

Cascade Connections



2025 | EDITION 5
Cascade Charter Township Newsletter



from the **Supervisor**

Thanks to its mature trees, rolling hills, and the Thornapple River, fall is one of Cascade’s prettiest seasons. Now, as the days shorten, temperatures drop, and we welcome in the holidays, I would like to share an update on current Township initiatives.

First, thank you to the hundreds of residents who attended our fifth annual Cascade Heritage Festival on September 20th. A special thank you to our wonderful sponsors who made this event possible including: **Thornapple Brewing, Spaulding DeDecker, Frosty Boy, Cascade Village Dental, Greenridge Realty, Orangetheory Fitness, Kingsland ACE Hardware, and Dog Ear Marketing**, as well as members of the **American Legion McDonald-Osmer Post 451** and the **Downtown Development Authority** for their service at the event.

TUFFY / TASSELL PARK PROJECT

Initial concepts to incorporate the Tuffy site into Tassell Park have been modified. With the Township’s recent purchase of the Verburg Automotive property, across Cascade Rd. from Tuffy, design plans will now include a pedestrian walkway along the river, that goes under the road, thereby giving pedestrians and bikers a safer alternative to crossing busy Cascade Rd.

The revised plan also retains more of Tassell Park’s existing features and prioritizes the property’s natural beauty. Visit cascadetwp.com/village for more **information**. Public feedback is welcome and desired!

PROACTIVE GROWTH MANAGEMENT / ZONING ORDINANCE UPDATE

To ensure that future development in Cascade aligns with residents’ long-term growth goals, Township leadership and staff continue to review and update a new draft zoning ordinance. The Board of Trustee’s deliberations on this initiative have included some robust public discourse and opportunities for transparent conversations about public issues that impact every property owner and resident in Cascade. I believe this civil discourse, although tense at times, is a natural and critical component of effective and representative governance. I am also confident it allows for the community-wide engagement critical to ensuring that the Board’s goals are aligned with those of our residents.



▲ Neighbors came together for a day of community and celebration at the fifth annual Cascade Heritage Festival.



▲ Let’s kick off the holidays together at the annual Cascade Tree Lighting Ceremony. See the back page for event details.

May the upcoming holidays be extra special for you and your families this year. As always, please share any thoughts, concerns or suggestions you may have. It is an honor to serve as your Supervisor.

Grace Lesperance

Cascade Charter Township Supervisor
glesperance@cascadetwp.com



from the **Clerk** Sue Slater

NEW VOTER ID CARDS

By now all registered voters should have received a new voter ID card with your updated

precinct and polling location. For some voters, this did not change; cards were sent to every registered voter to avoid confusion.

The Clerk’s Office has received many returned cards with undeliverable addresses for various reasons. We follow up on each one. If you received a cancellation notice, it is because we cannot send ballots to those on the permanent ballot list to an address from which we received return mail. Election mail cannot be forwarded. If you received a cancellation and should not be cancelled, **please contact the Clerk’s Office, 616-949-1508**, to rectify this matter.

Remember this ID card is for your information only; the ID we require on Election Day must be a photo ID. Most voters use their driver’s license or State ID.



from the **Treasurer** Windy Korstange

WINTER TAX INFORMATION

Winter 2025 tax bills and informational notices will be

mailed at the end of November and can be paid beginning December 1, 2025. Payments are due by February 17, 2026, to avoid penalties. If you do not receive your bill, check online at **cascadetwp.com (instructions right) or call the Treasurer’s office at 616-949-6944.**

For mailed payments, please allow seven days for delivery – **postmarks are not accepted.** Please include a phone number on your check. An informational letter with payment options and an E-Z pay application will be included in your bill.

WHERE DO I VOTE?

Precinct 1 - Cascade Library Wisner Center, 2870 Jacksmith Drive

Precinct 2 - Cascade Fellowship Christian Reformed Church, 6655 Cascade Road

Precinct 3 - Cascade Christian Church, 2829 Thornapple River Drive

Precinct 4 - Ada Bible Church, 8899 Cascade Road

Precinct 5 - Thornapple Community Church, 3260 Thornapple River Drive

Check the new precinct numbers and polling locations listed above, and to view an interactive map, please visit **cascadetwp.com/elections**.

NO EARLY VOTING THIS ELECTION

There will **NOT** be nine days of Early Voting for this November 4 Election since this is a County-level Election (only required for State and Federal Elections).

Have more questions? Please see the Cascade Township Election website at **cascadetwp.com/elections** or **contact the Clerk’s office at 616-949-1508.**

March 1, 2026, all unpaid real property taxes will be forwarded to the Kent County Treasurer for collection.

Tax info is available 24/7 at cascadetwp.com.

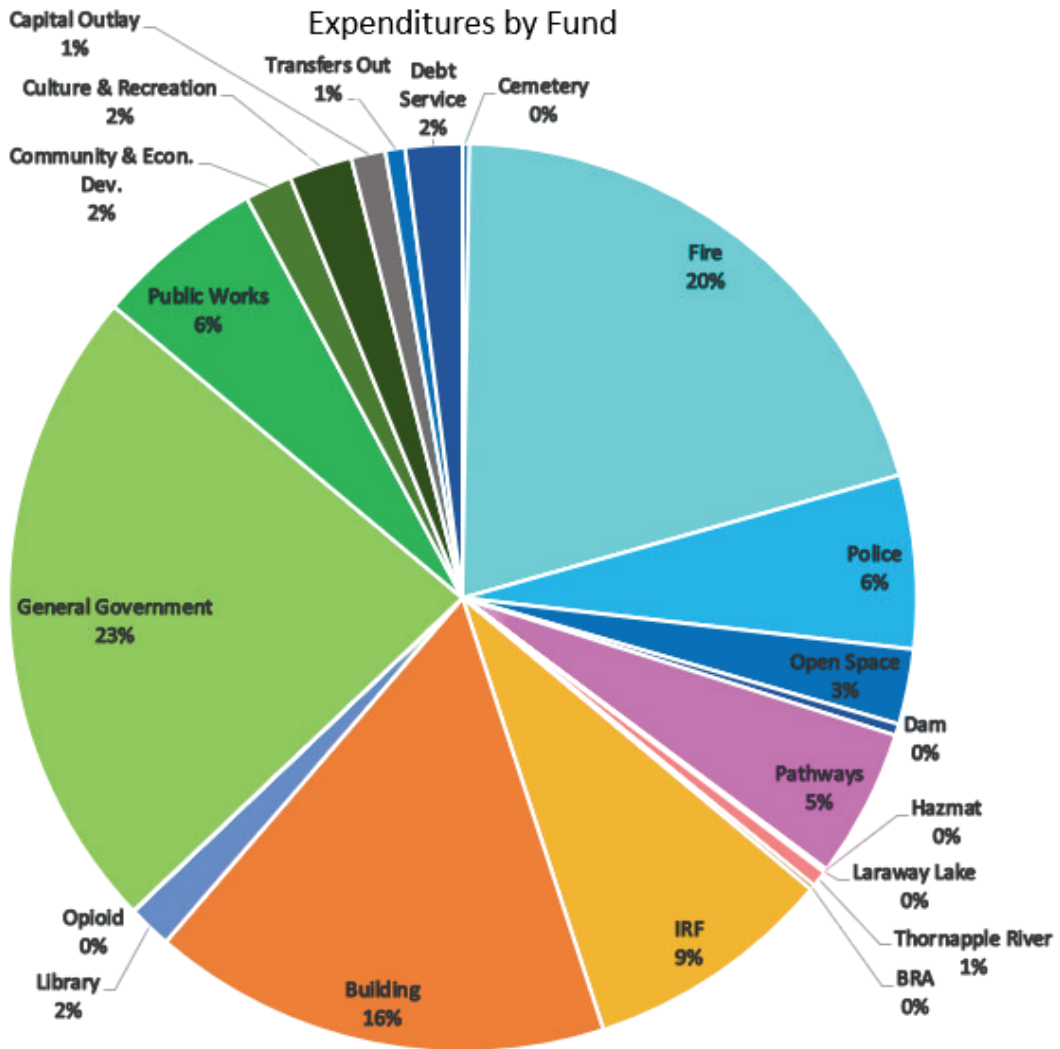
- Click **Property/Parcel Lookup** on the homepage
- Select **Property/Parcel Lookup Tool** where you can enter your address or search by name
- Click on **Selected Parcel**
- Click **Tax Information** tab

BUDGET PROCESS

The Township’s fiscal year (“FY”) follows the calendar year. Trustees spent almost two hours discussing the FY 2026 budget during a work session prior to their September 24 regular Board meeting. An additional hour-long work session was held prior to the October 8 regular Board meeting. The FY 2026 budget document was introduced as a formal item at the October 22 Board meeting. A Public Hearing is planned for the meeting on November 5. Following

this, the Board will be asked to formally adopt the FY 2026 Budget and authorize millage rates. Cascade’s staff will then begin planning to implement FY 2026 projects and activities.

Like all municipalities, the Township budget is adopted at the department level. The departments contained in the General Fund, and their draft FY 2026 expenditure budgets, are as follows:



DID YOU KNOW CASCADE TOWNSHIP OFFERS DOG LICENSES?

Kent County dog licenses are available in our office year-round. A current rabies certificate and proof of neuter/spay must be provided when applying for the license.

2026-2031 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN ADOPTED BY THE BOARD

Though the Township is not required by law to prepare a six-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), best practice recommends its creation. As the culmination of a summer-long process, at its September 10 regular meeting, the Board adopted the 2026-2031 CIP. The CIP addresses large (\$10,000 or more) physical improvements that are long-lasting. The projects listed for 2026 are included in the draft budget that the Board is in the process of reviewing. One project, a \$15 million “Village Redesign,” is a placeholder for a Downtown Development Authority (DDA) initiative.

The 2026 projects, and their funding sources, are as follows:

Project Title	Project Cost	Funding Source(s)
Replace Mowers	51,000	General Fund (101)
Township Contribution to County Road Projects	550,000	General Fund (101)
Land Preservation (Parks)	100,000	General Fund (101)
Driveway and Fencing Improvements	50,000	Cemetary Fund (151)
Replace Vehicle C-2	77,000	Fire Fund (206)
Refurbish Tender	35,000	Fire Fund (206)
Fire Station #2 Generator	60,000	Fire Fund (206)
Replace/Expand Public Safety Siren System	250,000	Police Fund (207)
Township Hall Generator	90,000	Police Fund (207)
Burton Park Maintenance	50,000	Open Space Fund (208)
McGraw Park Pathway Repair	100,000	Open Space Fund (208)
Rehab 30th & 36th St & Buttrick Pathway	950,000	Pathways Fund (216)
Land Preservation	1,500,000	Infrastructure Revolving Fund (246)
Infrastructure Feasibility Study	150,000	Infrastructure Revolving Fund (246)
Village Redesign	15,000,000	DDA Fund (248)
Sidewalk Replacement	50,000	DDA Fund (248)
Total: 16 Projects	\$19,063,000	

This is in direct response to residents’ top priority to “create a downtown village,” which was memorialized in the Township Board-adopted Strategic Plan in September of 2022. The DDA Board, comprised of business owners and residents within the DDA District, in conjunction with the Township Board, are in the early stages of project design, with the first focus on reimagining Tassell Park. The \$15 million listed for the Village Redesign project is NOT an indication of the total planned cost; rather, it represents the upper limit that the DDA would be able to finance through bonding. Any bonds issued would be paid through the DDA, with revenues collected through their normal course of funding.

For more information, visit cascadetwp.com/projects.

Air Sealing and Insulation

New homes must have a continuous air barrier to maintain conditioned air. Homes are now built so tightly that mechanical ventilation is required to provide fresh air inside the home.

Existing homes, however, may have air leaks that can lead to high energy costs, equivalent to leaving a window open year-round!

Benefits to air sealing and insulation:

- Reduced noise from the outside
- Less pollen, dust and insects entering your home
- Better humidity control
- Lower chance for ice dams

Common areas for air leakage include:

- Knee walls
- Porch roofs

- Attic access panels
- Recessed lighting
- Attic fans
- Rim joists
- Windows and doors
- Fireplace walls

Often a few tubes of caulk can have a dramatic effect on air leakage and provide a more comfortable home with lower energy costs. **For more information, visit www.energystar.gov or contact the Cascade Township Building Department at 616-949-3765.**



Celebrate the Seasons!



TOYS FOR TOTS ANNUAL DRIVE

Cascade Township will have their annual Toys for Tots Drive beginning December 1. Drop off toys in the lobby of the main office at 5920 Tahoe Dr.

CHRISTMAS TREE RECYCLING: DECEMBER 26 – JANUARY 11

After the holidays, Christmas trees can be disposed of at the rear side of Fire Station #2 located at Buttrick and 30th St. Signs will point the public where to go.

REMINDER: BAGGED YARD WASTE PICK-UP

Bagged yard waste pick-up for residents in the restricted burn area (west of Buttrick Ave and north of I-96) is **every Monday from October 13 through December 1**. Yard waste tags **will be a different color** this year. Pick up new tags from the Township Office. **Only yard waste with new tags will be picked up. For more information, call the Township at 616-949-1500.**

WALKING CLUB RECAP

All walking enthusiasts were invited to meet at Cascade Recreation Park on Wednesday mornings throughout September and part of October. This **FREE** club was a great way to get some fresh air and exercise. Stay tuned for information about this club returning this spring!

JOIN OUR CREW

Cascade Charter Township
is hiring!

SERVE YOUR
COMMUNITY

NOW HIRING
FULL-TIME

Read full job descriptions and apply today at
cascadetwp.com/opportunities

Metro Cruise Warm-Up

The annual Metro Cruise Warm-Up in August was a huge success, with more than 100 collector cars on display. New this year, Cascade's Friendship Park was home to one of three official Pit Stop events across Grand Rapids for the 28th St. Metro Cruise.



The event was held in partnership with the Cascade Downtown Development Authority (DDA), and Brandon Simmons, Metro Cruise Event Director, presented a commemorative plaque thanking the Township for its support.

From the Cascade Fire Department

While the holidays bring families and friends together, they also increase fire risks. See below for a few tips to ensure a joyful and safe season!

- Stay in the kitchen when you are cooking on the stovetop so you can keep an eye on the food
- Keep children away from a hot stove. When the stove is hot, kids should stay three feet away
- Keep the kitchen floor clear so you don't trip
- Blow out lit candles and turn off all light strings when you leave home or go to bed

Did you know?

- Thanksgiving is the leading day of the year for home fires involving cooking equipment
- More than one-third of home decoration fires are started by candles

adapted from:



NATIONAL FIRE PROTECTION ASSOCIATION

The leading information and knowledge resource on fire, electrical and related hazards



Cascade Township Fire Department

Dedicated to Serving You

Fire Station 1 | 616-949-1320 Fire Station 2 | 616-259-7020

Wisner Center Renovations

The Cascade Library Refresh included renovations to the Wisner Center, a program room that is home to Cascade Township's board meetings. This included:

- New partition walls that can turn the room into three smaller, multi-functional rooms
- Proposed updates to the Audio/Visual system
- New wall coverings, carpet, chairs and tables



Cascade Library Holiday Events

READY FOR REINDEER

December 6, 10-11 a.m.

Traveling all the way from the North Pole (via Rooftop Landing Reindeer Farms), live reindeer will be visiting the library. Dress warmly!

GINGERBREAD LANE

December 12, 10-11 a.m.

Stroll down Gingerbread Lane and enjoy gingerbread house decorating.

COUNTDOWN TO HAPPY

NOON YEAR

December 31, 11 a.m.

We're giving kids a fun way to ring in the new year with a countdown, noisemakers, crafts -- at an hour that won't keep them up past bedtime.

Visit KDL.org for a full list of events.

Kent District Library News

- **Legendary Readers**, a simple and fun program to help children develop a love of reading and learning, returns for kids in grades K-5! Visit the library 100 days throughout the school year and win prizes! **Visit: kdl.org/legendaryreaders.**
- Sign up for the *Let It Snow* reading program for adults and teens (age 11+). Read or listen to six books between Dec 1 and Feb 28 to earn a collectible mug! **Visit kdl.org for more info.**

Note: As Michigan weather shifts this season, library hours may be affected. For updates on weather-related closures and delays, **visit kdl.org.**

Contact Us

Township Manager

Jade Smith
616-949-1500
jsmith@cascadetwp.com

Township Assessor

Ben Griffin
616-949-6176
bgriffin@cascadetwp.com

Building Inspections

Brian Wilson
616-949-3765
bwilson@cascadetwp.com

Community Planning & Development Director

Andrea Hendrick
616-949-0224
ahendrick@cascadetwp.com

Township Engineer

Aric Thorne
616-949-1500
athorne@cascadetwp.com

Finance & Budget Director

Lorna Nenciarini
616-949-1500
lnenciarini@cascadetwp.com

Human Resources Director

Katie Murawski
616-949-1500
kmurawski@cascadetwp.com

Parks & Facilities Director

Dan Zwick
616-949-1500
dzwick@cascadetwp.com

Cascade Township Fire Department

Fire Chief / Non-Emergency
Adam Magers
616-949-1320
amagers@cascadetwp.com

Kent County Police Department

Sheriff / Non-Emergency Dispatch
616-336-3113

Community Policing Officer

Omar Dieppa
616-632-6435
omar.dieppa@kentcountymi.gov





NON PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
GRAND RAPIDS, MI
PERMIT NO. 250

Cascade Charter Township

5920 Tahoe Drive SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49546
616-949-1500
cascadetwp.com

Township Office Hours

Monday through Thursday: 7 am – 4 pm
Friday: 8 am – 12 pm

Cascade Tree Lighting Ceremony

December 6, 2025 | 5 pm

Celebrate the holidays with a reimagined tree lighting ceremony December 6 at 5 p.m. at the Cascade Historical Museum at 2839 Thornapple River Drive. Following the ceremony, Cascade firefighters will bring Santa to the Stone House - 2781 Orange Ave. - for hot chocolate and cookies with everyone.



Connect with us on Facebook and Instagram! We share news, events, and community highlights to help you stay involved and informed.

