



3848 VETERANS DRIVE / TRAVERSE CITY, MI 49684  
(231) 941-1620 / FAX: (231) 941-1588  
www.garfield-twp.com ~ updated frequently!

WINTER 2022

# Garfield

## Charter Township

SERVING THE CITIZENS OF NORTHERN MICHIGAN

### TOWNSHIP HOURS

Monday—Thursday  
7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.  
CLOSED FRIDAYS

### HOLIDAY HOURS

Township offices will be closed for the observance of the following holidays:  
Christmas — Dec. 22nd & 26th  
New Years — Dec. 29th & Jan. 2nd  
Martin Luther King Jr. — Jan. 16th  
Presidents' Day — Feb. 20th



### ELECTED OFFICIALS

CHUCK KORN.....SUPERVISOR  
CHLOE MACOMBER.....TREASURER  
LANIE McMANUS.....CLERK  
MOLLY AGOSTINELLI..... TRUSTEE  
CHRIS BARSHEFF..... TRUSTEE  
STEVE DUELL..... TRUSTEE  
DENISE SCHMUCKAL..... TRUSTEE

### STAFF

JUSTIN BIGBEE.....APPRAISER  
AMY L DEHAAN..... ASSESSOR  
RICH DERKS..... BUILDING INSPECTOR  
JAIME DOUGLASS.. BUILDING & LAND USE ASST.  
MICHAEL GREEN ..ZONING ADMINISTRATOR  
STEVE HANNON.. DEPUTY PLANNING DIRECTOR  
SEAN KEHOE ..... PARK STEWARD AND  
CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER  
KAREN LEAVER..... ADMIN ASSISTANT  
DEREK MORTON..... PARK STEWARD AND  
CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER  
KATHLEEN ROON .... OFFICE COORDINATOR  
ABBY SIMON .....APPRAISER  
AMY SIMON..... DEPUTY TREASURER  
MIKE STEFFES..... GIS  
CARL STUDZINSKI .....BUILDING OFFICIAL  
JOHN SYCH.....PLANNING DIRECTOR  
BETTY TEZAK..... DEPUTY CLERK

### OUR MISSION

*As neighbors, we work together to create a community where our residents and businesses thrive, our natural resources are protected and enjoyed, our visitors are welcomed and appreciated, and our high quality of life is promoted.*

### FROM THE TREASURER

We are wishing you a very jolly and peaceful holiday season. As a reminder, the 2022 winter taxes are payable from December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022 through February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2023. The due date of February 14<sup>th</sup> falls on a Tuesday, making it the last day to pay without penalty. During the holiday season please give your payment plenty of time to get here if you are sending it by mail. Please know you may always call if you want to verify your payment was received. On March 1<sup>st</sup>, all unpaid real property tax balances will be forwarded as delinquent to Grand Traverse County Treasurer for payment, with additional penalties added on.

As a reminder, summer tax bills mail out July 1<sup>st</sup> and winter tax bills mail out December 1<sup>st</sup>. If you ever do not receive your tax bill, please contact the Treasurer's office at 231-941-1620. Unfortunately, per state law, failure to receive a tax bill does not exempt you from late interest or penalties.

Thank you and Happy Holidays!



### ATTENTION BUSINESS OWNERS:

**The Small Business Taxpayer Exemption is EVEN BETTER for 2023!**

If your business has assets worth no more than \$180,000 (total true cash value, calculated using the normal Personal Property depreciation multipliers) as of 12/31/2022, watch your mail for details – there will be specific instructions for filing!

This higher threshold may mean **NO PERSONAL PROPERTY TAXES** for your business!

Until 2023, the asset limit was \$80,000 – an increase of \$100,000. This is great news for small business owners! Forms will be mailed at the end of December – be sure to watch your mail and be sure to get the appropriate form(s) back to us no later than February 20th. As always, if you have any questions, please stop in, call or email us.



### EMERGENCY RESPONSE FOR CRITICAL COMMUNICATIONS

CodeRED® is the FREE community notification system available to local residents that will send you alerts concerning time-sensitive and/or emergency information that may impact your area via phone calls, text messages, emails, and social media.

Grand Traverse County encourages you to take action and register your cell phone for this service and verify your home location to receive targeted notifications that directly impact your home or business.

The CodeRED system will be used to send critical and time-sensitive communications such as:

- Missing Persons/Children • Wildfire Alerts • Emergency Preparedness • Public Health Crisis
- Natural Disasters • Criminal Activity • Evacuation Notices • Road Closures/Traffic Alerts
- Boil Water Advisories • Shelter in Place/Lockdowns • Inclement Weather Warnings



Go to <https://www.gtcountymi.gov/CodeRED> or scan the QR Code on the right with your phone to register your information NOW!



FROM THE ASSESSOR'S OFFICE

2022 saw the trend continue – it has been another strong year for real estate! Though higher interest rates seem to have slowed the volume a bit in terms of both construction and sales, values have continued to rise – albeit not like they have the past couple of years. Perhaps we are nearing the end of this crazy market we have seen since before the pandemic? That would certainly be nice for buyers! But, there is also the looming fear of the “r” word [recession] that will hopefully pass us by – only time will tell! Either way, we want to be sure that buyers understand how property values and taxes are calculated after a purchase so they can decide if they are able to afford the property they want to buy. We can help by explaining how property taxes are affected by a purchase.

The Assessed Value (AV) is our attempt to reflect 50% of the true cash value of the property. Since the AV is supposed to reflect 50% of that, one would expect the AV would then become 50% of the sale price, but the law does not allow us to automatically assess at this value. Every home in a given neighborhood is increased, or decreased, by roughly the same percentage. The change is calculated by dividing the total AV's by the total sale prices of all properties that sold in that area.

Here is an example of 2 identical homes. Home A sold for \$395,000 in 2022. Home B did not and the current owner has been in the home for approximately 5 years. The assessed values of both homes increased by 7.1% (Neighborhood change shown below) and the capped values increased by 5% (CPI).

The Taxable Value (TV) is a comparison between the Capped Value (CV) and the AV. The "capped" value calculation uses last year's TV times the lesser of the CPI (Consumers Price Index) or 5% - UNLESS the property sells, something new is built or demolished. After adding anything new or removing anything demolished, the CPI is added to the previous year TV to arrive at CV. Then the AV and CV are compared. The TV becomes the lesser of the two values. If a property sells, the year after the sale – the TV uncaps and becomes the same as the new AV as it did in Home A, above - the buyer will pay more taxes than the seller did.

EXAMPLE:	Home A		Home B	
	AV	TV	AV	TV
2022 Values	\$ 180,000	\$ 152,534	\$ 180,000	\$ 152,534
Neighborhood Chg	1.0710		1.0710	
CPI Estimate	1.05		1.05	
Capped Value	\$ 192,800	\$ 160,160	\$ 192,800	\$ 160,160
	Sold for \$395,000		No Sale	
		TV Uncaps		
2023 Values	\$ 192,800	\$ 192,800	\$ 192,800	\$ 160,160

Since property owners typically don't know the upcoming year's value when they purchase, it is always best to use 50% of the sale price to estimate next year's taxes. It may end up being too high, but you can be assured that your escrow account won't be short! Using the actual sale price will give you a worst-case estimate because the values we set are usually lower than 50% of the sale price. And if they aren't, you are always welcome to come in and talk to the March Board of Review – they will make sure you aren't over-assessed, as long as you provide evidence of your claim!

These calculations can be confusing to buyers. If you've recently bought a home, are looking to purchase a home, have added a deck, removed a garage or just want to understand how your values are calculated, feel free to call Justin – he can explain how the process works, and show you the sales we use to determine your value.



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SEE IF YOU CAN  
FIGURE OUT  
WHAT THESE  
TRICKY BRAIN  
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ARE TRYING TO  
SAY -

HAPPY  
HOLIDAYS

ANSWERS WILL  
BE IN THE  
SPRING  
NEWSLETTER!

## FROM THE PLANNING DEPARTMENT

### Community Survey conducted as part of Township Master Plan update

In August, the Township prepared and conducted a survey as part of a broader effort to create a master plan of how Garfield should evolve and develop in the coming years. Utilizing the qualified voter file from the Township Clerk, a random sample of recipients was created and evenly distributed among the Township's seven voting precincts, to ensure the surveys were evenly generated across the Township. A total of 875 Township residents responded to the survey, and the following key findings were observed:

- A feeling of **safety and security** and **relationship to nature** are the top reasons for the quality of life for residents.
- **Protect the natural environment, housing choices and affordability, and quality and quantity of parks and open spaces** are the areas that Garfield should focus upon.
- A slight majority of responses say Garfield is **developing** about right, but residents are increasingly feeling that Garfield is developing too quickly.
- Nearly 90% of residents support **incentivizing redevelopment** of outdated commercial and industrial areas.
- Protecting **agriculture and rural areas** remains a very high priority.
- Nearly two-thirds of residents support more **pathways**.
- Over 75% of residents want improvement of **commercial corridors**.
- While residents don't necessarily desire a park closer to their home, nearly two-thirds of residents support the purchase of **more parkland**.
- Residents are split on **winery tasting rooms**, but strongly oppose **marijuana dispensaries**.
- Opposition to **short term rentals** is supported by nearly two-thirds of residents.
- There is general support for **accessory dwelling units** (i.e., granny flats).
- There is strong support against **tall buildings** and **changing the name** of Garfield.



Full survey results can be viewed on the Township website at <http://www.garfield-twp.com/planning.asp>. The community survey is one of several opportunities for residents to provide input in the master planning process. Please watch the Township website for information on public engagement opportunities in 2023!

### Commons Natural Area Design Plan, Parks and Recreation Plan near completion

The Township has been working with a team from Environmental Consulting & Technology, Inc. (ECT) on a Design Plan for the Commons Natural Area. The Design Plan will ultimately result in a park design to accommodate many different users and activities, create access to surrounding areas, incorporate native landscaping materials, and protect and enhance the park's delicate natural resources and wildlife habitat.



August 10 Open House at Kirkbride Hall

Public feedback was gathered at two open houses. The first, on May 11 at the Cathedral Barn, sought input on two conceptual designs: one showing primarily separated trails and another showing mainly shared-use trails. The second, on August 10 at Kirkbride Hall, welcomed comments on a more refined design showing primarily separated trails with some main shared-use trails. After presentation of the final preferred design on November 7 at Kirkbride Hall, the Design Plan is available for public comment.

The Design Plan will be incorporated as part of the Township's Parks and Recreation Plan. To apply for grant funding from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR), the Township is required to have an updated Parks and Recreation Plan filed with the MDNR describing anticipated parks projects over the next five years. The Parks and Recreation Plan includes projects to implement the Commons Natural Area Design Plan, potential projects in all Township parks, and potential trail projects.

You are invited to comment on the full Parks and Recreation Plan, including the Design Plan, which can be found at the following webpage: <http://www.garfield-twp.com/parks.asp>. We welcome your feedback and look forward to completing this plan and ultimately implementing projects to improve Township parks!



## WINTER HEMLOCK SURVEYING

Help ISN prevent the spread of hemlock woolly adelgid —  
NO COST TO LANDOWNER!

The Northwest Michigan Invasive Species Network (ISN) will be conducting surveys this winter (January–April) for hemlock woolly adelgid (HWA). HWA is an invasive pest insect that targets hemlock trees. ISN is looking for private properties to survey that fall within the following parameters:

\* Property is located within 10 miles of Lake Michigan shoreline.

\* There are 5 or more acres of property (or multiple neighboring properties that add up to a minimum of 5 acres).

\* One or more trees were purchased from an online retailer and/or property is located along the Manistee/Mason county border or along the Manistee River.



If you have property that qualifies, please contact ISN's Murielle Garbarino at (231) 941-0960 x29 or [mgarbarino@gtcd.org](mailto:mgarbarino@gtcd.org).



Property is located within Benzie, Grand Traverse, Leelanau, or Manistee County

For More Information: [www.HabitatMatters.org](http://www.HabitatMatters.org)

Funding for this project is provided by the Michigan Invasive Species Grant Program, administered by the Mason-Lake Conservation District.

### FROM THE ZONING DEPARTMENT

Exciting Changes in Accessory Structure Regulations!

Section 611 of the Zoning Ordinance entitled "Accessory Uses and Structures" was recently amended to lower the required separation between an accessory structure and any other structure on a lot from 10 feet to 3 feet. This amendment was moved forward in hopes of making permitting process easier for residents when placing a detached garage or small sheds on the property while retaining a reasonable distance between buildings consistent with other communities in the area. Keep in mind when planning construction that building setbacks are measured from the furthest projection of the building (e.g., roof/eaves), not the walls.



On a related note, one of the most frequently asked questions is whether a land use permit or building permit is required to place a shed or small garage. Although land use permits are normally required to erect or move a structure onto a property, they are not required where the resulting building or structure is less than 100 square feet in area. A building permit is not required for a residential accessory building that is 200 square feet or less.

Please note that accessory structures can only be placed on property that has a primary structure. In the case of residential accessory buildings, a dwelling is considered the primary structure.



### FROM THE PARKS DEPARTMENT

While River East Recreation Area will be open throughout the winter for your hiking enjoyment, it too has become victim to the ongoing supply chain issues. We are hoping the dog park construction is completed by next summer, but fencing has been difficult to obtain....keep your fingers crossed!

Silver Lake Recreation Area is also open throughout the winter and the paved loop will once again be maintained for all you die-hard walkers and runners. Please drive slow through the park as the winter landscape can be deceiving. Numerous cars drove into the ditches last year within the park despite having several markers in place.

The kayak launch at the Boardman River Valley Nature Preserve (next to the Old YMCA) will be left in this year. So if you enjoy winter kayaking, feel free to use this as a safe entry and exit point. As always, it's a good idea to let someone know where and when you will be kayaking especially during the winter months when hypothermia can set in quickly if you were to capsize. Enjoy the winter scenery along the river but please be careful!

We would like to thank DTE Energy and Releaf Michigan and to the wonderful volunteers who came out to help plant twenty nice size trees along the Buffalo Ridge Trail this fall!

Plans are also in place to add opportunities for sledding at Silver Lake Recreation Area and River East Recreation Area. Have fun!!



PARKS STEWARD DEREK SHOWING HOW IT'S DONE!

### FROM THE SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Winter is coming so please remember several safe driving habits. Make sure you have good wipers on your vehicle and be sure to let it warm up enough to defrost the windshield before driving. Check tires and make sure they have safe tread and switch to snow tires if you are able. Snow tires improve winter driving and traction considerably. Make sure you increase your following distance behind other vehicles on slippery roads and make sure you are always wearing your seatbelt. It is always a good idea to keep supplies in your vehicle in case of an emergency such as blankets, hats, gloves, and food. Never warm your vehicle up in an enclosed area and don't use cruise control on slippery roads.

**SCAM ALERT!** Be aware of fraudulent phone calls, emails, texts, ads, and mail. There are new ways every day that scammers use to get money from victims. If it seems too good to be true or the person contacting you says it's a deal you must act fast on, doesn't want you to hang up, or wants you to send money by gift cards or some other out of the ordinary way it's likely a scam. If you are suspicious tell them to give you a number and you will call them back. Before you ever send money anywhere research the place, business, or thing you are sending money too and ask someone you trust to help you if it is suspicious.



### SPRING BRUSH DROP OFF PASSES

Spring brush drop off passes will be available at the front desk by mid-April. Look to [recyclesmart.info](http://recyclesmart.info) for further information about brush drop off dates and times as we get closer to the spring season or scan the QR Code below for days, times, location, etc.

You can also find recycling and hazardous waste information at: [www.recyclesmart.info](http://www.recyclesmart.info) or call 231-941-5555.



The Township Board meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of each month at 6:00 pm.

The Planning Commission meets on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of each month at 7:00 pm.

The Zoning Board of Appeals meets on an as needed basis on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of each month at 6:00 pm.

The Parks and Recreation Commission meets the 1<sup>st</sup> Monday of every other month at 6:00 pm.

All meetings take place at the Garfield Township Hall unless stated otherwise on the agenda.