

**AGENDA**  
**Cascade Charter Township Parks Committee**  
**Tuesday, April 19, 2022**  
**8 am**  
**5920 Tahoe Dr**

- ARTICLE 1. Call the meeting to order  
Record the attendance**
- ARTICLE 2. Approve the current Agenda**
- ARTICLE 3. Approve the minutes of the March 15 and March 24, 2022 meetings.**
- ARTICLE 4. Acknowledge visitors and those wishing to speak to non-agenda items.  
(Comments are limited to five minutes per speaker.)**
- ARTICLE 5. Updates from Manager  
Update and information from Staff**
- ARTICLE 6. Parks Master Plan Discussion  
Review and discussion of 2014 implementation plan, comparison of Strategic Plan and Parks Plan survey results, and discussion of potential goals and strategies.**
- ARTICLE 7. Update from the New Neighbors at the Church on Wycliff  
Update from members of Unity Center for Spiritual Growth**
- ARTICLE 8. Naming Process for New Township Park on Wycliff  
Information on Township Naming Process and Possible Recommendation of Park Name**
- ARTICLE 9. Strategic Plan Update  
Update from Strategic Plan Subcommittee**
- ARTICLE 10. Update on Possible Peace Park Addition  
Update from Member Engel**
- ARTICLE 11. Old Business**
- ARTICLE 12. Any Other Business**
- ARTICLE 13. Adjournment**

**Meeting format**

- 1. **Staff Presentation** *Staff report and recommendation*
- 2. **Project presentation-** *Applicant presentation and explanation of project*
  - a. **PUBLIC HEARINGS**
    - i. *Open Public Hearing. Comments are limited to five minutes per speaker; exception may be granted by the chair for representative speakers and applicants*
    - ii. *Close public hearing*
- 3. **Committee discussion –** *May ask for clarification from applicant, staff or public*
- 4. **Committee decision - Options**
  - a. *Table the decision*
  - b. *Deny*
  - c. *Approve*
  - d. *Approve with conditions*
  - e. *Recommendation to Township Board*

## Meeting Minutes

Cascade Charter Township  
Parks Committee  
Tuesday, March 15, 2022  
8:00 AM  
2870 Jacksmith Ave SE

**ARTICLE 1.** Chairperson Wanty called the meeting to order at 8:00 am.  
Members Present: Chair Ginny Wanty, Mike Reese, Windy Korstange, Matt Douglas, and Supervisor Grace Lesperance  
Members Absent: Joe Engel (excused)

Others Present: Planning Director Brian Hilbrands, Building & Grounds Supervisor Jim MacDonald, Manager Ben Swayze, Troyer Group Rachel Walsh, and those listed on the attendance sheet

**ARTICLE 2. Approve the current Agenda**

**Motion was made by Member Reese to approve the current Agenda. Supported by Member Douglas. Motion carried 4 to 0.**

**ARTICLE 3. Approve the minutes of the February 15, 2022 meeting.**

Member Reese said that the level of detail in this set of minutes is what they were looking for and Chair Wanty agreed.

**Motion was made by Member Douglas to approve the February 15, 2022 meeting minutes. Supported by Member Korstange. Motion carried 4 to 0.**

Supervisor Grace Lesperance arrived at 8:04am.

**ARTICLE 4. Acknowledge visitors and those wishing to speak to non-agenda items.**

Rik Brown shared that he is interested in the committee and learning more about it. He requested to speak at the end of the meeting instead as he thought his concern may be covered by the agenda items.

**ARTICLE 5. Strategic Plan Update**

The parks Strategic Plan community focus group will be held on Tuesday, March 29<sup>th</sup> from 6:00-7:30pm at the Wisner Center. Chair Wanty encouraged all Parks committee members that are available to attend.

Chair Wanty asked Manager Swayze to check into why people who marked interest in being added to the email list on the survey have not started receiving the township newsletter.

The Parks Committee Strategic Plan workshop will be held on Thursday, March 24<sup>th</sup> at 8:00am, at the Wisner Center.

**ARTICLE 6. Updates from Manager**

The Parks Committee now has a dedicated email address.

The posting for the Director of Public Works position has closed. There were seven applicants and interviews will begin shortly. Manager Swayze requested a member of the Parks Committee be on the interview team since they will be working closely with the new director. Chair Wanty suggested Member Korstange be on the interview team because she is on the Planning Commission as well and could represent both boards. Member Korstange agreed to join the interview team.

Manager Swayze stated that the Parks Committee is considered to be an Open Meetings Act committee and recommend that they remain one. This is because going from open meeting to closed decreases transparency and that is already a point of contention in the community. Manager Swayze says he believes there may be changes to the Open Meetings Act, at a higher level, in the coming months, due to COVID-19 and how that might affect how members are allowed to attend meetings.

Manager Swayze will be meeting with Deputy Omar Dieppa on 3/15 at 10:00am because the township has purchased two cameras to use for situations such as at Burton Park. They are portable and the township will be able to switch their location to meet community needs.

**ARTICLE 7. Budget Discussion**

Manager Swayze talked about the 2022 township budget and how parks, pathways, and open space fit into it. He offered the committee to be more involved in creating the 2023 budget. He said he could come to the committee meeting in August 2022, look back at the 2022 budget, brainstorm capital projects and general expenditures, and come back for the September meeting with a draft capital plan and draft budget. Brainstorming budget recommendations can be added to a future agenda.

**ARTICLE 8. Parks Master Plan Discussion**

Member Reese and Rachel Walsh reviewed the parks survey. There was an increase in responses over the 2014 parks survey and a lot of consistent answers between the two surveys. One question gave ranges of how much people were willing to spend on a park's millage and, though the ranges were listed as double what was listed for that question in 2014, the percentage of respondents who said they were willing to give in each bracket remained consistent. This shows that, not only do residents greatly value the township's parks and trails, they are willing to spend the money to back it up. At the next meeting, there will be a discussion on how the survey results fit into the Parks Committee's vision and a review of the 2014 implementation plan.

**ARTICLE 9. Parks Committee Bylaws**

Chair Wanty and Member Reese have volunteered to help Member Engel update the committee bylaws. This topic was tabled until the next meeting due to time constraint.

**ARTICLE 10. Update on Oak Wilt Situation at Burton Park**

Building and Grounds Supervisor MacDonald and the Building and Grounds team completed trenching at site one. The Township Board approved Woodland Tree Service to remove 67 infected trees next November. Member Engel worked with the homeowner so the site would be accessible through the Patterson Property. They are currently trying to figure out which neighbor is cutting down infected trees and taking the wood home, which can spread Oak Wilt.

**ARTICLE 11. Submissions for Cascade Newsletter**

Member Douglas agreed to write an article for the summer newsletter on the importance of woodland ecosystems and why they should not be disturbed.

Former Township Supervisor Rob Beahan has agreed to write an article about Peace Park for the summer newsletter.

**ARTICLE 12. Invasive Workdays**

On February 26<sup>th</sup> there was an invasive species removal workday that was sponsored by the Kent County Conservation District to remove oriental bittersweet. There were seven volunteers which is an improvement over previous workdays. There will be more bittersweet workdays in the fall as well as a garlic mustard pull. There will be a garlic mustard pull at Burton Park on Saturday May 7 and at Cascade Cemetery on Wednesday, May 11. Poison hemlock is now growing at Burton Park. Kent County Conservation District took care of poison hemlock at Peace Park last year by spraying it and will do that to the 3 sites at Burton Park this year.

**ARTICLE 13. Old Business**

There was not any old business to address.

**ARTICLE 14. Any Other Business**

Visitor Rik Brown requested to share his public comments at this time. He said he was an avid backpacker and hiker and was impressed by the parks survey. He said he has been to Peace Park a lot and is concerned about erosion control. He recommended water bars and turnpikes be created at the entrance off of Grand River because it frequently washes out. He suggested contacting the National Park Service on how they implement this or watching how-to videos on YouTube. North County Trail in Lowell was mentioned as another resource that may be able to help. Brown said this is a project simple enough that community members could easily complete it with shovels if materials were purchased.

Brown also spoke about the problem with cracks and bumps on pathways, as that makes bike riding dangerous. He recommended hiring an asphalt maintenance consultant as the township's pathway system is clearly important to the greater community.

**ARTICLE 15. Adjournment**

**Motion was made by Chair Wanty to adjourn. Supported by Member Reese. Motion carried 5 to 0.**

**The Meeting adjourned at 9:41 am.**

Respectfully submitted,

Joe Engel, Secretary

DRAFT

## Meeting Minutes

Cascade Charter Township  
Parks Committee Strategic Plan Workshop  
Tuesday, March 24, 2022  
8:00 AM  
2870 Jacksmith Ave SE

**ARTICLE 1.** Chairperson Wanty called the meeting to order at 8:00 am.  
Members Present: Chair Ginny Wanty, Joe Engel, Mike Reese, Windy Korstange, Matt Douglas, and Supervisor Grace Lesperance  
Members Absent: None

Others Present: Interim Planning Director Brian Hilbrands, Management Office Administrative Assistant Jessica Stine, and Danielle Bouchard and Christopher Khorey with McKenna Associates.

**ARTICLE 2. Acknowledge visitors and those wishing to speak to non-agenda items.**

There was no one who wished to speak.

**ARTICLE 3. Strategic Plan Workshop**

Danielle Bouchard and Christopher Khorey with McKenna Associates provided an overview of the Strategic Plan survey results and lead the workshop. The Parks Committee was asked to identify priorities within the categories of land acquisition/capital improvements, personnel/funding/programming, and trails. Comments and priorities included the following:

Land Acquisition/Capital Improvements:

- Acquire land for green space/preservation
- Maintenance of current facilities

Personnel/Funding/Programming

- Hire additional staff
- More dedicated funding sources, such as a parks millage
- Academic programming

Trails

- Maintenance
- Expanding trails to different areas of the community

**ARTICLE 4. Adjournment**

**The Meeting adjourned at 9:48 am.**

Respectfully submitted,

Joe Engel, Secretary

## IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Term	No.	Project	Potential Funding Sources
SHORT	1	Increase park publicity and awareness for all parks. Tasks include quarterly parks updates in Township newsletter, updated parks maps, improved way-finding signage, and digital tool development for park location information	Township funds, MNRTF, LWCF, or others
	2	Host community focus group discussions to review the existing dog owner's policies and guidelines as they relate to individual parks	-
	3	Establish essential pilot programs for youth outdoor education, organized sports, volunteer events, and stewardship organizations	Township funds
	4	Complete short neighborhood pathway connections in critical areas (See Goal 3)	Township funds, MNRTF, LWCF, Michigan Trails and Greenway Alliance
	5	Develop barrier-free, handicap accessible, and universally designed children's play area in existing Cascade Township (Rec) Park as well as new properties such as the Village center or Cascade Public Library	Township Funds, CCF
	6	Organize Friends of Cascade Parks and Trails	Township Funds
	7	Develop an off-leash dog park at Cascade Township (Rec) Park	Township funds, MNRTF, LWCF
MID	1	Develop basketball courts at Cascade Township (Rec) Park with transitional ice skating rink	CCF, Private donations
	2	Prepare preliminary engineering plans for a regional trail system that will connect Cascade Township recreation areas with adjacent communities including Lowell, Caledonia, and Grand Rapids.	Township funds, MNRTF, LWCF, Michigan Trails and Greenway Alliance
	3	Construct all-inclusive, barrier-free playground	Township funds, MNRTF, LWCF
	4	Implement Gateway Concept Plan at Museum Garden Park	DDA, CCF
LONG	1	Long term maintenance plan for pathways and trails extension	Township funds, MNRTF, LWCF, Michigan Trails and Greenway Alliance
	2	Compile database of properties on the Thornapple River and Grand River to explore options for land acquisition and expansion of waterfront public park space	Township funds, MNRTF, LWCF, Thornapple River Association, Cascade Community Foundation, Private Donors
	3	Regional trail network connections to adjacent communities including Paul Henry Thornapple Trail and Fred Meijer M-6 Trail	Township funds, MNRTF, LWCF
	4	Develop multi-use athletic field complex	Township funds, MNRTF, LWCF
	5	Redevelop Village area with focus on unique and diverse recreation amenities	DDA, CCF

*Potential Funding Sources Key:*

*MNRTF = Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund; LWCF = Land and Water Conservation Fund*

*CCF= Cascade Community Foundation; DDA= Cascade Downtown Development Authority*



# CASCADE CHARTER TOWNSHIP

2865 Thornhills SE Grand Rapids, Michigan 49546-7192

## Policy for the Naming of Township Assets

Adopted by the Township Board on May 13, 2009

**Purpose** – This policy has been adopted to establish criteria for use by Cascade Charter Township in the naming of any current or future Township building, park, prominent feature, or facility. The criteria will ensure that names are not duplicated and to give proper honor and respect to noteworthy community figures and organizations.

**Scope** - This policy shall apply to all property and assets under the ownership of Cascade Charter Township, a Michigan municipal corporation, and shall be in full effect upon adoption.

**Regulations** - The Township shall designate an official name in honor of an individual person, persons or entity provided that the following are met:

- A. The person made significant contributions, financial or otherwise to the community of Cascade Township.
- B. All official names shall be approved by the Township Board after a review by the Infrastructure Committee. Requests for official name designation shall be done at the request of the Township Manager, any member of the Township Board, or via an application submitted to the Township office.
- C. Donor Related Naming – A formal gift agreement between the Township and the donor must be executed before any facility, park, open space, pavilion, roadway (within a park), playing field, pathway, or other major asset of the Township is named. Generally, donations should exceed 10% of the cost or value of the asset to be named.
- D. Miscellaneous, Smaller Named Items - Bricks, plaques, benches, landscaping items and similar miscellaneous items obtained through gifts may carry donor or honorary names with the approval of the Township Manager. Approval by the Township Board will not be required for any such naming, although the Township Manager should notify the Township Supervisor and Board early in the gifting process.
- E. Recognition - When a Township Asset is named for an individual, the actual name will appear on all signage, literature, and marketing related to it.
- F. Exceptions - There may be an extraordinary case whereby an exception may be granted to the above policies and procedures. In such an instance, the Township Manager will complete a formal review and make a recommendation to the Township Board for final approval.
- G. Change of Name - The Township Board reserves the right to change the name of a Township Asset, but only for good cause when it is in the best interest of the Township.



# CASCADE CHARTER TOWNSHIP

2865 Thornhills SE Grand Rapids, Michigan 49546-7192

## APPLICATION TO REQUEST A NAME FOR A TOWNSHIP ASSET

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Asset to be named \_\_\_\_\_

Requested Name and Justification for Name \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Proposed Gift Consideration (Donation) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Applicant \_\_\_\_\_

# Garlic Mustard

## Soon it Will Be Garlic Mustard Season

Ginny Wanty  
Chair Cascade Parks Committee

Garlic mustard is a highly invasive plant that stays green all year long. It has the odor of garlic when crushed. The young rosette (cluster of leaves) grows close to the ground. The adult plants grow upright with a white, four-petal flower at the end of the stalk.

### Impacts:

- Out competes or prevents native plants and trees from growing.
- One plant can produce more than 3,000 seed.
- Seeds can remain viable in the soil for ten years or more.

### Prevent Future Spread:

- Monitor your property carefully and frequently for new infestations. (Removing one or two plants before they go to seed is much easier than removing hundreds of plants later.)
- Clean shoes, plant cuffs, and equipment thoroughly after walking or working in an infested area.

### Suggested Control:

Hand removal is best achieved before the plant has gone to seed. When soil is moist, grasp low and firmly on the plant. Tug gently until the main root loosens and the ENTIRE plant pulls out.

Pulled plants should be bagged and placed in regular trash. **DO NOT COMPOST!**

**A collection dumpster for garlic mustard will be available May 6-31** in the back of the Cascade Township Fire Department (2865 Thornhills Avenue, SE Grand Rapids MI 49546)

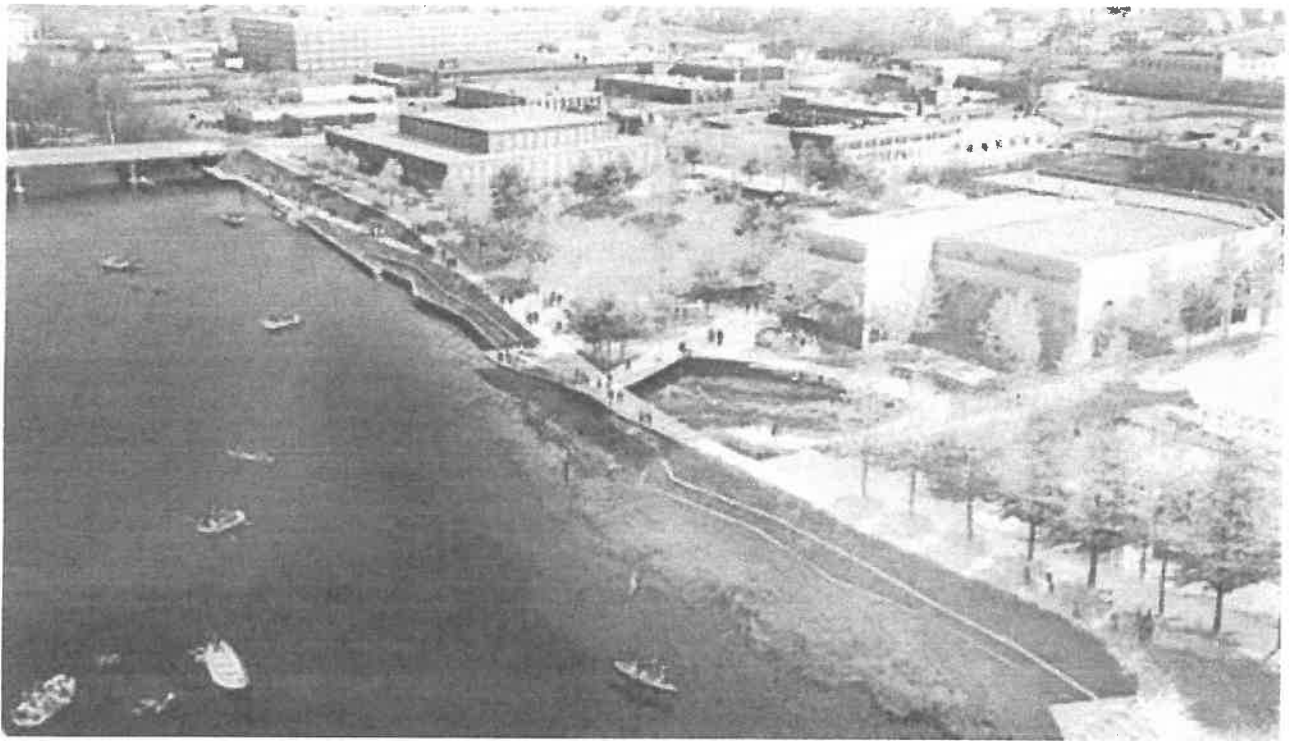
### **Residents are needed to volunteer for a garlic mustard pull at two different Cascade Township locations:**

- **10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday, May 7 at Burton Park**, 6805 Burton St SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49546. Meet at the Maintenance building and parking will be available behind the building.
- **6 p.m. to 8 p.m. on Wednesday, May 11 at the Cascade Township Cemetery**, 7200 30th St SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49508. Meet and park back by the maintenance garage but don't block traffic.

Grab some gloves and join in these community volunteer events.

For more information or questions, email [cascadeparks@cascadetwp.com](mailto:cascadeparks@cascadetwp.com)

## GRAND RIVER GREENWAY

**Now, the real work starts**

The Coldbrook Pump Station along Monroe Ave. NW just south of Leonard Street is one of the sites that could be renovated using \$55 million in state funds Grand Rapids is set to receive as part of a state infrastructure spending plan. This rendering shows how the pumping site could be transformed. Submitted by DGRI

Brian McVicar - [bmcvicar@mlive.com](mailto:bmcvicar@mlive.com)

### **Infrastructure bill: \$55M funding allocation is part of \$4.7B state spending package**

GRAND RAPIDS — With millions in state funding secured, now the work begins.

Gov. Gretchen Whitmer on Wednesday signed into law a \$4.7 billion infrastructure spending bill that includes \$55 million to expand and improve a network of parks and trails along the Grand River in downtown Grand Rapids and beyond. With the funding secured, Downtown Grand Rapids Inc., the city of Grand Rapids and community partners can now begin planning how to put those dollars to use.

“There’s been decades of planning that’s been going on, so we do have a jumpstart on some things,” said Tim Kelly, president and CEO of Downtown Grand Rapids Inc. “This is now when the work starts.”

Park and trail improvements under consideration are designed to complement a decadelong effort to restore the river’s rapids in downtown Grand Rapids. City leaders hope the restored rapids generate more recreational opportunities in and around the river for residents and tourists. They also hope the improvements spur the creation of more housing and other development along the river corridor.

As far as park and trail improvements, there’s already some big items on the list.

Renovations are planned for Ah-Nab-Awen Park, Canal Park, Sixth Street Park and Lyon Square, a small riverfront park located between Amway Grand Plaza Hotel and DeVos Place.

Funds could also be used to add parks and greenspace near 201 Market Ave. SW, the site of a proposed \$116 million, riverfront amphitheater.

In addition, officials want to build roughly 28 miles of nonmotorized trails that fill in gaps in the existing riverfront trail system and complete "critical connections to communities across Kent County," according to Downtown Grand Rapids Inc.

The nonprofit was created in partnership with the city of Grand Rapids to coordinate development in the city's urban core. It manages the city's downtown development authority and other tax collecting entities. It was the entity awarded the \$55 million in the state infrastructure spending bill.

### **SPEEDING UP THE TIMELINE**

"This investment will help change the trajectory of our community," Grand Rapids Mayor Rosalynn Bliss said Wednesday, speaking at Linear Restaurant in Grand Rapids, where Whitmer signed the \$4.7 billion package into law.

She said the funds will jumpstart improvements that have long been on the city's wish list.

"We will significantly speed up our efforts to put the Grand River back at the center of our public life," Bliss said. "Many of us thought we would be doing this work for 10, 15, 20 years. Now we aim to get it done in five."

Supporters of the \$55 million in funding included state Reps. Thomas Albert, R-Lowell; Rachel Hood, D-Grand Rapids; and David LaGrand, D-Grand Rapids, as well as state Sen. Winnie Brinks, D-Grand Rapids.

"Here in Grand Rapids, we've been dreaming, planning and working to reinvent our relationship with the river that defines our city by restoring the rapids and creating a riverfront corridor that invites us to interact with the river and each other in whole new ways," Brinks said Wednesday.

Timelines for the improvements funded through the \$55 million are not finalized, said Kelly, of Downtown Grand Rapids Inc.

"There's projects like Lyon Square, like Ah-Nab-Awen Park, like the Leonard-Ann Street trail that have been in design and under work for several years now," he said. "So those are a little further along. But in terms of what goes first and all that, those are still things that need to get figured out."

### **FUNDING THE GRAND RIVER GREENWAY**

Overall, the \$55 million is funding improvements to what's being called The Grand River Greenway in Grand Rapids and Kent County.

The Grand River Greenway was started in Ottawa County, and the eventual goal is to create a network of trails along the river that lead from Grand Rapids to Grand Haven and Lake Michigan.

Downtown Grand Rapids Inc.'s goal is to raise a total of \$175 million for the Grand River Greenway project in Grand Rapids and Kent County. The hope is the \$55 million will help Downtown Grand Rapids Inc. leverage the remaining funds from other sources, Kelly said.

Kelly said it's difficult, without knowing specific construction costs, to say what percentage of the overall Grand River Greenway projects the \$55 million would fund. But he said the funding is "a significant accelerant to the work that we've been doing."

"It's huge," he said of the funding. "This is a tremendous assist to help getting this work done, and I think will really help to see us realize some of these plans that we've been working on for a long time now."

In addition to the park improvements, here are the nonmotorized trail improvements the \$55 million would fund:

To the north of downtown Grand Rapids: A new riverfront trail section from Leonard Street to Ann Street, which links downtown, the Creston neighborhood, Riverside Park and the White Pine Trail.

To the south: A new riverfront trail from Fulton Street to Wealthy Street, which links downtown, the Black Hills neighborhood, the Grandville Avenue corridor, Millennium Park and the Idema Explorer's Trail in Ottawa County.

To the east: A rails-to-trails project that links downtown riverfront, the Belknap neighborhood, Highland Park, Midtown, Ada and Lowell on the eastern edge of Kent County.

Initial work on restoring the rapids in a portion of the Grand River in downtown Grand Rapids could begin this fall or spring 2023 if the necessary permit is obtained this year, said Steve Heacock, president and CEO of Grand Rapids Whitewater, the group leading the effort in partnership with the city.

"We still hope to be permitted yet this year," he said.