



Grand Haven Area
Community Foundation

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Amy Moore, Vice President of Grants & Program, GHACF
amoore@ghacf.org
(616) 842-6378



Rendering of the proposed North Bank Park accessible playground in the Village of Spring Lake

Village of Spring Lake Awarded \$250K GHACF Grant for North Bank Park Project

March 2, 2026— Grand Haven, MI – The Grand Haven Area Community Foundation announced today its latest round of Community Impact Grants, awarding more than \$551,000 to support projects that strengthen Northwest Ottawa County.

Among the funded projects is a \$250,000 grant to the Village of Spring Lake for the redevelopment of North Bank Park, formerly Central Park. This transformational project will incorporate Universal Design principles to ensure the park is welcoming, inclusive, and accessible for individuals of all abilities.

Plans include a fully accessible playground, pavilion, restroom facility, shade structure, dog park, sledding hill, and expanded pathways with lighting to enhance connectivity to the regional North Bank Trail. Every element is designed to accommodate diverse needs, strengths, and preferences, creating a space that can be enjoyed year-round by children, families, and adults across the community.

"The Village has worked hard to ensure each component of this project, aside from the sledding hill, meets universal accessibility standards," stated Peter Vanderberg, Spring Lake Village Assistant Manager. "With the support of the Grand Haven Area Community Foundation's Community Impact Grant, this represents a meaningful advancement in expanding recreational opportunities for individuals who have historically been underserved."

Design highlights include extra-wide sidewalks to accommodate wheelchairs, walkers, and strollers, as well as restroom spaces thoughtfully built to serve adults with disabilities and remain open year-round.

"This is the perfect project for our focus area of Economic and Community Betterment," said Amy Moore, Vice President of Grants & Program at GHACF. "The unique use of Universal Design principles and focus on accessibility will be a significant long-term asset for the community, and we couldn't be more pleased to help this vision come to fruition."

Construction is expected to begin in April 2027 and conclude in July 2027.

Additional Community Impact Grants Awarded Include:

Focus Area: Arts and Culture

Grand Haven Free Fridays – Expansion of Concert Series (\$25,000)

Grand Haven Free Fridays organizes six free summer concerts at the Lynne Sherwood Waterfront Stadium in July and August, each highlighting a local nonprofit partner. This grant will support expanded programming to include weekday concerts in neighborhood parks throughout Grand Haven. The expansion will create additional opportunities for families to gather, support local musicians, and raise awareness and funds for area nonprofits.

Walk the Beat — Walk the Beat Street Music Festival (\$11,000)

Funding will enhance marketing and promotion efforts for the Walk the Beat Street Music Festival to broaden community awareness and increase attendance. Support includes improved signage, advertising, and the addition of a part-time social media intern. The festival benefits East Side businesses and provides proceeds to local nonprofits, including the Repeat the Beat program, which offers music lessons and instruments to low-income students.

Focus Area: Environment

Ottawa Conservation District (OCD) – Tri-Cities Invasive Species Management (\$34,073.05)

This grant will help retain and support the Invasive Species Specialist position at the Ottawa Conservation District. The specialist leads the Ottawa Strike Team in coordinated management efforts across more than 1,800 acres of parks, trails, and natural areas. The project expands detection, mapping, treatment, and municipal collaboration across Grand Haven, Spring Lake, and Ferrysburg, reducing long-term ecological damage and protecting community infrastructure.

Focus Area: Health & Human Services

Grand Haven Charter Township — Fire/Rescue Stream Training Prop (\$14,538)

Funding will help acquire a Hose Stream Training Prop — the only one of its kind in the region — to provide hands-on training for firefighters in Northwest Ottawa County and West Michigan. Firefighters will learn essential skills such as water mapping, air entrainment, and effective hose stream techniques that will help suppress fires more quickly, reduce property loss, and improve life safety for community residents. The prop will also support youth programs such as the Ottawa County Fire Academy, Careerline Tech Center, and the 911 Summer Academy, strengthening the future public safety workforce.

Good Samaritan — Lakeshore Housing Alliance Expansion Project (\$60,000)

This grant will fund two full-time staff positions for the Lakeshore Housing Alliance: a Continuum of Care Coordinator and a Homeless Management Information System Database Administrator. Expanding beyond its current single staff member (the LHA Director), the Alliance will significantly strengthen coordination of services and frontline support for individuals experiencing homelessness throughout Ottawa County.

Momentum Center — Tri-Cities Friendship Bench Pilot Program (\$106,700)

The Friendship Bench Pilot Program is a one-year initiative led by the Momentum Center to provide low-barrier, community-based emotional support throughout Northwest Ottawa County. Funds will help train 25–30 local volunteers in active listening, empathy, problem-solving, and referral pathways so they can offer compassionate, nonjudgmental conversations in everyday public spaces such as libraries, parks, churches, and coffee shops. These safe and stigma-free seating areas will make mental health assistance more visible, approachable, and accessible.

Reach for Recovery — Sustained Sobriety and Wellness Recovery Program (\$50,000)

This grant will strengthen partnerships across Northwest Ottawa County to expand coordinated addiction and mental health services. By reducing barriers such as cost, transportation, and stigma, the program aims to increase access to medication and outpatient treatment, reduce overdose risk, strengthen family stability, and improve long-term economic mobility.

About the Grand Haven Area Community Foundation

For more than 50 years, the Grand Haven Area Community Foundation has served Northwest Ottawa County by encouraging philanthropy and stewarding charitable assets for lasting community impact. Established in 1971, the Foundation partners with individuals, families, businesses, and organizations to manage charitable funds, award grants, convene community leaders, and advocate for the nonprofit sector. To learn more, visit ghacf.org.