Kalamazoo Awarded Nearly $38 Million Grant to Reduce Arcadia Creek Flooding

The City of Kalamazoo will receive a nearly $38 million grant to upgrade stormwater infrastructure and reduce the risk of flooding along the Arcadia Creek near downtown. The grant will help fund a multi-year project to redesign and increase the stormwater capacity of the creek.

When it’s completed, about 60 acres of land and 70 homes and buildings will no longer be in a floodplain. It will also make our infrastructure more resilient to increasingly frequent and severe storms. Work will start this year near Westnedge Ave and progress westward in phases until it reaches Oliver St in 2028. A similar project for Arcadia Creek through downtown was successfully completed in the early 1990s.

Currently, much of the creek in this area is underground. The infrastructure it flows through is as old as the 1880s in some areas. The new creek design will uncover more sections of the creek—also known as “Daylighting”—and will help improve the quality of both the water and the environment. It will be coordinated with the upcoming event center and two-way street projects to help create safer connections for pedestrians through the area, too.

The grant funding comes from the Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-saving Transportation (PROTECT) Discretionary Grant Program, made possible by the Federal Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. Kalamazoo’s grant is the largest of 80 awards nationwide. The developers of the event center also contributed nearly $5.8 million to the project.

This grant will address flooding in this area of Arcadia Creek, and City staff are continuing to explore grant opportunities to alleviate flooding along Portage Creek and in other parts of the city.

Creating a Connected City: Streets For All

Keep your eyes peeled for construction headed to downtown Kalamazoo—perhaps on a street near you.

Kalamazoo Streets For All will emphasize the goal of safe travel for all modes of transportation in the city’s downtown.

The campaign will communicate with the community at every step of the way to build awareness and understanding among those who travel downtown and who will experience differing levels of impact during construction work.

Not only will the upcoming work make it safer to navigate downtown Kalamazoo, but it will also:

• Make Downtown Kalamazoo more welcoming and inclusive for all modes of transportation.
• Cultivate a lively, robust atmosphere that increases the amount of time people want to spend downtown.
• Encourage economic prosperity and support local businesses.

The first step in shifting downtown Kalamazoo’s traffic flow will begin on Michikal Street.

Michikal Street updates in 2024 will include:

• Reconstruction of the street, which will remain one-way for the near term. Once it’s able to be converted to two-way, it will have two lanes of traffic heading south toward West Main Street and one lane heading toward Kalamazoo Avenue.
• Sidewalk added to the east side of the street.
• A non-motorized trail on the west side of the street.
• Updating water infrastructure at the intersection of West Main Street, Michikal Street, Michigan Avenue and Stadium Drive.

Work is anticipated to start this year, and additional information will be provided as soon as it is available.

This positive change will lead to long-term prosperity that far outweighs any short-term inconveniences!

We encourage you to stay tuned for additional updates—scan the QR code to sign up for the newsletter!
No Mow May is an initiative during the month of May to let lawns grow undisturbed and give pollinators a food source in the early part of the growing season. In early spring, floral resources may be hard to find, especially in urban and suburban landscapes. By allowing lawns to grow longer, and letting flowers bloom, nectar and pollen become more available to help pollinators thrive.

Not mowing for a few weeks is a simple step in helping the local ecosystem, though it is only part of the solution. It acts as a starting point for moving toward increasing native habitats throughout the urban landscape. If you participate in No Mow May, you will become carbon neutral by 2050.

Other benefits of No Mow May include:
- Better wildlife habitat
- Improved water quality
- Increased biodiversity
- Reduced carbon emissions

One of the most significant benefits of No Mow May is the reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. According to a study by the National Wildlife Federation, mowing lawns contributes to 2% of global greenhouse gas emissions.

With No Mow May, you can make a difference in your local community and contribute to a healthier planet. So, let’s mow less and let nature do the rest!
Beats on Bates, Workout Wednesday Start June 5

Two of Downtown’s favorite event series get started for the season on Wednesday, June 5. Head over after the workday ends, or make a trip downtown to get your workout in, enjoy some live music, or both!

**Beats on Bates** is a free live music series from 5:30-8:30 p.m. on Bates Alley. It offers visitors and locals alike the chance to wind down on a Wednesday evening, grab some food and drinks, and enjoy live music under the beautiful lights of Bates Alley.

**Workout Wednesday** is a fun & free weekly workout in Bronson Park. Every Wednesday at 5:30 p.m., enjoy a different outdoor workout from a local fitness organization.

Summer Events Start with JumpstArt Weekend June 7-8

JumpstArt weekend is when summer officially starts in Kalamazoo, with major events like the Kalamazoo Institute of Arts Fair, Art on the Mall, the Do-Dah Parade, Kalamazoo Pride, and Concerts in the Park bringing our community together and inviting thousands of visitors to experience the best of Downtown Kalamazoo.

On Friday, June 7 the KIA Arts Fair will be in Bronson Park from 3 - 8 p.m., and **Art on the Mall** will be on the Kalamazoo Mall from 12 - 8 p.m. **Kalamazoo Pride** starts at Arcadia Creek Festival Place at 6 p.m.

On Saturday, June 8, the KIA Arts Fair and Art on the Mall continue from 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. The **Do-Dah Parade** steps off at 11 a.m., starting on Lovell St near John St. Kalamazoo Pride starts at 12 p.m.

On Sunday, June 9 the **Concerts in the Park** series starts with the Kalamazoo Concert Band live in Bronson park at 4 p.m.

Visit [jumpstartkzoo.com](http://jumpstartkzoo.com) or the organizer’s websites for more information.

Lunchtime Live! Returns to Bronson Park Starting June 14

Downtown Kalamazoo’s Friday lunch break is back starting on June 14, the first Lunchtime Live! of the year. Lunchtime Live! brings the community together for a lunch in Bronson Park with live music on the stage and lots of local vendors and food trucks to serve you. It’s every Friday from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Lunchtime Live! is sponsored by Lake Michigan Credit Union. Find details and the music lineup at [kzooparks.org/LunchtimeLive](http://kzooparks.org/LunchtimeLive).

First Summer Cinema Showing on June 28

What’s better than a movie outside? Join us this summer for Summer Cinema, a series of free movie showings in our city parks. The first movie will be a drive-in-style showing of The Super Mario Bros. Movie on Friday, June 28 in Spring Valley Park. The next two movies will be chosen by viewers, with showings at Frays Park on July 26 and Crane Park on August 30. Activities start at 6 p.m. and the movie begins at 7.

Mark your calendars! Find more details at [kzooparks.org/SummerCinema](http://kzooparks.org/SummerCinema).

Lunchtime Live! is a free, outdoor weekly event in Bronson Park that brings the community together for a lunch with live music on the stage. Small vendors set up food trucks to serve you.

**Kalamazoo City Commission**

City Commissioners are the elected representatives of Kalamazoo residents. The Commission meets twice each month at City Hall (241 W South Street), typically on the first and third Mondays. Informational Committee of the Whole meetings start at 5 p.m. and Business Meetings start at 7 p.m.

- Mayor David Anderson
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- Vice Mayor Jeanne Hess
  - [hessj@kalamazoocity.org](mailto:hessj@kalamazoocity.org)
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