

City Connection

SPRING 2026

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SPRING CHECKLIST

Pay property taxes

March 2 is the last day to pay property taxes at City Hall

Spring ahead

Daylight Savings Time begins **March 8**—now is a good time to check your smoke alarms

Get your skating in

The last day for the Howard Ice Arena is **March 15** (as long as the weather is cold)

Consider yard waste services

Best Way begins yard waste collection **March 15**—contact Best Way to sign up

Rake leaves*

Spring leaf collection begins **March 16** and lasts through **April 24**

Register for your parks pass*

Seasonal parks parking passes are required beginning **April 6**

Pay water bill

City water bills are due **April 21**

Put out brush for collection*

Brush collection will take place the weeks of **April 6 & May 4**

**more information inside this issue*



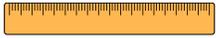
CITY OF
St. Joseph

Follow the guidelines to ensure your leaves and brush are picked up!

BRUSH COLLECTION

Brush and branches up to 8 feet long and 6 inches in diameter are collected by the City's Department of Public Works from the curbside during the first full week of each month, April through November.

Brush pickup is completed city-wide. There is not a defined route nor is it associated with a homeowner's trash day. Brush should be in the street gutter for the first day of the collection week for the month.



Limbs and brush must be **less than 6 inches in diameter and no longer than 8 feet**



Keep completely clear of **streets, sidewalks, mailboxes, street lights, sign poles, landscaping fences, overhead tree branches and power lines**

No:



building lumber or railroad ties



leaves



ornamental grasses or garden vegetation



large limbs/ removed trees



lawn clippings



bags of waste



rocks

SPRING LEAF COLLECTION

Residents may rake leaves into the street gutter avoiding placement on or near city drain tops. Loose leaves can block the city sewer lines from working properly.

Residents on Niles Avenue, Main Street and Lakeshore Drive should bag their leaves in bio-degradable kraft paper yard waste bags rather than placing them in the street gutter. Contact Public Works to arrange for a bagged leaf pickup.

Other residents who bag their leaves are required to purchase and place a Best Way sticker on the bag. Bags should be set out on your regular garbage day for pick-up through the yard waste disposal program.

No:



branches



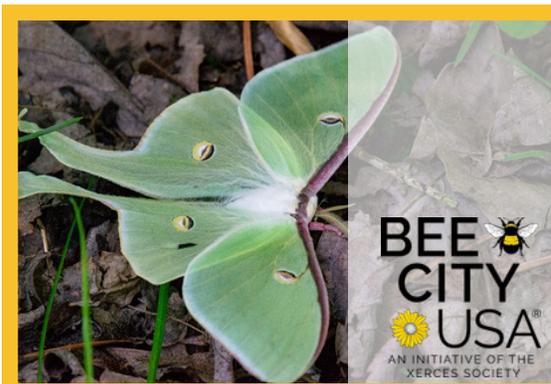
rocks



bags of waste

If any prohibited items are mixed in the brush or leaf collection piles, the entire pile will be left for the homeowner to dispose of.

Questions about pickup? Contact **Public Works** by calling 269-983-6341.



Want a lively, pollinator-friendly yard?

Consider leaving some leaves and/or brush in your yard. Overwintering bees and other pollinators (including fireflies!) use leaf litter and brush piles as shelter. Consider leaving your leaves until temperatures are consistently above freezing.



SCAN FOR MORE INFO

Worried about delinquent property taxes?

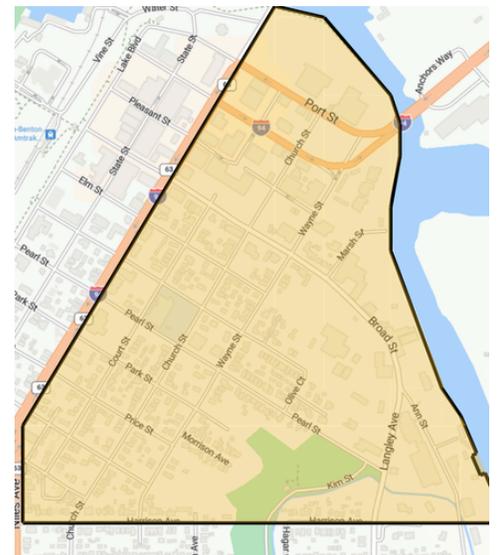
Berrien County Treasurer, Shelly Weich has been visiting municipalities across the county to assist taxpayers who are in jeopardy of foreclosure. Shelly will be hosting office hours on **Friday, March 6** from **1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.** at City Hall (700 Broad Street). If you are unable to make that date and time, Shelly will be visiting other municipalities through March 20. Visit berriencounty.org/treasurer to see the full schedule.

Spring construction update

Sidewalks are a very important means of travel for our residents. Our sidewalk replacement program helps eliminate unsafe sidewalks by systematically inspecting and repairing the City's sidewalks. This year's program is planned for the northeast quadrant of the City (north of Harrison Avenue and east of Niles Avenue/Main Street—see map.)

Sidewalks with a one-inch difference at any point between adjacent squares or that have other trip hazards, cracks, surface deterioration or other safety concerns are replaced. Sidewalks with a difference of 1.5 inches or greater are considered "urgent repairs" and, when identified, will be included in the replacement project regardless of location.

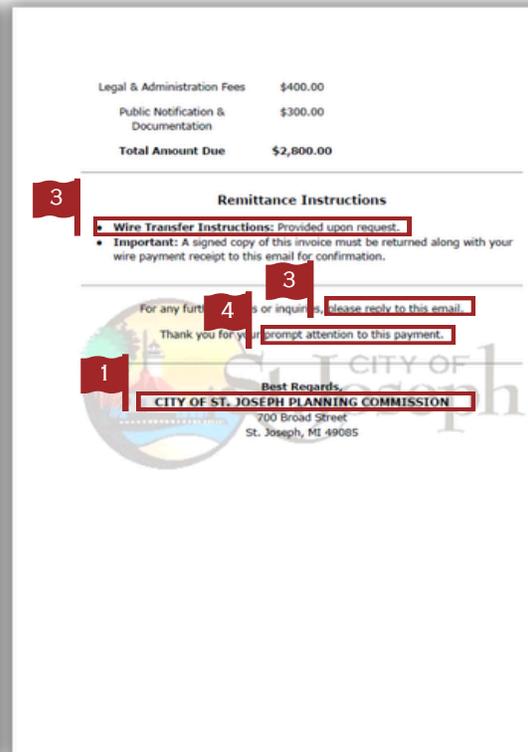
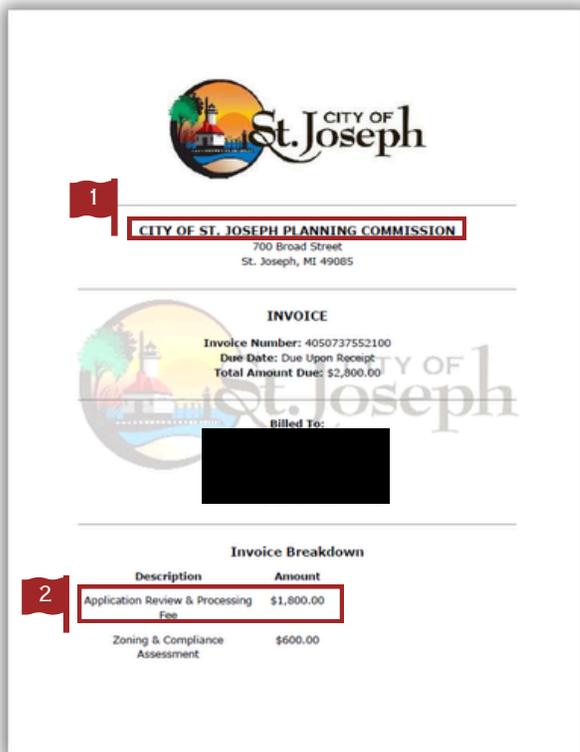
Sidewalks marked for repair have been identified with white paint. Generally, sidewalk projects take between four to six weeks to complete, with work taking place anytime between late spring and early fall. For more information, contact the **Engineering Department** by calling 269-983-5541.



Don't fall victim to fraud

The City has been notified of several fraudulent invoices pretending to be from the City Planning & Zoning Department requesting payment via wire transfer. This is a scam—do not respond. If you are unsure about communications from the City requesting payment, please call **City Hall** at 269-983-5541.

Here's an example of a real-life fraudulent invoice impersonating the City. Fortunately, this special event applicant knew something wasn't right. Look for some of the following **red flags**:



- 1 The invoice comes from a board or commission**
Official City correspondence is normally sent by a City department or official rather than a volunteer board.
- 2 Confirm charges**
A schedule of application fees is available online, but many applications, like special events or board membership, do not have any fees associated with them.
- 3 Unofficial contact methods**
Official City Correspondence will give a name and specific contact information instead of "reply to this email." Spammers use this technique to keep you from checking the actual email address of the sender.
- 4 Awkward phrasing or grammar**
While not always the case, awkward phrasing or grammar in combination with other red flags can be an indicator of a scam.

Tip: read the sender's email address carefully. Does that person work for the City? Have you seen that address in other communications? Look for tricky lettering like .corn (.CORN vs .COM) designed to take advantage of skimming habits.

Events

Savor the Shoreline

Throughout March

Select restaurants will offer specials during Savor the Shoreline. Complete a passport by dining at a minimum of five participating locations by Friday, April 3 for a chance to win prizes!

Spring Artisan Market

March 7 from 11a-4p | Union + Social

Antiques on the Bluff

May 3 from 10a-5p | Lake Bluff Park

Find hidden treasures along Lake Bluff Park at this premier antique show that overlooks Lake Michigan.

Lighthouse Tours

Sat. beginning May 23 from 10a-7p | Tiscornia Beach

Explore the free first-floor exhibits and dive into the rich nautical history of St. Joseph/Benton Harbor or pay \$5 to climb to the top for spectacular panoramic views.

BLOSSOMTIME

Blossomtime Youth Parade (toddler-middle school)

May 2 at 12:00 p.m. | State Street

Run for the Buds 5/10K | May 9 @ 10:30a, Main Street

Sign up at runsignup.com

Grand Floral Parade | May 9 @ 1p, Main Street

Watch over 120 units including bands, floats, clowns, costumed characters, antique vehicles, unicycle teams, equestrian units and the famed Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Motorcycle Drill Team during the 120th year of the parade.

KIDS

Story Time (babies, toddlers, preschool)

Wed. @ 10:30a

It's Elementary (1st-3rd grade) | 2nd Tues. @ 6p

March: *National Pack Your Lunch Day*

April: *National Gardening Day*

May: *National Limerick Day*

Block Play! | May 27 & 28 at 1p

Pages & Paws | 3rd Wed. @ 4:30p

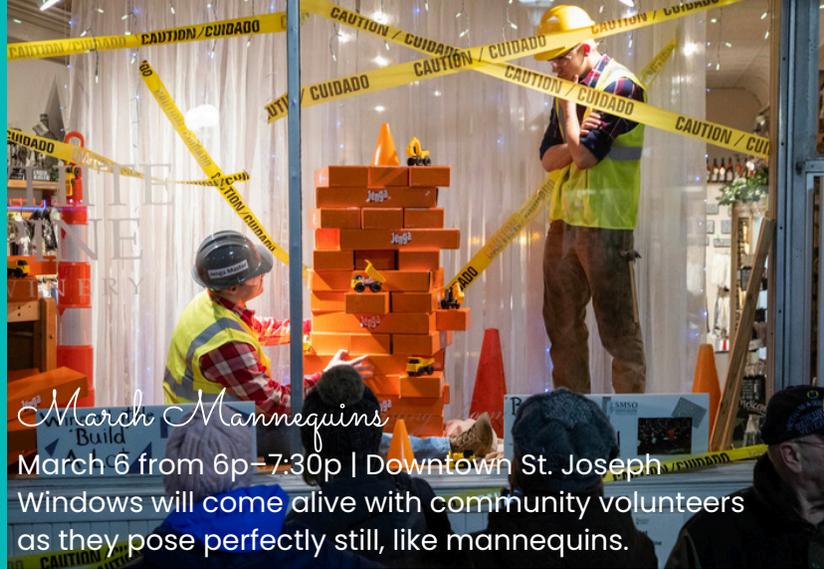
Let your little one grow their reading skills and confidence with this program which allows them to read to an adorable pup.

TEENS

Anime Club | 1st Fri. @ 4p

Mix it up with Cookie Mix! | March 11 @ 6p

Jelly Slime! | April 8 @ 6p



March Mannequins

March 6 from 6p-7:30p | Downtown St. Joseph

Windows will come alive with community volunteers as they pose perfectly still, like mannequins.

Visit stjoetoday.com for more information

Farmers Market

Sat. beginning May 23 from 9a-2p | Lake Bluff Park

Vendors will offer a variety of products including baked goods, locally grown produce, perennials and cut flowers, meats and cheeses, coffee and more!

Dog Day at the Compass Fountain | April 30 from 4p-6p,

Whirlpool Centennial Park

Bring your furry friend to splash around in the Compass Fountain before opening day.

Lory's Place Run, Walk, Rock

May 16 @ 7:00a | Lory's Place

Learn more at lorysplace.org/events

Police Memorial Day Service

May 15 | Lake Bluff Park

Visit LibraryByTheLake.org for more information on Library events.

Library Closed | May 9

GAME NIGHTS

Chess Club | Wed. @ 4p

Euchre Nights | Thurs. @ 5:30p

Scrabble Club | Thurs. @ 5:30p

Dungeons & Dragons (teens-adults)

2nd Sat. of the month from 12p-4p

BOOK CLUBS

BYOB Book Group | 1st Tues. @ 6p

Read Against the Machine | 3rd Tues. @ 6p

Lake Bluff Book Club | Last Wed. @ 6:30p

Maud's Makers (age 13+) | 4th Tues. @ 6p

Join us for our "Arts, Crafts, & Mindfulness" Club!

SPECIAL EVENT

The Nitty Gritty: Voting Rights

You May Not Know About

March 11 from 6p-7:30p

MOVIE MATINEE

1st Fri. @ 1p

March: *The Spanish Prisoner*, 1997, Thriller, PG

April: *That Thing You Do*, 1996, Comedy-drama, PG

May: *The Band's Visit*, 2007, Comedy, PG-13

Register your vehicle(s) for your resident parks pass



Paid parking is in effect in City parks **April 1–October 31** at the following locations:

- Tiscornia Beach
- Elm St. Lot (Whirlpool Compass Fountain)
- Lion's Park
- Kiwanis Park

St. Joseph residents can register their vehicles for free parking all season. Our parking system works by license plate, so you'll need to register your vehicle(s) license plate with the Department of Public Safety to avoid a ticket. Residents must re-register every year. Visit sjcity.com/publicsafety/page/city-resident-passes (or scan the QR code) to register for your parks pass.

2026 Property Maintenance Program

Every year, the City conducts neighborhood inspections based on the International Property Maintenance Code to prevent blight, maintain property values, and improve the overall safety and quality of life in our neighborhoods.

This year's program will focus on the southwest side of the City (Area 4B—see the map to the right.)

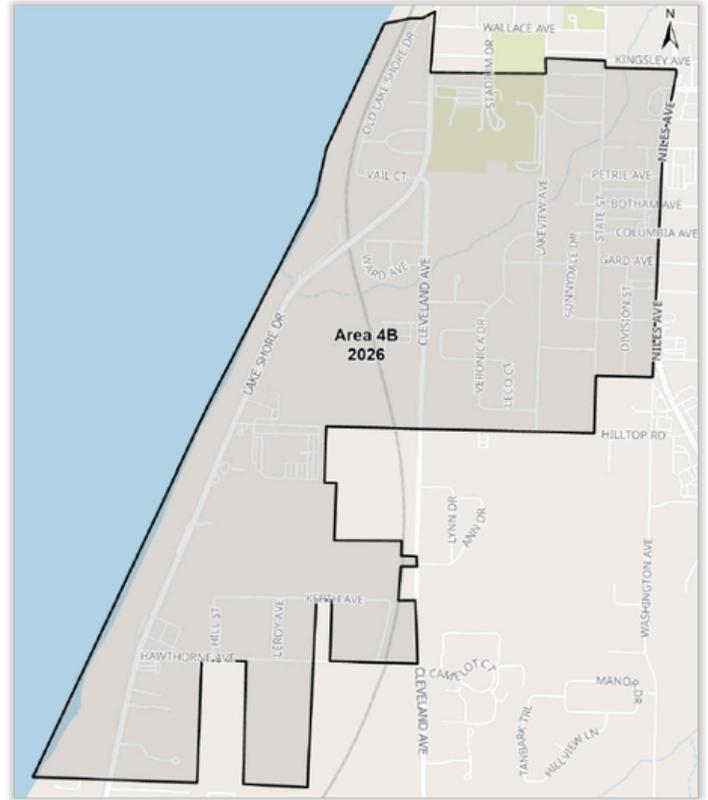
City inspectors will examine the exterior conditions in the neighborhood and will require owners to repair any deficiencies, such as:

- peeling paint
- deteriorated surfaces
- missing handrails
- missing house numbers
- any other signs of disrepair

Inspections will be conducted by viewing each property from adjacent public sidewalks, streets and alleys, or occasionally from private property with consent.

If the inspections finds the property does not meet the IPMC requirements, the City will send a Correction Notice to the owner in May. Owners of property that “passes” inspection will not receive a formal follow-up letter.

Questions? Contact the **Inspections Department** by calling 269-983-1212.



Need help financing home repairs?

Berrien County offers the Homeowner Impact Program (HIP) to provide funds for the purpose of rehabilitating single-family owner-occupied homes for low-to-moderate income residents. Grants can provide up to \$35,000 for necessary home improvements (like energy efficiency, roofs, windows, insulation, etc.), and are selected on a lottery basis. Funding is a forgivable loan—homeowners only have to repay money if the home sells for profit.

For more information, contact the **Berrien County Land Bank** at 269-983-7111.



DON'T FORGET TO SNAP A PIC!

Photo submissions for our 2027 calendar contest are due August 31. Look in the back of your 2026 calendar or scan the QR code for more information.





City Connection

SPRING 2026

HOMETOWN HISTORY

The Village of St. Joseph was chartered on March 7, 1834, however, that wasn't our original name. When Calvin Britain first laid out the village plat, he named the community "Newburyport" after a coastal city in Massachusetts.

YOUR CITY COMMISSION

Mayor Brook Thomas
bthomas@sjcity.com

Mayor pro tem Michael Fernandez
mfernandez@sjcity.com

Commissioner Mike Sarola
msarola@sjcity.com

Commissioner Tess Ulrey
tulrey@sjcity.com

Commissioner Lisa Vetne
lvetne@sjcity.com

 SJcity.com

 info@sjcity.com

 **City Hall**
700 Broad Street
Open M-F 8a-5p

 Call **269-983-5541** to reach City Hall

Upcoming Closures:
Good Friday, April 3
Memorial Day, May 25

Scan the QR code to view upcoming Board and Commission meetings:



FOLLOW THE CITY OF ST. JOSEPH, MI GOVERNMENT ON SOCIAL MEDIA:

