

FEATURED

Madison Township leaders achieve success with variety of projects in 2018

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An excavator cleans up the remains of a former gas station that was demolished at Chapel and Hubbard roads in Madison Township. The demolition project was completed through a collaborative effort involving township trustees and the Lake County Land Bank.



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Editor's Note

This is one in a series looking at how individual communities and broader governments and economies in The News-Herald's coverage area fared in 2018 and what is being expected in 2019.

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Madison Township government leaders in 2018 achieved success in completing paving projects and helping to bring down eyesore buildings.

When it came to street improvements, trustees this year awarded contracts that resulted in the paving of North Dock Road between Lake Road and Lake Erie, as well all Cunningham Road and Norton Drive. The paving of Cunningham and North Dock roads, covered in the same contract, was classified as an Ohio Public Works Commission project, in which the township and state split the costs 50/50.

"We've been lucky the last few years to get (the Ohio Public Works Commission) to help out with some road projects," said township Trustee Board Chairman Peter Wayman. "It's a big help to the community."

Trustees also were pleased to see the Lake County Engineer's Office this year carry out a project that paved Middle Ridge Road between County Line Road and Route 528 in the township. This project, which cost \$725,000, and the paving of other county roads and bridges, were part of a five-year program proposed by Lake County Engineer James Gills.

Last year, the state legislature passed legislation allowing county commissioners to pass an additional \$5 permissive fee on license plates in their counties for road and bridge projects. Lake County

commissioners approved the tax increase in July, and the additional fee will raise about \$1.25 million annually to improve the county's roads and bridges.

Madison Township trustees wrote a letter of support to commissioners earlier this year, urging the county panel to approve the \$5 increase.

"This will allow more paving to come to our township's county roads over the next few years," Wayman said.

In an effort to eliminate blight from the township, trustees worked with the Lake County Land Bank on two separate initiatives.

First, a cooperative effort between the township and Land Bank led to the demolition of a dangerous and dilapidated former apartment building on Green Road. Trustees credited township Administrator Tim Brown for playing a pivotal role in getting the building torn down, according to trustees' meeting minutes from Oct. 23.

Brown knew the owner of the building and was able to connect that individual with the Lake County Land Bank, according to the same meeting minutes.

Madison Township and the land bank teamed up again in 2018 to demolish an abandoned gas station on the northeast corner of Chapel and Hubbard roads. Trustee Ken Gauntner had been working since 2014 on a solution bring down the abandoned gas station, which was described as "one of the biggest eyesores in Madison Township" in trustees' meeting minutes from Nov. 27.

The building itself has been leveled, and it's hoped all debris will be removed from the lot by Jan. 4.

Meanwhile, trustees in 2018 also made it easier for township residents to spruce up their yards. They did this by expanding the township's branch dropoff site to accept yard waste, such as leaves and grass clippings.

"People love it and use it," Wayman said, noting that there weren't many other places in the area where residents can go and get rid of yard waste. The dropoff site is located behind the Madison Township Service Garage on Hubbard Road.

Looking ahead to 2019, Wayman said the township hopes to accomplish some of these goals:

- To solidify and finish all projects going on at Stanton Park related to restroom construction and renovation; and installation of a new heating, ventilation and air-conditioning system in the park's banquet hall.