

VERSION : ADOPTED  
NOVEMBER 6, 2019



# CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PLAN

2019-2024

PRESENTED BY: ANDREA Z. POLVERENTO  
PLANNING DIRECTOR

## Watertown Charter Township Planning Commission

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Melanie Wright, Planning & Zoning Assistant

Lisa Winans, Planning & Zoning Assistant

## Capital Improvements Plan | 2019-2024

### Introduction and Overview

The 2019-2024 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) will serve as a tool to guide and assist the Township's Board of Trustees, management and staff in turning long-range planning into actual improvements. This six-year plan, review annually and updated as necessary, is a requirement of the Township under the Michigan Planning Enabling Act of 2008, as amended. The following report identifies major capital improvements, a timeline for implementation, and the budget and revenue sources that will make these improvements a reality.

A CIP is a six-year schedule of public physical improvements which identify the need for major infrastructure projects and the sources of funding for such improvements. It provides a schedule of expenditures for constructing, maintaining, upgrading, and/or replacing a community's physical inventory. The CIP, therefore, is a tool to assess the long-term capital project requirements for Watertown Charter Township. Since capital improvements are spread across many community needs, (fire protection, sewer and water, parks and recreation, municipal administration, etc.) the CIP helps to prioritize these projects over time.

### Snapshot of the Township's Financial Position

It should be evident that the township is faced with the challenge of trying to meet the needs of its residents for public services and facilities amid relatively fixed or decreasing revenues and the increasing costs of providing the needed public services and facilities.

Over the past decade, the township board has strived to ensure the township was operated with a balanced budget. With sound fiscal management, the township has been in a position, despite declining revenues as a result of Proposal A, to cover all capital and operating expenses from the general fund without any additional millages. Increasing costs overall have led to the township's financial position potentially transitioning to one in which one or more special assessments are necessary to maintain basic services at their current levels.

Preliminary results of a recent township-wide survey have been very beneficial in both educating the public on the challenges of stagnant revenues and the costs to provide essential services. The township board will likely use this information to make sound financial decisions based on the public input received. The response rate the survey received was similar to a previous survey conducted a decade ago, and some similar questions on the recent survey were asked to provide a basis to better judge if attitudes had changed over time. The changing demographics of the township were well-represented and there was evidence that today's residents are more willing to consider an additional millage to keep services at or above today's levels.

Last, it is important to note a common misconception. While property taxes are paid to Watertown Charter Township, the township only retains a small percentage of the overall tax bill. Much of those funds are diverted to other government agencies, including Clinton County, school districts, public transportation, libraries and higher education. On average, approximately 13% of a resident's total tax bill is retained for use in Watertown Charter Township. These funds are used to meet all expenses, including capital expenses, for local road projects, fire and ambulance service, elections and voting, the Wacousta cemetery, planning and zoning, economic development, tax collection and assessments, parks and recreation, buildings and grounds maintenance, legal services and general administration, among many others.

Overall, the township board continues to prioritize spending in a way that is strategic and efficient, allows for a strong fund balance to address any emergencies, while providing a balanced budget.

### What Makes a Project a Capital Improvement?

Capital improvements are major, infrequent expenditures, such as construction of a new facility, a major rehabilitation or repairs to an existing facility, or the purchase of major equipment. Capital improvements are non-recurring expenditures that tend to be both large in physical size and cost, and have a longer useful life. Some examples of capital projects could include:

- Construction of a new township hall or fire station
- Major road construction, such as bridge replacement or substantial repaving
- Extension of a sewer and/or water line
- Purchase of a new fire truck
- Major repairs and/or renovations to the township hall or fire station
- Development of a new township park
- Major repairs and/or renovations to existing township park facilities

The following projects are examples of expenditures that would be categorized as operating expenses, and would not usually constitute a capital improvement project:

- Purchase of new office furniture or other office supplies
- Purchase of new/used small equipment, such as lawn mowers, copiers, individual computers, network, server, or software materials, etc.
- Recurring or ongoing maintenance of existing facilities
- Minor repairs to buildings, grounds, or equipment
- Minor improvements to existing buildings, such as carpet, painting, fixtures, etc.

### What is Watertown Charter Township's Capital Improvement Policy?

The term "capital improvement" is inherently relative – what is "major" to Watertown Charter Township could be considered "minor" to another. The follow section describes Watertown Charter Township's policy for determining how a capital improvement is defined.

A capital improvement is a major, non-recurring expenditure that meets one or more of the following criteria:

- Any acquisition of land for a public purpose which costs \$20,000 or more;
- Any construction of a new facility (township building, water or sewer lines, parks, etc.), or any addition to an existing public facility, the cost of which equals \$20,000 or more and has a useful life of five or more years;
- A non-recurring rehabilitation (not including annual/recurring maintenance) of a building, its grounds, a facility or equipment, the cost of said rehabilitation being \$20,000 or more with a useful life of five or more years;
- Purchase of major equipment which, individually or in total, costs \$20,000 or more with a useful life of five or more years;
- Planning, feasibility, engineering or design studies related to an individual capital improvement project with a cost of \$20,000 or more.

## Why is Watertown Charter Township Preparing a CIP Now?

A Capital Improvement Plan is a six-year plan. In 2007 and 2012, the township adopted CIPs and updated them periodically throughout the terms of those plans. Six-year plans are generally considered to be the most suitable time period, in the middle range of programming periods. Shorter time frames would not provide that much assistance during the standard budgeting schedule, and longer-term plans have too much variability in terms of predicting both costs and needs.

The Michigan Planning Enabling Act of 2008, as amended, requires that a CIP be prepared and annually reviewed and updated, if necessary, for any township which has a master plan, and for any township that owns and/or operates its own public water supply and/or public sanitary sewer system. Because Watertown Charter Township has both and adopted master plan and is co-owner of a public sanitary sewer system, adopting and annually updating a CIP is a requirement under state law. [MCL125.3865]

## What are the Benefits of Preparing and Adopting a CIP?

The CIP is more than just a requirement under state law, it is an essential planning tool in addition to a statement of budgetary policy. It informs the taxpayers of Watertown Charter Township how the township plans to prioritize, schedule, and coordinate capital improvement projects over the next six years. The benefits of creating and annual updating a CIP include, but are not limited to:

- Transparent and prudent use of taxpayer dollars;
- Focusing expenditures on the needs of the community;
- Prioritizing projects across the needs of the community;
- Generating support by seeking public input;
- Promoting economic development;
- Improving eligibility for state and federal grants;
- Providing an implementation tool for the goals and objectives of the township's master plan and non-motorized transportation plan.

## Who Plays a Role in the CIP Process?

The Township's Planning Commission is required by state law to take the lead role in the CIP planning process. This ensures that the goals and objectives of the master plan are fully recognized throughout the process. The Township Board of Trustees and the department heads who have budgetary responsibilities play roles in the CIP process, by proposing projects which will affect their departments. As capital improvement projects are likely to use public funds, it is also important that the residents of the township play a role in developing the CIP. Local agency representatives, such as the local fire department, sewer department or road commission, may also play a role by proposing projects which need to take place within the CIP's timeframe. While these entities may also have their own capital improvement planning processes, it is essential that they be reflected in the township's overall plan to ensure they are considered during the township's budgeting process.

## How are CIP Projects Evaluated and Prioritized?

CIP projects will be evaluated and prioritized at several levels prior to adoption of the plan. Those who propose projects will self-evaluate and prioritize their submission(s). Next, the CIP Committee (Planning Commission Committee of the Whole) will review the proposed projects for inclusion in the plan. The Planning Commission will use the criteria outlined in *Attachment A* to evaluate each project. A public hearing will be advertised and held by the Planning Commission for the public to review the proposed CIP plan and associated projects. The Planning Commission's final recommendations will be forwarded to the Board of Trustees for final review and adoption.

**Individual Project Proposal**  
*Description | Justification*

Prepared by: \_\_\_\_\_

Date prepared: \_\_\_\_\_

Project title: \_\_\_\_\_

Department: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Project Description:** Give a brief (1-2 paragraph) description of the proposed project. Provide basic information, such as the location, size, acreage, floor area, capacity, etc.

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**CIP Evaluation Criteria:** Review the criteria set forth in attachment A of this document (e.g., risk to public health, safety or welfare, state/federal law requirements, implementation of master plan action item, etc.). Write a brief description of how this proposed project meets as many of the criteria as may be applicable.

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**Schedule:** This project must be slated for commencement within the next five years. If the project will take more than one year to complete, outline the schedule here. If applicable, include work done in previous years, including studies or general planning.

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**Dependencies:** If the project is dependent on one or more other CIP projects, identify them and note their relationship to the proposed project. If the proposed project is not dependent upon, but could be linked to one or more other CIP projects, identify those linkages and their relationship.

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**Project Priority:** Review the prioritization schedule set forth in attachment A of this document and write a brief description of the priority and priority year of this proposed project. (Note: the highest priority does not have to occur in the current year, and priorities may not necessarily follow in chronological order. It may be that your most important project may not be needed or ready for action until a few years from now.)

Circle one:                      **Urgent**                      **Important/Necessary**                      **Desirable**                      **Deferrable**

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**Estimated Cost:** (In current year dollars) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

For projects that will take more than one year, list each year separately and show total.

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**Basis of cost estimate:** Check one of the following:

- Cost of comparable facility or equipment
- Unit costs
- From cost estimate from engineer, architect, vendor, etc.
- From bids received
- "Preliminary estimate" – no other basis for cost estimate, "guesstimate."

If you wish to provide additional detail, please describe below or provide attachments. Number of attachments, in pages \_\_\_\_\_

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**Alternative Financing:** Include an amount and source here only if it is a source other than the general fund or reserve/restricted/revolving fund. Complete this section only if you know of a specific source, such as a state or federal grant or reliable private funding.

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### Attachment A | Evaluation Criteria Schedule

When considering the project proposal, ask yourself the following questions:

***Is the proposed project:***

- Addressing a risk to public health, safety, and/or welfare?
- Required and/or mandated by state or federal law?
- Implementation of a master plan action item?
- Necessary due to a prior commitment of funds, and/or the next step in a sequence of steps to complete a project that is already in progress?
- Promoting a joint use of facilities or a regional approach to services?
- A means to leverage private, state, federal or grant funds?
- Improving efficiency of operations and/or maintenance costs?
- Serving a wide range of community interests?
- Encouraging more efficient governmental administration?
- Fulfilling an unmet community or neighborhood need?
- Other, please describe: \_\_\_\_\_

### Attachment A | Prioritization Criteria Schedule

When assigning a priority to the project proposal, please consider the following:

***Is the proposed project:***

- Urgent** – The project requires immediate action due to a public health, safety, and/or welfare concern; the building or facility is deteriorating and/or unsafe for occupation; or state or federal law requires the project to be completed. The project cannot be reasonably postponed. Any project necessary to address an emergency.
- Important/Necessary** – The project should be carried out within the next few years to meet the anticipated needs of a current township service, or to replace unsatisfactory facilities.
- Desirable** – Projects which are necessary for expansion of a service, the exact timing of which can wait until funds are available.
- Deferrable** – Projects which are necessary for ideal operation, but which are not currently recommended for action. They can be postponed without detriment to existing or present services.
- Not ranked** – Projects which were proposed but do not meet the evaluation or prioritization criteria at this time. There may not be enough information available for recommending funding, the proposed project was vague, or the responsibilities for implementation are outside the jurisdiction of the township. Not ranked projects can be resubmitted in future years in more information becomes available or greater need is presented.



## 2019-2024 Capital Improvement Projects | FINAL DRAFT Projects as Proposed

### Project No. 1 – Sewer Infrastructure Improvements

**Project summary:** Failing septic systems at several properties on Airport Road between Herbison and Howe Roads has led to a group of residents petitioning to connect to the township’s public sanitary sewer system. Up to ten homes are expected to take part in this infrastructure expansion.

During the planning and construction of the Lakeside Preserve subdivision, to which these properties are adjacent, a sanitary sewer stub was constructed which would provide access for these properties to connect at some future point. This will allow for construction of the individual sewer leads in the rear yards of the affected houses, which, while not ideal from an access standpoint, will lessen the overall effects on these properties. Easements will need to be established for the sewer department to have the necessary access to the infrastructure. Due to existing infrastructure in the right-of-way for Airport Road, adding sewer lines to that area was prohibitive. The township will be responsible for engineering and some installation costs during this project.

**Evaluation criteria and priority level:** Per the evaluation criteria schedule, this project addresses a risk to public health, safety, and/or welfare. In addition, the expected upgrades will likely result in improved efficiency, operational and maintenance costs. Given the failures of the on-site septic systems occurring, this project would be classified as urgent.

**Schedule:** Dependent upon external factors, but likely beginning in 2020.

**Cost:** Up to \$200,000.

**Funding:** Funding for these projects will be covered by the establishment of a special assessment district made up of those properties benefiting from the infrastructure improvements. Additional engineering and installation costs may come from the township’s sewer fund and/or TIRF account.

### Project No. 2 – Fire Station Facility Improvements

*The Looking Glass Regional Fire Authority has a contract for service with the Delta Township Fire Department to provide full-time fire and emergency medical response to the residents of Watertown and Eagle Townships. Currently, the LGRFA is funded jointly by Watertown and Eagle Townships, with Watertown Township’s share being 65% of all necessary capital costs. Currently, Watertown Township funds the LGRFA entirely from its general fund. Recent discussions have brought to light expected budgetary shortfalls during this plan which may necessitate the township offering residents an opportunity to vote on a dedicated millage to cover these anticipated deficits to avoid a future decrease in services.*

**Project summary:** The Looking Glass Regional Fire Authority facility’s parking lot is very deteriorated and is in need of immediate repairs.

**Evaluation criteria and priority level:** Per the evaluation criteria schedule, this project addresses a risk to public health, safety and/or welfare. Its priority level at this time is classified as urgent.

**Schedule:** This project is likely to begin in 2020.

**Cost:** The total cost is estimated to be up to \$200,000. The township’s anticipated share of this expenditure could be up to or exceeding \$130,000.

**Funding:** Funding for these projects would be covered by the Township’s general fund. Watertown Township would be responsible for 65% of the costs of capital outlay, as per the agreement with Eagle Township and Delta Charter Township.

### **Project No. 3 – Watertown Parkway Property Improvements**

**Project summary:** The township has owned more than 120 acres of property south of I-69 along Watertown Parkway since 1990. The property consists of an existing dilapidated residential structure, open spaces, woodlots and wetlands. In 2015, the township began working with the U.S. Fisheries and Wildlife Service on connected projects to improve and enhance existing wetlands, and to improve wildlife habitat. While public or private hunting is not permitted on the property, the township has authorized state and federal authorities access to the land for culling activities due to the CWD outbreak in this area. Further, some tree planting activities and general cleanup have been conducted through a partnership between the township and local scouting groups.

To develop this property into a public park, with limited walking trails and passive recreation opportunities, several projects would need to be completed:

- Create and adopt a plan for the development of the property
- Demolish the residential structure
- Improve entrance and establish public parking facilities
- Develop walking trails
- Consider purchasing property on Lowell Road to provide for alternate access

**Evaluation criteria and priority level:** Per the evaluation criteria schedule, many components of this project address master plan implementation items. Demolition of the residential structure would be classified as important/necessary. Other components of the project would be classified as desirable.

**Schedule:** Demolition activities would be first in the sequence, with those likely to take place within the next year.

**Cost:** Varies, up to \$150,000. Plan development would likely be the least expensive portion of this project, with at least some of the plan being produced in house or with limited consulting services, for approximately \$10,000. Demolition of the residential structure, depending on the method of demolition, could cost up to \$25,000. Costs for improving the entrance and parking facilities will depend on the materials used. Gravel facilities would be substantially less than asphalt, but an overall cost could exceed \$30,000. Trail development would be the costliest component of this project, with an expected cost up to or exceeding \$50,000. Property acquisition on Lowell Road would be based upon market factors at the time of purchase, the size of the property, and land availability.

### **Project No. 4 – Township Hall Facility Improvements**

**Project summary:** The parking lot at the township hall has proven to be inadequate during the past several elections. Improvements to the layout and the traffic flow will be necessary in advance of three significant elections in 2020 where a high turnout is expected. Additional parking behind the gym and a reconfiguration of the recycling area will be necessary as part of the project. On the west side of the township hall, along Wacousta Road, there are also drainage concerns which warrant some impervious surfaces and drainage tile installation to better manage the flow of water in that area. This will also allow for the reconfiguration of parking and traffic flow. There are likely to be engineering costs associated with this project, particularly with the drainage considerations.

**Evaluation criteria and priority level:** Per the evaluation criteria schedule, many components of this project improve the efficiency of operations, specifically elections, recycling services, and general parking. Given the three major elections scheduled in 2020, this project would be classified as urgent.

**Schedule:** Some planning tasks for this project may take place in the fall of 2019, with implementation likely in early spring 2020.

**Cost:** Likely up to \$150,000.

**Funding:** Funding for these projects would be covered by the Township's general fund.

## **Project No. 5 – Township Vehicles**

### **A.) Township Maintenance Truck**

**Project summary:** The current township truck is a 2006 Chevy Silverado 2500 HD Extended Cab pickup. While currently operational, it is nearing the end of its useful life as a township vehicle. It is scheduled for replacement within the next three years. Ideally, the truck will have some trade-in value when a newer vehicle is selected for township use.

**Evaluation criteria and priority level:** Per the evaluation criteria schedule, many components of this project improve the efficiency of operations and maintenance costs. Use of the truck also serves a wide range of community interests, including park and cemetery maintenance. Given the age of the vehicle, this project would be classified as important/necessary.

**Schedule:** 2020-2022

**Cost:** Likely up to \$30,000.

**Funding:** Funding for this would be covered by the Township's general fund.

### **B.) Township Maintenance Tractor**

**Project summary:** The current township tractor is a 2005 John Deere 4115 Compact Tractor/Loader, with approximately 1,540 hours on the engine. While currently operational, it is nearing the end of its useful life as a township maintenance tractor. It has begun to require repairs, replacement parts and additional maintenance to remain operational. It is scheduled for replacement within the next three years.

**Evaluation criteria and priority level:** Per the evaluation criteria schedule, many components of this project improve the efficiency of operations and maintenance costs. Use of the tractor also serves a wide range of community interests, including park and cemetery maintenance, and during Dump Your Junk Day. Given the age and hours of the tractor, this project would be classified as important/necessary.

**Schedule:** 2020-2022

**Cost:** Likely up to \$30,000.

**Funding:** Funding for this would be covered by the Township's general fund.

### Project No. 6 – Creains Garden in Wacousta Cemetery

**Project summary:** The Cemetery Board is responsible for the oversight, management, and development of policy and operating procedures relating to the Wacousta Cemetery. For some time, the Cemetery Board has been discussing the need for the creation of a cremains garden in the Wacousta Cemetery. A cremains garden would allow the burial of cremains in benches, and in smaller, more economical spaces in the cemetery. The proposed cremains garden would be located in the southeast portion of the cemetery, near Section D.

**Evaluation criteria and priority level:** Per the evaluation criteria schedule this project would fulfill an unmet community need. The priority level would be classified as desirable.

**Schedule:** It is anticipated that this project would take two years to plan, design, and build. It is expected that the project will begin within the next two years.

**Cost:** Up to \$30,000. First-year costs for planning and design are estimated at \$15,000, and second-year construction costs are expected to be \$15,000.

**Funding:** Funding for this project would be covered by the Township’s cemetery improvement fund.

### Project No. 7 – Heritage Park Pavilion Improvements

**Project summary:** Heritage Park is located behind the Township Hall, and features an artesian well, walking trails, tennis courts, volleyball pit, fire pit and horseshoe pit, canoe launch, bathrooms, ball fields, and playground equipment for children of all ages. The pavilion which serves this park is nearing the end of its useful life and is encountering structural concerns. Ideally, a new pavilion would be constructed that could allow for two rentals at a time, a larger party and a smaller party.

**Evaluation criteria and priority level:** Per the evaluation criteria schedule, this project would fulfill an unmet community need, by offering expanded opportunities for pavilion rentals, would serve a wide range of community interests, and is related to the implementation of master plan action items. The priority level would be classified as important/necessary.

**Schedule:** It is anticipated that this project would take 1-2 years to complete.

**Cost:** Up to \$50,000.

**Funding:** Funding for this project would be covered by the Township’s general fund.

**WATERTOWN CHARTER TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION  
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON THE PROPOSED  
2019-2024 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PLAN**

**WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 2019, 7:00 PM  
WATERTOWN CHARTER TOWNSHIP HALL  
12803 S. Wacousta Road, Grand Ledge, MI 48837**

Notice is hereby given that the Watertown Charter Township Planning Commission will hold a public hearing at 12803 South Wacousta Road, Grand Ledge, MI 48837, on Wednesday, November 6, 2019, at 7:00 PM, to receive comments regarding the proposed 2019-2024 Capital Improvements Plan.

Information regarding the 2019-2024 Capital Improvements Plan may be obtained from the Planning & Zoning Department during regular business hours of 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday, or by calling (517) 626-6593. Information will also be available on the Township’s website at [www.watertowntownship.com](http://www.watertowntownship.com). Written comments concerning this matter will be received until the time of the public hearing and will become a part of the official public hearing record.

Joseph Davis, Planning Commission Chair

*Individuals with disabilities needing special accommodations to fully participate in the meeting may contact the Clerk to request the necessary assistance. This request must be made at least two days prior to the public hearing.*

*Published in the DeWitt-Bath Review and Grand Ledge Independent on 10/13/19*

**WATERTOWN CHARTER TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION  
CLINTON COUNTY, MICHIGAN**

**RESOLUTION OF ADOPTION  
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PLAN 2019-2024**

**WHEREAS**, the Watertown Charter Township Planning Commission has the responsibility and is empowered by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, Act No. 33 of Public Acts of 2008, as amended, to make and adopt a Capital Improvements Plan to further the desirable future development of the Township and to amend the Plan as needed from time-to-time, and;

**WHEREAS**, the Watertown Charter Township Planning Commission has held a public hearing on its proposed new Capital Improvements Plan for the Township on November 6, 2019, at the Watertown Charter Township Hall, and;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Watertown Charter Planning Commission hereby adopts this Capital Improvements Plan 2019-2024 for Watertown Charter Township, dated November 6, 2019.

A motion to adopt the foregoing resolution was made by Overton and seconded by Powers.

AYES: Davis, Overton, Wiesner, Openlander, Adams, Ball, Zay, Powers.

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: Stipcak.

RESOLUTION DECLARED ADOPTED THIS 6<sup>th</sup> DAY OF NOVEMBER, 2019.

signed copy in official file  
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Joseph Davis, Chair  
Watertown Charter Township Planning Commission