



Keeping Things Moving

ROI Success Story: Improving Midland's Stormwater Flow

This is the second in a series of updates on grants that have been received in recent years, thanks to the efforts of local municipalities and organizations, state and federal legislators, and the Midland Business Alliance (MBA) Advisory Committee on Infrastructure. These grants are examples of a “return on investment” – turning the local donors’ “seed money” into larger “returns” for the mid-Michigan area by reducing the frequency and severity of flooding, rebuilding from flooding, and improving resiliency.

There’s a joke that goes something like this: What is Michigan’s state flower? A hint: it’s orange and pops up in the spring. Those construction cones and barrels are currently “in season” across the state and especially in Midland.

For the 2026 season, the City of Midland Water Reclamation Department has a group of seven construction projects that focus on storm sewer infrastructure upgrades, water main replacement, and resulting street reconstruction – all paid for by \$25 million in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds, administered by the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy (EGLE). These grant funds were secured thanks to our state legislators, City of Midland staff, and the MBA Advisory Committee on Infrastructure.

In early 2024, the Advisory Committee hired the Spicer Group, an engineering firm that worked closely with City engineers and staff to identify, evaluate, model, score,



and rank potential flood reduction projects. Due to ARPA restrictions, the selected projects would need to be completed by the end of 2026, not require lengthy permitting due to overall time constraints, and deliver the biggest impact ... all within a set budget.

The final ranked list was presented to the Midland City Council and then approved in October 2024. After design engineering and the construction bidding process, construction work started on the seven projects in April and May this year. All of these storm sewer upgrades are scheduled to be completed by October.

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The seven projects are located across the city and will upsize storm sewer capacity to help reduce the severity of flooding and increase resiliency. The infrastructure improvement projects include:

- **Scott Street** (from Washington Street to the intersection of Airfield Lane)
- **Jay Street area** (Jay Street west of Paine Drive, Paine Drive, and Clay Street to the intersection of Hancock Drive)
- **Eastlawn Drive** (from Washington Street to Abbott Road)
- **Avon Street area** (Avon from Wildes Street to Smith Road, and Smith Road between Avon and Hignite Street)
- **Lawndale, Sweetbrier, and Waldo area** (Lawndale Drive from Lambros Drive to Canterbury Drive, the northern portion of Sweetbrier Terrace to Highbrook Drive, and Waldo Avenue from Mark Twain Drive to Whitewood Drive)
- **Plumtree Lane** (from Dublin Avenue to west portion of Plumtree Lane)
- **Dartmouth Drive** (from Saginaw Road to Airfield Lane and intersection of Jefferson Avenue and Dartmouth)

For more information on the construction and detours, visit <https://bit.ly/midlandstreets>, follow the City of Midland [Facebook page](#), or call Water Reclamation at 989-837-3500.

After the MBA Board of Directors created the MBA Advisory Committee on Infrastructure in 2021, the committee asked local businesses and community organizations for “seed money” donations to launch this concerted effort to reduce the frequency and severity of flooding. Many of these 11 donors have provided multiple rounds of funding to continue their support. In fact, they have contributed \$1,887,500 to date, which has helped the Advisory Committee operate for the first five years and beyond.

These local donors include: Charles J. Strosacker Foundation, Corteva Agriscience, Dow Company Foundation, Fisher Companies, Hemlock Semiconductor Corporation, Johnston Contracting, Midland Area Community Foundation, MyMichigan Health, Patricia and David Kepler Foundation, Rollin M. Gerstacker Foundation, and Three Rivers Corporation.

The Advisory Committee maintains a list of projects and funding that it has been able to “return” to the community, thanks to the donors and extensive volunteer efforts. These community successes are listed on the “Return on Investment” [document](#) and include federal and state appropriations. As of March 2026, the “returns” totaled \$70,010,000 or approximately 37.1 times the donors’ investment.

Want more information about the flood study, flood reception and resiliency efforts, and preparedness?



[Learn more](#)



US Army Corps
of Engineers®
Detroit District

[Learn more](#)



[Learn more](#)



[Learn more](#)

Safety and Property Protection in Action

by *Ryan Smith, AICP, CFM*
Community Development Planner
City of Midland

This is the third in a series of articles to help residents understand the Midland community's flood risks and responsibilities. (Read the first and second articles in the [December 2025](#) and [March 2026](#) editions.)

Flood preparedness is about more than knowing facts. It is about taking simple, practical steps that protect your family and your home when the water rises.

Know Your Hazard

Flooding in Midland does not only come from rivers. Neighborhood drains, culverts, and low-lying intersections are often the first to flood. Properties outside of mapped floodplains are still at risk from heavy rain and overland flooding.

Insure Your Property

Do not assume your standard homeowners policy covers flooding. It does not. Renters also need to purchase flood insurance to protect their belongings. Flood insurance claims are paid regardless of whether a federal disaster is declared.

Protect People

Safety starts with awareness. Never walk through floodwater, which can conceal hazards and sweep you off your feet in just six inches of flow. Keep children away from ditches, culverts, and

storm drains. If flooding is expected, shut off gas and electricity to reduce the risk of fire and electrocution. Generators should always be used outside to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning.

Protect Property

There are many cost-effective measures homeowners can take. Move valuables upstairs, store documents in waterproof containers, and use sandbags to divert water. Consider elevating your utilities on platforms or moving them to higher floors. The City of Midland offers property protection advice and can connect you to financial assistance programs for larger mitigation projects.

Build Responsibly

Contact the City of Midland before beginning work in the floodplain. Both local permits and state floodplain permits may be required. Using licensed contractors familiar with floodplain requirements reduces the risk of costly mistakes.

Protect Natural Functions

Everyday maintenance helps the community. Do not dump leaves, grass clippings, or debris into ditches or streams. These clogs cause localized flooding. Residents are encouraged to report blocked drains or illegal dumping. Keeping water flowing freely reduces the chance of neighborhood flooding.

Preparedness is not complicated. By taking these common-sense actions now, residents can greatly reduce the danger to people and property when floods occur.

For more information, visit the City of Midland's floodplain information [page](#).



Ryan Smith serves as a Community Development Planner for the City of Midland, Michigan, where he focuses on land use, long-term planning, and floodplain management. He is one of three Certified Floodplain Managers (CFMs) on staff and plays a key role in coordinating the City's participation in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and Community Rating System (CRS). Beyond his work in Midland, Ryan serves as the Region 3 Representative on the Board of the Michigan Stormwater and Floodplain Association, where he works with regional and state partners to advance flood awareness, promote sustainable infrastructure planning, and strengthen community resilience across mid-Michigan.

DID YOU SEE?



“Breached!”

While mid-Michigan remembers the May 2020 floods, did you ever see the 2021 documentaries produced by Delta College Public Media: “Breached! The Tittabawassee River Disaster”?

Watch [Part 1](#) and [Part 2](#).

TELL YOUR NEIGHBORS



The MBA Advisory Committee on Infrastructure **High Water Mark** newsletter comes out quarterly—with extra editions when there’s breaking news. The library of back issues is available at MBAmi.org/FloodStudy.

Tell your friends to sign up for the newsletter at this [Constant Contact link](#). If someone forwarded this issue to you, sign up so we can send it directly to your inbox.

Do you have suggestions for future issues?
Write to us at ACOIMBA@MBAmi.org.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Tours Midland Area

On April 30, several engineers and the project leader from the Detroit District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) came to Midland for a tour of the area. In addition to a general tour of the flood-prone areas, USACE engineers also wanted to get a closer look at several locations, take measurements, and make notes of features. The Advisory Committee and USACE team were joined for a lunch break by local partners and community stakeholders before continuing the tour and data collection.





UPCOMING EVENTS

TBD

USACE Community Outreach

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Detroit District plans to hold another community outreach event to update the local community on the General Investigation study of the Tittabawassee River Watershed. Watch for an announcement in the coming months.

4
JUN

Turtle Tagging

6-8 p.m.

Join the Chippewa Nature Center's Turtle Team as they monitor turtles that live on the property. This research is performed under special permits from the DNR. Golf cart tour with limited seating. Learn more [here](#). *Additional date: July 9.*

5
JUN

Invasive Species Control

2-4:30 p.m.

Join Little Forks Conservancy and Nature Niche during Make a Difference Week and restore native habitat at 106-acre Nelson Woods, off M-20 and Sandow Road. Volunteers will remove non-native shrubs (autumn olive and buckthorn) that are harmful to the ecosystem. Learn more and register [here](#).

13
JUN

Weekend Land Maintenance Volunteer Group

10 a.m.-noon

Chippewa Nature Center volunteers meet the second Saturday of the month to maintain trails and public spaces. Activities vary and may include maintenance of planted trees, brush/trash cleanup, or other stewardship projects. Learn more and register [here](#). *Additional dates: July 11, August 8, and September 12.*

16
JUN

Firefly Frenzy

9:30-10:30 p.m.

Meet an interpretive naturalist at Chippewa Nature Center's Lanigan Pavilion to watch and learn about native fireflies. Learn more [here](#).

24
JUN

Yoga at the Wetlands

10-11 a.m.

Enjoy yoga at the Chippewa Nature Center's Wetlands Area. Register [here](#).



25
JUN

Preserve Stewards: Invasive Species Control

9:30 a.m.-noon

Help remove invasive species at the 270-acre George and Sue Lane Preserve in Gladwin with Little Forks Conservancy. Learn more and register [here](#).

21
JUL

Preserve Stewards: Tree Care

5:30-7 p.m.

Join Little Forks Conservancy at Nelson Woods to help care for the tree plantings at the nature preserve, documenting tree health and assisting with protective tree tubing. Learn more and register [here](#).

30
JUL

River Days

Midland Area River Days runs from July 30 to August 2. This inclusive community celebration by the river honors the past and embraces the future of Midland. A project of the Midland Area Community Foundation, River Days is presented this year by Fisher Companies. The full event schedule is coming soon. Look for more information [here](#).

31
JUL

Run the River

5-9 p.m.

Run the River and enjoy River Days by the Tridge. Races include a one-mile run, 5K run, and 5K walk. Learn more [here](#).

1
AUG

Voyageur Canoe Trips

11 a.m.-3 p.m.

During River Days, try paddling the Voyageur canoe on the Tittabawassee and Chippewa Rivers in downtown Midland. Chippewa Nature Center staff host short paddling trips beginning at the dock near the Tridge. Learn more [here](#).

7
AUG

Viva La Pollination

10 a.m.-noon

Celebrate the pollinators vital to the ecosystem in a fair-style family-friendly event at Dow Gardens. Learn about different pollinators, explore honey variations, make buzz-worthy crafts, and stop by the insect petting zoo. Held outside of the Education Center, with event parking nearby. Learn more [here](#).

14
AUG

13th Annual Cedar River Cleanup

10 a.m.

Join the Gladwin Conservation District and Little Forks Conservancy at Gladwin City Park and spend about three hours paddling 4.5 miles of river and removing trash. Lunch provided for attendees after the cleanup. Get the details and register [here](#).



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20
AUG

**Preserve Stewards:
Invasive Species Control**

9:30 a.m.-noon

Help remove invasive species at the George and Sue Lane Preserve in Gladwin with Little Forks Conservancy. Learn more and register [here](#).

1
SEP

**Preserve Stewards:
Tree Restoration Workday**

1-4 p.m.

Join Little Forks Conservancy at Forestview Natural Area on Tittabawassee River Road in Midland to care for tree plantings, remove nearby invasive species, and monitor tree growth and protection measures. Learn more and register [here](#).

1
OCT

Preserve Stewards: Trash Cleanup

5-7 p.m.

Keep the environment healthy by removing trash/debris and caring for tree plantings at Little Forks Conservancy's Three Ponds preserve in Midland. Learn more and register [here](#).



*We want the highest flood levels to be in our past ...
and our highest levels of progress ahead of us.*



MIDLAND BUSINESS ALLIANCE

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE
ON INFRASTRUCTURE**

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