



## Pittsfield Charter Township

Department of Municipal Services

Parks & Recreation

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### Parks Commission Report From the Meeting on October 4th, 2022

#### **CURRENT PROJECTS**

##### Montibeller Park Improvements

Work continues on the new pavilion at Montibeller Park. A punch list of outstanding items was submitted to the contractor. The contractor is diligently working on completing this list. Most items are minor issues to be corrected (Paint touch ups, Gutters not being complete, etc.) Once the building is complete and approved, a date for a grand opening will be set in cooperation with the Park Commission. A fee structure was also taken to and approved by the Board of Trustees, setting the rental fees for the new Montibeller pavilion.

##### Montibeller Park Improvement Phase II

The National Park Service (NPS) has informed the DNR that the Phase 2 project has been approved for cost-sharing under the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Program. The contract was presented to the Park Commission in the packet, with a preliminary schedule, for their review. The Park Commission passed a resolution to recommend the approval of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Development Project Agreement for the Phase 2 of the Montibeller Park Project. The total grant project amount was \$600,000, with \$300,000 to be provided by the grant program.

##### Waters Oak Valley and Seyfried Parks

The two public outreach sessions were scheduled by the planning consultant to take place on October 22, 2022, with one from 10 am to Noon and the second from 1 pm to 3 pm. The Park Commission rejected this plan and directed staff to keep the October 22nd session from 1 to 3 pm, but add a weeknight session for the outreach effort. Director Best stated he would go back to the consultants with the direction of rescheduling the second workshop to a week night.

##### US-12 Wastewater (Sewer) Improvements

The Prairie (Wild Flower) areas and grass areas that were to be restored at Hickory Woods Park have been graded and seeded. The new pathway has the base aggregate installed and will be paved in a few weeks when the asphalt crew returns. There are still areas at both the east and west side of Hickory Woods Park that are still under the influence of construction and will be graded and seeded as the crews fully leave Hickory Woods Park. Additional tree and shrub plantings will begin in October as well. Estimations are that full restoration to the remaining pieces on the East and West ends of the property along the project path will be done in October. All areas that were previously wild flowers have been replanted with the approved wildflower mix.

#### **PROPOSED PROJECTS**

##### Risk Assessment Report

The Park Commission again brought back discussion regarding the Risk Assessment Report from April 2022 that outlined the potential costs for the 2022 budget moving from winter to spring. As part of this discussion, Commissioners requested that Staff move forward on resolving the identified urgent safety repairs outside of

Montibeller Park. The Commission directed that Staff quantify the remaining Federal dollars allocated to Parks, approximately \$35,000, to be used for this effort.

Pittsfield Township Park

Director Best reported to the Park Commission that preliminary conceptual ideas are being developed for an update to the baseball fields at Pittsfield Township Park. Township staff is working with the Township Engineer, Stantec, on this effort. With the current condition of the field, high number of users and its high visibility, a refresh to this field is consistent with the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Initial ideas and budget costs will be brought back to the Park Commission for their consideration.

# MICHIGAN PLANNER



Michigan Chapter  
American Planning Association

## COMMUNITY PLANNING MONTH

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## Community Planning Month

October is Community Planning Month, and the Michigan Association of Planning is celebrating! The October issue of the Michigan Planner magazine traditionally highlights positive planning stories from across the state, and this year is no different. Read this issue of the Michigan Planner to learn about how Michigan communities are using planning to create great places.

MAP celebrates planning excellence at our annual conference, too, this year at an awards reception on Mackinac Island on October 12, 2022, where we recognize 5 plans and projects that exhibit excellence in planning and implementation:

- Excellence Award for Best Practice** - City of Holland, Unified Development Ordinance
- Excellence Award for Implementation** - Macomb Township, Macomb Town Center Development
- Excellence Award for Resiliency and Sustainability** - City of Sterling Heights Sustainability Plan
- Excellence Award for Urban Design** - City of Portage, Lake Center District Study
- Daniel Burnham Award for a Comprehensive Plan** - City of East Jordan Master Plan

We also recognize planning leaders – professionals and officials – who go above and beyond, and exhibit extraordinary perseverance, advocacy, and guidance as they urge their communities toward excellence.

### Helen Foss Volunteer of the Year

Christopher Germain, AICP, Executive Director, Lake Superior Community Partnership

### Helen S Willis Outstanding Commissioner Award

Betsy Dayrell-Hart, Planning Commission Chair, City of St. Ignace

### Helen S Willis Outstanding Commissioner Award

Matt Payne, Planning Commission Chair, Pittsfield Township

### Planning Champion Award

Dennis Stachewicz, Community Development Director, City of Marquette

### President's Award

James Tischler, FAICP, Michigan Land Bank

**Congratulations to all of MAP's 2022 award winners.**

## 2022 MAP Board Elections

The 2022 MAP Board Election is complete, and we add 3 new at large members to our elected leadership, along with one new appointed official in the Elected and Appointed Ex Officio position. Welcome new MAP Board members **Mandy Grewal, PhD**, Pittsfield Township Supervisor; **Trudy Galla, AICP**, Leelanau County Planning Director; **Scott Kree**, Oakland County Senior Planner; and **Kevin Martin**, Van Buren Township Trustee. We are thrilled to add county and township planners to the MAP Board. Also welcome our two student members from Eastern Michigan University - **Ashley Amey** and **Alexis Wilkerson** - who joined the board in May,

## Board Members

**Brad Kaye, AICP, CFM (President) (2023)**  
City of Midland, City Manager  
bkaye@midland-mi.org

**Mohamed Ayoub (Vice President) (2024)**  
City of Westland  
mayoub@cityofwestland.com

**Shari Williams (Secretary/Treasurer) (2023)**  
Detroit Future City  
swilliams@detroitfuturecity.com

**Christina Anderson (Professional Development Officer) (2023)**  
City of Kalamazoo  
andersonc@kalamazoo-city.org

**Carmine Avantini, AICP (Past President)**  
CIB Planning Group  
avantini@cibplanning.com

**Jill Bahm, AICP (2024)**  
Ciffels Webster  
jbahm@giffelswebster.com

**Kelly Freeman (2023)**  
City of Sault Ste. Marie  
kfreeman@saultcity.com

**Trudy Galla, AICP (2025)**  
Leelanau County  
tgalla@leelanau.gov

**Mandy Grewal, PhD (2025)**  
Pittsfield Township  
grewalm@pittsfield-mi.gov

**Scott Kree (2025)**  
Oakland County  
krees@oakgov.com

## Ex-Officio Members

**Kami Pothukuchi (Faculty)**  
Wayne State University  
k.pothukuchi@wayne.edu

**Kevin Martin (Elected Official)**  
Van Buren Township  
martinkevin34@yahoo.com

## Student Board Representatives

**Ashley Amey**  
Eastern Michigan University  
aameyn@emich.edu

**Alexis Wilkerson**  
Eastern Michigan University  
awilker4@emich.edu

## Staff

**Andrea Brown, AICP, Executive Director**  
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**Leah DuMouchel, AICP**  
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**Rachel Goldstein, Director of Operations**  
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**Amy Miller Jordan, Deputy Director**  
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**Wendy Rampson, AICP**  
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**Amy M. Vansen, AICP**  
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tecumseh2 by Barbara Eckstein

## Community Planning Month

October is Community Planning Month. It was established in 2006 to raise the visibility of the profession, and the important role of planners and planning in communities across the U.S. Community Planning Month provides MAP, and its 4,000 plus members, with a platform to highlight what a planner does, and how our work improves the quality of life in the communities we serve.

Communities celebrate planning in many ways. This month, MAP is lifting up planning excellence by highlighting the great work that our members do every day. This issue of the Michigan Planner magazine reveals the myriad ways we create robust, resilient, equitable, prosperous and safe places based first on quality community planning.

While many people may not realize it, planning plays a significant role in how a community looks feels and operates and how that built environment affects their daily life. From where they live, to how they commute, to the type of home they live in, planning plays a vital role in a person's quality of life and well-being. Through planning, strategic investments in innovation and infrastructure can boost the economy and strengthen communities. Planning leads to neighborhoods and economically resilient communities.

Planners work for the greater good. They do not simply focus on where to locate a building, but also consider how that decision impacts the safety of the community, its existing character, its impact on the environment and natural features, and if the decision encourages social and economic diversity.

We invite you to share this important issue with your local leaders to raise the visibility of the planning profession and to amplify the positive impact it has on your community and on Michigan as a whole. Well done, Michigan planners!





## Pittsfield Township Says Yes in My Back Yard

**W**hile Pittsfield Township has been recognized for implementing non-motorized infrastructure and for its work on sustainability, its successful integration of multi-unit dwellings near single-family housing along with provision of new multi-unit, multi-income, and multi-generational housing developments is not very well known.

Why is that? Two reasons: the dominant socio-political narrative around housing is binary (affordable vs. everything else) and because of NIMBYism.



NIMBYism has historically been a significant contributor to sprawl and segregation as (mostly white) economically well-off neighborhoods hide behind “protecting the trees” arguments to push development out of their communities. This denser, middle class/affordable housing development must then go into one of two places: 1.) within existing communities of color, further perpetuating racial divisions or 2.) in green/agricultural spaces, contributing to sprawl and nullifying the protection of trees. At its core, NIMBYism has worked because when constituents show up in large numbers to local council/board

meeting promising to vote members off at the next election if they approve the proposed housing project close to their neighborhood, they win! It has worked because we have not turned an exclusion (Not) into an inclusion (In), i.e., NIMBYism into YIMBYism.

While no one community can change the dominant housing narrative, it can work toward furthering policies that support equity and sustainability. Fourteen years ago, Pittsfield adopted a groundbreaking Master Plan that articulated priorities like infill, dense, and mixed-use development; form-based districts; non-motorized infrastructure; arts and culture; local agriculture; and supporting diversity. In 2008,

racial equity was not part of the conversation even if many of Pittsfield's sustainability goals also supported equity.

For instance, non-motorized infrastructure reduces carbon emissions, but also is an essential step to enhancing racial equity, providing individuals from all different physical, economic, and racial backgrounds access to jobs and other resources within the community. Dense, mixed-use development reduces sprawl, but also allows individuals from a diverse economic spectrum to live and work within the community. Removing berms and other physical barriers segregating the community maximizes density, and also provides public spaces where social interactions may occur between diverse community members

The 2022 Preserving Pittsfield Master Plan analyzes racial equity and sustainability as two sides of the community coin because, thankfully, racial equity is now an integral part of the dominant socio-political narrative. While the binary narrative around housing has not shifted, Pittsfield continues to take political risks in promoting multi-unit, multi-income, and multi-generational housing.

Since 2009, Pittsfield has added over 700 apartment units and about 300 townhouse units. 400 of these apartment units are part of two housing developments close to existing single-family neighborhoods. Knowing the power of NIMBYism, Pittsfield laid the groundwork well before any site plans were presented by conducting a plethora of public forums that promoted sustainability through mixed-use, dense, infill development which subsequently resulted in the establishment of form-based districts. With the support of the master plan and zoning ordinance, when the single-family neighborhoods mounted (significant) opposition to each of the two multi-unit housing developments, Pittsfield conducted additional public engagement forums to assuage fears and overcome NIMBYist opposition. These forums focused on sustainability and inclusivity: welcoming people from all walks



Social integration – across class and race – by way of, among other things, affordable housing in well-off areas and public gathering spaces (parks, pathways), is receiving greater attention as an important driver for not just racial equity, but also upward economic mobility.

of life to live and work in a community that prioritizes green space preservation.

As a result, Pittsfield greatly increased its stock of apartment units: an average of 50 apartment units per year have been added over the past 14 years! In addition, an overwhelming majority of new housing developments include a mix of townhouse and single-family units. This required working, over a period of many years, with private-sector partners to incentivize inclusion of multi-unit housing and, occasionally, retail outlets as part of senior and single-family housing developments.

Now, Pittsfield is on the other side and beginning to organically attract housing developments that are sustainable and inclusive. For instance, the proposed Sutherland Square incorporates local retail, community gardens, and green spaces into its housing stock of cottages, lofts, apartments, and town homes. Having created a community-centric milieu through non-motorized, mixed-use development while expanding green and

recreational spaces, Pittsfield has attracted an average of \$10 million per year in new private investment (2015-2021) and grown its SEV to nearly \$3 billion without any significant tax increases. While Pittsfield cannot change the dominant socio-political narrative around housing from NIMBYism to YIMBYism, it is forging ahead to showcase the multitude of benefits associated with shifting away from a binary and exclusionary conversation about housing to one that is multi-dimensional and inclusive.

**Mandy Grewal** is Pittsfield Township's Supervisor and has a Ph.D. in Urban Planning from the University of Michigan. Carlisle Wortman Associates serve as Pittsfield's planning consultants. Mandy has worked in close partnership with Ben Carlisle and the Pittsfield Planning Commission to execute and implement Pittsfield Township's planning priorities and vision. In 2018, Dr. Grewal received MAP's Outstanding Community Administrator award. In 2022, she was elected to the MAP Board of Governors.