

FALL LEAF DROP-OFF

The Fall Yard Waste Drop-Off Program will begin on Friday, October 23rd and continue through Monday, November 23rd at the drop-off site located behind the DPW Building at 13300 168th Avenue.

The hours of operation are Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m.; Saturday from 10:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m.; and Sunday from 12:00 noon until 6:00 p.m.

The drop-off is only meant for leaves, grass and similar yard waste. There is no dumping of wood, limbs or brush allowed.

WEBSITE & FACEBOOK

Grand Haven Charter Township's website can be found at:

www.gh.township.mi.us

In addition, in order to improve communications with Township residents, the Township is now on Facebook at :

<https://www.facebook.com/GHTownship/>



SURGE IN GROWTH

The Township's growth has increased significantly. Over the past eighteen months, the Township has approved 224 single family units and 264 apartment units. And, there are 184 new single family units that are currently pending approval. (See table below.)

In addition, there are also a number of commercial projects in various stages of the approval process. These include a Flagstar Bank that is currently under construction; a Speedway facility with fueling bays for trucks that is awaiting final approval from the Michigan Department of Transportation; and, a 120,000± square foot medical facility that is anticipating zoning approval.

This growth is occurring in the areas that were Master Planned for these types of various developments and not within the rural areas of the Township.

To help mitigate the environmental impact of this growth, all of these developments are connected to both the Township's water system and the sanitary sewer system.

Moreover, because of the capital improvement planning that has previously occurred, this current surge in development projects will not strain the Township's infrastructure.

Although the Township is required to accommodate growth, the Township recognizes that "growth does not pay for itself".

More residents and businesses means that there will be more calls for service, which can range from an increase in emergency medical service calls for the fire department, to increasing parking at Township parks, to adding new grave sites at local cemeteries.

That said, there is an exception to this truth. As a community grows, debt millages are typically reduced because the debt is "shared" among more property owners.

For example, the Township's water debt will continue to be reduced during the upcoming fiscal year. This will allow the Township's property tax rate to be **lowered** ↓ from about **4.05 mills** to about **4.01 mills** for the upcoming Winter Tax roll.

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Trustee Howard Behm
Trustee Mike Hutchins
Trustee Calvin Meeusen
Trustee Ron Redick



We are on the web
www.gh.township.mi.us • info@gh.township.mi.us

Township Board has established a joint Community Engagement Subcommittee comprised of members from the Planning Commission and Parks and Recreation Committee.

Over the next year, this Subcommittee will develop strategies to engage residents to help the Township determine what type of recreation amenities (*if any*) the residents would like to develop at one, or both, of the new additions to Hofma Park and Preserve.

Consideration will include determining if residents would like additional amenities (e.g., *soccer fields, baseball diamonds, playground equipment, etc.*) at either location based on size and location.

With regard to the pathway extensions, the Subcommittee will seek input from residents on:

1. Final location of the additional pathway segments;
2. Which side of the street the pathway extensions will be located; and,
3. If property owners and residents would prefer the pathway to travel in a straight line (*utilize existing road right-of-ways*), or save trees by winding in between (*acquiring easements from property owners*).

SNOWBIRDS & ELECTIONS

If you are planning to be away from the area this winter, please notify the Clerk's office to avoid any delays in delivering your absentee voter applications and ballots by calling (616) 604-6343 or emailing kdeverney@gh.township.mi.us. Thank you for your help.

Development Name	# of Units	Status
Piper Lakes Apartments	204	Zoning approved, apartment construction to commence next Spring
Stonewater Subdivision and Condominiums	184	Zoning application being reviewed
Lincoln Pines Subdivision	99	Zoning approved; utility plans being reviewed
Copper Stone Subdivision	73	Houses are being built
Timberview Apartments	60	New apartment plans are being developed
Brighamwood No 2 Subdivision	26	Houses are being built
Bignell Ridge Condominiums	26	Condominiums are being built
TOTAL	672	

NEWSLETTER

If you are interested in learning more about any pending development project, please contact the Township's Planner, Stacey Fedewa, by emailing her at sfedewa@ght.org or phoning (616) 604-6326.

OAK WILT

A fungal disease called oak wilt has infected oak trees in the Township. The disease can develop in both the red and white oak groups, but red oaks are the most susceptible.

The disease moves through the vascular system of the tree. Once infected, the leaves at the top of the tree will begin to brown. Whole branches may yellow and then brown as the disease moves down the branch. Leaves will begin to fall off and a fungal mat will grow under the bark causing the bark to crack. The tree will eventually be unable to move water through its system and will die. Red oaks can die within a few weeks once infected.

The disease is typically spread in three ways:

1. Trees trimmed between April 15 and July 15 can emit a sap which attracts small beetles. These beetles can bring the fungus from infected trees (including those killed last year).



2. Through already infected root grafts between trees of the same species. Therefore, if there are several oak trees near each other, it is possible the disease will be passed through the roots. Oaks within approximately 100 feet of each other can contract the disease in this manner.

3. Through movement of infected wood (i.e. fire wood, branches greater than 2" in diameter). If moved to another location, the spores from the infected fire wood can be transferred to recently pruned or damaged oaks in the new location.

To prevent further spread of the disease, the following measures should be taken:

- a. Avoid trimming oak trees between the growing season of April 15 to July 15.
- b. If trees are damaged by a storm or must be trimmed afterward, a tree wound dressing should be applied immediately, before the sap which attracts the beetles is emitted.
- c. Do not move firewood from infected trees. Any infected wood being moved should be debarked to avoid fungal mat and covered in a minimum 4 mil plastic until the end of the growing season.
- d. Cut any root grafts when other oaks are near the infected tree.

A certified arborist can also be helpful in identifying and treating oak wilt. Depending on the progression of the disease, there may be additional options available.

To report a suspected oak wilt site, email DNR-FRD-Forest-Health@michigan.gov or call (517) 284-5895.

Residents may send samples to MSU Diagnostic Services for identification as well. Additional information is located at <http://www.pestid.msu.edu/> or by calling (517) 355-4536.

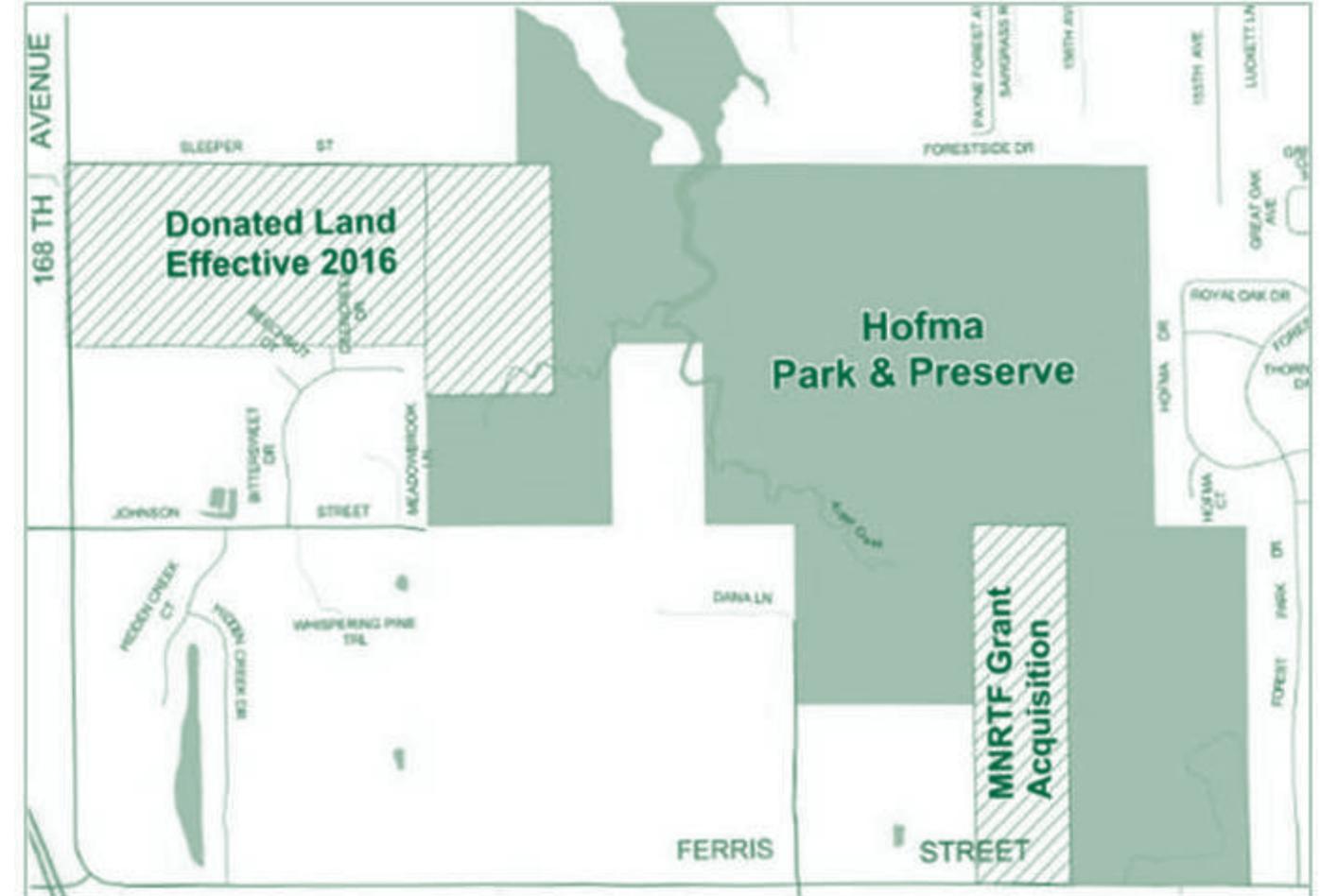
HOFMA PARK/PRESERVE

Hofma Park and Preserve will be expanding by an additional **158 acres** starting in January. This will be an expansion of about 38% and will grow the park land to a total of about **567 acres**.

The first addition will be a 118 acre parcel that is currently used as a Christmas tree farm on the south side of Sleeper Street.

This parcel is part of the so-called Witteveen Estate that was scheduled to be transferred to the Township in 2023. However, the current leaseholder has terminated their interests effective December 31st.

The Township does not have any development plans for this parcel other than to remove the buildings and fencing. (It is anticipated that one of the buildings will be used for a fire/rescue training exercise.)



The second parcel is a 40 acre parcel adjacent to the west entrance to Hofma Park on Ferris Street. About 50% of this parcel is a regulated wetland and includes a portion of Alder Creek.

The State of Michigan awarded the Township a **\$276,500 Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Land Acquisition Grant** to purchase this property from the Catholic Diocese of Grand Rapids. The Township will be responsible to provide a 25% match toward the land purchase.

Currently, the Township is following the myriad of rules and regulations associated with the grant that must be completed prior to the purchase — including a final appraisal of the property.

Again, the Township does not have any final improvement plans for this parcel.

However, the Township will be completing a “Community Engagement” process to help determine how this addition of 158 acres should be developed. (See next article.)

TOWNSHIP COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROJECT

The Township will complete planning on three recreation projects in 2016. These include:

1. The 40 acre lot west of Hofma Park that is being acquired through a Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund grant. (See previous article.)
2. The 118 acre Witteveen Christmas Tree Farm (See previous article.)
3. An addition of 10± miles of pathway. Recall that in November of 2016, the Township Board will request the residents of the Township to approve a debt millage for the additional pathways, which would bring the total to approximately 36 miles. (It is noteworthy that the Township Board will not ask the residents to assume a debt millage until the last debt millage is paid in 2017.)

In light of these new recreation developments, the