

## Winter 2024

Winter 2024:  
Volume 2, Issue 2



# DEXTER TOWNSHIP

Dexter Township Hall  
6880 Dexter-Pinckney Rd.  
Dexter, MI 48130  
(734) 426-3767  
[www.dextertownship.org](http://www.dextertownship.org)

**Office Hours:**  
**Monday – Thursday**  
**8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.**

### Township Board

Supervisor **Lonnie Scott**  
Clerk **Michelle Stamboullis**  
Treasurer **Brad Metz**  
Trustee **Karen Nolte**  
Trustee **Karen Sikkenga**  
Trustee **Laura Sanders**  
Trustee **Alicia Abbott**

## 2025 Metropark Pass Information—Deadline for Submission is December 15, 2024 - ACT NOW!

Dexter Township is a rural community and does not maintain or operate its own parks, walking paths, or recreational areas. However, we are fortunate to have a 1,500-acre Metropark in our township. Rather than take on the long-term financial commitment of obtaining land, developing a park, and maintaining recreational space, the Township Board decided to offer each home in our township (1) one annual pass (2025) to this Metropark (paid for from the Township General Fund). This is a space to unwind, enjoy the hiking or biking trails, play golf and disc golf, listen to the flow of or canoe down the river, and just reconnect and energize with nature. Please review the information below and request your pass before the deadline of **December 15, 2024**.

### Additional Information:

- Limit one (1) pass per home (garages, sheds, and structures under separate house numbers are ineligible)
- To submit your survey, go to [www.dextertownship.org/parkpass](http://www.dextertownship.org/parkpass)
- Please do not go to the town hall. Pass requests will only be honored via form submittal. If you do not have access to the internet or need assistance requesting your pass, please call 734-426-3767 ext. 151. For general questions, email [info@dextertownship.org](mailto:info@dextertownship.org)
- Passes will be mailed at the end of December. You will receive an email notification to watch your mailbox.
- **December 15 is the request deadline.** No submissions will be accepted after December 15.

Scan QR code to be taken to the park pass survey now!

### Inside this issue:

2025 Metropark Pass	1
Clean Up Day	1
Strategic Plan Status Report	2
Supervisor Sikkenga's Message	3
Welcome New Board	4
Clerk's Dept. Message	4

### Dexter Township 2025 Metroparks Pass Program



## SEE YOU IN THE PARK!



## Dexter Township 2024 Clean-Up Day



We want to thank all of our amazing volunteers for all their assistance during our annual clean up day event. With your help, 2024's Clean Up Day appears to be our largest to date! We shredded just under 2,500 documents, collected 6,640 pounds of old tires, collected a trailer of Styrofoam, and collected 14,084 pounds of electronic waste. We also want to thank the community as well for taking advantage of this event.



## Four-Year Strategic Plan Wrap Up

As we prepare for a new township administration, let's take a moment to review what has been accomplished. In 2021, a newly elected Board of Trustees approved a Strategic Plan with goals. Under each goal, we set out a series of specific objectives. Almost every goal is substantially complete, with just a few slated for completion in the next year. This report summarizes the Board's progress towards those goals and objectives.

### Dexter Township Strategic Plan Goals:

1. **Good Government:** Conduct government operations in a clear and transparent nature.
2. **Environmental Stewardship:** Be good stewards of the environment through township government policies, operations, and programs.
3. **Communication:** Improve communication within the Township organization and with residents and stakeholders.
4. **Community Enrichment:** Provide amenities and programs to increase the quality of life of residents.

### Good Government

Under the "Good Government" pillar, we set and accomplished these goals:

**Goal #1: Create written policies and procedures:** The most significant approved policy is the new Master Plan: this board commissioned and approved the first new Dexter Township master plan since 2009. The plan's pillars closely parallel the strategic planning goals, indicating alignment between the Board and community on strategic initiatives. In the past year, our Planning and Zoning Department has identified errors and contradictions in the Zoning Ordinance and worked with the Planning Commission and Board to fix these. The DPZ has also developed tools for homeowners and developers to navigate the permit and approval process more easily, and has taken up major policy matters such as local control of renewable energy and short-term rentals. More broadly, the BOT also approved bylaws, updated the personnel guidelines, compensation policies and procedures (including establishing an arms-length compensation committee to set board salaries), approved an updated investment policy, approved and implemented a digital records policy, and approved a local roads funding policy, rubric, and schedule.

**Goal #2: Be fiscally responsible.** The BOT approved a fund balances policy then set aside conservative fund balances for cash reserves, capital improvements, and emergency funds. The board significantly improved our return on investment with the new investment policy. We improved our cash handling and checks and balances with automation and improved business processes. We commissioned a capital reserve study to ensure that dollars are set aside for future capital needs and that our properties are well-maintained. We restructured our budget from line item basis to an activity basis to improve transparency and comply with GFOA standards. We pursued and fully deployed ARPA funds. We ended each fiscal year with operational surpluses, and expended our fund balances on long overdue capital improvements, including road repair and public safety improvements.



**Goal #3: Encourage and facilitate improved broadband and cellular access.** We participated actively in a Washtenaw County initiative for universal broadband. We proactively identified residents without broadband access and have partnered with the County on full implementation. For cellular coverage, we are working actively with cell phone providers to increase the number of towers in Dexter Township. This initiative will take several more years to complete.

**Goal #4: Assess and make recommendations on single-hauler trash pickup.** We have assessed community interest in single-hauler through surveys and community events, and determined that residents are highly interested in single-hauler. The Board of Trustees approved a single hauler ordinance in 2023, and an RFP for single hauler services is planned to be

issued in late 2024. We have been working with Washtenaw County and their consultants and the earliest implementation date will be second quarter 2025 (dependent on RFP results).

**Goal #5: Improve recycling operations.** The Township is operating a pilot volunteer-run plastic film recycling initiative in collaboration with Chelsea High School.

**Goal #6: Improve local collector road quality.** The Township has invested over {\$2M} to bring all local roads to good condition. Only two roads remain to be addressed in FY2026: Madden and Stinchfield Woods East. The Township's rubric for scheduling road repair based on average daily use, accident rates, and road condition, has been heralded by the Road Commission for its innovativeness. Our rubric and Local Roads Committee are models for other townships.

**Goal #7: Provide effective quality control with affiliate organizations.** Dexter Township has been instrumental in improving operations in affiliate organizations, especially Multi Lakes Water and Sewer Authority and the Chelsea Area Construction Agency.

**Goal #8: Provide ongoing training and education to township board and committees.** The Township has offered CPR training to board and committee members. A majority of the township board attended the Michigan Township Association annual conference and brought back best practices. Three board members completed the MSU Citizen Planner training. All board and staff members have participated in specialized training.

### Environmental Stewardship

Under the "Environmental Stewardship" pillar, we set and accomplished these goals:

**Goal #1: Establish and provide education of appropriate management of natural areas.**

The township has reduced its use of chemicals in managing its landscapes at the Town Hall and Fire Station. At the Fire Station, we have reduced mowing of large areas. Within the next year, we plan to plant pollinators and native plants at Dexter Town Hall, and are considering prairie restoration at Fire Station 2.

**Goal #2: Encourage preservation of land and waterways.** Dexter Township has created a Farmland and Open Space Preservation program. A FOSP millage was approved by the voters, and the township purchased its

(Environmental Stewardship count.)

first development rights in 2023. Two more properties are queued up to be preserved in FY25.

**Goal #3: Protect and improve water quality.** Dexter Township representatives to the Multi Lakes Water & Sewer Board were vital to encouraging water testing, which found that WMWSA treated water contains PFAS. This issue is being addressed. Board members are working with the Huron River Watershed Council to establish a Waterways Protection Committee that will provide education and approve policies to protect our precious waterways.

**Goal #4: Reduce environmental impact of township operations.** The Township has organized annual "Clean Up" days featuring metal, electronic, and Styrofoam recycling where the Township and residents can responsibly reduce their environmental impact.

**Communication**

Under the "Communication" pillar, we set and accomplished these goals:

**Goal #1: Create and manage external communication to residents and stakeholders.** We established the "In the Loop" electronic newsletter, which goes out to 1,500 Dexter Township residents at least once a month. We created a printed "In the Loop" newsletter which is mailed to all our residents 3-4 times a year. We updated our web site and have sent several targeted mailings to increase residents' awareness of Township programs. For residents seeking to build or improve their homes, we created a Development Manual, Single Family Home

Checklist, and Zoning Permit Checklist.

**Goal #2: Create and manage internal communications to boards, committees, and staff.** We have improved communications by replacing our IT provider and working to fix challenges with email communications. We have upgraded our IT systems and are in the process of reworking IT replacement schedules, cybersecurity training, and IT use policies.

**Community Enrichment**

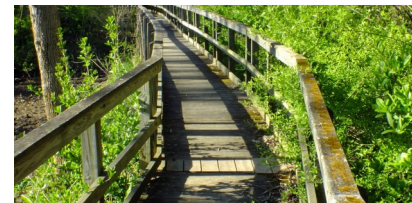
Under the "Community Enrichment" pillar, we set and accomplished these goals:

**Goal #1: Encourage Public Art.** We are planning a photo context to display the work of local photographers at Dexter Town Hall.

**Goal #2: Facilitate quality parks, recreational opportunities, and trails within the Township.** We provided Metropark passes to Township property owners to allow residents access to a park without having to pay an admission fee, in lieu of establishing a parks department. The Township provided funding for a trail study, in collaboration with the Metroparks, the Huron Waterloo Pathways Initiative, and the County Parks Department, to determine a route for the Northwest Passage trail. The NW Passage trail will connect Hudson Mills Metropark to Stinchfield Woods and Pinckney State Recreation area, three beautiful park-like amenities in Dexter Township.

**Goals #3 and #4: Creating an Ag Center and a Mental Health Center** were deemed infeasible, based on the mandated and permissive functions of a township and the township's size, at an August 2023 Strategic Plan update meeting.

**Goal #5: Encourage greater community engagement through the use of township facilities.** The Township has opened up its facilities to Homeowners Associations and Lakefront Associations for their regular meetings. We have hosted community movie nights and coffee chats with Trustees. Renovations of the lower level will increase available office space but also create a separate large meeting and training room, planned to be made available to Township residents depending on policy decisions of the incoming board.



**ITC Transmission Line Upgrade**

Don't forget that the ITC Transmission Line upgrade work will begin on December 13th and end on January 31st, 2025. The working hours are restricted to 7 am – 7 pm, Monday – Saturday, with no work on Sunday or holidays. However, to complete the project as efficiently as possible, there may be sporadic days of helicopter activity between October 1st and December 13th. This is unpredictable and will only occur when crews are delayed in other segments of the project. These works days will help reduce the sustained work time in Dexter Township in the winter. An overview of the project can be found on [ITC's website](#) and on the [Dexter Township website](#).

**Supervisor Sikkenga's Goodbye Message**

I want to take this opportunity to say thank you. Thank you to my fellow board members, who persevered through a global pandemic and a steep learning curve to master our jobs and enhance quality of life in the Township. Thank you to our small but mighty staff for their commitment to excellence, consistency, and continuous improvement. Thank you to our committee members and volunteers whose generous contributions of expertise, skill, and time, allowed us to move forward on major policy ideas and smaller initiatives. And finally, thank you to our electorate, who placed their trust in us and extended to us a very special opportunity to serve.

Four years ago, the Dexter Township electorate put in place six new board members, including an all-new Supervisor, Treasurer, and Clerk. At the same time, the COVID19 pandemic shut-downs

upended local government operations, challenging an inexperienced board to learn its job while managing a global, multi-year crisis. Despite this, our organization has coalesced around a strategic vision, with four big ideas designed to ensure good government, environmental stewardship, communication, and community enrichment. Remarkably, with the help of our dedicated staff, committee members, volunteers, and community, this organization accomplished virtually every major strategic planning goal.

We are on an amazing trajectory. I look forward to seeing the innovations and priorities of the new Board of Trustees that begins its work at noon tomorrow. Meanwhile, the Township will continue to improve roads, conserve our beautiful farms and natural areas, communicate clearly and often with our residents, and look for ways to put



property tax dollars to work for the benefit of all. I can't wait to see what the future brings!

Respectfully,

Karen Sikkenga, Outgoing Supervisor



Passing the gavel to new Supervisor, Lonnie Scott

<b>Welcome New Board</b>	<b>Clerk Stambouellis' Message</b>
<p>We want to welcome the new members of the Board of Trustees for Dexter Township (November 2024– November 2028). New positions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supervisor: Lonnie Scott</li> <li>• Treasurer: Brad Metz</li> <li>• Trustee: Alicia Abbott</li> </ul>  <p>Current board members include (left to right): Trustee Sanders, Trustee Sikkenga, Treasurer Metz, Supervisor Scott, Clerk Stambouellis, Trustee Abbott, &amp; Trustee Nolte.</p>	<p>I would like to extend a sincere thank you to the entire Dexter Township community for the wonderful display of democracy during the November 5, 2024 general election hosted in Dexter Township. The polls opened promptly at 7am with voters patiently waiting and excited to cast their votes. Voting gives you the power to create positive change for your community and determine a better quality of life for you and your family. Voting together with your neighbors, family, and friends ensures that your shared values and issues are prioritized, that you play a key role in choosing who represents you, and where government funding and resources will go. The more we continue to get out and vote, the more powerful our voices become, and the likelier the issues that are important to us will be heard. Our Dexter Township community has, historically, been one of the communities with high new voter registration and voter turnout rates. Voting, and encouraging others to vote, means standing up for the issues you care about and gives you a voice in your community.</p> <div data-bbox="1016 1159 1354 1292" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p><b>Voting Turnout Totals:</b>  <b>Precinct 1:</b> 2,181 total votes  <b>Precinct 2:</b> 1,714 total votes  <b>Precinct 3:</b> 971 total votes</p> </div>  <p>There are 5,944 registered voters in Dexter Township. Out of the 5,944 voters, 4,869 residents voted during the November 5, 2024 General Election (89.54% of the overall number of eligible voters in Dexter Township).</p>

**Want to stay “ in the loop” as to what’s happening in Dexter Township?**

Subscribe to our monthly email updates - “in the loop” on our website [www.dextertownship.org](http://www.dextertownship.org)  
Simply enroll by sending your name, email address, and phone number to [info@dextertownship.org](mailto:info@dextertownship.org) . Please join us!



Interested in serving your community or volunteering with Dexter Township?  
If so, send you an email to [info@dextertownship.org](mailto:info@dextertownship.org) or [supervisor@dextertownship.org](mailto:supervisor@dextertownship.org).