



HIGH WATER MARK

SEPTEMBER 2026

Midland Business Alliance Advisory Committee on Infrastructure

Tentatively Selected Plan

USACE Shared Plan at Community Open House

On August 5, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Detroit District visited Midland for a community open house to share the Tentatively Selected Plan (TSP) and get the public's feedback. The development of the TSP is another milestone in the Tittabawassee River Watershed Flood Risk Management Study.

Held at Northwood University, the event was also hosted by the local non-federal sponsors – the County of Midland, City of Midland, and Midland Business Alliance (MBA) Advisory Committee on Infrastructure – who were also available to answer community questions about ongoing local flood reduction efforts.

The community's experience started with "popcorn and a movie." A short video gave an overview of the study and the TSP. From there, community members visited different information stations to talk to USACE experts on the hydraulics and hydrology of river flooding, flood risk, structural flood protection, environmental mitigation, non-structural solutions, and more. A final station collected oral and written public comments, a key part of this process.

The conceptual TSP as presented includes a floodgate and high-capacity pump station at Sturgeon Creek near Midland's Main Street and the Tittabawassee River – along with flanking floodwalls and berms to contain the river. The TSP also currently includes a "non-structural" component that looks at various flood-proofing techniques for eligible



at-risk structures across the Midland area. This is a totally voluntary program, and approved improvements would be at no cost to those property owners.

At press time, the USACE plans to add the "Draft Feasibility Report" to the [study's website](#) soon. That draft report includes extensive information about the plan, the economics, and the emphasis on health and public safety. There will also be a way for the public to comment on the plan. Watch the USACE website for more information.

Thank you to the community members who participated, as this was the most well-attended event to date with the Army Corps of Engineers. And thank you to Northwood University for providing the space for this community event.

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



[Learn more](#)



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Building Midland's Resilience Together

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

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

Floodplain management is not only about regulations. It is about building a community that is stronger, safer, and better prepared for the future.

Know Your Hazard

The City of Midland Planning Department maintains flood maps, elevation certificates, and even historic flood photos for public review. These resources help residents understand past floods and anticipate future risks.

Insure Your Property

Because Midland has invested in strong floodplain management practices, residents receive a 25 percent discount on flood insurance premiums. This discount is possible because Midland

participates in FEMA's Community Rating System. By working together as a community, every resident benefits.

Protect People

Resilience is a community effort. Neighbors checking on neighbors, helping during evacuations, and sharing information all save lives. Signing up for emergency alerts, knowing siren signals, and having family evacuation plans are important steps. But true safety comes when we look out for each other.

Protect Property

The City of Midland can provide property owners with advice on flood mitigation and information on financial assistance. Programs exist to help residents elevate structures, install protective measures, or even relocate out of harm's way. By using these tools, property owners reduce future damages and strengthen the entire community.

Build with Foresight

Construction today must account for tomorrow's risks. Climate variability and more intense rain events mean the flood of the future may not look like the flood of the past. Permits, elevation requirements, and drainage rules are in place to ensure Midland's new development is resilient for decades to come.

Protect Our Natural Systems

Floodplains are more than storage basins for water. They filter runoff, recharge groundwater, provide wildlife habitat, and improve quality of life through recreation and open space. Protecting these areas is not just an environmental priority, it is an economic one. Healthy floodplains reduce flood damages, improve water quality, and enhance property values.

Resilience is built step by step. By knowing the risk, insuring wisely, safeguarding lives, protecting property, building responsibly, and respecting nature, Midland can thrive in the face of flooding challenges.

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 KNOW?



You Can Adopt-a-Sturgeon

You can support the Lake Sturgeon Reintroduction Program in the Saginaw Bay Watershed by adopting a sturgeon. No at-home fishtank is needed. Your adoption supports fisheries, school programs, and restoration efforts. Find out more at saginawbaysturgeon.org.

Hands-on bonus

Don't miss the chance to hold a tiny sturgeon as you release it into the Tittabawassee River on September 26. (See the calendar below.)

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.



Brig. Gen. Daniel J. Herlihy (left), U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Great Lakes and Ohio Rivers Division commander, passes the Detroit District flag to Lt. Col. Donald K. Lew to begin his command on Thursday, July 16.

U.S. Army photo by Brandon Hubbard

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Change of Command Ceremony

On July 16, local sponsors of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers study traveled to the USACE Detroit District's biennial "Change of Command" at the War Memorial in Grosse Pointe Farms. This formal ceremony says goodbye to the existing district commander and officially installs the new commander for a two-year assignment.

Brig. Gen. Daniel J. Herlihy, USACE Great Lakes and Ohio River Division commander, presided over the ceremony, where Lt. Col. Donald K. Lew assumed command from Lt. Col. Wallace W. Bandeff.

"Across the two Army Corps of Engineers studies, Midland representatives have attended the Change of Command twice and have worked with three different commanders,"

said Bill Schuette, member of the MBA Advisory Committee on Infrastructure. "They have all been very professional and very supportive of our efforts to reduce the severity of flooding in the Midland area."

Lt. Col. Bandeff, the outgoing commander, spoke at the ceremony. "It's truly been an honor for me to serve with the Detroit District team and those who live within our boundaries," he said. "It is with a heart full of gratitude and a sense of pride that I stand before you today. I can say without reservation, and with absolute certainty, the past two years have been the most professionally rewarding experience of my career because of what this team delivers across the Great Lakes."

He mentioned the Midland area specifically: "A shining example of this commitment is our ongoing work on the Tittabawassee Flood Risk Management Study. The citizens in that basin have faced historic, heartbreaking challenges, but they have not faced them alone. The incredible non-federal sponsors we have partnered with on this study – the City of

Midland, Midland County, and the Midland Business Alliance – are, without exaggeration, the ‘gold standard’ of partners. Their unwavering commitment, their collaborative spirit, and their dedication to their communities have been truly inspiring to witness. Together, we are engineering solutions that will protect lives and property for generations.”

Lt. Col. Bandeff continues his military service at his next duty station as a professor at Michigan Technological University.

Lt. Col. Lew comes to the Detroit District from Winchester, Virginia, after serving two years as the deputy district commander for the USACE Middle East District. He holds an industrial engineering bachelor’s degree from Purdue University, where he commissioned through the ROTC program; an MBA from Webster University; a master’s in engineering and management from Massachusetts Institute of Technology; and a master’s of operational studies from Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.

“It is the honor of a lifetime to stand before you today as I assume command. The dedication and expertise required to deliver vital engineering solutions and solve our nation’s

toughest problems is truly incredible,” said Lt. Col. Lew, in his opening remarks as the incoming commander to his staff and community partners. “I am deeply humbled to lead this team, and I am ready to get out to our project sites, meet you all, and ultimately deliver on our commitments.”





UPCOMING EVENTS

All events are subject to change of date, time, and availability. Confirm with the sponsoring organizations.

17
SEP

Trail Building

5:30-7:30 p.m.

Join Chippewa Watershed Conservancy volunteers to build trails at the Mill Pond Natural Area, adjacent to Chipp-A-Waters Park in Mt. Pleasant. All tools provided. Learn more [here](#).

26
SEP

Lake Sturgeon Release

10:30-11:30 a.m.

Help the Saginaw Bay Watershed Lake Sturgeon Reintroduction Program and the Chippewa Nature Center release young lake sturgeon into the Tittabawassee River at the Caldwell Boat Launch in Midland. (Other teams are releasing sturgeon into the Shiawassee, Flint, and Cass Rivers the same day.) Learn more [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](#).

7
OCT

"State of the Bay 2026"

8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

Every two years, the Saginaw Bay Watershed Initiative Network (WIN) and its partners host a one-day conference covering diverse topics related to the Saginaw Bay, tributaries, and those working to conserve and protect this watershed. Held in Bay City at the Doubletree Hotel and Conference Center, the keynote speaker will be Lynne Heasley, environmental historian at Western Michigan University. The MBA Advisory Committee on Infrastructure will also make a presentation. Register and learn more [here](#).

7
OCT

Advisory Committee Presentation

9:45 a.m.

Members of the MBA Advisory Committee on Infrastructure will present at the "State of the Bay 2026" conference in Bay City. The program is "Midland Progress: Reducing Flooding, Building Resilience," with Q&A following. The Advisory Committee also will host an information table throughout the conference. Register and learn more [here](#).

10
OCT

Weekend Land Maintenance Volunteer Group

10 a.m.-noon

Chippewa Nature Center volunteers meet the second Saturday of the month (February through November) 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 date: November 14.



USACE Soil Sampling

Near Midland's Main Street and the mouth of Sturgeon Creek, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers completed the first round of soil borings (drilled samples) in June. These soil samples will help engineers develop the design and construction process around the potential floodgate and pump infrastructure. Additional sampling and site surveying are planned in the months ahead to gather more data for the study.

Photo by U.S. Army Corps of Engineers



***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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