With inflation running rampant, what may have once seemed like a challenge has really become quite daunting in some communities—how to fund public projects and an ever-increasing demand for services. With limited funds and increasing costs, township officials must become more creative and resourceful. On the bright side, there may be more grant funding opportunities (as well as loan programs) available now than ever before. Deteriorating infrastructure and COVID-19 impacts have prompted state and federal lawmakers to try and jump start the economy with numerous programs. So how do you capture some of this revenue for your township?

Many of the available programs focus on major assets, including:

- Bridges
- Water and wastewater systems
- Parks
- Trails
- Facilities
- Roads

Although most townships don't maintain or initiate capital projects for roads and bridges, working closely with your county road commission or road department is critical. Townships often have better insights into upcoming developments or priorities for residents and having a solid partnership with your road agency can result in more grant funding pursued for those assets within your township.

Nearly every Michigan township received its allocations of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds, and the state allocation has resulted in grants and other programs funneling more funding into communities. The historic Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) dramatically increased funding to some infrastructure programs (including increasing broadband access) and created new funding for other programs. There are many grant programs that provide funding for other areas, including emergency services equipment or training, election equipment, and more. While this article will share sources for the assets listed at left, keep in mind that the application strategies discussed apply to all competitive grant and loan opportunities.





Seven steps to applying for and winning a grant

1) Identify a funding opportunity that meets the needs of the township

This step can be viewed as somewhat of a prerequisite in pursuing grant funding. As asset management has become more integrated into the vocabulary and practice of local government officials, so have capital improvement plans (CIP). Some townships have had a CIP for decades, some developed them in recent years, and some are still holding off. (Under MCL 125.3865 of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, a CIP is required for a township if the township, alone or jointly with one or more other local units of government, owns or operates a water supply or sewage disposal system.) A CIP identifies and prioritizes major projects for a community over a period of time, often five to six years. If your township has a CIP, let that be the roadmap when searching for grant opportunities. If you don't have one, consider making it a priority.

In the absence of a current CIP, townships may be more likely to become reactive to opportunities that are presented instead of proactive. Additionally, many competitive grants require excerpts from an approved CIP to demonstrate that an application meets a documented need and priority. Even if your township doesn't have the funding to implement the plan, this becomes somewhat of a "wish list" and will help guide future decisions.

In some cases, a unique funding opportunity comes along, and you must be flexible and prepared to act quickly. For example, it could be roadway improvements to accommodate a business expansion, water or sewer extension or replacement to serve a new development, or funding focused on safety enhancements. Since most grants require a local match, it's important to use local resources to pursue a project that truly benefits the community rather than simply to "get a grant."

Be intentional on pursuing funding for prioritized projects as it will enable the author of the grant application to be more persuasive on the importance of the project to benefit the community.

2) Read all documents related to the funding opportunity

This is a critical step in the application process. Funding applications vary from quite simple, requiring completing just one or two pages, while others are more complex and require a substantial amount of supporting documentation. The following are key items to make note of when initially reviewing the application documents.

- **Key dates**
 - Q&A call-in date
 - Written Q&A deadline
 - Application due date
 - Expected grant award date
- **Application submission requirements**
 - Application form
 - Required matching funds
 - Required attachments
 - ✓ Public hearing
 - ✓ Affidavit of notice of public hearing
 - ✓ Board resolution of support

Township case study

The township: Niles Charter Township (Berrien Co.)

The project: Portions of Indiana-Michigan River Valley Trail

The funding sources: *Phase I:* Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) Enhancement and Transportation Alternatives Program (\$415,010), Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (\$286,000) and Local (\$141,000); *Phase II:* MDOT (\$650,826), MDNR (\$300,000), Local (\$246,690) and Bike Michiana (\$15,000) *Total:* \$2.05 million

The details: Niles Charter Township Treasurer **Jim Ringler** calls the township's 4.4 miles of the Indiana-Michigan River Valley Trail "some of the best money that the township has ever spent."



The 34-mile interstate trail runs through the township from the state line, along the eastern bank of the St. Joseph River, connecting the City of Niles with Mishawaka, Ind. A draw for both residents and visitors, the trail connects to four downtowns, 16 parks, numerous historical and cultural attractions, and

local businesses, including restaurants, shopping districts and more.

The township additions to the trail were completed in two phases. Phase I, extending from the state line to the Brandywine Creek Nature Park, is a 3.3-mile section—nearly 10% of the overall trail—of non-motorized trail parallel to the township's commercial, retail corridor. Completed in August 2014, the section is 10 feet wide with two-foot shoulders through a wooded passageway utilized by pedestrian travelers and recreational enthusiasts.

Ringler says that Phase II runs through "a beautiful area, winding through the woods and over Brandywine Creek," yet still located near two major roads in the township. The 1.1-mile section completed a missing section of the trail, linking the finished Michigan trail sections with the many miles of trail in Indiana. It includes a bridge and 50 feet of elevated boardwalk connecting to township's Community Park.

Improvements continue to be made, including a bike repair station donated to the township by the city of Niles. A Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund grant has also been approved for the township to develop a trailhead with features that will support trail use and enjoyment. There are currently no trailheads on the trail between Niles and South Bend, Ind.

"The trail is the heaviest used property and asset that the township has," Ringler said. "It was a big step for the township to commit to. It gets used by a lot of people, and was well worth the investment and efforts by the township."

- ✓ Independent cost estimate
- ✓ Location map
- ✓ Photos of the site
- ✓ Letters of support
- ✓ Economic development financial information
- ✓ Narrative
- ✓ Attorney's title opinion
- ✓ CIP
- ✓ Project implementation schedule

• **How to submit the application**

- Digital submittal (e.g., email, upload to a portal)
- Hard copies (number of copies required)

• **Contact person for the granting agency**

Identifying the key dates is essential to planning and developing milestones throughout the process. It is helpful to attend any Q&A sessions offered, even when familiar with the grant program. The potential to receive new information offers insight into making the best case for your project. The due date is obviously critical and knowing the anticipated award date will help to plan out the actual implementation.

It's important to fully understand the magnitude of the matching funds required for any funding program. This can determine the township's ability to pursue the project or pass on the opportunity. Many grant programs fund a percentage of construction costs. This means the township is not only responsible for a percentage of construction costs but also 100% of engineering, environmental clearance, legal, fiscal and property acquisition expenses. Understanding the full scale of the financial commitment on the front end will avoid surprises down the road.

Any required attachments can get challenging if they aren't clearly identified early in the process. If public notices need to be published, it is best to get those prepared early, especially if your local publication is published weekly. If your board doesn't like special meetings, plan to have any required board action occur at a regular meeting, although it may not be possible if there is a short turnaround or if the dates simply aren't complementary. Some of the required attachments, such as an attorney's title opinion, may also indicate some of the partners needed for the project. If letters of support are required or recommended, the strongest advocates should be contacted to get them on board early. This could include local businesses, nonprofit advocacy organizations, county officials or legislators.

Some grant opportunities are tied to an economic development activity of one or more businesses. These programs often require information from the expanding or relocating businesses, such as current number of employees, jobs to be created, and the estimated private investment. This may require more extensive information so involving those partners early is critical.

With the end game in mind, organize your application from the start. Learn what you can about the primary contact

for the grant application and the individual or team that will ultimately review the applications. Ask yourself, “Do they have a technical background?” for example. Having this knowledge can help shape your approach to the application. This can also be a great time to contact the program administrator for clarification of any requirements. Start building this relationship to garner any other insights for a successful application for the current or future opportunities.

3) Identify key team members for development of the application

The importance of this step in a successful application process cannot be overstated. After fully reviewing application requirements, identify team members who are needed to complete the application. Again, some simple applications may be completed by a single person, but many require varying expertise. Consider the following when assembling a team for the application.

- Township officials/personnel
- Attorney
- Engineer
- Planner
- County road commission/department
- Adjacent township, city or village
- Local business(es)
- Legislators
- Trusted reviewer

There is often a township official or staff member who possesses historical knowledge or context of the problem to be addressed by the project. This could be a long-serving board member or someone in the public services department. The **supervisor** and **clerk** should be made aware of the application, especially if a publication and board resolution of support are required. Applications may require a signature from a staff member, while others require the “highest elected official” (the supervisor).

The services of an **attorney** may or may not be required for an application. If an attorney’s title opinion is required, such as for most Michigan Department of Natural Resources grant applications, inform the attorney of the application purpose, provide any furnished boilerplate documents, and give them time to complete their research.

An **engineer** is often a necessary team member for applications for capital projects. The engineer can prepare the independent cost estimate, which is often the foundation for a grant application, provide technical justification for the project, and has resources available to easily prepare location maps, project photos, conceptual plans, or consolidate excerpts from relevant master plans or maps. An engineer may be able to assist with amendments to CIPs if that is necessary.

A **planner** may be beneficial to the team if part of the narrative requires describing how the proposed project integrates with long-term planning efforts of the township, outlined in the CIP.

If the application involves transportation improvements, coordination will likely be required with your **county road commission/department**. For some transportation programs, the applicant must be an Act 51 road agency. In this case,

Township case study

The township: Oronoko Charter Township (Berrien Co.)

The project: Park facilities

The funding sources: Michigan Department of Transportation Small Urban Program (\$81,200) and Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Program (\$140,000); Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (\$278,100); Local (\$720,700) *Total:* \$1.22 million

The details: Oronoko Charter Township has long sought grant funding to assist with enhancing facilities and services to better serve the community. In fact, the township’s five-year recreation plan notes that in 1976, the township received a grant to develop an acre of land adjacent to the township hall into Robert G. Feather Park. Fast forward more than 40 years, and the township continues to seek—and receive—grants to improve community recreation facilities.

Using a combination of awards, the township has added a new park adjacent to Feather Park, with construction underway for new youth soccer and football fields—including an accessible limestone pathway allowing those with mobility issues to get close to the field to watch

their players—as well as a concession and restroom facility. In addition to a large parking lot, able to accommodate more than 300 vehicles, a new .6-mile, non-motorized, multi-use trail is also in the works. The new park has been designated as a trailhead for a potential countywide trail network.

“Our youth recreation programs have not only outgrown the current facilities, but those facilities are located at the public school campus and getting squeezed,” said Supervisor **Mike Hildebrand**, explaining that the recreation program is a cooperative effort among the township, **Berrien Charter Township** (Berrien Co.), Village of Berrien Springs and Berrien Springs Public Schools, which recently filed to become a recreation authority. “When we are completed, we will have one large recreation space for all outdoor youth sports.”

Hildebrand says the township would “absolutely not” have been able to accomplish the project without grant funding, particularly with substantial increases in construction costs since the project was originally estimated. Being nimble and knowledgeable about grant program requirements is key. “Understand what designs might have to change in order to meet the parameters of the grant,” Hildebrand noted.

The township is raising funds and seeking grants for Phase II of its park project, which will include a dog park, and basketball and sand volleyball courts. The school district—which Hildebrand calls a “fantastic community partner”—purchased an adjacent 27 acres where new baseball and softball fields will be located. A credit union headquartered in the township has started a community matching donations campaign, encouraging individuals, businesses and organizations to contribute a combined \$100,000 to the park, which will help with the cost overages, Hildebrand said. Altogether, when completed, the community park will be more than 60 acres contiguous to the original Feather Park.





Township case study

The township: Chikaming and New Buffalo Townships (Berrien Co.)

The project: Corridor improvement and streetscape project

The funding sources: Berrien County Road Department (\$1.5 million); Michigan Department of Transportation Federal Surface Transportation Program—Rural (\$780,000) and Transportation Economic Development Fund, Category D (\$120,000); USDA Rural Business Development grant (\$75,000); Chikaming Township (\$750,000); New Buffalo Township (\$750,000); The Pokagon Fund, via the township's share (\$850,000) *Total:* \$4.825 million

The details: Recent grant funding assisted two lakeshore Berrien County townships in revitalizing Union Pier in southwest Michigan's Harbor Country. The small lakeside community is a tourist attraction—boasting outdoor recreation, wineries, restaurants and more. The project included roadway and streetscape improvements along Red Arrow Highway through Union Pier. It included 1.3 miles of road resurfacing/reconstruction along with a non-motorized pathway, restrooms, sidewalk improvements, new stormwater infrastructure, lighting, and streetscape plantings and furnishings. The road reconstruction and streetscape will improve road safety, increase multimodal improvements and walkability features to support local businesses, and better match economic development opportunities.

"These efforts have shown an immediate impact with residents and visitors having safe access to the businesses in Union Pier, the emergence of new businesses opening and existing businesses having increased traffic," said Supervisor **David Bunte**. "This project will be a catalyst to continued improvements along the Red Arrow Highway corridor in Chikaming Township, with future streetscape and infrastructure development in the coastal areas of Lakeside, Harbert and Sawyer. Without the assistance from these programs, our community would be challenged to plan for the future and drive our local economy."

the township would likely play a supporting role in the application process. If the project involves construction of a new trail or bike lanes, coordination with the county or Michigan Department of Transportation would be important to garner a preliminary approval for placement of facilities in their right-of-way.

If the project crosses jurisdictional boundaries or impacts an **adjacent township, city or village**, initiate collaboration efforts to strengthen the application and convey a greater positive impact.

It may be beneficial to contact a **state or federal legislator** for support of the project. These officials often appreciate the notification and an opportunity to advocate for funding pursuits within their district.

Finally, recruit someone with an eye for detail who is skilled at writing or editing to be a **trusted reviewer**. Typos and poorly written narratives do not appear in the recipe for a successful funding application. The reviewer needs to perform a final quality control check on the application package. It is important to be honest about your own strengths and limitations and enlist someone who excels where you don't.

4) Prepare a milestone schedule and assign tasks to the team

Once the team is assembled, take the list of key dates and insert the grant application submission requirements in a chronological order to develop the overall milestone schedule and assign each task to the appropriate person on the team. Depending on the complexity of the application, it may be helpful to have intermittent check-in times to see how all team members are progressing, any obstacles encountered, and if additional assistance is needed.

5) Prepare a draft of the application

After the team has their assignments, it's now time to get to work! As items on the task list are completed, assemble them in the proper order. For any items that may require significant lead time (e.g., public hearing publication, attorney's title opinion), get those initiated so they don't add stress as the submission deadline approaches.

If there are initial questions about the application requirements, reach out to the contact person from the funding agency to get clarity on the expectations. This can also be a good opportunity to find out who will be evaluating the applications (e.g., individual, committee) and whether the individual(s) has a technical background.

If a narrative is a required component of the application, it is helpful to know the audience who will be evaluating it. Consider the differences in the following examples:

The existing 4" cast iron water main will be replaced with a new 8" ductile iron water main to increase the available fire flow to a minimum of 2,000 gallons per minute (gpm) throughout the project.

The new 8" water main will provide enhanced water quality and fire protection for the residents and businesses along this corridor.

6) Submit a complete application package

Here is where it is helpful to have an independent person perform a final review. The milestone list prepared initially is a good resource for checking the final application package to be sure all required documents are included in final form, signed where indicated and clearly labeled. A good reviewer will also check for spelling, grammar and general content. If the reviewer doesn't understand something, there is a decent chance that someone from the granting agency may question it as well. This is the final opportunity to get it right!

If a hard copy is required, be sure to allow ample time for delivery and use a shipping method that enables you to track your submission. If a digital submittal is required, be sure to request confirmation of receipt. After the efforts of the team and investment to complete the application, be certain that it is received by the due date.

7) Follow up with a representative of the funding agency

It's almost always beneficial to follow up after applying for funding. A follow-up call conveys the importance of the funding for your community and gives you an opportunity to clarify any questions that may have been raised. This can also be another opportunity to develop the relationship with representatives of the agency.

Where do we find the money?

It would be impossible to list all of the grant programs—state, federal, community foundations and more—available to townships. The extensive listing beginning on page 22 identifies commonly used grant programs, and outlines eligible uses, key dates, competitiveness, funding amount

available, match requirements, and resource information. While the listing provides a good basis for where to begin looking for grants, it is by no means an exhaustive list. Township officials may wish to talk with consultants, including engineering firms, county leaders or your fellow township officials, who may also be aware of applicable grant opportunities. MTA shares grant notices and application information through its weekly newsletter, *Township Insights*, and compiles a listing—updated monthly—of available grant opportunities. The listing, and additional grant-related resources and information is available on the members-side of www.michigantownships.org (access the "Grants" webpage via the "Index of Topics" under the "Answer Center" tab after logging in).

Many sources of grant funding

The good news is that there are many sources for grants! Prioritize the capital improvements for your township and find a resource to help get it implemented. If you aren't sure of a project or grant source, check with MTA or an engineer as many have experience working with different programs. Identify the grant, build your team, and submit a successful application!



Mickey Bittner, P.E., Regional Director
Wightman

Contact Bittner at (269) 266-2159 or mbittner@gowightman.com, or visit www.gowightman.com.

You can also learn more from Bittner and Wightman associates at the Grants Guidelines session held at MTA's

Regional Summits in October. Turn to page 28 to learn more!

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Guide to grants

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds

American Rescue Plan Act funds were made available to state, local and tribal governments through the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF). Initial distribution of these funds began in May 2021, and non-entitlement units of government (all but eight of Michigan's largest townships) receive their second allocations this July.

Eligible uses:

- Access to clean drinking water, including replacement of lead service lines
- Vital wastewater and stormwater infrastructure
- Affordable access to broadband
- Administrative costs (consultants, legal) provided services are secured in compliance with the Brooks Act (Qualifications Based Selection)
- Government services and support including replacement of lost revenue, premium pay for essential workers, and responses to public health and negative economic impacts from the pandemic

Key dates:

- Can be used for costs incurred after March 31, 2021
- Must be obligated by Dec. 31, 2024
- Must be fully expended by Dec. 31, 2026

Competitive: No

Available funding: Varies by township

Required match: None

Resources:

- www.michigantownships.org/covidrelief.asp
- www.michigan.gov/arpa
- <https://home.treasury.gov/policy-issues/coronavirus/assistance-for-state-local-and-tribal-governments/state-and-local-fiscal-recovery-funds>

Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) funds

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, signed into law on Nov. 15, 2021, authorized \$1.2 trillion for investments in transportation and infrastructure, with almost half going to new programs, including billions of dollars flowing into the state of Michigan over the next five years. Townships will likely need to partner with their county road commissions or departments, as these programs typically require the applicant to be an Act 51 agency. The details are quite expansive, and the funding requirements aren't uniform across all programs.

Eligible uses:

- Roads and bridges
- Broadband
- Water and wastewater infrastructure
- Public transportation
- Highway and pedestrian safety
- Natural disaster prevention and mitigation

Key dates: Fiscal years 2022–2026

Competitive: Yes

Available funding: Varies significantly by program

Required match: Varies significantly by program

- Many transportation grants require a minimum match of 20% of construction costs plus 100% of engineering and other administrative costs
- Broadband infrastructure grants may not exceed 70% of the total project costs

Resources:

- www.gfoa.org/the-infrastructure-investment-and-jobs-act-iiija-was
- www.nga.org/iiija-implementation-resources/

Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE)

While many state Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy funding programs focus on water, wastewater and stormwater infrastructure, they also have numerous other programs, including brownfield redevelopment, coastal planning and construction, energy, and aquatic invasive species. Funding is available for drinking water projects that include lead service line replacements on private property. Both grant and low-interest revolving loan (1.875%–2.125% for FY '22) programs are available. Periodic one-time grant opportunities target specific initiatives (for example, Stormwater, Asset Management, and Wastewater (SAW) and Drinking Water Asset Management (DWAM) grant programs). Grants for water and wastewater construction projects are often called “principal forgiveness” and target financially disadvantaged communities.

Eligible uses:

- Drinking water systems
- Wastewater systems and stormwater infrastructure
- Several others

Key dates:

- Intent to Apply forms for Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) and Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) are currently due annually on Nov. 1.
- Project plan for CWSRF is due June 1
- Project plan for DWSRF is due July 1

Competitive: Yes. All funding applications are scored, then ranked. Awards are made until available funding is exhausted. Unfunded applicants remain on the list until the following year.

Available funding: CWSRF—\$881 million for loan; \$68.3 million for principal forgiveness, no maximum per project; DWSRF—\$256.5 million for loan; \$91 million for principal forgiveness, no maximum per project

Required match: CWSRF and DWSRF are loan programs

Resources:

- www.michigan.gov/egle/regulatory-assistance/grants-and-financing

U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development (USDA RD)

USDA Rural Development offers a wide variety of programs for drinking water, wastewater, community facilities and solid waste management, among others. Rural areas with populations of 10,000 or less are eligible to apply for water and wastewater projects (Rural Utilities or RU), rural areas with populations less than 20,000 are eligible to apply for community facilities (CF), and rural areas with populations less than 50,000 are eligible for Rural Business Development Grants (RBDG).

As a federal agency, USDA will not fund lead water service line replacements on private property. Partial grants may be available to disadvantaged communities for water and wastewater projects. Some examples of eligible community facilities include township halls, community centers, public safety buildings, medical facilities, and fairgrounds. Police vehicles, fire trucks and public works vehicles are also eligible. RBDG grants provide funding for transportation, streetscape, parking lots or utilities to benefit small or emerging businesses. The project must be tied to job creation for the local business.

Eligible uses:

- Drinking water systems
- Wastewater systems
- Facilities (township hall, public safety buildings)
- Vehicles and equipment

Key dates:

- Water, wastewater and facilities applications accepted throughout the year
- RBDG typically accepts application from September to February

Competitive: RU and CF are not competitive unless program funding limits are reached; RBDG: competitive

Available funding: No maximum for RU or CF. No maximum for RBDG, but priority is given to smaller requests. Grants generally range from \$10,000 to \$500,000.

Required match: Water, wastewater and facilities programs are loan programs. RBDG does not require a match, though a match makes the application more competitive

Resources:

- www.rd.usda.gov
- www.rd.usda.gov/mi
- www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/business-programs/rural-business-development-grants/mi

Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR)

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources has several grants available to communities, including the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF), Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), Recreation Passport Grant, and Invasive Species Grant Program. A current five-year recreation plan must be on file with the MDNR to be eligible for the MNRTF and LWCF programs. A five-year recreation plan or CIP may be used for the Recreation Passport Grant.

Eligible uses:

- MNRTF—Development of trails, parks, beaches, campgrounds, water access, hunting and fishing facilities, winter sports, ball fields, as well as bathrooms, nature interpretive buildings, park visitor centers, and storage buildings to support these activities. Acquisition of property for the same uses.
- LWCF—Development of trails, parks, beaches, campgrounds, water access, winter sports, ball fields, and skate parks, as well as bathrooms and storage buildings to support these activities.
- Recreation Passport Grant—Development of parks, trails, campgrounds, beach access, or other recreation amenities with a focus on renovation or enhancement of existing facilities
- Invasive Species Grant Program—Prevent, detect, eradicate and control invasive species

Key dates:

- MNRTF, LWCF and Recreation Passport Grants: Five-year recreation plans are due Feb. 1; grant applications are due April 1
- Invasive Species Grant Program: Request for proposals issued Sept. 1; grant applications due Nov. 1

Competitive: Yes

Available funding:

- MNRTF: Minimum grant of \$15,000 to maximum of \$300,000 for development grants. No maximum for acquisition projects.
- LWCF: Minimum grant of \$30,000 to maximum of \$500,000
- Recreation Passport Grants: Minimum grant of \$7,500 to maximum of \$150,000
- Invasive Species Grants: Minimum grant of \$25,000 to maximum of \$400,000

Required match: MNRTF: Minimum 25% of the project cost; LWCF: Exactly 50% of the project cost; Recreation Passport Grants: Minimum 25% of the project cost; Invasive Species Grants: 10% match

Resources:

- www.michigan.gov/dnr/Buy-and-Apply/grants
- www.michigan.gov/invasives/grants/misgp

Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT)

The Michigan Department of Transportation has numerous sources as it also serves as the custodian of federal transportation funds. These programs will require townships to partner with the county road commission or department as applicants must be Act 51 agencies. The federal Surface Transportation Program (STP) funds flow through the state and are made available to rural task forces (RTF), small urban groups and metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) for federal aid-eligible roads and bridges. The Local Bridge Program funds bridge replacement or rehabilitation projects. The Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)

cover story

funds pedestrian and bicycle facilities while Safe Routes to School (SRTS) funds facilities to schools. The MDOT Office of Economic Development has several programs, including Category A and F funds.

Eligible uses:

- STP—Roadway or bridge improvements
- Local Bridge Program—Bridge replacement or improvements
- TAP—Sidewalks, shared use paths, boardwalks, bike lanes, paved shoulders
- SRTS—Sidewalks, curb ramps, on-street bicycle facilities
- Category A—Roadway or bridge improvements related to economic development activity in specific industries (e.g. agriculture or food processing, manufacturing, tourism) with job creation or retention
- Category F—Roadway or bridge improvements for urban areas in rural counties (population of 400,000 or less)

Key dates:

- STP—Planning organizations typically have a three- to five-year plan and meet periodically depending on the organization. RTFs may meet annually or biannually while MPOs typically meet monthly.
- Local Bridge Program—Applications due annually, typically in May
- TAP & SRTS—Applications are accepted in February, June, and October
- Category A—Applications are accepted throughout the year
- Category F—Applications are typically due each spring

Competitive:

- STP—Yes, prioritized through the RTF, small urban group, or MPO
- Local Bridge Program—Yes
- TAP & SRTS—Yes
- Category A—Yes
- Category F—Yes

Available funding:

- STP—Annual allocation varies by RTF or MPO; maximum grant limited by availability
- Local Bridge Program—No maximum, based on funding availability
- TAP—Minimum grant \$200,000; no maximum
- Category A—No maximum
- Category F—Maximum grant of \$375,000

Required match:

- STP—Minimum 20% of construction costs, plus 100% of engineering and administration costs

- Local Bridge Program—5% of construction costs, plus 100% of engineering and administration costs
- TAP & SRTS—Minimum 20% of construction costs, plus 100% of engineering and administration costs
- Category A—Minimum 20% of the total project costs, including engineering and right-of-way acquisition. Other grant sources can be used as the local match.
- Category F—Minimum 20% of construction costs, plus 100% of engineering and administration costs

Resources

- www.michigan.gov/mdot/programs/grant-programs
- www.michigan.gov/mdot/business/local-government/local-agency-program
- www.michigan.gov/mdot/programs/grant-programs/transportation-alternatives
- <https://saferoutesmichigan.org/>
- www.michigan.gov/mdot/programs/grant-programs/transportation-economic-development-fund/category-a
- www.michigan.gov/mdot/programs/grant-programs/transportation-economic-development-fund/category-f

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The Michigan Association of Planning's annual conference at Mission Point Resort offers sessions customized for township land use leaders. National expert Jason Jordan, from the American Planning Association, tackles how communities can acquire and use federal funds to drive local recovery and reinvention. Breakouts include: preparing for solar energy, rural food systems, retrofitting the suburban strip and navigating contentious land use decisions. We are again hosting the MSU Extension Citizen Planner Program. Join us in person and/or online. Register today!



An introduction from the MDARD director

New state office aids rural development

Michigan's long-term prosperity depends on the success of our rural regions: 94% of our state's geography is considered rural, and our urban and rural economies are linked through our markets, natural resources, tourism opportunities and workforce. Nearly 1.8 million Michiganders live in rural areas, according the U.S. Department Agriculture. Many of these areas and residents are served by Michigan townships.

Rural Michigan faces a complex set of challenges and opportunities, including housing shortages, limited broadband access, and workforce shortages—tied to aging populations and population decline—that have profound impacts on our state's economic vitality. Addressing these challenges in rural communities requires a different set of tools than those used in urban cities like Detroit or Lansing; what works for a large manufacturer or entrepreneur in Detroit might not apply to a business looking to expand in the Upper Peninsula. What's more, many rural areas experience gaps in high-speed internet access, aging or declining populations, and a lack of housing options—and they have fewer resources or staff with which to address those needs.

Recognizing the unique needs of our rural communities and the challenges they face every day, a new Office of Rural Development (ORD) was created earlier this year within the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD). This is an office for the people. ORD aims to position Michigan as a leader in problem-solving, partnership and management of issues facing rural communities to make a real difference in people's lives.

A leader who knows rural Michigan

In March, Sarah Lucas was selected to lead this new office. In making this decision, MDARD decision-makers knew that ORD needed to be reflective and managed by

someone deeply integrated into rural Michigan. A resident of Marquette, Lucas has spent most of her 20-year career in small communities and rural areas in northwest Lower Michigan and the Upper Peninsula. She is passionate about reinvigorating Michigan's rural economies and being their partner on the critical issues they face.

Lucas has led a variety of cross-sector initiatives and planning efforts resulting in long-lasting coalitions, local and state policy change, and enhanced regional capacity for growth and investment. Previously, she served as the CEO of the Lake Superior Community Partnership, a Marquette County resource and advocate for economic development.

As a certified planner, Lucas has worked extensively with township governments, as well as counties, cities and villages. Prior to her work with Lake Superior Community Partnership, Lucas served as the community development director for Networks Northwest, a 10-county regional planning agency in northwest Lower Michigan; led the development of Housing North, a regional organization devoted to policy and communications solutions to housing needs in northwest Lower Michigan; and, after relocating to Marquette in 2020, worked with the Western Upper Peninsula Planning and Development Region to develop a regional economic development plan for "building back stronger" in the region's post-pandemic economy.

A large scope of issues

The state budget for the upcoming fiscal year further supported rural Michigan by including critical funding for ORD to move forward on addressing the unique needs of these communities, allowing for improvement of rural access to existing resources while filling gaps in programs and funding.

With such a large scope of issues facing rural Michigan, ORD will initially focus on three priority subject areas: access to affordable housing, workforce decline in rural counties, and increasing access to high-speed internet.

The COVID-19 pandemic shone a bright light on the fact that high-speed internet is essential for business, education, work, access to health care and population attraction. An estimated 900,000 Michiganders in rural areas lack fixed high-speed internet connection at home, and 77% of households without access to minimum broadband standards are rural communities. Every person in Michigan, regardless of zip code, must have access to fast, affordable, high-quality internet services where they live.

Investments in housing infrastructure, especially in rural communities, are crucial as Michigan's economy thrives. As businesses drive new economic activity in rural areas of Michigan, we must take steps to ensure that Michiganders have access to safe and affordable housing options, which is why ORD is collaborating with the Michigan State Housing Development Authority to facilitate rural affordable housing development.

While Michigan's workforce continues to evolve, the workforce and general population within rural communities continue to decrease. As of 2019, the population is declining in more than half of Michigan's rural counties. Among the ways that ORD will address this multifaceted issue is working in close partnership with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation and other stakeholders to focus on rural economic development projects that will bring talent to Michigan and allow us to keep talent here.

This is one of the first few steps forward on a much larger journey. The story within rural communities across our state is different than in other areas. The work happening today helps write the next chapter in this story—one of innovation, improvements and groundbreaking advancements within rural communities across our state. The work by the Office of Rural Development will help ensure future Michiganders may start calling rural Michigan home—a place where you can raise a family, have a good-paying job, and enjoy the true beauty that Michigan has to offer.



Gary McDowell, Director, Michigan Department of Agriculture & Rural Development

For more information on the Office of Rural Development, visit www.michigan.gov/mdard (via "Divisions" under the "About MDARD" tab).

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EMPOWER
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upcoming MTA workshop

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Get a handle on the hot topics facing your township's fire department and emergency services personnel

Providing emergency and fire protection services for your community may be one of the more complicated (and critical!) services your township provides. MTA can help! Township board members and fire officials alike can join us for *Emerging Issues in Emergency Services*, coming to the **Bavarian Inn Lodge in Frankenmuth on Sept. 12**. This full-day event is designed to offer both an update and a better understanding of current challenges.

You'll hear from a variety of experts—including State Fire Marshal Kevin Sehlmeier—on hot topics like the new Fire Fighter Training Council General Rules which include continuing education requirements for fire department members beginning this fall. Get an update from the director of the Division of EMS and Trauma within the state Bureau of EMS, Trauma and Preparedness, insights into recruitment and retention and more!

In today's era of new and emerging threats, we must be more aware of our surroundings than ever. Devastating events are occurring with increasing regularity and severity. Situational awareness can help mitigate the situation, but it is only as accurate as our own perception or reading of the situation. We'll review indicators that will help you identify violent behavior, offer de-escalation techniques and prepare you to react appropriately to minimize the devastation in your community.

Then we'll bring it home by examining the toll trauma has on department members' well-being and what townships can do about it. Exposure to adrenaline and trauma can negatively affect a responder's safety, decision-making and ability to remain ethically solid. Learn to recognize the warning signs for chronic and post-traumatic stress and take away techniques for managing the cumulative stress. We'll also explore wellness strategies like peer support teams and other methods of support you can provide to help rescue your rescuers! Join the discussion on what is (and isn't) working in sustaining your team.



Cancellations and Substitutions—Written cancellation requests must have been received at the MTA office by Aug. 29 to receive a full refund. In-person event “no shows” or those who cancel after Aug. 29 will be given online access to the recorded version. No refunds will be issued after Aug. 29 without extenuating circumstances. You may substitute another individual from your township without incurring a charge; please notify MTA of the change.

*Can't make the date but don't want to miss out on this valuable information?
A recorded version will be available after the event;
watch MTA publications and emails for details.*

Emerging Issues in EMS Registration Form — — — — —

Township County

Daytime Phone Number

Name & Title Email

Name & Title Email

Regular Registration Rate*:

\$148/person (Premium subscribers pay \$122/person**)

_____ (# registered) x \$_____ (rate*) =

TOTAL DUE \$_____

*Rates applies to MTA members. Non-members, call MTA for rates.

****Premium subscribers are townships that have purchased an online learning subscription to MTA Online at the Premium level. Find out if your township is a premium subscriber at www.michigantownships.org/mtaonline.asp.**

NOTE: Payment must accompany form in order to be processed.

Check enclosed (payable to MTA)

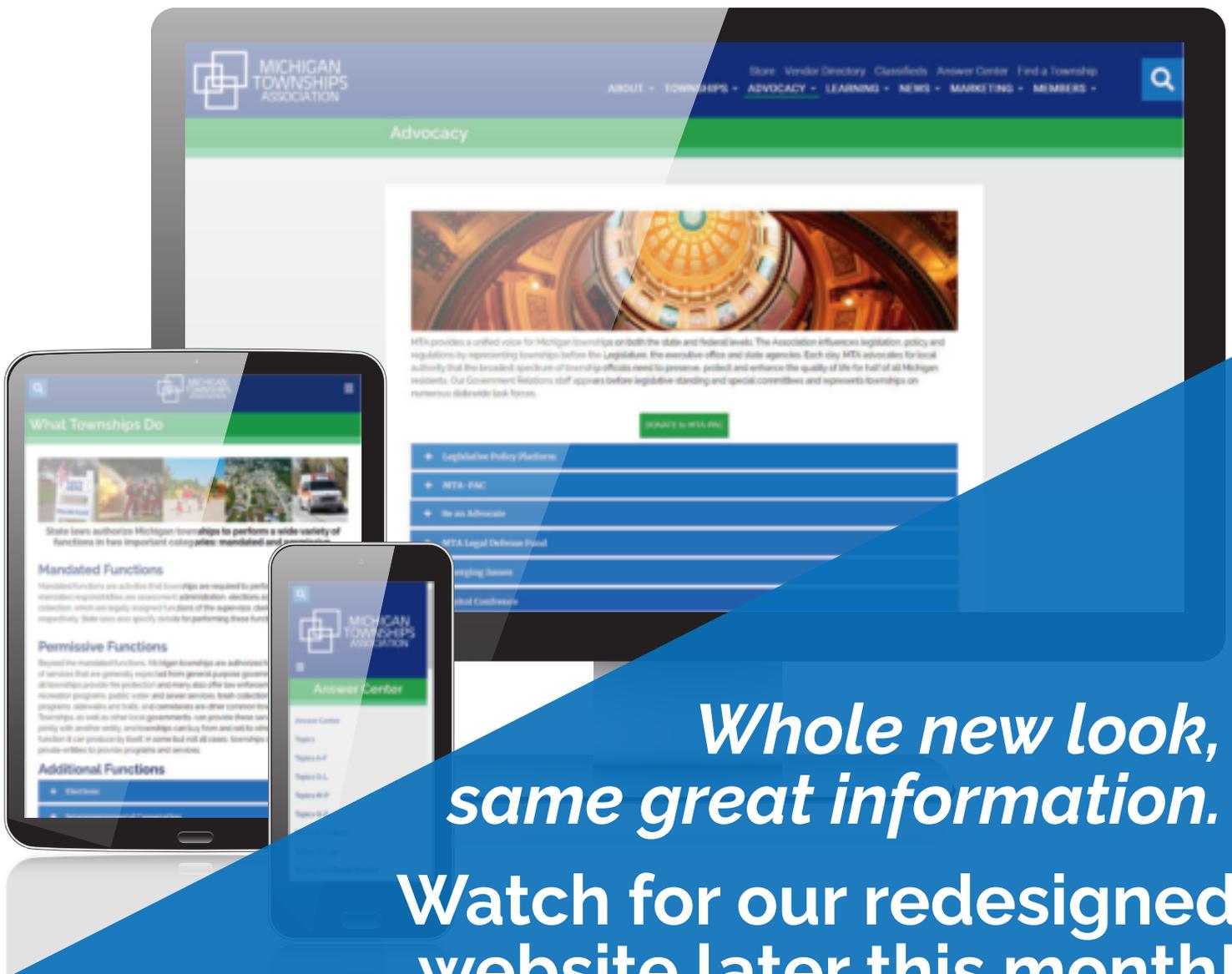
Charge to: (circle one) MasterCard VISA

Card # _____ CSV (3-digit code) _____ Expires _____

Print Cardholder's Name _____ Signature _____



Send your completed registration form with payment to MTA, P.O. Box 80078, Lansing, MI 48908-0078; fax: (517) 321-8908. Or register online at www.michigantownships.org. Questions? Call (517) 321-6467 ext. 221.



*Whole new look,
same great information.*

**Watch for our redesigned
website later this month!**

Use your current MTA username and password to log in to access members-only resources and information.

If you have questions about the new website or need technical support, please reach out to emily@michigantownships.org or call (517) 321-6467, ext. 241.



www.michigantownships.org



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