

CITY MANAGER REPORT

TO: Mayor Pat Humphrey & Clare City Commission
FROM: Jeremy Howard, City Manager
DATE: October 17, 2024
RE: City Manager's Report

For the Agenda of October 21, 2024

Lake Shamrock Dredging and Dam Project. Mechanical and hydraulic dredging continue with good progress. Mechanical dredging by the city is operating 10 hours a day Monday through Thursday each week. Hydraulic dredging by Savin Lake Services is still operating Monday through Friday 24 hours a day most days and has started doing some alternate day and night shifts on the weekends as well. They are still working on completing the north side of Barnes Island and have started moving into the mouth of the West finger of the lake. EGLE is still reviewing the permit for the East finger and area on the East end of the lake by the dam, and when I reached out to them a couple weeks ago, they responded that they hoped to have the permit complete soon. Hopefully this happens so we can stay on schedule to complete the hydraulic dredging by the end of this year or early next year according to the contractor. There is still no new news on the second grant and agreement that we were awarded on the dam project. Our engineering firm, GEI, is working on the next design phase for the dam and we have an official kickoff meeting with them and staff for the project scheduled for Tuesday, October 22nd.

Rail Trail. The project is essentially complete, barring a few punch list items. The only major piece left is the rail crossing gates at the end of Pioneer Parkway. The gates are manufactured and being shipped from Florida, and with the recent hurricanes, there have been delays in their arrival. It looks like it will be at least a couple weeks before they arrive and are able to be installed. We are planning to have the ribbon cutting and official trail opening celebration this coming Wednesday, October 23, 2024 at 3:00 p.m. (see attached flyer).

November General Election Information. The Public Accuracy Test for the November 5, 2024, General Election has been scheduled for Monday, October 21, 2024, at 3:00 pm at Clare City Hall, 202 W. Fifth St., Clare, Michigan. The Public Accuracy Test is conducted to demonstrate that the computer program, ballots, and tabulator used to record and calculate the results of the election have been prepared in accordance with the law.

For the purpose of registration for Elections at the City of Clare, Elections staff may be contacted by calling (989) 386-7541; or emailing elections@cityofclare.gov. Election staff will be working on Sunday, November 3, 2024, from 7am-3pm to issue and receive Absent Voter Ballots.

Michigan North-South Passenger Rail Project. As you know, this project has been in the works for years (once known as AA to TC Project). As Clare is a prime possible stop for future Passenger Trains, I have been meeting with the Rail Advisory Group along with many others across the state during regular quarterly meetings. Recently the consultant sent the attached press release stating that they have received significant funding to further evaluate the feasibility and process to make this passenger rail system a reality. It will be a long study and hopefully we will have some results by the end of next year on feasibility and next steps for this exciting possible project.

Attachments:

1. Rail Trail Ribbon Cutting Flyer.
2. Michigan North-South Passenger Rail Project Press Release.



You're invited to the

RIBBON CUTTING

THE PERE MARQUETTE RAIL-TRAIL
CLARE GAP IS COMPLETE!!!



Wednesday, October 23, 2024 at 3 p.m.
Clare Union Railroad Depot
201 W. Fourth St.
Clare, MI 48617



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Rail Consultant Chosen for Next Essential Study Phase for Michigan North-South Passenger Rail

October 7th, 2024

Contact: Carolyn Ulstad
Transportation Program Manager
Carolyn.ulstad@groundworkcenter.org
Groundwork Center for Resilient Communities

October 7th, 2024 - Groundwork Center for Resilient Communities and Cadillac/Wexford Transit Authority (WexExpress) is pleased to announce that after a thorough and competitive selection process, the team has chosen [WSP](#) to work on the second phase of the Michigan North-South Passenger Rail Project. WSP will be joining WexExpress and Groundwork to advance the study. WexExpress was awarded the State and Federal grants that will help to complete the work required by the consultant over the next year and a half.

About the Consultant:

WSP brings a wealth of experience and expertise in transportation planning and infrastructure development. With 10 offices throughout the state, their team for this assignment is comprised of residents who live and work along the proposed corridor and who are committed to the success of the project.

Focus of Phase Two:

Some main tasks of the planning project include:

- **Ridership and Market Demand:** Based on population, demographics, employment, and where people are traveling, the team will estimate likely ridership and make recommendations for station area investments.
- **Track Condition:** Railroad condition will be evaluated and estimates for upgrades and a priority list for improvements will be created.
- **Proposed Route and Service Options:** This will look at how, where, and when the new service will operate, and what is needed to run the service.
- **Economic and Financial Analysis:** Revenue estimates and the financial plan for the service.
- **Management and Governance Structure:** How the service will be organized, structured, and managed.

- **Community Engagement:** Communication with stakeholders throughout the process to address needs and gather community input.

Project Timeline:

In the coming weeks, WSP will begin their work assessing the rail corridor. The study is estimated to wrap up toward the end of 2025.

“We are excited to work with WSP,” said Carolyn Ulstad, Transportation Program Manager. “We’ve been impressed with their work on other projects throughout the state and feel their expertise will help advance the project.”

About Groundwork and WexExpress:

Groundwork empowers people who want to be part of creating a better Michigan with innovative, local-based solutions that create a clean environment, strong economy, and healthy community.

WexExpress provides Public Transit Service to the residents and visitors of Wexford County. Whether you are going to school, work, or the grocery store, they can get you there. They provide door-to-door service with regional connections to Tustin and Traverse City.

For further information, please contact:

Carolyn Ulstad

Transportation Program Manager

Carolyn.ulstad@groundworkcenter.org

Groundwork Center for Resilient Communities