City of Otsego Newsletter

A Publication of the City of Otsego

Fall/Winter 2026

FALL LEAF PICK-UP

Dates for the pick-up are the following:

1st Round - November 2 - 5

****Farmer & Allegan St. (M-89) - Nov. 5**

2nd Round - Nov. 16 - Nov. 19

****Farmer & Allegan St. (M-89) - Nov. 19**

***PLEASE NOTE THAT RANDOM PICKUPS MAY OCCUR BEFORE AND BETWEEN SCHEDULED PICKUPS.**

***Please do not put the leaves out before October 28th.**

Watch for additional announcements on the City's Website, in the "Shoppers Guide", and Facebook.

The City's policy is to canvass all streets at least twice during the two week pick-up period. If the leaves are not in the street they will not be picked up. *REMEMBER: With the exception of Allegan Street & Farmer Street, all leaves are to be raked into the street next to the curb.* FINAL ROUND OF PICK-UP WILL BE FOLLOWED BY THE STREET SWEEPER. Once the Street Sweeper has passed pick-up is complete.

Please do not place anything *except* leaves in the street. The City places these leaves on a compost pile and therefore, branches, twigs and other yard waste must not be included. Brush and other yard waste may be taken to the City's Transfer Station free of charge. It is the City's policy to canvass the City two times. If leaves are placed in the street after completion of the canvassing, they will not be removed. It is the resident's responsibility to dispose of the leaves at the Transfer Station.

CYNDI TROBECK COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD

Congratulations Ginger Titus - for being awarded the Cyndi Trobeck Community Service Award at the October 5, 2026, City Commission Meeting.

Cyndi played a pivotal role in getting Ginger engaged and would be ecstatic with this choice. Ginger, thank you for all that you do.

Winter Parking Rules

Beginning November 1, parking is once again PROHIBITED on any public street in the City of Otsego from **2:00 a.m. to 5:00 a.m.** Parking is restricted during the months of November through April in order to facilitate snow removal. Violators will be ticketed.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION!

Included Inside

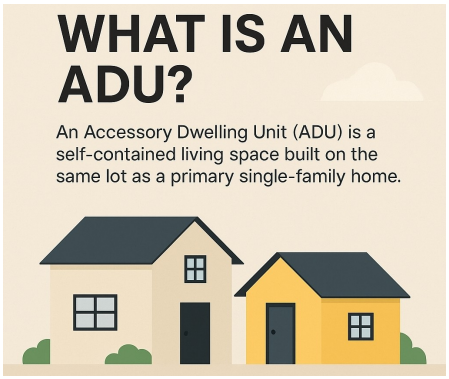
- ***Preparing for Frozen Water Pipes***
- ***2026 December Board of Review***
- ***Winter Reminders***
- ***Save the Dates - Halloween, Hometown Christmas***
- ***November 2026 General Election Information***
- ***Early Voting***

City Manager
Aaron Mitchell

CITY MANAGER'S VIEW

Since the beginning of 2026, I have made a conscious effort to get as much information in the resident's hands as possible. Each month I have put a series of topics in an update that is posted on or before the 1st of every month on the City's website. These vary from new information that may be relevant for that month or valuable information that should be brought to your attention that some may not be aware of. If you would like to review this month's update or any of the prior months' visit www.cityofotsego.org and find my updates on the front page. Below are some of the recent highlights that I want to bring to your attention:

Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Allowance- Recently our Planning Commission has created the permitting possibility of building an ADU on your residential property. ADUs were previously not allowed. However, as the City of Otsego has monitored and reviewed societal residential changes; adding ADUs was an area that made sense to help improve our residential housing options. ADUs are small secondary homes that are utilized for family members to help give space and independence but still offer a safe place to rely on family members if needed. Think of a child who may not be ready to live on their own or an elderly parent that is no longer able to live independently and not wanting to go to a nursing home. An ADU allows for our residents to stay in their homes longer and save substantial money during these trying moments for our family members. If you have any questions about ADUs or want an application stop by city hall.



Lead Service Line Replacement- As we have mentioned for years now, the State of Michigan is requiring for all lead water service lines to be replaced at the cost of the water provider. We have been working to identify all service line compositions, which we received a grant last year of over $350K for. However, we are now at the point of needing to replace those 600+ services that we have identified. Mulling over options to pay for this expensive and laborious task we decided to apply for a low interest loan from the state. We were fortunately awarded and were offered 0% APR and 10% loan forgiveness grant! When you calculate the savings from the 0% interest rate over 20 years, that alone saves us over $1M! Then to hear that we received a grant for 10% of the loan, it was basically like the cherry on top of the sundae! That equated to over $400K in savings in addition. This was particularly great news due to the fact that we just increased water rates substantially to pay for these replacements. This project is scheduled to begin June of '27. We all will be excited to be done dealing with the tracking, repairing and documenting of any lead service lines. I have stated it hundreds of times before but it merits stating again; we have never had a lead problem or even a single failed lead water test. This work is 100% complying with a State of Michigan unfunded mandate.

Director of Police & Fire, Brad Misner

OTSEGO POLICE DEPT.

Fall Safety Reminders from the Otsego Police Department

As the days get shorter and the temperatures begin to drop, fall is a good time to review a few seasonal safety reminders from the Otsego Police Department.

Overnight Parking Begins November 1
A reminder to residents that the City of Otsego's overnight parking restriction begins November 1. Parking is prohibited on public streets between 2:00 a.m. and 5:00 a.m. from November through April. This restriction helps keep streets clear for snow removal and allows our crews to work safely during the early morning hours. Please make arrangements to park vehicles off the street during these hours, particularly as winter weather approaches. Vehicles left on the street may be ticketed.

Slow Down as Fall Conditions Change
Fall brings changing driving conditions. Wet leaves, frost, fog and reduced daylight can all affect visibility and stopping distances. Please give yourself a little extra time, slow down when conditions require it, and watch carefully for pedestrians, bicyclists and wildlife.
Drivers should also be especially alert for deer during the fall months. If you see one deer near the roadway, remember that others may be nearby.

Halloween and Trick-or-Treating Safety
Halloween is a fun tradition in our community, but it also brings increased pedestrian traffic after dark. Parents and children can help keep the evening safe by carrying flashlights, wearing reflective or brightly colored clothing when possible, and using sidewalks and designated crossings.

Drivers should use extra caution in residential neighborhoods on Halloween night and be prepared for children who may unexpectedly enter the roadway.
Before enjoying treats, parents should also check candy and other items brought home by children.

School and Bus Stop Safety
With students traveling to and from school each day, please continue to be mindful of children near schools, crosswalks and bus stops. Slow down, remain alert and obey crossing guards and traffic signs.

As the days get shorter, children may be walking or waiting for the bus when it is still dark or beginning to get dark. Extra attention from drivers can make a big difference.

What Should I Do?
What should I do if I see something suspicious?
Trust your instincts and pay attention to what you observe. If there is an immediate threat or emergency, call 911. For situations that are not an emergency, contact the Police Department through its non-emergency contact options. When reporting an incident, providing details such as the location, description of a person or vehicle, and what you observed can be helpful.

What should I do if I see a deer near the roadway?
Slow down and be prepared for additional deer. Deer often travel in groups, so seeing one may mean others are close behind. Use your high beams when appropriate and safe, and avoid swerving if a collision becomes unavoidable.

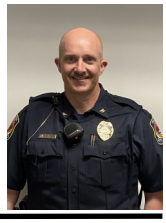
What should I do if I have an overnight parking concern?
Remember that the overnight parking restriction begins November 1. Plan ahead and move vehicles off public streets between 2:00 a.m. and 5:00 a.m. If you have a question about parking regulations or need clarification, contact the City or Police Department before leaving your vehicle on the street.

Look Out for Your Neighbors
Fall is also a great time to look out for one another. If you notice something unusual or have a concern about a neighbor, property or vehicle, don't hesitate to contact the appropriate authorities. Community awareness and communication help keep Otsego a safe place to live.

From all of us at the Otsego Police Department, we wish everyone a safe and enjoyable fall season. Thank you for doing your part to keep our roads, neighborhoods and community safe.

OTSEGO FIRE DEPARTMENT

Director of Police & Fire, Brad Misner



Fall and Winter Fire Safety: Preparing for the Colder Months

As we move into fall and prepare for the colder months ahead, now is a great time to take a few simple steps to keep your home, family and community safe. Many of the hazards we see during the fall and winter months can be prevented with a little preparation.

The Otsego Fire Department encourages everyone to take a few minutes this season to review these important fire and life-safety reminders.

Stay Safe When Heating Your Home
As temperatures drop, heating equipment becomes an important part of our daily lives. Before turning on your furnace for the season, make sure it has been properly inspected and serviced when needed.

If you use a fireplace or wood-burning stove, have the chimney inspected and cleaned regularly. Keep anything that can burn—including furniture, decorations and firewood—a safe distance away from heating equipment.

Space heaters also require special attention. Keep them on a solid, level surface, away from anything that can burn, and always turn them off when leaving the room or going to bed.

Check Your Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarms
Fall is an excellent time to make sure your smoke and carbon monoxide (CO) alarms are working properly.

Test your alarms regularly and replace batteries as needed. If an alarm is more than 10 years old, it may be time to replace it, depending on the manufacturer's recommendations.

Every home should have working smoke alarms on every level, outside sleeping areas and inside bedrooms as recommended. Carbon monoxide alarms should also be installed in appropriate locations throughout the home.
Remember: **If your alarm sounds, take it seriously and get outside.**

Know Two Ways Out
Every household should have a fire escape plan, and everyone should know at least two ways to get out of each sleeping area when possible. Take a few minutes to review your plan with your family. Make sure everyone knows where to meet once they are outside, and remember that children, older adults and anyone who may need additional assistance may require extra planning. Practice your escape plan so that everyone knows what to do before an emergency happens.

Be Careful in the Kitchen
As the holidays approach, kitchens often become some of the busiest rooms in our homes. Never leave cooking unattended, especially when frying, grilling or cooking at high temperatures.

Keep anything that can catch fire away from stovetops and other cooking appliances, and remember to turn appliances off when you are finished cooking.

If a small grease fire occurs, **do not use water**. Turn off the heat if it is safe to do so and carefully cover the pan with a lid. If the fire cannot be controlled immediately, leave the home and call 911.

Candles and Decorations
Fall and winter decorations can make our homes feel warm and inviting, but candles and open flames require extra caution. Keep candles at least a safe distance from anything that can burn, and never leave a burning candle unattended. Consider using battery-operated candles as a safer alternative.

As holiday decorations go up, make sure electrical cords are in good condition and avoid overloading outlets or power strips.

Generator Safety
Power outages can happen at any time during the colder months. If you use a portable generator, **never operate it inside your home, garage or other enclosed space**. Generators produce carbon monoxide, an odorless and potentially deadly gas. Operate generators outdoors and well away from doors, windows and vents, and always follow the manufacturer's instructions for safe operation.

What Should I Do?
What should I do if my smoke alarm goes off?
Treat every alarm as a real emergency. Get everyone outside and stay outside. Once you are safely outside, call 911 and do not go back inside until firefighters have determined it is safe.

What should I do if I smell natural gas?
Leave the building immediately and move to a safe location. Do not turn lights or electrical switches on or off, and do not use anything that could create a spark. Once you are safely away from the area, call 911 and your gas utility.

What should I do if the power goes out?
Use flashlights instead of candles whenever possible. If you use a generator, make sure it is operating outdoors and away from doors, windows and vents. Never use a grill, camp stove or other outdoor cooking appliance inside your home to provide heat or cooking during an outage.

A Little Preparation Goes a Long Way
Fall is the perfect time to prepare for the months ahead. Take a few minutes to test your alarms, check your heating equipment, review your family's escape plan and make sure everyone knows what to do in an emergency.

Fire safety is a community effort, and simple steps can make a significant difference.

From all of us at the Otsego Fire Department, we wish you and your family a safe, healthy and enjoyable fall and winter season. Thank you for doing your part to keep Otsego safe.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 30, 2026
4PM TO 6PM
TRAIL FOR TREATERS
DOWNTOWN OTSEGO
Presented by:
Otsego Rotary

SEWER BACK-UPS - Call City Hall first at 692-3391.If it is *after hours*, please contact our Police Department at 692-6111.

NOVEMBER 1, 2026

WINTER REMINDERS

- **WATCH FOR SNOW PLOWING VEHICLES**
- **REMEMBER FRONT YARD PARKING IS PROHIBITED.**
- **REMEMBER SIDEWALKS NEED TO BE KEPT CLEAR**

CITY HALL HOURS

MONDAY - THURSDAY
7:30 A.M. TO 5:30 P.M.
FRIDAYS - CLOSED

RECYCLE CURB-SIDE PICK-UP

FIRST & THIRD *TUESDAY* OF THE MONTH

TRANSFER STATION HOLIDAY HOURS

CLOSED
November 26, 2026
Dec. 24, 2026
Dec. 31, 2026

RENTAL INSPECTIONS HAVE STARTED

PCI PROFESSIONAL CODE INSPECTIONS

Save the Date!
December 5, 2026

Watch the Shopper's Guide for event times and details
Activities for all ages.

CITY HALL WILL BE CLOSED

November 26, 2026 & December 23, 24, 30, & 31 2026

Angela Cronen

City Clerk's Office

ELECTION NEWS - GENERAL ELECTION

Tuesday, November 3, 2026

- Early Voting - Saturday, October 24, 2026 through Sunday, November 1, 2026. 8AM to 4PM at City Hall
- Election Day Tuesday, November 3, 2026 - Hours 7AM to 8PM.
- The City of Otsego maintains a Permanent Absentee Ballot List (a ballot is sent to you automatically). If you would like to be on the list, please contact the City Clerk for more information.
- Please take a moment to thank the Election Workers who are serving your community. They put in many hours of training before the elections, nine days of Early Voting, and many hours on Election Day. The City of Otsego is very fortunate to have such great election inspectors!
- If you have any questions regarding your Voter Registration, please call 692-3391 or email acronen@cityofotsego.org
- Exercise Your Right To Vote!

FROZEN WATER PIPES

If you experience discoloration in your water or reduced water pressure, ***please notify*** City Hall immediately at 692-3391. As temperatures fall, our Water Department may advise customers to ***leave one faucet running with a pencil size stream of water.*** Please be aware if it is a very cold winter ~ although temperatures may rise above freezing, the potential still exists for freezing water lines. Do not stop running water until you have called City Hall and been advised to do so. Otsego City Hall ***must be notified when you begin running your water and when you cease running your water***, for any *potential* adjustment to be made on your utility bill. **Please watch for Public Notices in the *Shopper's Guide, our Facebook Page, & Website pertaining to running water. Call 692-3391, if you have any questions.***

Contact Us

NOW is the time to prepare for cold temperatures and insulate your water pipes. Please be advised that if your inside pipes freeze, it is not the responsibility of the City, and credits will not be issued.

SEWER BACK-UPS - Call City Hall first at 692-3391.If it is *after hours*, please contact our Police Department at 692-6111.

HELP US KEEP FIRE HYDRANTS CLEAR OF SNOW

Snow is invariably not far away. As a reminder, residents are responsible for maintaining free and unobstructed access to fire hydrants. We thank you in advance for keeping those accessible to us when we urgently need them.

2026 DECEMBER BOARD OF REVIEW

The December Board of Review will be meeting on Tuesday, December 15, 2026; at 10:00 a.m., *City Hall.* If you disagree with the percentage shown for your Principal Residence Exemption on your Winter 2026 taxes, you must contact City Hall ***before*** Thursday, December 10, 2026. If you have any questions, please call 692-2741.

City of Otsego Treasury Corner – Fall/Winter 2026

Brian Kelley,
Finance Director

We hope everyone had a great summer! As we welcome some cooler weather and a busy Holiday season coming up, we wanted to offer some dates to be aware of and some helpful hints to avoid common issues noted by City Hall staff.

Firstly, 2026 winter tax bills will be mailed out on November 30, 2026. Winter payments are accepted beginning December 1 and will be due, without penalty, before end of business on Tuesday, February 16, 2027. As a reminder, winter taxes are generally due February 14, but in 2027, the 14th is a Sunday and February 15 is a Federal holiday, so the taxes are due on February 16 this year only. As another reminder, the city does not accept postmarks, so any payment received after February 16, 2027 will be subject to penalty and interest.

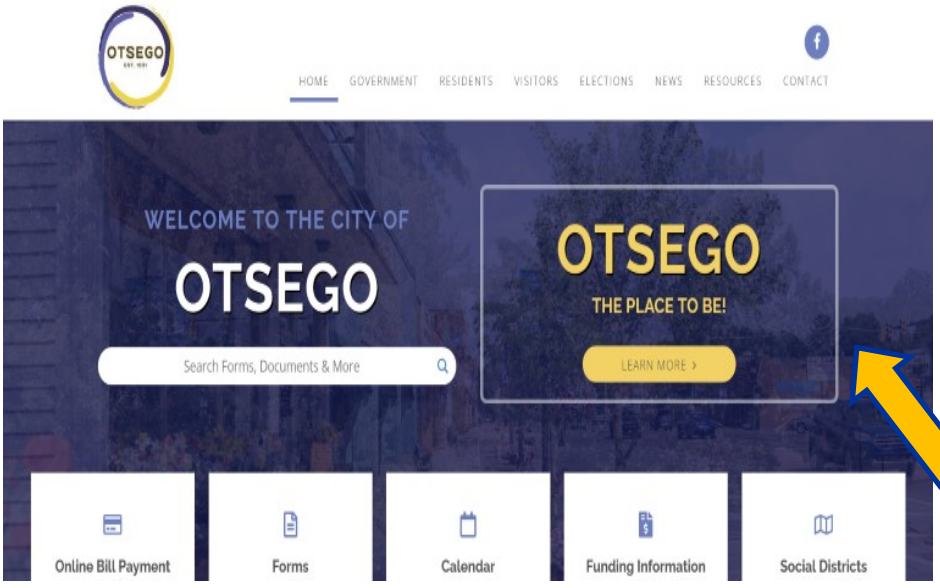
Speaking of payments, we wanted to ask that anyone writing a traditional check to pay your property tax or utility bill, please take an extra moment to make sure the check is filled out correctly. In this age on paying bills with a card or cash, sometimes we don't write traditional checks that often and it's easy to overlook the "how to" part of writing a check. First, any check should be made payable to "City of Otsego". Second, make sure the numbers are clear and legible and show the decimal point. Third, the written words section is the most important part of the check and where you should focus. Especially for property taxes, the amounts may be higher, so there may be more words than you're used to. When writing this section, sound out the amount like your favorite teacher in school used to do, then write all of the words that way. For example, "one *thousand* six *hundred* seventy-two and 13/100". A helpful hint is that you don't need to write the word "dollars" in this section because that word is already printed on your check. Lastly, don't forget to sign your check and include our portion of your billing statement so we know how to apply your payment. Check writing can be confusing, so if you'd like a formal refresher on how to write a check, you can check out the Huntington Bank website https://www.huntington.com/learn/checking-basics/how-to-write-a-check or an article from Good Housekeeping, https://www.goodhousekeeping.com/what-to-buy/sales-shopping-news/a44359107/how-to-write-a-check/

If you're more comfortable using your bank's online bill pay service, we would like to ask you to create separate payment records for paying your utility bill and your city property tax bill. The information on your online bill pay record has your account number, which is probably your utility bill account number. When you make a payment, the bank reports that account number to us, so when you pay property taxes, we still see your utility billing account number. That's why we ask that you use separate bill pay records. **Any questions you have on making a payment, please call us at City Hall and we'll be happy to help.**

2026 Summer Taxes can still be paid at Otsego City Hall. Both summer and winter taxes can be paid here through March 1, 2027. Any taxes not paid by that date will be turned over to the Allegan County Treasurer for collection on March 2, 2027. If you have any questions on the property tax collection process, please contact us at City Hall.

Brian Kelley, City Treasurer / Finance Director

Lura Holden, Deputy Finance Director



REMINDER

CITY COMMISSION MEETINGS
1ST & 3RD MONDAY OF THE MONTH

PLEASE CHECK OUR WEBSITE
WWW.CITYOFOTSEGO.ORG
FOR AGENDAS, MINUTES & OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

CITY OF OTSEGO CALENDAR

OCTOBER, 2026

1	CITY TRASH PICK UP DAY	
5	CITY COMMISSION	7:00 P.M. CITY HALL
6	CITY BRUSH PICK UP DAY	
6	CURBSIDE RECYCLING DAY	
19	CITY COMMISSION	7:00 P.M. CITY HALL
20	CURBSIDE RECYCLING DAY	
24 - NOV 1	**EARLY VOTING NOVEMBER GENERAL**	CITY HALL 8AM - 4PM
26	PLANNING COMMISSION	7:00 P.M. TBA
30	TRAIL FOR TREATERS - DOWNTOWN ONLY	
31	HALLOWEEN	

NOVEMBER, 2026

2	CITY COMMISSION	7:00 P.M. TBA
NOV 3	**GENERAL ELECTION**	7:00 AM - 8:00 PM CITY HALL
3	CITY BRUSH PICK UP DAY	
3	CURBSIDE RECYCLING DAY	
5	CITY TRASH PICK-UP DAY	
16	CITY COMMISSION	7:00 P.M. CITY HALL
17	CURBSIDE RECYCLING DAY	
23	PLANNING COMMISSION	7:00 P.M. CITY HALL
26	**CITY HALL CLOSED**	

DECEMBER, 2026

1	CITY BRUSH PICK-UP DAY	
1	CURBSIDE RECYCLING DAY	
3	CITY TRASH PICK-UP DAY	
5	HOMETOWN CHRISTMAS	
7	CITY COMMISSION	7:00 P.M. CITY HALL
15	CURBSIDE RECYCLING DAY	
21	CITY COMMISSION	7:00 P.M. CITY HALL
28	PLANNING COMMISSION	7:00 P.M. CITY HALL
23, 24 & 25	**CITY OFFICES CLOSED**	
30, 31	**CITY OFFICES CLOSED**	

JANUARY, 2027

1	**CITY OFFICES CLOSED**	
4	CITY COMMISSION	7:00 P.M. CITY HALL
5	CITY BRUSH PICK-UP DAY	
5	CURBSIDE RECYCLING DAY	
7	CITY TRASH PICK-UP DAY	
18	CITY COMMISSION	7:00 P.M. CITY HALL
19	CURBSIDE RECYCLING DAY	
25	PLANNING COMMISSION	7:00 P.M. CITY HALL

FEBRUARY, 2027

1	CITY COMMISSION	7:00 P.M. CITY HALL
2	CURBSIDE RECYCLING DAY	
2	CITY BRUSH PICK-UP DAY	
4	CITY TRASH PICK-UP DAY	
15	CITY COMMISSION	7:00 P.M. CITY HALL
16	WINTER TAXES DUE	
16	CURBSIDE RECYCLING DAY	
22	PLANNING COMMISSION	7:00 P.M. CITY HALL

MARCH, 2027

1	CITY COMMISSION	7:00 P.M. CITY HALL
2	CURBSIDE RECYCLING DAY	
2	CITY BRUSH PICK-UP DAY	
4	CITY TRASH PICK-UP DAY	
15	CITY COMMISSION	7:00 P.M. CITY HALL
16	CURBSIDE RECYCLING DAY	
22	PLANNING COMMISSION	7:00 P.M. CITY HALL

CITY CONTACTS

Police & Fire Emergency……..…911

Fire Non-Emergency…….694-4390

Police Non-Emergency…….692-6111

Chief of Police……...692-6111

City Manager ……...…….694-6146

City Clerk ……..…...……...692-3391

Finance Director ..……692-2741

Dept. Public Works ……..….694-6636

Website:
www.cityofotsego.org

OTSEGO
EST. 1831

CITY OF OTSEGO

Stacey Withee……..……Mayor
Lauri Krueger…..…...…..Mayor Pro-Tem
Wayne Rayburn...……..…..Commissioner
Chuck Moore Jr...……..…..Commissioner
Jason Smith.....……..……..Commissioner
Aaron Mitchell……..…..City Manager
Angela Cronen..……...City Clerk
Mike Bosch…..Director of Public Services
Brad Misner…….Director of Police & Fire
Brian Kelley……..……...Treasurer
Lydia Paille……..……..…..Assessor

117 East Orleans Street
Otsego MI 49078
269-692-3391

CITY HALL WILL BE CLOSED

November 26, 2026 & December 23, 24, 30, & 31, 2026