



KALAMAZOO COUNTY GOVERNMENT

In the Pursuit of Extraordinary Governance...

The County Communicator - a community newsletter

September 2017

We Are Kalamazoo County Government!



Inside This Issue

- From the Office of Administrator
- Citizen Police Academy
- Inmate Garden Tour
- Brownfield Redevelopment Authority
- Kalamazoo County Board of Commissioners
- County Commissioners Attend White House Convention
- HCS Environmental Health – ZIKA Update
- Family Fun In Kalamazoo County!
- Maple Hill Trail
- County Parks Memorial Donations
- Gryphon Place – 4th Annual Suicide Prevention Walk
- Mental Health First Aid 8-hour Certification Training
- Important Dates to Remember

From the Office of Administrator

2018 Budget Workshops

Departmental budget submissions have been finalized and priorities solidified for the 2018 General Operating Budget process. The Board of Commissioners will start their formal deliberations in September. The Board will focus on continuing the prudent, long-term fiscal policies supporting mandates, providing essential services, and protecting public health, safety and welfare.

The Board of Commissioners will hold budget workshops on:

- Tuesday, September 12th from 4:00-6:00pm
- Wednesday, September 13th from 4:00-6:00pm
- Tuesday, September 19th from 4:00-6:00pm
- Wednesday, September 20th from 4:00-6:00pm

All budget workshops will be held in the Chambers at the County Administration Building at 201 W. Kalamazoo Avenue. The 2018 Budget Workbook will be available on the [County website Finance section](#) prior to the meetings for those interested in accessing the documents.



Did you Know..?

At any given time in Michigan someone – maybe you or someone you care about – is worried, stressed and unsure where to turn for answers. Maybe your unemployment benefits are tapped out, and the utility bills are coming due – with no means to cover them. Perhaps your aging parents have immediate home health care needs or mounting medical bills. Or, maybe you're looking for affordable child care, preschool or after-school programs for the kids – on a slim-to-none budget.



Michigan 2-1-1 is a free, confidential service that connects you with local community-based organizations across the state offering thousands of different programs and services for people seeking answers. If you need help for yourself, a neighbor or a loved one, call 2-1-1 or search the [2-1-1 website](#) to find out where to get help.

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Kalamazoo County

SHERIFF'S OFFICE



From the Kalamazoo County Sheriff's Office

Citizen Police Academy (CPA) has been established to continue the positive movement in the relationships between the citizens of Kalamazoo County and their Sheriff's Office. The goal is to develop and enhance citizen awareness and understanding of the police role in our community through lectures, demonstrations, videos, computer presentations and hands on participation. CPA is an eleven (11) week program starting on September 6th that meets once a week on Wednesday evenings from 6:00pm to 9:00pm. Community members interested in attending must be 21 years or older, live or work in Kalamazoo County, have no prior felony convictions, and no misdemeanor convictions within the last three years. **Applications must be submitted and approval received by August 31st. Openings are still available and there is no cost to attend.** Topics presented include "Meet the Sheriff", tours of the Court House, 911 Communications Center and the Correctional Facility, criminal investigations, crime scene processing and forensics, patrol operations, K-9 unit and Use of Force training. Visit the [Kalamazoo County Sheriff's Office website](#) for an application and more information! Or call the Kalamazoo County Sheriff's office at 269-383-8725 or email Lieutenant Jeff Baker at jimbake@kalcounty.com. Through this growing nucleus of responsible, well-informed citizens the challenges, practices and myths about law enforcement will be brought into focus and make Kalamazoo County an even greater place to live and work!

Kalamazoo County Inmates Turning Over a New Leaf



2017 Inmate Garden Tour

The garden has gradually expanded to a $\frac{3}{4}$ acre parcel. Last year, pumpkins were added to the garden and used for a Halloween celebration event with inmates and their families. Inmate workers assigned to the food service area learn new ways to serve fresh vegetable selections, some of which they have never seen. This season has already provided 14 gallons of tomato sauce, acorn squash that has been processed and frozen in preparation for the inmate's Thanksgiving meal and a variety of fresh vegetables and herbs for soups and salads. The lessons learned and abilities developed while working this program are valuable and marketable skills for life.

In 2009 a plot of ground southeast of the County jail was tilled, seeds planted, and a program grown. This program, nearly ten years later, is called the Kalamazoo County Jail's Inmate Worker Garden. The garden is tilled each year by a citizen volunteer, and plants and seedlings are generously donated from local greenhouses and businesses. The garden is planted and nurtured by low-risk inmates and provides nutritious, fresh foods to the jail population. At the annual 2017 Inmate Garden Tour, Sheriff Richard Fuller shared that the primary goal is to provide enhanced and healthy foods to the inmates. The harvests have been bountiful and shared with the community. Over 900 pounds of produce was distributed throughout the community through Loaves and Fishes in 2016. "Inmates receive a sense of pride and accomplishment in seeing this garden come to fruition", says Food Services Director Rick Taylor.

"Over 900 pounds of produce was distributed throughout the community through Loaves and Fishes in 2016."



Loaves and Fishes arrives to pick up fresh goods

Kalamazoo County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority

*The EPA defines a brownfield as "real property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the **presence or potential presence** of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant." The State of Michigan further defines brownfield sites as blighted, functionally obsolete or historic resources.*

Michigan is home to over 38,000 brownfield sites. In Kalamazoo County alone, we have over 1,000 known contaminated sites. The Kalamazoo County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority (KCBRA) was established in 2002 to pursue and utilize available federal and state brownfields tools to help alleviate brownfield conditions and redevelop eligible sites. The KCBRA has supported numerous projects utilizing grants, loans and financial incentives resulting in jobs, investment and environmental benefits for the entire community.

In May of 2016, the EPA awarded the KCBRA its second assessment grant with \$400,000 in funding, one of only four grants awarded in Michigan. The current grant allows the KCBRA to conduct environmental site assessments on parcels throughout the County that have known or perceived contamination related to hazardous substances or petroleum. Sites can be small, such as a gas station, or large, similar to the Midlink Business Park.

Most development or re-development projects require environmental due diligence to be conducted prior to acquisition. These EPA grant funds can be used to meet those requirements, satisfying lenders, buyers and other development partners. Additionally, the grants can be used to develop Brownfield Plans that can help offset environmental and non-environmental costs associated with redeveloping or rehabilitating buildings and properties. Brownfield Plans have been the critical element in defining the KCBRA's success by not only helping alleviate brownfield costs on eligible sites, but also creating a future sustainable funding source for additional sites which is just now beginning to take shape.

Major Goals of Brownfield Redevelopment:

- Increase investment, jobs and revenue
- Reuse existing infrastructure
- Encourage redevelopment of contaminated or blighted properties
- Recovery of tax base
- Improve value of surrounding property
- Preserve historic or cultural community icons
- Environmental cleanup, public health improvements
- Preserve greenspace, reduce sprawl

Project Profile – Metal Mechanics, Schoolcraft



In 2016, Metal Mechanics, Inc., a manufacturer of hydraulic presses in Schoolcraft Township, was growing and needed to expand. Later in 2016, with the support of the KCBRA, Metal Mechanics, Inc. constructed a 30,000-square-foot building on a known brownfield site in the Village of Schoolcraft. The parcel of land the building was built on was known to be contaminated. The site was identified as a "facility" (due to soil and groundwater contamination) because of its historic use as a lumber Wolmanizing operation. The KCBRA, Kalamazoo County and the Village of Schoolcraft approved a Brownfield Plan that allows for the reimbursement of \$65,000 in eligible activities back to Metal Mechanics

through tax increment financing (TIF) over the next 11 years. Some of the eligible activities include site demolition, management of contaminated soil and installation of a sub-slab depressurization system. This is a win for Metal Mechanics and the community; a brownfield has been re-used, the property is back on the tax rolls, jobs have been created and the known environmental issues related to the site are understood and safely controlled.

And the KCBRA can assist with smaller projects, too. . . .

[continued next page]

Kalamazoo County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority (cont'd)

Project Profile - Pocket Park and Outdoor Café, City of Kalamazoo

In July 2017, the KCBRA authorized the use of EPA assessment funding for a Phase I Environmental Assessment of a vacant lot near Downtown Kalamazoo. Ricky and Yvonne Thrash are purchasing this lot—which is next to their business, Ennovy's Beauty Bar—from the City of Kalamazoo. The property will be redeveloped into an outdoor café and pocket park that will be open to the public. The improvements planned for the property will help to beautify the neighborhood and serve as a welcome gathering space for their customers and the local community.

If you would like to learn more about the Kalamazoo County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority and available funding opportunities, please contact Rachael Grover, Resources Coordinator with the County Planning & Development Department, by phone at (269) 384.8305 or by email at ragrov@kalcounty.com.

Also, please visit our [website](#) to view upcoming meeting dates, a list of board members, various BRA documents and marketing materials.



Kalamazoo County Health & Community Services Department (HCS) Environmental Health Zika Update

The Kalamazoo County HCS Department-Environmental Health Unit is participating in a mosquito surveillance program this summer, specifically looking for the mosquito that has been known to carry the Zika Virus. The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services awarded Kalamazoo County a grant for the Zika Virus Mosquito Surveillance and Community support program. Southern Michigan is currently in the plume of potential migration of the *Aedes albopictus* mosquito (Asian Tiger Mosquito), an insect that has been known to carry the [ZIKA virus](#). Although this species has yet to be found in Michigan, Kalamazoo County is keeping a close watch!

What Kalamazoo County is doing:

- Setting mosquito traps and collecting mosquitoes at five locations throughout the County from Jun September. These locations include rest areas, a hiking trail, a car wash and a location near the air
- Identifying the mosquitoes that are caught and reporting that information to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).
- Providing information at community events on mosquito bite prevention, mosquito habitat control, and how to prevent mosquito borne diseases.



Mosquitoes are commonly associated with spreading Zika Virus, West Nile Virus, and Eastern Equine Encephalitis. The warmer summer weather means many residents are spending more time outside participating in outdoor activities. Vern Johnson, Environmental Health Manager said, "Residents should be aware of mosquitoes and the issues associated with them in order to be prevent mosquito borne diseases." Johnson continued, "It's important for Residents to protect themselves from mosquito bites and plan ahead before going outdoors."

What you can do to Prevent Mosquito Borne Diseases:

- Empty and wash all containers that collect water (small pools, feeding bowls, open rain collection barrels, buckets, birdbaths, etc.) at least once a week and keep swimming pools properly treated to eliminate mosquito breeding grounds.
- Keep trash containers properly covered.
- Use screens on your home windows to prevent mosquitoes and other pests from entering.
- Use insect repellent with DEET or lemon-eucalyptus oil on skin and treat clothing with permethrin to repel biting insects. Always follow label directions to keep you and your family safe

Your Kalamazoo County Board of Commissioners

**Advisory Boards & Commissions
in Kalamazoo County**

Stephanie Moore, Vice Chair
District 1
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Kevin Wordelman
District 2
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Tracy Hall
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Mike Quinn
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The Kalamazoo County Board of Commissioners regularly seeks area residents interested in serving on boards and commissions. For a list of boards and commissions with vacancies, [see the website](#) for details.

Make a difference in your community!

**Board of Commissioners Meeting
Dates:**

-  September 5, 2017
-  September 19, 2017
-  October 3, 2017
-  October 17, 2017

Michigan County Commissioners Meet with Officials at the White House



County Commissioners from 23 Michigan counties traveled to Washington DC on August 8th to attend the Michigan County Commissioner Convention at the White House. Kalamazoo County Commissioners Julie Rogers, Stephanie Moore and Dale Shugars were in attendance. The event is an ongoing effort to cultivate working relationships between the White House Federal Agencies and leaders of local Michigan communities. The convention allowed county officials to connect directly with the Trump administration and discuss the key issues that Michigan residents are most concerned about.

Family Fun In Kalamazoo County

Ramona Park Beach

Where: 8600 South Sprinkle Road, 1/2 mile south of Centre Ave
Hours: Beach - Open Daily 10:30 a.m. - 7:30 p.m.
June 9-September 4
Cost: \$5 per vehicle daily for Portage resident
\$10 per vehicle daily for non-resident



Ramona Park has something for everyone from the fisherman to the beach bum! Located off Sprinkle Road with access to Long Lake, Ramona Park is truly a family destination site. Ramona Park has a fully-staffed and lifeguarded beach and is home to a creative, accessible playground with a colorful soft surface. [Beach rules](#) here.

Portage Creek Bicentennial Park

Hours: 8:00am to Dusk
Cost: Free!



The “backbone” of the Portage park system, Portage Creek Bicentennial Park (PCBP) was the official city project to honor the nation’s 200th birthday. Spanning over 200 acres, PCBP is a linear facility that runs between the City Centre Area and the northern city limits at Kilgore Road, connected by a 3.5 mile multi-use trail. In total, PCBP has over 8 miles of hiking and biking trails with several opportunities to view scenic Portage Creek.

Parking is available at the Lover’s Lane Trailhead, just south of Kilgore Road, at the main entrance on Milham Avenue just west of Lover’s Lane, and at the Celery Flats Historical Area at Garden Lane.

Amenities include play equipment, shelter, picnic tables, bbq grills, walking/nature trails, biking trails, restrooms and fishing!

Portage Market

When: Sundays from 10:00am to 2:00pm; May thru October
Where: 320 Library Lane, Portage, MI 49002
Cost: Free!



The Portage Market is open every Sunday from 10am to 2pm, just behind the Public Library. Find 25 local farmers, artisans and producers bringing you fresh Michigan produce and goods every week through October. Everyone is welcome. We accept SNAP benefits, Double Up Food Bucks, WIC Project FRESH and Senior Market FRESH coupons. Cooking demonstrations, music, good fun.

New in Kalamazoo!

In the Pursuit of Extraordinary Recreation...

What has tabletops,
ledges, steps and
skinnies?

Maple Hill Trail
does!

A ceremonial kick off of the mountain bike trail in Kalamazoo served as the official grand opening on August 17th. The [Maple Hill Trail](#), named for its title sponsor Maple Hill Auto Group, is a five-year collaboration by [Kalamazoo County Parks](#), the [Southwest Michigan Mountain Biking Association](#) and many local businesses and organizations. The trail is a 5.5 mile course located on an 80 acre parcel of the Markin Glen Park with connectivity to the Kalamazoo River Valley Trail. The trail is designed for public bicycle riding for all ages and skill levels. The trail is bidirectional with elevation transitions, sharp turns, tabletops and berms.

A Kalamazoo County park pass is required to access the trail. Passes are \$5 daily, or \$25 a year, and are available via cash or check at the Markin Glen gatehouse, or via credit card at the main park office, Expo Center at 2900 Lake St., or over the phone with a credit card by calling 269-383-8778.



The Trailhead at the Ceremonial Kickoff

Pump up the tires, put on your helmet, practice safe cycling and have a blast!



Maple Hill Trail



Grand Opening Ceremony

Did you Know..?

Kalamazoo County Parks - Memorial Tree & Bench Program

The Parks Memorial Tree & Bench Program allows groups and individuals to donate trees & benches to commemorate special events, in someone's honor, or as memorials to loved ones. The items purchased through the program are planted or placed in one of the County Parks.

Tree Donations - \$275.00

A tree is a long-lasting opportunity to honor or remember a loved one. At the same time, it improves the beauty and quality of the Kalamazoo County Parks.

- A choice of four types of trees are available
- You may select the specific park for your tree donation. You may request a specific area within the park, however the tree's exact location will be determined by the Park staff based on the need of the park. Donors will be notified once a tree has been planted and will be made aware of its location.
- Donations can be made at any time, trees will be planted from April-May or October-November.
- The 3" x 6" gold engraved plaque will be installed at the base of the tree.
- Tree and plaque will be maintained by the County for its lifetime and will be replaced if damaged or dies within the first 3 years after planting.

Bench Donations - \$250 (wooden) or \$550 (recycled plastic)

Memorial benches provide another option to honor or remember a loved one, as well as offer respite to park visitors to help them enjoy their surroundings. For more information and donation forms, [visit the website](#).

****Important Dates****

September is :

National Suicide Prevention Month

September 4th

Labor Day

The first Monday in September is a creation of the labor movement and is dedicated to the social and economic achievements of American workers.

Take the day off!

September 9th

4th Annual Suicide Prevention Walk

Walk with us!

September 11th

Patriot Day

Take time for a moment of silence at 8:46am Eastern time. This is when the first plane struck the North Tower of the World Trade Center. This is a time of prayer and remembrance of the victims who lost their lives in the terrible attack. It is also a time to reflect on freedom as well as the heroes who gave their lives saving others.

Home of the Brave!

September 17th

Constitution and

Citizenship Day marks the 230th anniversary of the signing of the United States Constitution on September 17, 1787.

Land of the Free!

September 20th

Michigan Blood Drive

Health & Community Services –
Georgian Room
9:00am – 2:00pm

Save a Life!



4th Annual Suicide Prevention Walk

Saturday, September 09, 2017

Benefiting **GRYPHON PLACE**

Join us – Register today!

Walk With Us...

On September 9th, 2017 we will be walking to support suicide prevention.

Our Suicide Prevention Walk is held during National Suicide Prevention Week on September 9, 2017 at Bronson Park in downtown Kalamazoo. Opening remarks at 9:00am followed by the walk. The 5K cause-walk will raise awareness for suicide prevention, allow people to connect with each other, & provide critical funds for Gryphon Place to support the essential programs we offer. We'll be there, supporting suicide prevention one step at a time, & would love for you to join us.

Walk to support your community. Walk to support each other. Walk to support your loved ones. Walk to break stigma, to raise awareness, to educate, to connect, & to **save lives**.



Mental Health First Aid -September 22nd & 25th, 2017

Kalamazoo Community Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services invite you to attend Mental Health First Aid 8-hour certification training

Adult Mental Health First Aid is appropriate for anyone 16 years and older who wants to learn how to help a person who may be experiencing a mental health related crisis or problem. This training is held on September 25th from 8:15 am-4:30 pm with lunch included.

Youth Mental Health First Aid is designed to teach parents, family members, caregivers, teachers, school staff, peers, neighbors, health and human services workers, and other caring citizens how to help an adolescent (age 12-18) who is experiencing a mental health or addictions challenge or is in crisis. This training is held on September 22nd from 8:15 am -4:30 pm with lunch included.

Registration is through KCMH.

Click [here](#) to download the training registration form. Complete the registration form and email it to their Training Department by clicking [here](#).

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