

# The Township Update

Saginaw Township Government Newsletter

Summer/Fall 1998

## Wal-Mart Project Underway - State Street Enhanced

**A**fter nearly a year and a half of planning, the Westwood Plaza Shopping Center located on State Street is now under construction. The site contains nearly 73 acres of land and is located near the intersection of State Street and Brockway Roads. Two major tenants will anchor the shopping center. A 127,000 square foot Wal-Mart store will be constructed on the East Side of the site, while a 12-screen theater containing 2,500 seats will be constructed in the Southwest portion of the property. Once completed, the shopping center will contain approximately 300,000 square feet of tenant space.

Rob Grose, Assistant to the Director of Community Development and Planning reports, "the size of the overall project can be compared to the shopping center on Tittabawassee Road, which contains Dick's Sporting Goods and Petsmart. Over the past 18 months, a considerable amount of discussion has taken place regarding the impact that this project will have on our community," Grose added.



Pictured left to right: AIG Baker developer Bill Searcy, Twp. Supervisor Olson, Twp. Manager Lee, Community Development Assistant Director Rob Grose and Jim Lehman, Saginaw Co. Road Commission welcome Wal-Mart development at ground breaking ceremony.

State Street was developed in the early 1950's and became the heart of the Township's business community. Fashion Square Mall was built in 1972 and as a result, commercial developers shifted their interest from State Street to Bay Road. The Bay Road corridor has since become a booming commercial area and has evolved into a major center for comparison shopping in the Saginaw region. State

Street, on the other hand, has continued to maintain a more local flavor by providing a wide range of shopping opportunities that appeal to nearby residents. These opportunities include convenience goods, auto sales, grocery stores and discount department stores.

Grose added, "Since this project was announced there has been a huge amount of interest expressed by developers seeking to reinvest into the State Street Corridor. Most of the interest has come from local business people looking to relocate near the new shopping center or upgrade their existing sites. The business community has strongly supported this project, they recognize that it is the first step in what hopefully will become *the renaissance of State Street.*"

## Subdivision Road Resurfacing Continues

Ronald Lee, Township Manager reports, "Saginaw Township is in the middle of its second successful year of road resurfacing." By the end of the 1997 construction year, seven neighborhoods saw their local roads resurfaced at a cost of about \$600,000. In preparation for the following 1998 construction year, two additional road projects were processed during the off-season. Currently, another six neighborhoods are taking the initial steps toward having their subdivision roads resurfaced. The initial steps involve the development of special road assessment districts which will fund roughly two-thirds of the cost for each project. On five of the projects, the Township is funding the remaining one-third. The sixth project involves a concrete road being renovated into asphalt, in which case, the Township is funding one-third of the cost of asphalt. The total value of road projects for 1998 is about \$900,000.

"For several years, the Township has been watching and noting the continued deterioration of numerous older, local subdivision roadways. Then the winter of 1997 was exceptionally brutal on many of these same roads. In hopes of stimulating local road renewal, *Continued on page 2.*

Continued from page 2. we took a bold step by making the commitment to accept the responsibility to help our residents preserve the value of their properties by improving roads," Lee said.

**To be eligible, your subdivision must meet the following criteria:**

1. Minimal drainage work.
2. Very low engineering costs.
3. Existing road must be well crowned.
4. Sub-base of the roadway substantially sound.
5. The roadway must have either existing valley or V-shaped ditches (not filled in) or curbs & gutters.
6. Require only milling and resurfacing of bituminous surfaces.

The Township established a pool of funds roughly in the amount of \$200,000 for use in matching local property owner funding up to a 30% matching contribution, not to exceed \$1,000 per lot owner, to any subdivision interested in resurfacing their roads. Special road assessment districts were established. "In general, it was estimated that \$200,000 of Township funds, matched with \$400,000 worth of lot owner funds, could fund \$600,000 annually for resurfacing. The Township hopes to run this program one more year" Lee added.

## **Township Supervisor Gives Message**

It is my pleasure on behalf of your elected Township Board, to bring to the people of Saginaw Charter Township this first edition of The Township Update. As we encounter many issues and challenges, it occurs to us here in Township Hall that many people do not always understand what we do or why we do some things. Nevertheless, the actions we take always affect you. This bulletin which will come to you bi-annually, is intended to show the "Township's Side of Managing" so the public understands the things we do.



**George L. Olson,  
Twp. Supervisor**

### **Strategic Planning**

Thinking ahead, forecasting the future, strategic planning, long range goals, visions, missions, objectives, etc... These are popular phrases and buzz words that we have heard throughout the 1990's to indicate a desire to organize, plan and manage one's destiny.

This is a process which helps us develop a sense of direction and long term purpose. The process also helps structure our approach toward achieving that purpose.

The process involved developing a desired vision about the Township. From this vision, a mission statement was constructed, along with a series of objectives. The process, began in the Fall of 1995, was tedious but time well spent. Using Actis Consulting, Phase I of the process began by first interviewing members of the Township Board about how each perceives the community in terms of the past, present and future. Other questions involved how the public perceived the Township and what expectations the public had about us. Are some of those expectations unrealistic or unattainable? For those that are attainable, are we meeting the public's expectations? The purpose of this exercise was to define a comprehensive vision, and from this a general mission and objectives that could achieve both vision and mission in the best interest of the taxpayers.

After the Township Board's Vision was refined, Phase II involved carrying this to the Department Heads of the Township for determination of action strategies.

### **Vision**

A diverse community of excellence in living, regional/local shopping and leisure time activities; where the quality of life is pleasing, desirable and safe; where government is limited, yet effective and efficient in the management of land resources, infrastructure, services and recreation; a community which serves as a model for innovation and regional collaboration.

### **Mission**

To work with the Manager in establishing, maintaining, and improving public policy, services, fiscal management, funding, business and residential planning and zoning, and communications.

### **Objectives**

- Obtain adequate road funding.
- Develop rental & housing codes.
- Improve public safety and crime prevention.
- Prevent commercial & residential deterioration.
- Develop a communications plan.
- Evaluate personnel staff & succession.
- Improve recruitment of volunteer fire fighters or fire suppression personnel.
- Promote retail & medical services.
- Study recreational needs.
- Study ways to cooperate with other communities.

Continued on page 3.

*Continued from page 2.* What this all means for Saginaw Township is that it gives a purpose, a sense of direction and something to strive for. Some communities are content in letting fate lead them. Saginaw Township has not taken that approach in twenty years. For the sake of the nearly 40,000 residents, we cannot afford to simply muddle through. We must manage our destiny and we intend to do just that.

## **Yard Waste Collection Guidelines**

**The Saginaw Area Solid Waste Management Authority has expanded its recyclables. Here's a list of acceptable items for roadside collection.**

- ☒ Newspaper and newspaper inserts
- ☒ Phone books
- ☒ Glossy magazines, catalogues
- ☒ Flyers and brochures
- ☒ Junk mail, letters, photo copies, scratch paper
- ☒ Cereal, dry food, shoe and tissue boxes
- ☒ Paper towel rolls
- ☒ Brown paper bags
- ☒ Corrugated two-layer board
- ☒ Paper milk and juice cartons
- ☒ Juice boxes
- ☒ Aluminum and tin cans
- ☒ Foil pie plates and food trays
- ☒ Aerosol cans
- ☒ Lined cans
- ☒ Clear, green and brown glass
- ☒ Beverage glasses, plates, ceramics, cookware
- ☒ Plastic milk jugs, detergent bottles, etc.

Residents may place unlimited amounts of yard waste at the curb. The yard waste must be contained in wet strength kraft paper bags (available for sale in most local stores and lawn and garden shops) or in up-to-33 gallon bulk containers, labeled with a "Yard Waste" sticker. Stickers are available in the Township Offices.

Yard waste includes: organic materials like leaves, grass, garden, plant prunings, small twigs and brush (less than 2" in diameter, no root balls). Do not include: garbage, refuse, inorganic or inert materials like plastic, paper, glass, metal, gravel, stones, bricks and lumber.

Brush may be taken by homeowner to the township brush drop off site located at 5790 West Michigan Ave. next to the waste water treatment plant. No stumps, leaves, grass or commercial brush will be accepted. The site is open September 12 - October 25, on Saturdays and Sundays, 10 - 6:00 p.m. The refuse hauler will pick up one bundle of brush per week on your regular trash collection day. Brush must be tied and bundled. The bundle cannot be wider than 24 inches in diameter nor more than 4 feet in length.

## **Storm Damage Costs Taxpayers \$20,000**

As a result of the storm that swept through Mid-Michigan on Sunday, May 31, most areas of the Township had tree damage. Damage ranging from a few small branches to major branches and in some instances complete trees were blown over. In response to the large amount of brush piled at curbside, the Township requested from our collection vendor that a special pick up of brush take place. Jerry Francis Director of Public Works reports, "Fortunately, we were able to obtain some tree crews contracted by the State of Michigan to assist cities and townships in brush removal."

"The services of the tree crews supplied through the State of Michigan were free, but the cost of the special collection and other storm related expenses were \$20,000, which was borne by our Solid Waste Budget," Francis added.

## **Public Works News Briefs**

■ Citizen's response to alternate day lawn and garden watering plan implemented on May 15, 1998 has been very positive, with only a few reports of improper watering.

■ The construction of Wetlands and a Leachate Collection System began on May 18 on the north side of the closed landfill, at Center and West Michigan. This project is designed to use a new and innovative method of treating the leachate emanating from the landfill. A combination of aeration and filtration through the constructed Wetlands will provide a low-tech, low maintenance removal of any contaminants before discharge to the Tittabawassee River. The prime contractor of this \$489,000 project is Champagne & Marx Excavating. Completion for this project is expected in early summer 1999.

■ The spray pool opened on June 12 in Gotto Park to capacity crowds due to the unusually hot June. The hours at the pool are 12:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., seven days a week, weather permitting. Admission is free, and the only entrance requirement is that the children have to be 4 foot tall or under to enter pool.

## **Property Tax Limitation Working**

David Kern, Saginaw Township Director of Assessing reports "a five-year billing history reveals that property tax limitation is truly taking place." For a typical Saginaw Township dwelling, this law revision caused the initial 1994 property taxes to be reduced by 47 percent. It has been five years since 1993's Proposal A property tax reduction legislation was approved by the voters of Michigan. The sales tax was increased by 2 percent as property taxes were reduced. These changes were intended to revise the method of funding local education operating revenue and place a limitation, or cap, to the annual charge for a property's taxable value. *Continued on page 4.*

Continued from page 3. At the time of Proposal A's approval, many critics doubted the long-term prospects for property tax reduction. "These doubts appeared justified given Michigan's past history of what seemed like large, automatic yearly tax increases," Kern said.

A model, constructed to illustrate the tax limitation effects of Proposal A follows:

Year / Tax Calculation Pre-Prop. A - Current	Property Tax Savings(\$)	Property Tax Reduction(%)
1994 - \$2,322	\$1,232	\$1,090 ..... 46.9%
1995 - 2,417	1,264	1,153 ..... 47.7%
1996 - 2,497	1,299	1,198 ..... 48.0%
1997 - 2,587	1,335	1,252 ..... 48.4%
1998 - 2,706	1,372	1,334 ..... 49.3%

This example uses the 1993 millage rate as the base tax rate, a homestead dwelling with a 1994 market value of \$100,000, and the application of the average annual residential state equalized value adjustments. "Many Saginaw Township homestead properties have experienced a greater percentage of tax savings than the model average listed above. It is expected that the percentage savings will continue to become greater as time passes," Kern reported.

### Voter Registration Now State-Wide

Township Clerk, Timothy Braun announces a new computer system. Saginaw Township recently switched to a new state wide voter registration system which reportedly will eliminate duplicate records. Every municipality has merged its voters' registration into one mainframe in Lansing. All driver's license changes made by the Secretary of State's Office will be transferred to a voters' registration file. Deputy Clerk, Dana Muscott asks that you check your drivers' license to see where you are registered to vote, or call the Township Clerk's Office at (791-9830) for more information.

### Saginaw and Thomas Townships Purchase Thermal Imaging System to Aid Fire Fighters

In cooperation with the Thomas Township Fire Department, the Saginaw Township Fire Department has acquired an International Safety Instruments Vision III thermal imaging camera for use in both municipalities at a shared cost of \$20,235. "This unique venture provides enhanced safety of our firefighters. Citizens in both townships also benefit from improved service capabilities from our fire departments," Saginaw Township Fire Chief, Richard Powell reports. The thermal imaging system will have applications in structural fires involving rescue of trapped citizens, suppression activities, and post fire overhaul functions. The device is also useful in the event a hazardous material release occurs in either community or when searches for missing persons must be undertaken.

### Citizens Grade Police Professionalism

A new program entitled COPS, (Citizens Opinion of Police Services) began in February allowing selected citizens to grade the professionalism of the officer and the department. Citizens who have had contact with the department during the previous month are selected at random and receive a questionnaire and a self-addressed stamped envelope in which to return the survey. Citizen's rank such matters as the courtesy and appearance of the officer, whether or not the officer was thorough and knowledgeable, and whether or not the officer responded to the citizen's concerns.

Motorists who receive a traffic citation from the Saginaw Township Police will also be afforded an opportunity to grade the professionalism of the officer who ticketed them. The survey is not meant to determine whether the motorist agreed with the citation, but rather to determine whether the police officer was courteous, that the violation was explained and that the motorist was given information on how to take care of the violation. Citation recipients are also chosen randomly. When COPS was announced in February, Chief Stephen C. Renico said. "A program of this type invites criticism but it is my belief that the Saginaw Township Police Department is professional enough to accept criticism and benefit from the experience." To date, the percentage of contact surveys returned has varied each month from 13% to almost 40%. "The approval rating for officers handling complaints has consistently been between 85% and 97%. The approval rating received for officers on traffic citation surveys generally exceeds 80%. Additionally, citizens have provided a variety of helpful comments which are shared with the officers," Chief Renico added. The program will be ongoing and information received from survey recipients may be used to help the department identify areas where additional training may be needed.

**Saginaw Township Issues Survey**  
(Telephone survey of 50 persons)

The purpose of this survey was to identify the issues most important to township residents. Selected at random, each respondent was asked to name two issues in a list of 10 they felt were most important to their community. Expect to find these topics addressed in future newsletters. Priority issues are: Jobs, management and development.

1. Jobs in/near community
2. Community management
3. Community development
4. How taxes are used
5. Community crime
6. Code enforcement
7. Taxes for property
8. Community roads
9. Community recreation
10. State Street, Bay Road traffic



## Zael Memorial Library, Great Resource

The Zael Memorial Library has seen some big changes over the year, including building improvements, new on-line databases, improvements in technology, and new emphasis on different areas of the collection.

During the winter, the library was closed for a few days to replace the carpeting. In order to complete this large project, the library staff, along with the Department of Public Services staff, had to move every piece of furniture and shelving. In addition, every book, compact disc, magazine, and computer had to be moved. Trish Burns, Zael Librarian said, "The worst part was having to move them all back when the carpeting was completed." Additional shelving was installed to improve storage space and provide room for materials in the future.

Additional terminals and PC's have been installed for patrons to use in the library. "The library offers a great on-line magazine database that provides general, health, and business indexes, along with the capacity to print out articles right from the library," added Burns. This service is good for finding information about a business, getting a product evaluation, or finding out symptoms of a certain disease. Along with information, the library has PC's available for patrons to use for word processing or doing a resume'. Burns said, "By the time you read this newsletter, Zael will have eight PC's with internet and word-processing capabilities." People can come in and use a PC for up to two hours at a time, and printing is a small charge of ten cents per page.

"As well as improving our computer capabilities, Zael has been building a dynamic collection of music CD's and books on tape. The library orders new materials every two weeks, and the collection is growing rapidly," Burns said. "Many township residents have found books on tape to be a great way to better enjoy their drive to and from work, or to help that *up north* drive seem a little faster," added Burns. The library also has books on tape for kids - another great idea for those long family vacations. Come in to the library soon to enjoy the new and old services of your neighborhood library.

Call Zael Library for questions and information at: 799-2771

## Recreation Commission Sets Agenda

Saginaw Township is the fifth largest township in the State of Michigan. It is 26.5 square miles and is the home of 15 township parks, two county parks, eight public schools and three golf courses. The fifteen parks are managed by the Saginaw Township Parks and Recreation Commission. This Commission is comprised of, Ralph Tucker Chairman, Gus Patterson Vice Chairman, Gotto Kabobel, Vern Korkus, Jack Cleveland and Jack Burd. They can be reached by calling the Township Recreation Office at 791-9860.

The commission meets the third Monday of each month. Funding for the recreational activities, programs and facilities comes from the General Fund, Grants and Gifts. Parks and Recreation is administered by a full-time Director of Recreation, one full-time Assistant Director, a part-time clerk, part-time activities coordinators, an umpire coordinator, and seasonal assistance as needed.

Saginaw Township has steadily increased its recreation programs and opportunities for area citizens. At the same time it has remained financially responsible to its citizens. The Saginaw Township Parks and Recreation Commission has identified the following areas as priorities for the next five years:

- Winter activities
- Senior activities
- Female recreation opportunities
- Park enhancement & expansion

For these priorities, the following eight specific proposed action plans have been generated:

- A community center
- Additional land/new park development
- Harvey Randall Wicks Park paving
- Lighting for baseball and soccer fields
- Sandhill enhancement
- Shuffleboard courts
- Soccer park loop
- Winter activity park

**Pay Your Water Bills Electronically-** through electronic bankdraft withdrawal. With this automatic payment system, you will avoid late charges. You will still receive a bill which will indicate the amount and day the payment will be deducted from your checking account. Sign up forms are available at the Township Treasurer's Office, or for more information call (791-9840).

## Saginaw Township Government Newsletter

Your connection to: Government  
Developments, Recreation, Planning

### Inside this issue:

- Wal-Mart Breaks Ground. Pg. 1
- Manager on Road Improvements. Pg. 1
- Supervisors' Report. Strategic Plan. Pg. 2
- Storm Damage Costs. Pg. 3
- Yard Waste & Recyclables. Pg. 3
- Proposal A Working. Pg. 3
- Police Survey Positive. Pg. 4
- Fire Dept. Has Thermal Imaging. Pg. 4
- Recreation Information. Pg. 5
- Zauel Library Resources. Pg. 5

## Community Calendar

September: 3 Special Board mtg. ■ 5 Police Auction ■ 7 Twp. Offices Closed ■ 2 & 16 Planning Comm.  
9 Brd. Of Appeals ■ 14 & 28 Twp. Board Mtg.

October: 7 & 21 Planning Comm. ■ 14 Board Of Appeals ■ 12 & 26 Twp. Board Mtg.

November: 4 & 18 Planning Comm. ■ 11 Board Of Appeals ■ 9 & 23 Twp. Board Mtg. ■ 26 & 27 Twp. Office  
closed

December: 2 & 16 Planning Comm. ■ 9 Board Of Appeals ■ 14 Township Board Mtg. ■ 24 Office closed p.m. ■ 25  
Office closed all day. ■ 31 Office closed p.m.

Look for the next issue of The Township Update in January 1999.

George L. Olson	Timothy J. Braun	Daniel M. McConnell	Walter W. Loth	William J. McQuillan	Patrick J. McGraw	Barbara N. Ewend
Supervisor	Clerk	Treasurer	Trustee	Trustee	Trustee	Trustee