

## *M-45 Pedestrian Tunnel*

### *Making Progress*

In November of 2014, the City, in partnership with the West Michigan Trails and Greenways Coalition, kicked off a \$2.6 million dollar funding campaign for the Lake Michigan Drive Pedestrian Tunnel.

The Fred Meijer Standale Trail currently has a missing link at Lake Michigan Drive that directs trail users, via sidewalk, a half mile out of their way to cross at a signalized intersection. However, many trail users cross the five-lane road to continue along the alignment of the trail which can be dangerous. Our goal is to create a crossing that people of all abilities can use to continue on our beautiful trail system safely.

After numerous donations from local businesses, individuals, the City of Walker's contribution, local community foundation grants, and the support of the Michigan Department of Transportation, we are one step closer to connecting our trail system safely and completing the missing link. This project is approximately \$25,000 away from our total funding goal but the City is optimistic that the remaining funding will be met in time for construction.

Below is a short estimated project timeline:

- Design is complete
- Project out for bid - January 2016
- Contract award (contractor selected) - February 2016
- Utility relocations - Winter 2016
- Construction estimated to begin - March / April 2016
- Tunnel to be built in three phases - south side, north side, and center (connecting both sides)
- Traffic reduced to one lane in each direction on Lake Michigan Dr. - Spring/Summer/Fall 2016
- Full closure of Lake Michigan Dr for one weekend - Summer 2016 (to allow for construction of center portion)
- Estimated substantial project completion - September 2016
- Ribbon cutting ceremony - Fall 2016

City staff is working hard to make this project a reality. We will be sure to share all updates with the community as we get closer to milestones. Be sure to follow the progress of the tunnel on our Facebook page and the e-newsletter. We can't wait to celebrate this exciting new addition to our community!

If you would like to donate to the Lake Michigan Drive Pedestrian Tunnel or have questions, please contact [akneibel@ci.walker.mi.us](mailto:akneibel@ci.walker.mi.us)



Left to right Scott Conners, City Engineer, Mayor Mark Huizenga, and Darrel Schmalzel, City Manager

# Message from the Mayor



Greetings,  
January is already here! I hope that you and your family spent time relaxing and enjoying the holidays. I am especially thankful to our Police and Fire Department for their service over the holiday season.

As I reflect on 2015, I am proud of all of our accomplishments:

**Transparency:** The city strives to be inclusive and transparent. This year we added the ability for anyone to listen to the dialogue that occurs at our city meetings. To learn more about this

feature, go to the city website, click on recent meetings, select the meeting you want to review then click on audio minutes.

**Community Events:** The Spring started off with the Annual Easter Egg Hunt! Many families participated in this annual tradition. The Memorial Day parade was a hit with floats representing many organizations. The Standale Summer Concert Series was a success! Next summer, look for our new community amphitheater. We kicked off the Fall with a new event, Pumpkin Bash. This event brought community together to celebrate the fall season with cider and doughnuts, crafts for children and a petting zoo. We finished off the year with the second annual Winter Fest. Thanks to all who assisted in these events. I hope that you were able to participate and we hope to see you at future events.

**Roads:** This year, we had several road projects. The city spent over \$800,000 for road repairs and paving projects. Several neighborhoods saw new asphalt. Remembrance Road was repaired and resurfaced from Walker Village to Wilson Avenue. The roundabout was completed in August. This dramatic change has kept traffic in this intersection moving safely. MDOT resurfaced Wilson Avenue from the Grandville border to Lake Michigan Drive.

**Business & Residential Growth:** As the region continues to rebound economically, the city continues to grow in both business and residential. Several residential developments were started or expanded in 2015. The Community Development Department reported 95 commercial building permits valued at \$29 million, 39 Industrial permits were issued with a valued at \$22 million and 207 residential permits were issued with a valued at \$9 million.

**Public Safety - Fire Truck:** This year the city purchased a new fire truck. We have been saving for the past several years in order to avoid debts or payments associated with this vehicle. The fire truck is designed with stainless steel to reduce maintenance and decrease costs over time.

**Traffic signals:** The city has received grants from MDOT and will work to upgrade the intersection at Northridge and Fruitridge to prepare for a future traffic signal (near Irwin seating). This will enhance the safety of this busy road. As businesses continue to grow in the North Wilson area the signals at Wilson and 3 Mile will allow for additional traffic to travel through this intersection via a new left turning light.

Best wishes to you and your family for a successful and prosperous new year!

Mayor, Mark E. Huizenga

**Mayor:** Mark Huizenga  
Ph: 735-2950 E: mhuizenga@ci.walker.mi.us

**First Ward Commissioners:**  
Al Parent  
Ph: 262-1204 E: aparent@ci.walker.mi.us  
Dan Kent  
Ph: 784-5591 E: dkent@ci.walker.mi.us

**Second Ward Commissioners:**  
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Gary Carey  
Ph: 292-1715 E: gcarey@ci.walker.mi.us

**Third Ward Commissioners:**  
Cynthia Stek  
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Sandra Howland  
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## City Staff

**Assessor:** Kelly Smith  
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**City Clerk:** Sarah Bydalek  
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**Community Development:**  
Frank Wash, Assistant City Manager and  
Community Development Director  
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**District Court 59th:** Judge Peter P. Versluis  
Ph: 453-5765

**City Engineer:** Scott C. Conners, P.E.  
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**Finance Manager:** Cindy Lewis  
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**Fire/Police Departments:**  
Robert Walker, Deputy Chief of Fire Operations  
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**Income Tax Director:** Julie Blok  
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**Department of Public Works Director:**  
Mark Koning  
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**Treasurer:** Dan DeVries  
Ph: 791-6852 E: ddevries@ci.walker.mi.us

**Communications Manager:** Amber Kneibel  
Ph: 791.6856 E: akneibel@ci.walker.mi.us

# Income Tax Department

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## 2015 Walker Income Tax Returns are Due May 2, 2016

### Who must file

Every resident or part-year resident of Walker (this includes renters) who had taxable income in 2015 of \$600 or more must file a return. More information on taxable income can be found here:

[http://www.ci.walker.mi.us/government/departments/income\\_tax/income\\_tax\\_faqs.php](http://www.ci.walker.mi.us/government/departments/income_tax/income_tax_faqs.php)

All Walker addresses have Grand Rapids mailing addresses so please do not assume you are not a Walker resident based on your mailing address. Visit the following link on the Walker website to check whether your address is within the city limits of Walker and click on the Street Directory link on the right side of the page.

<http://www.ci.walker.mi.us/government/departments/assessing/index.php>

If you have past years of Walker returns that you have forgotten to file, contact the tax department immediately at 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 continuing the process of 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 you receive an assessment from this compliance program.

### Estimated Payments

The fourth quarter estimated payment for 2015 Walker Income Tax is due February 1, 2016.

If your employer does not withhold Walker Income Tax or you have non-wage income (rental income, capital gains, premature pension distributions, etc.) that is subject to tax and you think you may owe more than \$100 with your 2015 return, you must make quarterly estimated payments. The 2015 Quarterly Estimated payment vouchers with instructions can be found:

- In the 2014 Resident Forms and Instructions booklet
- On our web site at [www.ci.walker.mi.us/income\\_tax\\_forms](http://www.ci.walker.mi.us/income_tax_forms)
- By mail--call us at 616-791-6880

You must pay in at least 70% of your current or prior year liability (whichever is lower) through timely estimates, credits or withholding to avoid receiving a bill for penalty and interest for underpayment of estimated tax. If you need help calculating safe estimates, please call us for assistance at 616-791-6880.

Please note that paying all four 2015 quarterly estimates with the fourth quarter voucher due February 1, 2016 may result in a bill for penalty and interest for failure to pay timely estimates.

# Fire Department

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## Carbon Monoxide Safety

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a gas. It has no odor. CO gas is poisonous. It can make a person feel sick and can be deadly. Heating and cooking devices that burn fuel can be sources of carbon monoxide.

### CO Alarms

- CO alarms should be installed outside each sleeping area. Install alarms on every level of the home. It is best to use interconnected alarms because when one alarm sounds, all CO alarms in the home sound. If interconnecting is not feasible, battery operated CO detectors are still very effective.
- Follow the instructions on the package to properly install the CO alarm. CO alarms should be replaced every ten years, so be sure to mark the date of installation on your alarm so you know when it was installed.
- Test CO alarms at least once a month.
- Replace CO alarms according to the instructions on the package.
- Know the sounds the CO alarm makes. The alarm will sound if CO is detected. It will make a different sound if the battery is low or if it is time to get a new CO alarm.
- If the battery is low, replace it.

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# Six Month City Calendar

## Something for you to remember us by...

The City now offers two yearly printed newsletters delivered to your home or business in January and July. We also offer a monthly electronic newsletter with timely updates, events, and deadlines.

In order to make sure you don't miss important City dates, we now offer a six month calendar in the printed edition. This calendar will serve as a great reminder tool. Due to limited space, only brief details are listed. If you need more information on any of the events or deadlines listed below, please visit our website at [www.ci.walker.mi.us](http://www.ci.walker.mi.us) or call us at (616)453-6311. We would be more than happy to assist you with questions.

**If you would like to sign up for our email newsletter, please email [akneibel@ci.walker.mi.us](mailto:akneibel@ci.walker.mi.us)**

## FEBRUARY

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	Girls' Softball & Spring Soccer Registration Begins 4th Quarter 2015 withholding due	1 2	3	4	5	6
7	Last day to register for March Presidential Primary Election	8 9	10	11	12	13
14	City office closed	15 16	17	18	19	20
Valentine's Day	Presidents' Day					
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	2015 WW-3 forms due January withholding due	29				

## MARCH

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	Presidential Primary	8 9	10	11	12
Daylight Saving	13	14	15	16	17	18
				St. Patrick's Day		
20	21	22	23	24	25	11am - Easter Egg Hunt
27	28	29	30	2016 February withholding due	31	
Easter						

# APRIL

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3	Last day to register 4 for May Election  Adult Softball Registration Begins	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	Tax Day 15	16
17	18	19	20	21	Earth Day 22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

# MAY

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	1st Quarter 2 2016 withholding due	Election 3	4	Walker 5 Clean Up Day	Walker 6 Clean Up Day	Walker 7 Clean Up Day
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
<b>Mother's Day</b>						
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	City office closed -30 Memorial Day  Walker Memorial Day Parade -12pm	April withholding 31 due				

*The following meetings are always open to the public:*

**City Commission:** 6:30 p.m. on the second, third, and fourth Monday of the month.

**Planning Commission:** 7:00 p.m. on first and third Wednesday of the month.

**Zoning Board of Appeals:** 7:00 p.m. on the second and fourth Wednesday of the month.

\*Meetings above are all held at Commission Chambers (City Hall, 4243 Remembrance Rd., NW)

**Downtown Development Authority:** 7:30 a.m. on the third Tuesday of the month.  
Fire Station #2 (4101 Lake Michigan Drive)

# JUNE

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	Standale Concert - 9 Kari Lynch Band 6:30PM	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	Standale Concert 23 - Adam's Family Band 6:30PM	24	25
<b>Father's Day</b>						
26	27	28	29	May withholding due 30		

# JULY

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3	City office closed 4	5	6	Standale Concert 7 - Soul Syndicate 6:30PM	8	9
	<b>Independence Day</b>					
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	Standale Concert 21 - TBD 6:30PM	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

*Connect with the City for even more updates:*



[www.facebook.com/CityofWalkerMI](http://www.facebook.com/CityofWalkerMI)



[@CityofWalkerMI](https://twitter.com/CityofWalkerMI)

*Fire Department continued...*

- If the CO alarm sounds, you must get fresh air. Move outdoors or by an open window or open door. Make sure everyone in the home gets to fresh air. Call the Fire Department from a fresh air location. Stay there until help arrives.

### **Prevent CO Poisoning**

- When warming a vehicle, move it out of the garage. Do not run a fueled engine indoors even if garage doors are open. Make sure the exhaust pipe of a running vehicle is not blocked. Clear snow away.
- During and after a snowstorm, make sure vents for the dryer, furnace, stove and fireplace are clear of snow build-up.
- Clear all debris from dryer, furnace, stove, and fireplace vents.
- A generator should only be used outdoors. Use in a well-ventilated location away from windows, doors, and vent openings.
- Gas or charcoal grills can produce CO. Only use them outside.
- Have heating equipment and chimneys inspected by a professional every year before cold weather sets in.
- Open the damper when using a fireplace for adequate ventilation.
- Never use your oven or stove to heat your home.

## *Walker Ice & Fitness Center and Recreation*

### *Upcoming Events & Programs*

#### **Easter Egg Hunt**

Saturday, March 26, 2016 at 11:00 a.m.  
Walker Ice and Fitness Center  
4151 Remembrance Rd. NW  
Boys and Girls ages 2-8  
Hunt for wrapped candy and prize eggs  
Easter Bunny available for pictures

#### **Walker Memorial Day Parade**

Monday, May 30, 2016 - 12:00 p.m.  
Registration deadline: Monday, May 9, 2016  
Parade route: Lake Michigan Dr. NW between  
Lincoln Lawn NW and St. Clair NW  
All veterans, bands, floats, companies and  
organizations are invited to participate  
Entry forms available at Walker Ice & Fitness Center  
or on our website.

#### **Girl's Softball**

Girls - 6-13 years of age  
Practices and games on Tuesday and Thursday  
evening practices begin week of April 11  
First game on Tuesday, April 26, 2016  
Registration: Feb 1 – Feb 29 at  
Walker Ice & Fitness Center

#### **Girls' Softball Umpires Needed**

Minimum age is 14 years old  
Must have softball experience

#### **Co-ed Spring Youth Soccer**

Boys and Girls 5-13 years of age  
Practices on weekdays, Games on Saturdays  
Practices begin the week of April 11  
First game on Saturday, April 23, 2016  
Registration: Feb 1 – Feb 29 at  
Walker Ice & Fitness Center

#### **Youth Soccer Officials Needed**

Minimum age is 14 years old  
Must have soccer experience

#### **Adult Softball**

Softball Leagues offered for Men's, Women's and  
Co-ed teams eight week season beginning  
June 13, 2016  
Registration April 4 - April 16  
Information packets available in March

#### **Adult Softball Umpires Needed**

Participation in Walker umpires classes required

For complete information on all of our programs, special events and schedules, please contact the Walker Ice and Fitness center at 735-6286, visit our facebook page or our website at [www.walkericeandfitness.com](http://www.walkericeandfitness.com)

 For more updates, visit us on [www.facebook.com/WalkerIceFitness](http://www.facebook.com/WalkerIceFitness)

# Clerk's Office

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PRSRT STD  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
GRAND RAPIDS, MI  
PERMIT NO. 793

## Updates

### Upcoming Election

The Presidential Primary Election is March 8, 2016. Sample ballots will be available on our website or you may view one in the Clerk's Office. Check the website for updates regarding the Election. Last day to register to vote for this election is Monday, February 8, 2016. You can register at the City Clerk's office or any Secretary of State Branch office.

### Absentee Ballots

If you are over 60 years old, you qualify to be on our Permanent Absentee Voter List. This allows you to automatically receive an Application to Vote prior to each Election. You then complete the application and return it to the Clerk's Office to receive your ballot. If you wish to be on this list, contact the Clerk's Office. If you already receive an application, you are already on the list and do not need to contact us again.

### Passports

You can apply for a passport in the Clerk's Office. No appointments are necessary during normal office hours. Evening and weekend appointments can be made by calling the Clerk's Office to make arrangements. Visit our website for details on the requirements.

### City Hall Drop Box

Any documents you need to turn into the Clerk's office may be dropped off in the City Hall drop box outside City Hall. (i.e. Absentee ballot applications, signed and sealed absentee ballots and license applications and payments).

# Police Department

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## Winter Driving Safety Tips

The Walker Police Department would like to offer you some tips on driving safely in snow and ice:

1. Allow yourself extra time to reach your destination. This will ensure that you do not go too fast for conditions.
2. Brake about three times earlier than you normally would. This way, if your car skids you will not collide with the cars in front of you or skid through an intersection.
3. Do not pass snow plows or ice trucks. The visibility for these vehicles is very low and the road in front of them will likely be far worse than the road behind them.
4. Make sure that your entire car is free of snow and ice before departing.
5. Do not use cruise control on snowy or icy roads.
6. If visibility is too low to continue stop at a nearby establishment. Do not pull over on the side of the road and wait for visibility to get better. To access these tips and more like them visit [weather.com](http://weather.com). Winter driving can be very difficult and dangerous so do not drive in snow or ice unless it is absolutely necessary.