



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

SUMMER 2024

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:

- Independence Day—July 4th
- Labor Day—Sept 2nd
- Veterans Day—Nov 11th
- Thanksgiving—Nov 28th



ELECTED OFFICIALS

- CHUCK KORNSUPERVISOR
- CHLOE MACOMBERTREASURER
- LANIE MC MANUSCLERK
- MOLLY AGOSTINELLI TRUSTEE
- CHRIS BARSHEFF TRUSTEE
- STEVE DUELL..... TRUSTEE
- DENISE SCHMUCKAL TRUSTEE

STAFF

- JUSTIN BIGBEE.....APPRAISER
- AMY DEHAAN..... ASSESSOR
- RICH DERKS..... BUILDING INSPECTOR
- JAMIE 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 SIMONAPPRAISER
- AMY SIMONDEPUTY TREASURER
- MIKE STEFFES GIS
- CARL STUDZINSKIBUILDING 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 CLERK'S OFFICE

The 2024 Election Year will be exciting due to all the changes in election law. The opportunities to vote have expanded with early voting. All voters will have the opportunity to vote at Garfield Township Hall for nine days prior to Election Day, beginning with the second Saturday before each election.



The Local Primary Election will be held on Tuesday, August 6, 2024. Early Voting will begin Saturday, July 27 through Sunday, August 4 from 8-4 daily. For those who have returned their absentee ballot, the opportunity to spoil your ballot ends at 4:00pm the Friday before early voting starts, which is 4:00pm Friday, July 26 for the Local Election. This is a Primary which means you cannot split your ballot, you must vote for only one Party in this election.

The General Election will be held on Tuesday, November 5, 2024. Early Voting will begin Saturday, October 26 through Sunday, November 3 from 8-4 daily. For those who have returned their absentee ballot, the opportunity to spoil your ballot ends at 4:00pm the Friday before early voting starts, which is 4:00pm Friday, October 25 for the General Election.

Our office will no longer be automatically sending applications after this year. The Bureau of Elections is eliminating the permanent application list after this election year, so if you have not signed up for the permanent ballot you will need to request an application each election year. Those who checked the permanent ballot choice on the last application that was sent will automatically be sent a ballot for all future elections. If you will be away for any election, it is the voter's responsibility to notify our office of an alternate address to mail your ballot as election mail does not forward. As always, contact our office with any voting questions.

THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS NEIGHBORS

Garfield Township would like to graciously thank Dan and Sue Walters for the coordination and generous donation of the new flag pole to our Silver Lake Park. In the process of adding lighting to the flag, Dan and Sue also donated the materials for putting electrical outlets to the large pavilion, known as "Bill's Pavilion". The Walters very thoughtfully used their time and resources to coordinate a whole team to make this project happen – all time and materials donated by charitable businesses and neighbors in our area. We want to thank Team Elmers for donating the concrete, Alpers



Shirley, Sue and Dan

Excavating for doing the trenching, Todd Bosscher for the masonry labor, KV Electric for their labor, and the Robertson Family for all of their help and for all that they do to serve this community. This whole project was inspired by our beloved community member, Shirley Robertson, who with her family and friends, has celebrated a flag raising ceremony every 4th of July for the last 35 years.



FROM THE TREASURER’S OFFICE

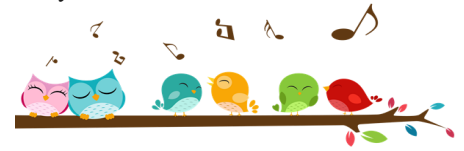
Summer Tax Deferments Available:

If you are 62 years of age or older, and/or totally disabled, and your gross household income was not over \$40,000 during the preceding calendar year, you may qualify for a deferment of your summer taxes. This makes the summer taxes for your primary residence due on February 14, 2025, instead of September 14, 2024, which will give you more time to make payments with no late interest. If you have qualified in the past you will be receiving an application in the mail around July 1st, 2024. If you think you may qualify and did not receive an application in the mail, applications are available at the Treasurer’s office. If you have any questions, contact the Treasurer’s Office anytime at 231-941-1620. Winter deferments may be obtained at the Grand Traverse County Treasurer’s office.

FROM THE ASSESSOR’S OFFICE

ATTENTION PROPERTY OWNERS:

It’s that time again – the start of annual fieldwork for Assessing staff. You can expect to see them around your neighborhood, wearing bright yellow vests. They carry Township ID’s for your safety and theirs. Their work involves verifying building dimensions, characteristics, amenities and updating photos.

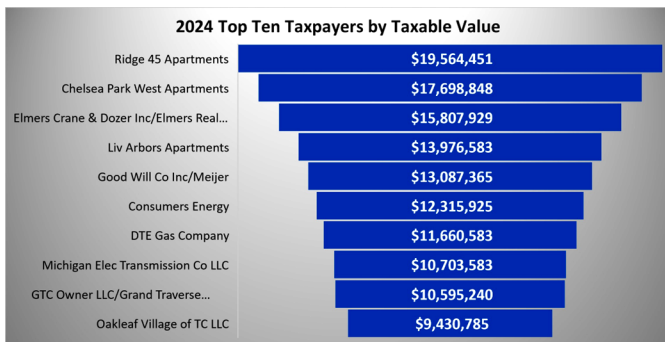


You can expect a visit if:

1. A building permit has been issued for changes, improvements or demolition
2. Recent purchase – typically within the past year
3. Property has NOT been reviewed in the past five (5) years

We are required by the State Tax Commission to review 20% of ALL property in the Township every year. For our office it means we review approximately 1,300 residential properties, 250 commercial properties and 20 industrial properties annually. We also review EVERY sale and EVERY property that is issued a permit. If you are home when we come by, you should expect to be asked a few questions. Otherwise, you may find a “yellow tag” on your door with a few simple questions to answer. Your help is appreciated in completing the postcard and dropping it in the mail.

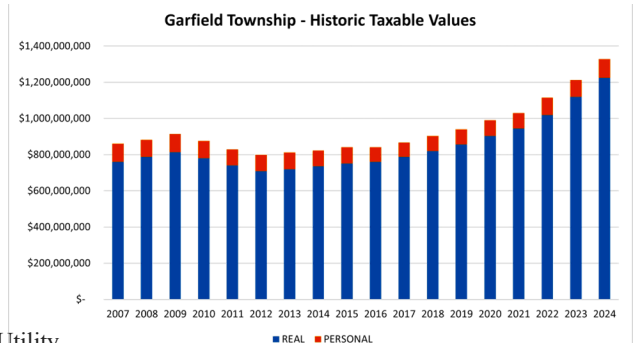
This review is NOT an effort to increase taxes, it is done to ensure that ALL property is listed and described accurately in our records and the value is properly calculated. We are able to do our job best when we have accurate details for each property. The goal is fair and accurate assessments. If you have questions about your property record details, you are welcome to stop in, call, or email us.



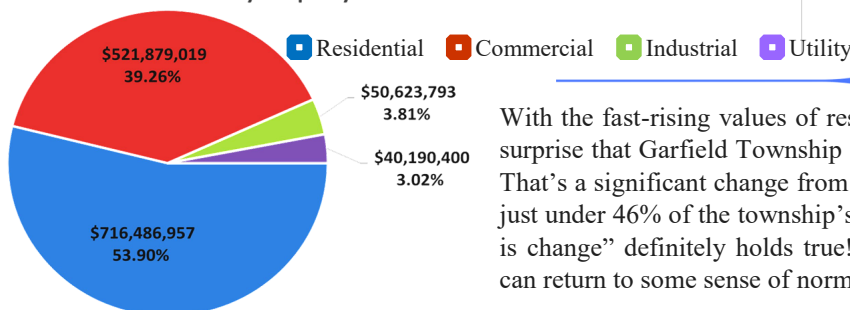
With all the new construction happening in Garfield Township, it’s no wonder the list of Top 10 Taxpayers has gotten shaken up a bit! Ridge 45 Apartments is now Garfield Township’s Top Taxpayer – even before the final phase is complete! Chelsea Park West is now finished and has moved up to #2 on the list. And, despite the sale of the “Team Elmer’s” business, Elmer’s has remained in the top three taxpayers. Liv Arbors remained in the #4 spot, and Meijer has moved to #5 following their total store remodel. Consumers Energy, DTE and Michigan Electric Transmission take up #6, #7 and #8 this year. And, the Grand Traverse Crossings drops from #7 in 2023 to #9 in 2024. New to the Top 10 this year is Oakleaf Village (commonly

known as Meadow Valley), the new senior living complex under construction off North Long Lake Rd. It will be interesting to see if this list changes even more next year!

Taxable values continue to rise with the increases in property values, though at a somewhat slower pace. This past year saw the township’s taxable value rise by 6.86%, which is still higher than the 5% cap, but lower than last year’s 8.6% increase. Sales continue to be a factor in this change, along with construction activity.



2024 Taxable Values by Property Class



With the fast-rising values of residential property over the past several years, it is no surprise that Garfield Township is now comprised of nearly 54% residential property. That’s a significant change from just 13 years ago, when residential property made up just under 46% of the township’s taxable value. The old saying “the only thing certain is change” definitely holds true! Hopefully, the rising prices will slow a bit and we can return to some sense of normalcy – if there is such a thing.

FROM THE SUPERVISOR

We just received our May water bill and it was substantially higher than we are used to. Here is a list of suggestions that may help reduce the additional expense of maintaining a healthy lawn.

The fact is, an established lawn needs only 1 inch of water per week in the growing season, so pouring on the water can actually harm your turf, as well as the environment—and your budget.



Here are the water-saving steps you can take:

Let the grass grow longer by raising your lawn mower’s cutting height. Longer blades of grass help shade each other, reducing evaporation, so keep your grass between 3 and 4½ inches tall.

Reduce fertilizing; it only promotes new growth. When you mow, leave grass clippings on the lawn to retain moisture and add nitrogen. If you use a sprinkler, direct the spray to the grass and garden and not the sidewalk and street.

Don’t use water to clean off your driveway, steps, or deck. Sweep them instead or use a leaf blower. Wash your car with water from a bucket or go to a commercial car wash that recycles water.

When it rains, collect the water in barrels or install gutters and downspouts that direct the runoff to your plants and trees.

Reduce the size of your lawn. Consider replacing grass with mulch, ground cover, drought-tolerant plants, or ornamental grasses. Weeds compete with other plants for water, so weed regularly and ditch any water features unless they use recycled water. To find the best plants for your region, consult your county cooperative extension or a local nursery.

Use soaker hoses or drip irrigation, if watering is permitted, to apply water slowly and evenly. Buy a hose nozzle with an automatic shutoff. Water early in the day when evaporation rates are low and more water is absorbed.

Consider a moisture sensor in your irrigation system, they claim to reduce unneeded water use.

FROM THE PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Implementing the New Master Plan

With the anticipated approval of the new Master Plan in June 2024, the Planning Commission and Planning Department are shifting to implementation mode. The actions outlined in the new Master Plan are mainly based on the 2022 Community Survey of residents and the Strategic Plan developed by the Township Board. Through its study sessions, the Planning Commission has identified the following priorities:

- Adjust the R-3 Multiple Family Residential zoning district to increase housing availability. These changes may include streamlining review processes and, where supported, allowing for increases in the number of residential units.
- Create a new Mixed-Use Center zoning district that integrates concentrations of commercial, residential, entertainment, office, public spaces, and other aligned uses through sound, coordinated design plans. This approach will help support current and future land use development changes to the Cherryland Center area and Grand Traverse Mall area that supports flexibility and innovation.
- Amend the Zoning Ordinance on issues that are most pressing in development reviews conducted by the Planning Commission.

The Planning Department is also drafting a capital improvement plan that will identify and prioritize Township-funded projects including new park enhancements, trails, and water and sewer improvements. The plan provides clear direction in responding to community needs, improves efficient use of resources, and expands opportunities to access grant funding.

The Planning Commission holds its study sessions on the fourth Wednesday of the month at 7:00 PM at the Garfield Township Hall. You are welcome to attend any of the study sessions to hear more about what the Planning Commission is working on to implement the Master Plan and to voice your ideas!

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PLEASE WELCOME GT METRO FIRE CHIEF PAUL MACKIN

Paul Mackin was appointed Fire Chief of the Grand Traverse Metro Fire Department upon the retirement of Chief Pat Parker. Chief Mackin previously served with the North Palos Fire Protection District in Illinois for over 29 years. In addition to being Chief, he served at several ranks including Lieutenant, Battalion Chief, Deputy Chief and Training Officer. Chief Mackin has earned an Associate’s degree in Fire Science, Bachelor of Science degree in Fire Service Management, and a Master’s degree in Public Administration, as well as numerous state and national certifications. Chief Mackin has been an instructor for the Illinois Fire Chiefs Fire Officer program and for academic programs with Joliet Junior College and Southern Illinois University. We are very grateful for you choosing to serve our community as our new fire chief.



FROM THE PARKS DEPARTMENT

RIVER EAST UPDATE:

The dog park at River East Recreation Area (which is located just north of Hammond Rd. on Keystone Rd.) is officially open! You will notice three separate fenced in areas for this dog park. One is for small dogs (25 pounds or less) and the other two are for bigger dogs. Only one “big dog” park will be open at a time in order to allow grass to rejuvenate as the big dogs can be hard on the grass. Please help keep this dog park clean by picking up after your dog. Bags and trash receptacles are available at the park. Temporary bathrooms have been installed and are cleaned 1-2 times a week. Permanent bathrooms should be installed early 2025.



KIDS CREEK/OLESON’S POND UPDATE:



Once again, Garfield Township has stocked the kids fishing pond with Rainbow Trout. There are also hybrid Bluegill still swimming around from last year’s planting. There are two fishing platforms available to make fishing a little easier for the kiddos!

Suggestions, compliments and concerns or general communication with our park staff can be made by e-mailing us at PARKS@garfield-twp.com.

Dad and daughter enjoy a day of fishing

ASSESSING CONT.

If you’ve been in the Assessing Dept or were visited by our appraisers recently, you probably know that appraiser, Abby Simon, was going to have a baby. She gave birth to a healthy little boy – both mom and baby are doing great! It is such a blessing to have Abby as part of our team, and we are thrilled to welcome her little miracle into the world! Please join us in congratulating Abby and Russell on this wonderful addition to their family!



FROM BUILDING AND ZONING

This time of the year, we are asked many questions about installing outdoor residential swimming pools. The purpose of the building code is to ensure the safety of your families by focusing on barriers to prevent potential drowning and near drowning by restricting access. A swimming pool is defined in the building code as “any structure intended for swimming or recreational bathing that contains water over 24” deep. This includes in-ground, above-ground and on-ground swimming pools, hot tubs, and spas”.

A building permit is required to install a swimming pool. A general guide to swimming pool barrier requirements of the code follows:

- A barrier/fence is required for swimming pools.
- The barrier shall be 4’ in height, openings in the barrier shall not allow the passage of a 4” sphere.
- When an above ground swimming pool 4’ in height is used as the barrier, then the ladder or steps shall be secured, locked, or removed to prevent access, or a barrier

meeting the requirements above is required around the access.

- An exception to the above barrier requirements is for spas and hot tubs which have a safety cover.

Please note that this is not a complete list, there may be further requirements applicable to your project.

Our Building Department has a free handout for swimming pools that provide more detailed requirements on barriers. We would suggest you pick up a copy of this handout, prior to purchasing a swimming pool.

Our Zoning Ordinance section 776 for Swimming Pools has regulations and conditions as well. Swimming Pools are considered to be an accessory use, and the pool cannot be within 10 feet of the adjoining property line, measured at the outside wall. There shall also be a distance of not less than 6 feet between the pool wall and any buildings located on the same lot.



FALL BRUSH DROP OFF PASSES

Will be available at the front desk by September 2nd.

Scan the QR Code below for days, times, location, etc.

You can also find recycling and hazardous waste information at:

www.recyclesmart.info/1162/Household-Hazardous-Waste

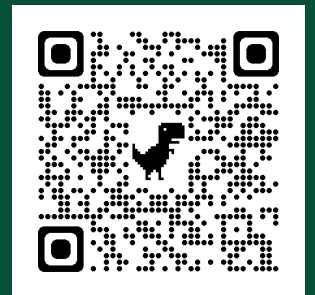
RECYCLE SMART HHW Event Dates for 2024

August 8 - 12pm-6pm

September 14 - 9am-2pm

Sign-up will be available online approximately ONE month before each event.

[Appointments are required.](#)



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

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

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

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

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