



Monthly e-Newsletter | October 2020 Edition



Greetings from the Mayor's Office



Just as I was putting my thoughts together for the newsletter, I began to reflect on all that 2020 has thrown at us. As most of us have probably done, I found myself immediately jumping to the normal things that have not taken place since the Covid-19 Pandemic began. We missed our Summer Concert Series, and we also did not host Pumpkin Bash. Instead, I believe we should reflect on the many things that are taking place in Walker.

Just a few days ago, we celebrated a ribbon cutting at the new Blain's Farm and Fleet store in Standale. While the event was small, the celebration for another new business coming into Walker and bringing new jobs is exciting. If you look directly across Wilson to the east, you will see Aldi putting the finishing touches on a new store as it prepares to open next month. Directly next to them, construction on a new Consumers Credit Union and Culver's restaurant is already under way. In the coming year, a little further down the road, is the long-awaited Chick-fil-A restaurant. That is expected to open next fall.

On the north side of our city, in the industrial corridor, the Planning Commission approved the development plans for a new 113,000 square foot Amazon sorting and distribution center. This facility will bring hundreds of new jobs into our city as well. As part of that planned corridor development, the final stages of the Northridge Drive extension are almost complete. Soon, trucks and other traffic will be able to travel from Bristol to Fruitridge (or the other direction) without having to use Three or Four Mile Roads. This will help improve the efficiency of the traffic through the area as businesses continue to make the decision to call Walker home.

As we start to see some normalcy coming back into our lives, many of you are asking the plans for events like Walker's Winterfest. At this point, our intent is to have an alternative type of event that will mitigate a large crowd gathering, even if we are outside. While trying to respect the traditions in holding these events now and going forward, we are working with guidance from the Kent County Health Department to ensure a safe environment for all. We

believe alternative plans are the most appropriate as there are more details to come.

And finally, as we traverse a contentious election season and the frustration we all have with wanting that normalcy back in our lives, I would ask that we are hyper aware of others and the environment in which we are currently. Whether that be with mask wearing, political views, or otherwise, let's maintain that civility that our community is known for and we will get through this all that much easier.

As always, thank you for making the decision to call Walker home.

Mayor Gary Carey, Jr.

[Visit our Website](#)

THANK YOU TO OUR 2020 EVENT SPONSORS!

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MASTER PLAN | CITY OF WALKER, MI



2020 WALKER MASTER PLAN DRAFT

[VIEW NOW >>](#)

From the Income Tax Department

Due dates

Fourth quarter estimated payments for calendar year 2020 are due February 1, 2021.

Forms are available on our website. Simply click [here](#).

Forgotten Returns

If you have past years of Walker returns that you have forgotten to file, contact the tax department immediately at [616-791-6880](tel:616-791-6880).

If you file prior-year returns and pay the tax and interest due, you may request a waiver of penalty. If the tax department contacts you first regarding unfiled returns, you will not be eligible for a waiver of penalty.

We are electronically matching State of Michigan returns filed from a Walker resident address with Walker returns filed. If you have forgotten to file Walker returns from prior years, *now is the time* to get that cleared up before the letters go out from this matching program.

Have questions?

If you are not sure if you need to file Walker Income Tax returns, the most common questions are answered on our [website](#).

You can also call us at 616-791-6880.



M-11 at Remembrance Road Roundabout

MDOT has restriped the section of M-11 that is northwest of the Remembrance Road roundabout.

The striping should depict an offset road section with one lane northwest, 2 lanes southeast, and a center turn lane. This configuration was needed to allow for the new traffic signal at Three Mile Road. The signal installation should occur in the [spring of 2021](#).

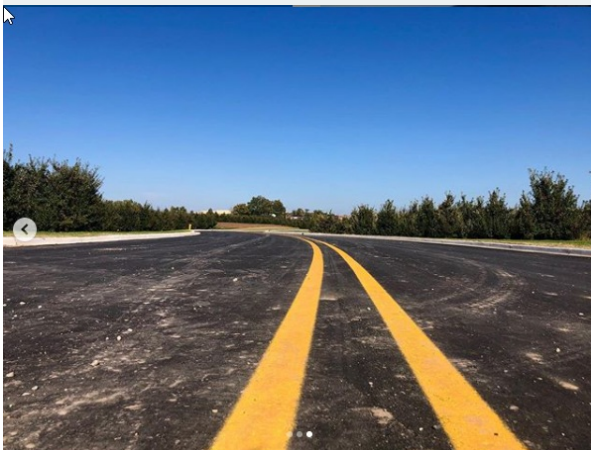
A picture of the MDOT restriping is to the right, while the future plans are detailed in the image above.



North Ridge Connection

The City of Walker's vision for North Ridge Drive is taking a huge step forward this month. After nearly 25 years of diligence, the final connection between Walker Avenue and Fruit Ridge Avenue will be paved in the coming weeks.

This last gap is being completed by the combination of City project across the Schwallier Orchard and a private development by Visser Brothers and their DEG development company. By mid-November we hope to have the missing gap complete and in service.



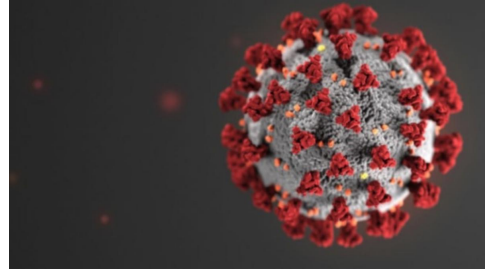
This connection will provide vital emergency response access for police and fire, along with transportation redundancy for employees and visitors to this industrial corridor. With access from three directions, we will have eliminated the longest cul-de-sac in the City with a robust transportation grid.

Coronavirus Disease Resources

Please refer to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's [website](#) for credible information regarding COVID-19 (Coronavirus).

We have added a quick link to the CDC's website under the *residents* tab on our website.

We also encourage you to like and follow the [Kent County Health Department](#) and the [Michigan Department of Health and Human Services](#) on Facebook for helpful tips and reliable COVID-19 updates on a county and state level.



Walker Fire Department: *Department Alerts*

Rules for Open Burning with Permit

In accordance with the Code of Ordinances for the City of Walker, Chapter 34 (Environment), Section 34-55 (Open Burning), listed below are the rules and regulations for the City's Open Burning Policy:

Residential burning is allowed *twice a year*. The burning season begins on April 15th through May 15th and October 15th through November 15th.



Burning permits are free and may be obtained on-line by clicking [here](#). If you do not have an e-mail address, please contact the Fire Office at 791-6840 and we will assist you with your burning permit. If you do obtain a permit, the following rules will apply:

- You may **only** burn on **Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays** during the burning season.
- The burning of leaves and grass clippings is prohibited.
- You are only allowed to burn small twigs.
- **ABSOLUTELY NO COMMERCIAL BURNING** (Contractors, businesses, clearing land, etc.)
- Burning of garbage, rubbish or any other solid waste is prohibited.
- Opening burning shall be supervised and kept under control by an adult who shall be present at the site of the fire at all times and until the fire is completely extinguished without smoldering.
- Fire extinguishing equipment must be readily available at the site of the fire. A supply of water must be available in the immediate vicinity of the fire.
- Opening burning is not permitted within 50 feet of any building or overhead wires.
- Open burning is not permitted in ditches or drainage courses other than the burning of natural vegetation growing therein (with permission from the Fire Dept.)
- No burning in trash barrels or other containers.

- Burning is not slowed until sunrise and must be extinguished at sunset.
- Materials to be burned must be dry and readily combustible. The fire must be small and no black smoke permitted.
- Burning is not allowed when the wind is over **20 mph**.
- You must renew your burning permit every spring.

Lastly, if the Fire Department is called to your address because of a complaint from smoke or odor from your fire, and if our responding fire officer determines that your burning is causing a health hazard or nuisance to your neighbors, you will be asked to extinguish your fire.

BE EXTRAordinary.



Fire Information
Fighter Security

City of Walker Fire Department is seeking

Paid-on Call Firefighters



Contact us:
www.walker.city
 (616) 791-6840
 @cityofwalkerfiredepartment



SCAN ME

Like Walker Fire Department on Facebook

Walker Police Department: *Department News*



Police Submission Activity in the City of Walker has begun to pick back up with several more businesses opening and many schools being back in session. The schools are participating in a variety of learning platforms; from in-person to virtual and a combination of the two. Officers have had to limit contact with the schools due to the COVID-19 restrictions as needed. We do look forward to being able to have a more proactive approach to the schools like the department has had in the past!

National Night Out 2020 took place at the Delta Plex on October 6. Although the event was modified to comply with current restrictions, it was the first community event that first responders in the area were able to participate in since the spring. The event included police, fire and EMS from the area, and we cannot thank the amazing community members who showed up to hang out with us enough! The kids and families who participated came out with energy and support that truly made what we do worth every second. Chief Long, Sergeant Heugel, Sergeant Frank, Officer Johnson and Chaplain Bradley had the opportunity to meet all of you, take pictures and embrace the West Michigan community that we all live in and love! Thank you all again for participating and we look forward to seeing you all again!

As always, keep up with our daily posts on Facebook by liking & following "City of Walker



Like Walker Police Department on
Facebook



Clerk's Department Updates

Election Day is Tuesday, November 3, 2020!

Polls will Open at 7:00 AM and will Close at 8:00 PM.

Did You Know?

By going to [MI.gov/Vote](https://mi.gov/vote) you can:

- Request an absentee ballot and vote from home
- Register to vote
- Verify you are registered to vote
- Find your polling place location
- Update your address
- Track the status of your ballot
- See what will be on your ballot



DON'T WAIT UNTIL IT'S TOO LATE!

Apply for your absentee ballot to be mailed to you now. Everyone can vote via an absentee ballot (by mail). You can email your absentee ballot request to elections@walker.city. Once we have a signed application from you, the voter, we will be able to mail your ballot to the address listed on your application. Ballots are **NOT** allowed to be forwarded to another address by the Post Office. If you need your ballot mailed to a different address, you **must** list the mailing address on your application with the dates you will be away.

City Hall Drop Box:

The **Green** City Hall Drop Box is open 24/7 for residents to drop off your **absentee ballot application or ballot** and any other documents you need to deliver to any city department.



Fall Facility Hours:

Monday - Friday 5:00 am - 9:00 pm | Saturday & Sunday 7:00 am - 5:00 pm



WE'VE MISSED YOU!

Follow us on Facebook and Instagram to stay up-to-date with our latest class schedules & programs starting back up!

Like Walker Ice & Fitness Center on Facebook

The past few months have been tough on everyone and not getting to work out at the WIFC has been especially taxing on so many. But, we are BACK AT IT and so happy to see our members again! It just hasn't been the same without you!

We are committed to keeping everyone safe and well by following requirements from the State of Michigan and Centers for Disease Control. Please review our member safety guide available at www.walkericeandfitness.com. Questions? Feel free to stop by the front desk or call (616) 735-6286.



Learn to Skate

Register now for the November *Learn to*



Skate/ Learn to Play Hockey Session 2! It starts Saturday, November 14th at 10 a.m. Spots are limited so sign up early!

Click [HERE](#) to sign up.



Cross Ice Program

This exciting program starts Saturday, October 17th. This is perfect for kids 5-13 who want to develop their hockey skills and have some fun! Click [HERE](#) to register.

Questions? Call Mike Fountain at (616) 735-6112, or email him at mfountain@walkericeandfitness.com.

Our Pro Shop Is Back Open



It's open and fully stocked with all your hockey needs! We have skates available from a rec level open skater all the way up to a professional hockey player!

New sticks and equipment are in from Bauer, CCM and Warrior. T-shirts and ball caps also available.

Come check us out! If the WIFC is open, so are we!



We are sad to announce that due to Covid-19, the Recreation Department will not be taking

donations for the Grand Rapids Home for Veterans this year. Normally, we start the collection on October 1. Hopefully, we can resume doing this again next year!

The Grand Rapids Home for Veterans is not accepting donation items currently, but they are accepting monetary gifts/donations. If you can donate a monetary gift, any amount will help!! Our Veteran's deserve so much more than what they receive.

Send checks made payable to the **Grand Rapids Home for Veterans: Grand Rapids Home for Veterans 3000 Monroe Avenue N.E. Grand Rapids, MI 49505**

Back At It: Youth Soccer



Although the youth soccer season looks a little different this year, they are back at it! Both parents and kids are enjoying a little different version of getting out and having fun this Fall. A special thank you to all our volunteer coaches! Without you, the season wouldn't happen, we truly appreciate all your help. Also, thank you to all our soccer families for your patience and understanding!



Check out M Parks' [Virtual Play and Wellness Network](#): Physical activities for everyone from children to seniors!



KENT DISTRICT LIBRARY REOPENING PLAN

NOW

- Face mask over mouth and nose required.
- In-branch hours and curbside service available.
Extra measures taken to ensure safety.
- Free printing until the end of 2020.
- Book drops are open.
- Expanded checkout limits for digital materials.
- Programs conducted online.
- Returned materials are quarantined for 96 hours.

Visit kdl.org for details.



LATER (Date TBD)

- In-person programs and events resume.
- Study rooms and children's areas become available.



Visit our Facebook Page

Kent District Library is pleased to announce branches are operating at their normal published hours with one exception – all branches will remain closed on Sundays. Curbside pick-up is offered during open hours.

Walker Branch of KDL Hours

Monday through Thursday 9:30 - 8 pm.

Fridays and Saturdays 9:30 am - 5 p.m.

Sunday: *Closed*

For health and safety reasons, KDL will continue to have guidelines in place:

- Masks are required during your visit.
- Private study rooms are not available for use and play spaces are closed.
- Patrons are asked to limit their visits to one hour. Computer use will be limited to an hour a day.
- Returned items remain in quarantine for 96 hours.
- The governor's Executive Order requires KDL to limit building capacity to 25%.
- Programs will continue to be conducted online.

Kent District Library Expands Printing and Scanning Services

KDL has upgraded its printing and scanning services to make them more robust, intuitive and easy to use. TBS Printing, installed at all KDL branches, allows patrons to effortlessly print documents, emails and web content from any internet enabled smartphone, tablet, laptop or desktop directly to KDL's existing printers.

Click [HERE](#) to access our printing portal. Each KDL branch now has a ScanEZ Station, an easy to use touch screen scanning solution that can scan, save and send your documents or photos practically anywhere. The new system provides users high speed scanning and copying via a patron-friendly interface. Patrons can even restore old, faded photos and documents and translate copy to text or audio in over 100 languages!



Write Michigan:

Write Michigan is an event series held by Kent District Library, located in Kent County, Michigan, that is dedicated to nurturing and promoting local literary talent.

The [Write Michigan Short Story Contest](#) is an annual statewide competition that began in 2012 and is open to all ages. We also offer a [poetry contest](#) for Kent County teens and a free, biannual [writers conference](#). Short story writers, grab your laptops for the 9th annual Write Michigan Short Story Contest, presented by [Kent District Library](#) and [Schuler Books](#).

Writers of all ages can enter, with cash prizes awarded for Readers' Choice, Judges' Choice and Judges' Runner-Up. We also have a category for Spanish-language stories from kids age 11 and younger. Winning entries will also be published by [Chapbook Press](#).

The Basics:

- One short story per author
- Maximum story length: 3,000 words
- Entry fee: \$10 for ages 18 and older (free for ages 17 and younger)
- Contest open to Michigan residents only
- Complete contest guidelines available in [English](#) and [en Español](#).

What's New This Year?

In the past, we've had an all-ages Spanish-language category. This presented a challenge to reviewers and judges due to the wide age range of authors. So this year, we're piloting a Spanish language youth category for kids ages 11 and younger. We hope to be able to add Spanish language categories for teens and adults in the future. In addition, judges will award one writer a slot in Johnathan Rand's 2021 [Author Quest writing camp](#) for kids ages 10-13.

Important Dates:

Entries Accepted

September 1 – Noon, November 30, 2020

Review Process

December 2, 2020 – January 6, 2021

Semifinalists Announced

January 11, 2021

Public Voting Online / Judges' Review

January 11-31, 2021

Winners Announced

February 4, 2021

Awards Ceremony, Anthology Sale & Book Signing

March 13, 2021

Kent District Library Launches SPARK Collection

Kent District Library is pleased to introduce the SPARK collection, which contains books for adult beginning readers. The collection is available at all 19 KDL branches and the Bookmobile. Each location offers the same assortment of about 90 titles.



The SPARK collection was the result of KDL's partnership with the Literacy Center of West Michigan. The Adult Tutoring Program is the original program of the Literacy Center and remains the backbone of their work.

Samantha Hodge, Collection Development Librarian at KDL, met with representatives from the Literacy Center to discuss their needs for their tutors, the types of materials they use and the CASAS reading levels, which is how the SPARK collection will be organized. Literacy Center tutors and students and all beginning adult readers can visit any KDL branch to find books compiled for them. Hodge used a catalog of the Literacy Center's collection of materials to choose and label books for the SPARK collection.

"Literacy is a foundation for a full adult life, providing not only a connection to the world around us, but also the independence to make our own choices," said Hodge. "With the SPARK collection, KDL will be a proud partner for adults working to improve their literacy skills and reach incredible goals."



Community Engagement Committee

The City of Walker's Community Engagement Committee is continuously looking for ways to get the community more involved in different events, but also wants to make a difference in the community as a group. The Committee decided to adopt three sections of road within the three different wards of Walker through the [City's Adopt-a-Road Program](#). They split up into groups and cleaned sections of Richmond Street, O'Brien Street, and Pannell Street.

If you have an interest in learning more about the Adopt-A-Road Program for

Friends of Walker Trails News



The Friends of Walker Trails has a Facebook page! Follow along for updates and news on our lengthy network of trails right here in Walker, as well as the [West Michigan Trail Challenge!](#)

Like Friends of Walker Trails on Facebook

Walker Firehouse Cafe / Senior Neighbors

The pandemic may have separated us physically, but it can't keep us from interacting with each other in unique ways!

Check out our *Phone Activities* for the month of October:

BINGO

Mondays, Wednesdays & Fridays w/ Sherri at 11am

BOOK CLUB

Wednesdays w/ Lora at 9:30am

RHYTHM BAND

Fridays w/ Lora at 9:30am

PHONE PALS

Call Sherri at (616) 735-3240 and get connected to a fellow Walker Senior Center senior.

PHOTO WALK

Enjoy some time walking in nature. Take a picture and text or email it to Sherri to share in the November mailing.

Questions? Contact Sherri Meines at (616) 735-3240 or by [email](#).



October Birthdays!



Carolyn Bachan

Gloria Gilbert

Lynn Hojnacki

Florence Reilly

Visit Walker Senior Neighbors

