

THE STAR



Help us “Make a Splash” at Texas Drive Park



The Parks & Trails Committee is excited to announce the launch of the “Make a Splash” campaign, which is raising funds for a community splash pad at Texas Drive Park. The proposed splash pad would be approximately 2,000 SqFt in size and include 15-20 spray/water features. The structure would be separated into three zones: toddler, young child, and a family-friendly area.

The splash pad is part of the Township’s long-term vision for Texas Drive Park and a key component of the Parks & Trails Master Plan.

“A splash pad is a destination amenity. Not only would this offer a safe and enriching place for families to connect, but would also bring visitors into our community. With the close proximity of the park to our downtown core, we anticipate the splash pad to be an economic driver for our local businesses.” - Superintendent Julie VanderWiere

The fundraising goal for the project is \$400,000. The Township Board has committed to funding \$100,000-\$150,000 of the \$541,000 project cost. The Township has partnered with Texas Township Friends of Parks & Trails to raise funding for the project. We want everyone to have the opportunity to participate in the development of this exciting project. Donations of any amount are welcome and appreciated, but some structured donor levels have been established with

options for corporate donors to receive varying levels of recognition. All contributions are tax-deductible and will be utilized for the construction or maintenance of the splash pad.

Annual maintenance has been a factor in the decision-making process. Through the installation of a well, maintenance costs can be minimized. The Township anticipates an annual budget of \$5,000 for maintenance, with additional monies set aside for future repairs of the spray features.

Ways You Can Donate to the Campaign

1. Online at www.texastownship.org/splashpad (or by scanning the QR code)
2. Text Splash to 202-858-1233
3. Make a check payable to “Texas Township Friends of Parks & Trails” with Splash Pad in the memo line and mail or deliver to:



Texas Township
Attn: Splash Pad
7110 West Q Avenue
Kalamazoo, MI 49009

Please contact the Township for in-kind opportunities.

Featured Items

- “Make a Splash” Splash Pad Campaign
- Township Hall Project Update
- DDA Road Connector Project
- Strategic Plan Adopted
- Texas Corners Visual Preference Survey
- 2021 Community Events & Important Dates
- Flooding Mitigation Update
- Vegetation & Noxious Weeds Ordinance



DRAFT Renderings of Splash Pad

Short-Term Flooding Mitigation Project Comes to a Successful Close

In 2018, Texas Township collaborated with State and Local representatives, neighboring communities, Prein and Newhof Engineering, Kalamazoo County Drain Commission, Kalamazoo County Road Commission, Lake and Neighborhood Associations, as well as up and downstream property owners to develop a plan to mitigate the historic flooding. A Flood Task Force was created and a short-term flood mitigation project was implemented. After two years of pumping, the drawdown for both Eagle and Crooked Lakes measured 42.48 inches. Crooked Lake successfully met their permit target level and Eagle Lake was only 6.72 inches from their permit target level.

This pumping project successfully helped to relieve flooding for hundreds of impacted homes and was an incredible example of a successful public private partnership project. As we move forward with the long-term project, we would be remiss not to thank the many people that provided easements to enable the short-term project. The success of this project would have been impossible without the generosity of these property owners:

Lukasz and Rachelle Niec, the late Jim Roberts, Bentwood Association, Crooked Lake Texas Association, Salim and Amal Harik, Frank and Michelle Loedeman, Rajesh and Nita Dagli, Joanna and the late Allen Bellware, ELGAE Point Association and the Bass Lake Property owners.

We look forward to working with the Kalamazoo County Drain Office to implement the long-term project that will safeguard these lakes from experiencing historic flooding in the future.

Township Hall Project Update

The Township Board continues to work on determining the best location for a new Township Hall facility. Thank you to all 1,126 individuals who responded to the Township Hall Project Community Survey. Based on the feedback received and comments provided in writing and at various meetings, the Township Board has moved forward with the solicitation of an RFP for land acquisition within the Corners Business District (Texas Corners). Proposals and previously considered sites will be reviewed and evaluated by the members of the Township Board, staff, and by representatives from Progressive AE, the design firm for the project. We anticipate that the review will be completed during the month of July and decisions could be made in August. Project updates will be posted online at www.texastownship.org/township-hall-project.

Electronics Recycling Event Piloted This August

On Saturday, August 28th from 1:30pm to 4:00pm, residents can dispose of old electronics at the Township Hall. The township has partnered with Comprenew to provide this recycling service.



We'll be collecting items such as old monitors, TVs, computers, and various electronic devices. Some fees do apply for disposal of the following larger items CRT Monitors (\$10) and CRT TVs (\$20).



Township Continues to be Open For Business

In-Person Meetings Resuming July 1

The Township Office continues to be open for business! Our normal office hours are:

- **Monday-Thursday | 8:00am-4:30pm***
- **Friday | 8:00am-11:30pm***

The last thirty minutes of the workday are dedicated to cleaning and sanitizing our office to ensure a safe environment for our staff and visitors alike.

Starting July 1, all boards and committees, including the Township Board, will be resuming in-person meetings, provided there are no outbreaks or COVID-related Executive Orders limiting in-person meetings. Please view our calendar for upcoming meetings.

**A few staff members have adjusted work schedules. If you would like to meet with a member of our staff, please verify in-person availability prior to coming to our office.*

Vegetation and Noxious Weeds Ordinance Under Consideration

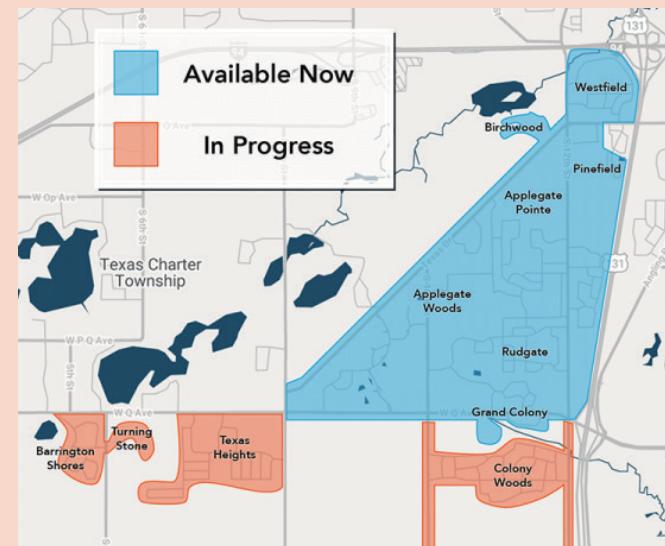
The Township Board is currently considering the adoption of a new ordinance that would require property owners to:

1. Destroy all noxious weeds found on their land (noxious weeds are defined by Public Act 359 of 1941).
2. Cut and remove uncontrolled plant growth or uncultivated vegetation three feet from either the edge of road pavement or back of sidewalk, so vegetation does not impede visual clearance of roadways.
3. Maintain lawn areas below a height of eight inches.
4. Manage duff and yard waste, particularly during the fall season (October through December), to minimizes impacts, such as transference of leaves to neighboring properties or the attraction of pests.

The goal of the ordinance is to protect public health and safety through the removal of noxious and nuisance vegetation; maintain and enhance property values; improve and preserve the aesthetic appearance of residential neighborhoods, commercial properties, and Township streetscapes; and promote the protection of native vegetation. If adopted, the new ordinance would likely go into effect by the end of July. Please check the Township website for more information on the draft ordinance.

CTS Fiber Installation Underway

CTS is currently installing fiber internet in the Colony Woods neighborhood. Please note that final yard restoration won't be completed until the end of the neighborhood installation, but they will be taking steps to start yard restoration throughout the project. Their anticipated completion date for the neighborhood is mid-September. For more information about the project and fiber availability, please visit www.gocts.com/myfiber



ARPA Funding Update

Based on information released from the State, the Township is estimated to receive \$1.8M in funding from the American Rescue Plan Act. Staff are working through the details on when and how these funds will be distributed and what are considered qualifying uses. Further details will be announced soon.

Provide Input on What You Would Like to See in Texas Corners

The Township Planning Commission is beginning work on updates to the Corners Business District zoning ordinance, which encompasses the Texas Corners area. The intent is to develop regulations that will assist with the vision established for Texas Corners in the Texas Township Master Plan. To help in that regard, a Visual Preference Survey is under development. The survey, which collects feedback on items like preferred building size, color, setback, architectural style, and more, will be accessible between August 1st and August 31st.

A link to the survey will be available at www.texastownship.org/planningzoningdevelopment on August 1st. To register for an email update on when the survey is available, please scan the QR code. We would greatly appreciate your input as we create the future vision of Texas Corners!



Design Work on Ring Road Project Begins

The DDA recently contracted with VK Civil Engineering for the design of a segment of the “Ring Road” connecting Vineyard Parkway to 8th Street, and 8th Street to Shooting Star Lane. The development of this roadway will help reduce traffic on West Q Avenue and improve connectivity in Texas Corners.

The DDA and VK Civil are working with adjacent property owners, the Road Commission of Kalamazoo

County, and representatives of the Township throughout the design phase, which is in the preliminary stages. Once the design work is finalized, the DDA and the Township Board can determine the project cost for construction and evaluate potential funding sources.



New Strategic Plan Adopted

On May 24, 2021, the Township Board adopted a new Strategic Plan. The plan provides a vision and framework for where the Board would like to direct financial and human resources over the next five years. The plan is structured into three goal areas, with defined objectives and tasks to support each goal area. Future budgets, capital improvement projects, and initiatives will be considered and funded based on their alignment with this plan.

- **Goal Area 1: Connected Community**
- **Goal Area 2: Balanced Development**
- **Goal Area 3: Optimized Systems & Infrastructure**

Annually, the Township Board and staff will conduct a comprehensive review of the plan to identify tasks for the following year with monthly and periodic reviews.

Annual Parcel Review

The State of Michigan requires the Assessing Department to review 20% of parcels each year. This review includes measuring buildings and taking photos. The Assessing Department (comprised of a few new faces) will be conducting this review over the next several months. You will receive a postcard mailer prior to their review. Cars will be marked and staff will have township ID with them. If you have questions or concerns, please contact the Assessing Department.

Summer Taxes Due Tuesday, September 14

Your 2021 Summer property tax bill is due in the Township office no later than 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, September 14th. Any payment placed in our Drop Box (located on the west side of the Township Hall Parking Lot) by 8:00 a.m. on Wednesday, September 15 will be recognized as an “on-time” payment. Late payments will incur 1% interest each month.

Payment Options

OPTION #1: USPS Mail - Mail your payment to Texas Township Treasurer, 7110 W Q Ave, Kalamazoo, MI 49009. Please include your payment and the bottom portion of your tax statement. If you would like a receipt, please provide an email address or a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Postmarks are not accepted. In all late-payment disputes, the Texas Township Treasurer's Office will rely on the receipt stamp applied by Township administrative staff.

OPTION #2: CREDIT CARD Visit texastownship.org and click on the pay online now tab to pay with a debit or credit card. A processing fee of 3% is charged by the online vendor (Point & Pay). Select E-Check and the online vendor fee is \$3.00.

OPTION #3: ONLINE BANKING

Check with your financial institution to inquire about online bill pay. Please allow **1-2 weeks** for receipt of your payment by the Texas Township Treasurer's Office.

Kalamazoo Pickleball Outreach Hosting First Tournament at the 6th Street Park

Wednesday, July 14 through Sunday, July 17, the Kalamazoo Pickleball Outreach organization will be hosting a pickleball tournament at the 6th Street Park. The courts will be closed during tournament setup & play but spectators are welcome and encouraged! We appreciate the KPO's financial support in making the construction of the courts at 6th Street Park a reality.

Assessor Ted Gruizenga Retires After 30+ Years

After 30+ years of service, Ted Gruizenga retired as Township Assessor on April 29, 2021. We are deeply appreciative of Ted's commitment to serving our residents and wish him all of the best in retirement.

In May, Claudia Stirton was hired as the new Assessor. Ms. Stirton has years of experience in the field and has started in her new role with much enthusiasm. The Assessing Department has office hours Monday-Thursday from 8:00am-4:30pm. You can contact Claudia at cstirton@texastownship.org or by phone at 269-375-1591.

Texas Drive Park Playground Equipment Open

The new play structure at Texas Drive Park is officially open for play! The new structure is placed on top of poured-in-place surfacing, which is universally accessible, and is connected to new accessible pathways. The township is proud to offer accessible spaces that all residents may enjoy.



OPTION #4: DROP BOX

A 24-hour secure drop box is located at the west end of the township hall parking lot. Please include your payment and the bottom portion of your tax statement. If you would like a receipt, please provide an email address or a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

OPTION #5: IN-PERSON AT THE TOWNSHIP OFFICE

2021 Community Events & Important Dates

Dumpster Day | Texas Drive Park

- Sat Aug 7 | 9:00am-12:00pm
- Sat Oct 2 | 9:00am-12:00pm



Electronics Recycling Event | Township Hall

- Sat Aug 28 | 1:30pm-4:00pm

Elections | Various Precincts

- Tue Aug 3 (Just Portage Public Schools - Precincts 4 & 5)

- Tue Nov 2 (Countywide)

Visit the Michigan Voter Information Center at www.michigan.gov/vote to check or update your voter registration information, find your polling place, preview your ballot, or join the permanent absentee voter application list.

July Board of Review

- Tue Jul 20 | 9:00am

Farmers' Market

- Saturday Market | 8:00am-12:00pm (through Oct 16)
- Tuesday Market | 4:00pm-7:00pm (through Aug 31)

2021 Farmers' Market Season

Saturdays | 8am-12noon (through Oct 16) & Tuesdays | 4-7pm (through Aug 31)

Farmers' market season is in full swing in Texas Township! This time of year, vendor tables are filling up with the bounty of the summer season, like blueberries, raspberries and cucumbers, with sweet corn, peaches and heirloom tomatoes close behind.

In addition to the Saturday market, shoppers can get Fresh on Q! during the week on Tuesdays from 4 to 7 p.m. This weekday market is the perfect spot to get fresh ingredients to take home for dinner or enjoy a picnic with the family from the food trucks and prepared food vendors at the market each week.

Both markets feature local farmers and food businesses selling their seasonal fruit and vegetables, meats, eggs, baked goods, preserves, honey, hot and ready-to-eat foods, cut flowers, plants, Michigan wine and so much more. Everything at the Fresh on Q! Farmers' Market is grown or prepared locally and shopping at the market supports our community and local economy.

Don't have cash? Don't worry! The market accepts a variety of other payment methods, including credit/debit card. Visit the Information Table at the east end of the pavilion to learn more or to swipe your card in exchange for market tokens to spend with vendors. Visit www.texastownship.org/farmers-market to learn more.

O Avenue Road Closure

O Avenue will be closed from 6th Street to 8th Street until mid-August for the installation of a water main (in conjunction with construction of the water tower at 6th Street Park), driveway installation at the Groves Education Business Technology Park, and resurfacing of the roadway. The detour route will be on N Avenue. We encourage you to register for RCKC Connect for updates on the project.



**View the 2021 Road Projects at
www.texastownship.org**

CONNECT TO ROAD COMMISSION OF KALAMAZOO COUNTY ALERTS



Have You Signed Up?

Receive Message Alerts for:

- ◆ Road Construction
- ◆ Road Closures/Detours
- ◆ Road Construction
- ◆ General Public News

RCKC CONNECT

RCKC ALERTS SIGN UP NOW

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Texas Township Board of Trustees



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Trustee Linda Kerr
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Trustee Barb Hammon
bhammon@texastownship.org

2021 Meeting Schedule

Township Board Meetings are held on the second and fourth Monday at 6:00 p.m. Meetings are held at the Township Hall and are always open to the public.

**Jul 12 Sep 13 Nov 8
Jul 26 Sep 27 Nov 22
Aug 9 Oct 11 Dec 13
Aug 23 Oct 25 Dec 27**

To view upcoming agendas or meeting minutes, please visit www.texastownship.org.

New Staff Members

Assessor: Claudia Stirton

Ordinance Enforcement Officer: Dale Epkey