

## Revitalize Your Community

Is your community ready to run in the race to rejuvenate the economy? Obama's advisers are sending recovery recommendations to Congress by the first of the year and action could occur soon after the new President takes office.

When Congress fires the starter's gun there will be a real competition to see what projects should be funded. It is speculated that spending will be targeted at projects that create jobs quickly by funding "on-the-shelf" projects. Most communities do not have projects already designed for this purpose. Projects that have already been submitted to a state or federal agency for funds will likely be first in line. Communities that have started the design process will be in the best position to receive funds.

Infrastructure projects will be the major focus of the new stimulus package. President-elect Obama has promised to create the largest



public works construction program since the inception of the interstate highway system in the 1950's. It is envisioned that as much as \$850 billion could be included in this stimulus package and road, water and sewer projects will be a part of the mixture of projects to receive funding.

WAI has a track record and was successful in helping eight clients get funding in the late 1970's when there was a similar public works funding plan. Today, we are helping numerous clients prepare for the 2009 stimulus package. This will be a great opportunity for small and large communities to have projects completed and to provide local employment. The only decision you need to make is whether to be in the race or be a spectator. ■



# THE WIGHTMAN WAY

4th Quarter 2008 Report

Practical Solutions Based On Common Sense.



Bike Paths & Trails



Bridge Design & Inspection



Municipal Building Design

## Putting The Fun Into The Great Outdoors

Creating or improving outdoor facilities like neighborhood parks or community sports complexes is a great source of pride for communities. Recreation opportunities define and enhance a community's quality of life. It takes planning to have the right mix to appeal to all ages while conserving maintenance costs.

Over the years WAI has helped communities develop recreation plans for parks throughout Southwestern Michigan. A recreation plan benefits public and private park developments. Nearly all funding sources require a 5-year plan that has community approval and has been accepted by the MDNR.

There are many advantages of a recreation plan that benefit short and long term needs. A plan should first identify the physical and social characteristics of the community then determine the community's recreational needs and desires.

This establishes the recreation goals and objectives that will provide a guideline for recreational policies. A schedule for maintenance and development of facilities is developed to keep the community focused on existing facilities while planning for future development. The plan simplifies community communication and allows for broad based input.

Using a master plan, Bridgman has been able to develop Weko Beach Park with construction of boardwalks, stairs, observation decks, lighting, parking lot,



Edwardsburg Sports Park

campground renovations and a public beach house/community center using Michigan Department of Environmental Quality and Natural Resources funding.

WAI is designing a sports complex for the Edwardsburg community that currently is in the fundraising stage. The 100 acre complex will have at least 6 baseball/softball fields, 6 soccer fields, and 2 football fields. There will be concession stands, fitness trails, playgrounds, and adequate parking areas. Select fields will have lighting, and each sport will have at least one showcase field. Their plan includes future growth with land being set aside for indoor courts, swimming, or an ice arena.

The City of Albion took advantage of its Kalamazoo River frontage by developing a multi-use path along the river with funding from a MDOT Enhancement Grant. The project includes a 10 ft wide concrete trail in residential areas and HMA trail elsewhere. The path also has three 14 ft wide pedestrian bridges and utilizes an abandoned 270 ft railroad trestle.



A recreational plan helps communities to make the best of existing opportunities and to find overlooked or unique recreation gems. ■

One of three bridges on the Albion Trail.



Weko Beach Park



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## Welcoming a 250 ft New Neighbor



The Lake Michigan Shoreline Water and Sewerage Treatment Authority water project is nearing completion. After several years of various controversies and associated newsprint, a critical hurdle has been made.

The not so small hurdle... how do you make a 250 foot water tower blend into a neighborhood, be appealing to the neighbors, and let visitors see the area's pride regarding the community assets.

The feat of designing and constructing a \$6.2 million water project that included two, 1 million gallon water towers, two booster stations, a radio telemetry system, pressure reducing water valves, and 4000 feet of inter-connecting water mains

can pale in comparison with getting a publicly accepted logo for a water tower.

WAI puts this critical process into its project plan. Matching a community's aesthetics or character of the surrounding neighborhood is an important step in the design process and should not be overlooked or pushed aside.

The Authority and townships joined forces to give the residents of the surrounding communities

ample time for input. Their systematic approach asked for written, verbal, and graphic suggestions for the content of what should be painted on the tower. Ideas were discussed at public meetings.

The recurring themes included content that was patriotic, showed the fruit belt, and lake. Cornerstone Alliance offered support by lending their Michigan's Great Southwest logo plus a monetary donation to help cover the cost of painting the logo on the tower. The suggestions and logo were sent to local graphic firms for options and quotes.

The Authority board presented final options designed by Johnson Rauhoff to the community. The final design was sent to Caldwell Tank, Inc. who worked with Dave Cole Decorators, Inc. to complete the painting of the logo and surrounding art. ■

## Utility Rate Comparison...Where do you stand?

Last year we published our comparison of water and sewer rates for an average residential user in our local communities. This year we expanded our survey to include all municipalities in Cass, Van Buren, and Berrien Counties.

The comparison is based on monthly rates for a household with 3/4 meter, using 6000 gallons per month. While this criteria may not be average, we needed to set a base for this comparison. Thank you to those who provided information. If there are corrections please forward this information to us so that throughout the year we can keep this information current.

The average rate includes only communities that provided rate information. The average rate increase is a comparison of 2008 vs. 2007.

We hope that publishing this information once a year will be interesting and useful in your discussions and planning processes. ■

Location	Water	Sewer
<b>Townships</b>		
Bangor	\$17.13	\$44.68
Baroda Township	NP	NP
Benton Charter Township	\$27.79	\$21.38
Berrien Township	\$14.09	\$43.78
Buchanan Township	\$20.22	\$36.24
Coloma Township	\$20.06	\$21.25
Hagar Township	\$29.30	NP
Howard Township	NP	\$28.82
Lake Township	—	\$13.00
Lincoln Township	\$20.81	\$21.67
New Buffalo Township	\$33.40	\$28.00
Niles Township	\$10.30	\$21.00
Oronoko Township	\$14.09	\$43.78
Ontwa	NP	\$29.34
Porter Township	NP	\$46.00
Royalton Township	\$24.25	\$33.45
St. Joseph Charter Township	\$24.33	\$21.51
St. Joseph Twp from B.H.	\$23.51	\$28.11
Silver Creek Twp	NP	\$17.00
Sodus Township	26.2	NP
Weesaw Township	NP	\$31.00
<b>Average Rate:</b>	<b>\$21.82</b>	<b>\$37.86</b>
<b>Average Increase:</b>	<b>22.32%</b>	<b>28.63%</b>
<b>Cities</b>		
Bangor	\$17.13	\$44.68
Benton Harbor	\$16.02	\$19.54
Bridgman	\$17.40	\$43.37
Buchanan	\$17.28	\$30.96
Coloma	\$24.68	\$34.47
Dowagiac	\$18.16	\$22.74
Gobles	\$33.64	NP
New Buffalo	\$24.50	\$41.36
Niles	\$21.80	\$24.72
St. Joseph	\$13.96	\$16.50
Watervliet	\$30.50	\$35.97
<b>Average Rate:</b>	<b>\$21.37</b>	<b>\$28.57</b>
<b>Average Increase:</b>	<b>4.79%</b>	<b>7.44%</b>
<b>Villages</b>		
Baroda	\$25.00	\$16.40
Berrien Springs	\$8.05	\$29.18
Cassopolis	\$20.79	\$28.86
Eau Claire	\$22.00	\$13.50
Edwardsburg	\$20.70	NP
Lawton	\$8.80	\$31.00
Marcellus	\$38.34	\$33.30
<b>Average Rate:</b>	<b>\$20.53</b>	<b>\$21.75</b>
<b>Average Increase:</b>	<b>9.80%</b>	<b>11.47%</b>

NP - Not Provided

## Great Things Are Happening...People.

### NEWS FLASH



#### Gail Morton, Right-of-Way Specialist

Gail recently received her Michigan Broker's Real Estate license. Gail is responsible for right-of-way negotiations and acquisitions for clients including the City of Wyoming, Kalamazoo, and Portage and Allegan, Berrien and Kalamazoo Counties. Gail is an active member of the International Right-of-Way Association.



#### Ken Ark, Survey Manager

Ken recently completed training to be a volunteer Reserve Officer for the Berrien County Sheriff Department. Ken routinely rides with other officers on weekends and will assist the department during special events for traffic and crowd control.



#### Jamie Harmon, LEED AP and Steve Carlise, P.E.

Jamie and Steve recently attended Trails: Build It - They

Will Come workshop. The workshop included the latest information on planning, developing and funding.



#### Matt Davis, LEED AP

Matt Davis, P.E. has earned Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (LEED) AP accreditation from the Green Building Certification Institute, established with the support of the U.S. Green Building Council.

Since joining the firm in 1994, Mr. Davis has served as a project engineer and has been responsible for the evaluation and implementation of private and public civil and building projects from inception through the study, design, permitting, bidding, and construction phases.

Davis is a licensed engineer in Michigan, Wisconsin, Illinois, and Indiana. He also holds a Michigan Real Estate Associate Broker License and Michigan certifications for Construction Site Storm Water Operator and Soil Erosion & Sedimentation Control.

Davis has a Bachelor's degree in Civil/Architectural Engineering from University of Colorado, Boulder. Mr. Davis resides with his family in St. Joseph, Michigan. ■

## Great Things Are Happening...Projects.

<b>Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians</b>	Providing engineering and architecture services for the addition of a new tribal administrative building. The project will include the building, site design, roads & parking, drainage improvements, utilities, and lagoon system improvements.
<b>City of New Buffalo</b>	Perform Level II Study for Whittaker Street bridge.
<b>City of New Buffalo</b>	Perform engineering study of seawall and make recommendations for repairs.
<b>Village of Baroda</b>	Providing design engineering services for the proposed industrial park.
<b>Keeler Township</b>	Updating their 5-year Community Recreation Plan.
<b>Harbor Shores</b>	Creating a site layout for the Harbor Shores Residential Development on Parcel 21.
<b>Chickaming Township</b>	Provide drain relief for property owners in an area with chronic flooding concerns.
<b>Berrien County Drain Commission</b>	Assisted Drain Commissioner with construction engineering for two drain projects.
<b>Cass County Board of Public Works</b>	Design a \$10.4 million lake sewer collection and treatment system.
<b>Coen &amp; Partners</b>	Install 20 wick drains to relieve perched waste tables and prevent bluff erosion
<b>Chikaming Country Club</b>	MDEQ Joint Permit and Application for Part 315 Dam Safety to expand reservoir.
<b>Kevin Killerman</b>	Providing structural design for new house and multiple retaining walls in Grand Beach.
<b>Four Winds Casino Resort</b>	Provide architectural and structural engineering services for multiple projects ranging from kitchen modifications to security system upgrades.
<b>BDR Inc.</b>	BDR & WAI are partnering to design a private road and site for a custom home on Lake Michigan.
<b>City of Springfield</b>	Provide engineering specifications to resurface two neighborhood road systems.
<b>Quality Dining, Inc.</b>	Providing architectural design services for four Chili's Restaurants that will be located in New Jersey, Pennsylvania & Delaware.



The Wightman Way is the official newsletter of Wightman & Associates, Inc.

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