



*Midland, Michigan 2016*

**Population Category: 30,000 - 50,000**

**AIB Participation History: 1<sup>st</sup> entry, 2016**

**Population: 41,863 (2010 census)**

**Acres of Active Recreation: 1,076**

**Acres of Passive Recreation: 1,424**

**Area in Square Miles: 36.06**

**Website: <http://www.cityofmidlandmi.gov/beautification>**

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## Introduction to Midland, Michigan

**Midland, Michigan** is tucked near the base of the thumb in the middle section of the Michigan “mitten.” Organized as a county in 1850, Midland’s earliest population included members of the Chippewa Indian tribe who settled along the riverbanks as well as loggers and farmers who contributed to the formation of early settlements. Midland has evolved from an Indian village to the “City of Science and Culture.”



*Midland's Wayfinding Signage*

The City of Midland was incorporated in 1887; three years later, a young electrochemical pioneer named Herbert Henry Dow arrived in Midland, attracted by the area’s plentiful brine wells, and subsequently founded [The Dow Chemical Company](#). The growth and success of Dow has enabled Midland to become a cultural melting pot, attracting the minds of science, technology and innovation from around the globe.

Midland has evolved into a center for industrial innovation, and is quickly becoming a hub for the solar energy industry, emerging technologies and a variety of entrepreneurial pursuits. It’s also home to the Midland Cogeneration Venture, the largest gas-fueled, steam recovery co-generation facility in North America. Professional opportunities can be found at many large and small businesses throughout Midland and our neighboring communities along with Midland’s state-of-the-art medical facility, [Mid-Michigan Medical Center](#).



*Copper Medallion at US 10 Entranceway*

Downtown Midland continues to grow and flourish with the addition in 2007 of the \$50 million Dow Diamond stadium, home of Class-A minor league baseball's [Great Lakes Loons](#). The new [East End](#) Development is an urban-style center that adds a contemporary feel to the area. The 5-star [H Hotel](#) and conference center offers beautiful rooms and upscale restaurants to the city's casual dining opportunities and specialty shops.



*Kayaks by the Tridge*

The [Tridge](#), a unique three-legged pedestrian bridge located at the confluence of the Tittabawassee and Chippewa rivers, draws people as an attraction on its own as well as to events and recreational opportunities around it. The Tridge marks the beginning of the 3.5-mile Chippewa Nature Trail and the starting point of the [Pere Marquette Rail Trail](#), a Michigan Rails-to-Trails Conservancy Hall of Fame trail. At the base of the Tridge, the popular Farmers' Market brings crowds on Wednesday and Saturday mornings from May through October with its large variety of seasonal local produce, plants, baked goods and other edible fare.

The [Center City District](#) is a quaint shopping locale in the center of Midland offering a mix of retail, restaurant, bistro and business services as well as multi-family housing. The Midland Mall, constructed in 1991 is a regional mall featuring four anchor stores and more than 60 specialty and name-brand shops. Many retail stores, hotels, restaurants, and entertainment locales have sprouted up in the mall area.

Midland offers outstanding cultural opportunities, including the arts, science, history, and natural beauty. The [Midland Center for the Arts](#) provides state-of-the-art stages for audiences of 400 to 1500. The home of well-known mid-20th century architect [Alden B. Dow](#) and the [Herbert D. Doan Midland County History Center](#) provide interesting enriching opportunities. These offerings, coupled with the outstanding beautification efforts of both residents and businesses gives Midland “small city charm with big city choices.”

## Floral Displays – Attracting Attention with Colorful Plants

Midland is known throughout the state of Michigan for its vibrant and extensive floral and landscaped corridors. The downtown area boasts flower beds along its major streets, walking and recreation areas. Floral displays can be found not only in the downtown area but also in multiple parks, traffic islands and city facilities.

### ◆ **Municipal**

The **City of Midland** is a state leader in municipal horticulture efforts. The City established a Horticulture Program in 2007 and employs a horticulturist as a member of its Parks and Recreation Department. The City Horticulturalist serves as an advisor for the Center City District, Midland Blooms, Downtown Development Authority and the State Department of Transportation (MDOT). The horticulture program is responsible for landscape design, maintenance and beautification throughout the city, incorporating visual beauty into public spaces, and effectively making an impact on the quality of life in our community.



***Hanging Baskets on  
Ashman St***

Under the direction of the City Horticulturist, the activities of the Horticulture Program include:

- Upkeep of the floral and landscape displays, turf maintenance and street tidiness by up to 18 seasonal employees
- Design and installation of seasonal floral displays in city facilities such as City Hall, the Grace A. Dow Memorial Library, Law Enforcement Center and Municipal Water Plant
- Operation of a 2,400 gallon watering truck and a smaller 550 gallon unit that make regular rounds to keep flowerbeds and large portable pots watered and fertilized. Numerous automated irrigation systems simplify watering maintenance for the hanging baskets, Main Street planting displays, outlawn areas and recreation areas
- Maintaining the soil health of floral displays through the use of organic compost and soil amendments. Careful consideration to soil fertility is given to make sure the flowers thrive from season to season in a variety of conditions to include tough growing sites such as busy roadsides with hot, dry conditions in summer months and road salt during the winter
- Design and installation of seasonal floral displays throughout the City, to include numerous annuals as well as 86 hanging baskets and 75 large portable pots in the downtown area
- Incorporation of approximately 10,000 spring bulbs and numerous summer annuals in the colorful beds that line the streets each season
- Design and installation of floral displays welcoming patrons to the Farmers Market and dispersed through the streetscape surrounding the hub of activity
- Design and installation of brightly colored annuals and perennial displays at the Tridge
- Creation of new floral displays each season in six of the premier City parks, highlighting entrances of the most popular recreation areas



***Downtown Planter in  
Bloom***



***Main Street Planting Bed in  
Bloom***

### ◆ **Business**

Midland is home to the 110-acre, nationally renowned **Dow Gardens**, visited by thousands each year for its beautiful floral and seasonal displays.

- The many walks reveal an abundance of tulips in the spring, followed by more than 20,000 annuals in the summer
- An annual “trial garden” workshop helps educate visitors and professionals as to the best new annuals to plant in our area

**Chippewa Nature Center** maintains a demonstration wildflower/rain garden and sponsors an annual wildflower sale.

The **Midland Downtown Development Authority** puts pride in its yearly floral display planted by the City.

The businesses of the **Circle Business Association** fund the Center City Authority floral container displays located on the medians. Many of these businesses have flower boxes and pots of colorful annuals and perennials as part of their exterior décor, including the US Post Office Building. A beautifully landscaped traffic median highlights the entrance to Center City.

### ◆ *Residential*

Midland residents, like most Midwesterners, seem to embrace spring and summer with a competitive spirit toward creating floral masterpieces. From amazing potted annuals and perennials to flowing beds of flowers, it is hard to find a neighborhood without a show-stopping floral display.

- Gardeners learn best practices and new techniques at seminars and classes sponsored by garden clubs, master gardeners, area nurseries, home shows, Chippewa Nature Center and Dow Gardens.
- Many get inspiration from the City’s downtown planting, which changes every year. Dow Gardens and the master gardeners provide informational columns in the local newspaper, while the annual Reece Endeavor Garden Walk gives gardeners a chance to ask questions of garden docents and see different approaches to landscaping and gardening.
- The Dahlia Hill Society and local Daylily Society sell extra plants and bulbs and the Farmers Market has many flower vendors during the spring and summer. The Chippewa Nature Center offers a native plant sale annually that is open to residents.

### ◆ *Community Involvement*

**Midland Blooms**, hosted by the Midland Area Chamber of Commerce, is the single largest volunteer event in the City of Midland. The annual spring planting event engages more than 600 citizens from scout troops, garden clubs, church groups, families, businesses and many other organizations. These community members gather on a Saturday morning in late May to plant the five-mile planting area on the business corridor of US10 on Eastman Avenue with 54,000 colorful annuals.

- Midland Blooms was established in 1989 and directed by a volunteer committee of business representatives
- The City Horticulture Department prepares the flowerbeds prior to planting and maintains the beds throughout the season. Given the harsh nature of the planting site, situated directly behind the curb of a major state trunk line, the planting area has been under a soil bioremediation project since 2009. At the start of each season, soil tests are taken and the soils organically amended each season with compost and other microorganisms to improve the health and condition of the soil for a successful planting. Vehicles for planting day are donated by local car dealers.
- A volunteer appreciation pancake breakfast is hosted by a local senior housing facility to celebrate the hard work of the volunteers.



**Midland Blooms**

**Dahlia Hill Society** of Midland, a non-profit organization dedicated to dahlias, was founded in 1966 and has grown over the years to its now-terraced hillside location.

- The garden is maintained solely by its 50 volunteers and open free of charge to the public.
- There are eight terraces with approximately 3,000 dahlias. Extra dahlias are sold each year in late May at a bulb sale, and 200-300 bulbs are donated to the City for use in the downtown floral displays.
- Local artist Charles Breed created and donated four abstract dahlia sculptures with human characteristics to represent the four stages of life; these are on display at Dahlia Hill.



*Aerial View of Dahlia Hill*

**The City of Midland** offers an “Adopt a Flower Bed” program where citizens are invited to help support the city’s maintenance of its many flower beds.

### **Garden Clubs**

Garden Clubs are volunteer organizations sponsor projects throughout the city, to help promote a beautiful city environment.

- Chemical City Garden Club plants annuals and perennials at the Post Office on Rodd Street and plants and maintains annuals at the gravesites of 150 Midland City Cemetery veterans.
- Evergreen Garden Club created and maintains the beds on either side of the entryway of the pool building at Plymouth Park. Working in partnership with the City of Midland horticulturist, the large oval bed in the drive leading to the pool has season-long color with knock-out roses, tall grasses, hydrangeas and perennials in colors of pink, purple, rose, and white to provide pool users with a beautiful entryway. Another garden, the Jerome Street Traffic Island, invites neighbors to wander on pathways among dwarf evergreens, blooming shrubs, perennials and herbs.
- Great Lakes Gardeners maintains gardens at three senior living facilities: Cleveland Manor gardens, Kings Daughters gardens, and the Seasons-Adult Care Services Courtyard.
- Midland Garden Club plants and supports the plantings of annuals and perennials at the Rehabilitation Courtyard, located on the campus of Mid-Michigan Medical Center.



*Horticulture Division  
Tending Blooms*

## **Landscaped Areas – Designed Tree, Shrub, Turf and Perennial Plantings**

Landscape designs throughout the city include flowering trees and shrubs, spring bulbs, summer blooming annuals, perennials and ornamental grasses. The overall effect is to present a pleasing display throughout the city, with year-round interest from spring blooms to structural winter elements such as evergreens. The downtown sidewalk beds begin with tulips each spring, progress to summer annuals and twinkle each winter with lighted deciduous trees and holiday decorations. Examples of spring blooming bulbs, flowering trees and shrubs and ornamental grasses can be seen on the Grand Curves, Eastman Road Overpass area and the M-20 and Currie Parkway entrance into the city.

### **◆ Municipal**

Midland has worked with foundations and volunteers to define and enhance the appearance of the city. Organized in 2001, Entranceways Initiative Task Force is composed of citizens, city planners, business leaders and foundation members who joined together with the central mission of improving the appearance and function of the entranceways into the City of Midland. Improvements include sustainable and attractive hardscaping and landscaping with seasonal interest plantings and informative signage.

- The City Horticulture Department is responsible for the maintenance of the city’s entranceway projects. Examples of project areas include the landscaping at the base of the U.S.10 bridge and Eastman Rd., the Grand Curves (the green space between Indian St. and Buttles St. that starts at State St.) and the landscaping at the corner of M-20 and Currie Parkway.

- Native plant material and drought-tolerant species are given priority when designing new planting areas or renovating existing ones. Sustainability and low maintenance are priorities when considering the type of plant species for these areas.
- Most of the turf areas under maintenance by the city are under an organic fertilization program. Special consideration is given to the seven acres of turf surrounding the Farmers Market and Tridge area. This highly popular area sees a high volume of foot traffic throughout the year during programs such as Tunes by the Tridge, a summer concert series that hosts thousands each summer.
- Many of the City's municipal buildings such as the Water Plant, Service Center, Law Enforcement Center and Library have undergone landscape renovations over the last three years.
- The Japanese Garden of the Grace A. Dow Memorial Library viewed from the magnificent floor to ceiling windows in the library's quiet room is a highlight of the library's landscape. The Japanese lanterns were presented to the citizens of Midland from the delegates of Handa, Japan in recognition of our long-standing Sister City relationship.

**Circle Area Community Garden**

At the corner of Edwin and Cambridge Streets is the Circle Area Community Garden. Surrounded by a white picket fence, it includes 30 individual raised beds and is bordered by a perennial and annual garden, maintained by the City of Midland's Community Garden Manager and Master Gardener volunteers. The Circle Community Garden is designed to be a teaching garden, with amenities such as a gazebo and a bench installed as an Eagle Scout Project. The garden was dedicated in late summer 2012 with financial support from the city, churches, non-profit organizations, local food pantries, local businesses and individual contributions.



*Circle Area Community Garden*

**Entranceways**

There are three main entryways: Eastman Avenue, US-10, and the M-20 Corridor. Over the last 10 years, various projects have been completed to improve first impressions of the city. Such projects involved the Fairgrounds north and south entrances on Eastman Avenue (2003-04), and the Eastman overpass with medallions (2004-05). The southern Fairgrounds entrance was planted with annuals, perennials and grasses. The northern Fairgrounds entrance was planted with low grasses, flowering shrub roses, and hydrangeas. The Eastman overpass was landscaped with long blooming perennials, roses and flowering trees and shrubs. The Bay City entrance was completed in October 2007, and the M-20/Currie Parkway entrance was completed in 2009. The Bay City Road entrance was reshaped from existing soil to allow for more natural-looking drainage, and Michigan native trees were planted. In 2008 the Currie Parkway/M-20 entrance into the city was designed and landscaped with large stone walls, spring bulbs, flowering trees and shrubs and low-maintenance perennials. The park-and-ride lot on Wackerly Street near the US10 exit to Eastman Avenue was completed in 2005 and landscaped with low maintenance ornamental grasses and other hardy perennials.

**Grand Curves Parkway**

The Grand Curve Parkway is a greenbelt comprised of 30-plus acres. It was designed as a recreational pathway along Business US 10 connecting with the Pere-Marquette Rail Trail. The paved pathway is asphalt and imprinted concrete; about 1,300 perennials and 300-plus trees and shrubs are planted along the 4.25 mile pathway, with seating benches dotted throughout.

**Traffic Islands and Medians**

Midland has several traffic islands, each planted with specially selected drought-tolerant plant material and/or native species in an effort to remain environmentally conscious. The Circle traffic island is planted with long-blooming, low-maintenance Nepeta. Plant height is important in these areas to allow for high visibility of the



*Circle Traffic Island*

passing cars while at the same time providing year-round interest to the location. At the Saginaw-Wheeler intersection, the two traffic islands were planted in 2009 with native ornamental grass and drought-tolerant allium to accommodate the full-sun location as well as an accumulation of winter road salt. The beds continue to flourish and provide the city with a pleasing display.

### **US10 Roundabout**

In 2014, a new roundabout on business US 10 brought the need for additional landscaping. The City Horticulturist worked with the Michigan Department of Transportation to design a low-maintenance display containing evergreen trees and shrubs and colored stone mulches. The plants selected for this area needed to be particularly tough and able to withstand the occasional destruction by vehicular traffic.

### **Downtown**

The City Horticulturist collaborated with the City's Engineering Department to redesign the streetscape of Ellsworth Street. The project also included renovating nearby Putnam Park, which sits along the corridor, with new seating areas and perennial floral displays. The street is a connector between downtown and the newly developed East End Office Complex and Dow Diamond. Closer to the river, the Farmers Market display and Tridge landscaping include trees, large natural stone elements, flowering shrubs and long blooming perennials. The Farmers Market is a floral display of color with blooming trees, groundcovers, ornamental grasses, perennials and a mix of annuals planted each spring. One of downtown's most unique features is a universally accessible canoe and kayak launch. The launch area, which was completed in 2010, boasts steep hillsides with native wildflowers and grasses.



*Grand Curves*

### **Parks and Recreation**

There are more than 72 city parks in Midland. Some of the parks have been left natural, but most are greenspace areas maintained by the city.

- For many years, the City required that green space be a part of all neighborhood planning. As a result, many "pocket parks" were established within neighborhoods providing additional green space for all residents.
- The premier parks house ball fields, a dog park, a skate park and a hockey rink, multi-use trails, picnic pavilions, canoe launches, playgrounds, splash parks, festival areas, a public pool, municipal forests, Michigan's only iced toboggan runs and a man-made lake.
- Currie Municipal Golf Course is owned by the City and under professional management of Billy Casper Golf. The golf course plants annual containers and numerous displays along with colorful landscape planting beds around the clubhouse and throughout the course.
- Midland Cemetery, owned and maintained by the City, provides lovely seasonal landscaping along the road and entry points.



*Midland Cemetery*

### **◆ Business**



**The Dow Gardens** provides 110 acres of professionally landscaped gardens. Winding paths and a meandering stream guide visitors through many different landscapes: pine forest with rhododendrons, rolling hills covered with birches, a rock garden and waterfall with specimen conifers, seasonal displays of flowers, perennial and herb gardens, rose gardens, grasses and fern glades. An award-winning children's garden showcases companion plantings of vegetables and flowers around play structures and a water feature. Garden staff plans and maintains the areas and provides functions for enjoying the many venues.

*Dow Gardens Visitor Center*

The **Circle Business Association** funds the Center City Authority's holiday lights and seasonal container displays. In addition, the area has a landscaped traffic median that includes trees and grasses, evergreens and perennials. These plantings provide pedestrians and vehicular traffic with a year-long seasonal display in a collaborative effort with the City's Wastewater Department to provide a visual block to the wastewater pump station.

**Other area businesses** take pride in landscaping for residents' enjoyment:

- **The Dow Diamond** landscape creates a park-like setting around the stadium. On-site maintenance keeps both the ball field and the landscaping in top shape. The stadium lights are powered by solar panels. The landscaping flows seamlessly into the adjacent **Dow Founders Garden**, overlooking the Tittabawassee River and Main Street.
- The largest employer in the area, **The Dow Chemical Company**, has manufacturing, research and corporate headquarters areas within the City. Some of their landscaping incorporates natural, native grasses and trees. Other areas are sweeping green expanses of well-maintained turf. The front of the corporate headquarters on Patrick Road is impressive, with trees lining the property and mowed lawn, opposite the greenbelt pathway leading into the Grand Curves area across Saginaw Road and into the downtown area. Dow Chemical fulfills its role of being a good neighbor, as its property blends seamlessly with the surrounding residential neighborhoods.
- **Midland Soccer Club** has set a fine example of softening the expansive playing fields and parking areas with landscaping that provides appealing spaces for residents and visiting families.
- Built in 1991, the **Midland Mall** is located near the Eastman Road Exit from US-10. In 2015, ash trees killed by the emerald ash borer were replaced with 23 new trees and the landscaping in front of the Ruby Tuesday's restaurant was renovated. As hotels and businesses populate the mall area, they incorporate landscaping into their entrances and parking areas.
- The area **Home Builders Association** and local nurseries host a Parade of Homes each year. Landscaping has become an important component of this showcase. The Home and Garden Show in the spring has special emphasis on landscaping and design and brings in garden authors to hold educational seminars.
- **Area churches** such as Memorial Presbyterian Church, Aldersgate Methodist Church, Christian Celebration Center and Midland Reformed Church take great pride in their landscaping and have won Appreciation of Beautification Awards for their efforts.
- Numerous large and small businesses located in renovated homes and office spaces have updated or installed new landscapes and plantings, winning City of Midland Beautification Awards for their efforts.
- The **MidMichigan Medical Center** campus is adorned with beautiful landscaping, floral displays and fitness trails that wind through forested areas that are open to the public as an exercise venue.



*Memorial Presbyterian Church*

### ◆ Residential

The City of Midland is a city of neighborhoods, mostly developed after WWII. Each neighborhood takes its character from the decade in which it was built as well as its developers. The residential neighborhoods surrounding the Circle Business Area have homes dating from the 1930s, '40s and '50s, while other areas reflect the 1980s and beyond. Because Midland has five Michigan Garden Clubs as well as a Michigan Master Gardener Volunteer Association, and numerous landscape and floral businesses, there is no scarcity of gardening expertise. Gardeners learn best practices and new techniques at seminars and classes sponsored by garden clubs, master gardeners, area nurseries, home shows and Dow Gardens.

### **Reece Endeavor Garden Walk**

Each year, five to six residential gardens participate in the popular Reece Endeavor Garden Walk. The walk takes ticket holders through different landscapes large to small and provides an opportunity to talk to and

learn from the homeowners and volunteer Master Gardeners while raising funds to provide housing for individuals with special needs in Midland County.

### ◆ **Community Involvement**

In 2014, the Beautification Advisory Committee was awarded the Michigan Recreation and Park Association's Community Service Award for their 40 years of service. This volunteer committee of the city promotes beautification through its awards programs. Beautification awards go to businesses and individuals for landscaping or site and structural improvements. Outstanding effort in beautification is touted through special recognition with the Bette R. Tollar Civic Commitment Award. This award is generally given to projects that have involved local foundation funding, volunteers and city resources over a period of time.



*Volunteer Tended Planting Bed*

Many organizations maintain recreational areas and promote volunteering in the community.

- Midland citizens are invited to "Adopt a Park" to help maintain and clean up parks. A sign is posted in the park with the organization's name. In 2015, nine parks were adopted. The individual, business or organization commits to a minimum of two clean-ups per year.
- Little League fields for Fraternal Northwest and Northeast Little Leagues have been improved with help from volunteers and local foundations. Both have won beautification awards from the City for their landscaping and site improvement. The Midland Girls' Softball League and other youth softball organizations have also worked to improve Optimist Park.

### **Master Gardener Volunteers**

The Midland County Master Gardener Association contributes approximately 4,000 hours per year in Midland working with a variety of organizations, including:

- Community and church gardens
- Side-by-side with children in school gardens
- Inside Dow Gardens, Whiting Forest and the Historical Society's Heritage Gardens
- Teaching local Midland residents to grow vegetables and herbs through 4H projects and with the Circle Area Community Garden.
- Partnering with the Reece Endeavour Garden Walk to provide education during the Walk
- A regular informational gardening column in the local newspaper (co-written with Dow Gardens)
- Participation in the annual Midland Blooms planting and identifying wildflowers on the Pere Marquette Rail Trail

## ***Urban Forestry—Preserving Our Woodland Heritage***

Midland is in a transition area between northern and southern forest types. From about 1840 to 1900, most of the Michigan forests were cut down for farms and to produce lumber for buildings, ships and mines; Midland was a center for logging and moving trees down the rivers to Lake Huron. After 1900, Michigan realized the importance of forests for both recreation and wildlife preservation and began the process of rebuilding the forests. Midland has a rich diversity of plant and animal life dependent on the forest cycles, along with many wonderful examples of transition woodlands within the city.

### ◆ **Municipal**

The Forestry Division of the City of Midland Parks and Recreation Department is committed to planting, maintaining and the overall health of Midland's urban forest. The City maintains over 28,000 trees in the outlawsns of the city and nearly the same number located in the many parks in Midland. There are 5,442 acres of woodland within the city. The City of Midland has a comprehensive tree management program. Below are some highlights of the program:

- Rules for selecting, planting and caring for trees in city right of ways and parks are found in the City of Midland Master Plan, which is reviewed every 5 years. Chapter 3 of the Master Plan details the natural resources inventory of the city. Chapter 5 details plans for future land use.
- Plans to deal with disease and damage are in place for both street and park trees. Parks and street trees are maintained according to the plans. Specimen trees have been saved and specially treated to maintain their position in parks and other areas. Replacement tree plans include planting mixed species to avoid devastation of any one type of tree in continuous areas.
- Outlawn ash trees, sycamore trees and elms were evaluated and many are treated on a regular basis to prevent disease. Others too infested are removed.
- The city partners with Consumers Energy on problem trees and recommends trimming or removal as needed with regard to utility line clearance. The two organizations also collaborate on planting the right trees to avoid future tree-utility line conflicts.
- In addition, city ordinances detail duties of the home or business owner and the city's responsibilities in plantings, maintenance and proper trimming and removal of trees deemed hazardous. Citizens request pruning, tree planting and evaluation of problem trees.

In addition to the outlawn tree management program, the city also manages three vibrant urban forests utilized by citizens throughout the year:

- **City Forest** is the largest park in the City of Midland, boasting 520 acres of hardwoods and pines. As one of the most utilized parks, City Forest is perfect for a variety of year-round activities. The forest provides 11 kilometers of groomed trails perfect for cross-country skiing or snowshoeing and hiking. In addition, there are 13 miles of mountain biking trails that are open year-round that are maintained by a volunteer user group. Equestrians use the trails in the spring, summer and fall months. The park also hosts toboggan runs, a sled hill and an ice rink and offers a warming Chalet with rental equipment and refreshments.
- **Stratford Woods Park** is home to Kiwassee Lake, a shallow, sandy-bottom man-made lake perfect for children and adults alike. The large beach is available for sunbathing or playing in the sand. The pond is fully stocked for fishing. The park has a variety of play equipment, basketball courts, a BMX bike track and four beach volleyball areas. The west side of the park has a number of trails running through the woods for hiking and walking. A picnic area with a pavilion, grills and tables is also available for use.
- **Barstow Woods** is a 24.9-acre natural wooded area with year-round trails. In the winter, the paths are perfect for cross-country skiing and snowshoeing. In warmer months, walkers, runners and hikers frequent the trails. This natural area is a great place to watch the spring bloom or fall color change.



*City Forest Nordic Skier*

### ◆ **Business**

**Whiting Forest** is a native woodland offering of the Dow Gardens featuring plants native to the Central Michigan region. Whiting Forest's vision is to showcase an urban forest with native provenance for education and recreation. The forest consists of Jack Pine and Tamarack, White & Red Pine, Wet Deciduous and Old field succession areas. Part of the original apple orchard from the Dow Estate was also preserved while native

wildflowers were reintroduced into the forest and adjacent fields.



*Whiting Forest Lodge*

**Other Midland businesses** and institutions have embraced the forests of mid-Michigan as part of their landscaping as well:

- **The Dow Chemical Company** has many naturally forested areas surrounding its holdings.
- **MidMichigan Medical Center** has forested trails throughout its campus. Along the Sturgeon Creek Watershed, its Wellness Trails encompass three miles of walking trails through the surrounding woods. Specimen trees have been identified and preserved. Overhead utility lines have been rerouted to produce minimum destruction. New buildings always work to enable access while fitting buildings into the woods, maintaining the tranquil feeling of the forest.
- **Northwood University** campus is surrounded by many wooded areas and borders the Pere-Marquette Rail Trail as well. Buildings nestle into the wooded setting and students and visitors move down shaded streets to classes and displays
- Many of the **Home Builders Association** members use forest-friendly planning to maintain natural areas around new homes. Most businesses also consider the natural landscape when building new buildings and incorporate surrounding natural areas into their plans.
- In 2016 and 2017, the **Arboriculture Society of Michigan** will hold its summer conference and Michigan Tree Climbing Championship in Midland's Revere Park.

### ◆ *Residential*

With Midland having a City Master Plan for urban growth, many neighborhoods have benefited from naturalized planning by homebuilders and architects. Minimal destruction of natural habitat has left Midland with beautiful residential areas. There are many neighborhoods with 100-year-old trees that were saved when homes were constructed. Natural wooded areas as well as parks are a part of many neighborhoods. A designated Tree City USA community for twenty years, Midland takes pride in its many beautiful wooded neighborhoods.

Winding through Midland are many of the drains and streams that are part of the Sturgeon Creek and Tittabawassee River watersheds. Much of this area is a right-of-way for the Drain Commission and along the creeks and streams are many lovely trees. As Sturgeon Creek meets the Tittabawassee, there are also many trees in the primarily rural residential areas leading into Emerson and Chippewassee Parks and further along the Chippewa River into Chippewa Nature Center. Residences can also be found along the wooded banks of the Pine and Chippewa Rivers.

Classes on Shade Gardening and Woodland Gardening have been offered by Dow Gardens in its annual Know and Grow Seminars and Winter Classes. Whiting Forest has offered tree identification, chain saw and tree maintenance courses. In 2015, they sponsored Wood Lot management courses. Local MSUE Master Gardener Volunteers also offer classes and advice to the community on tree health and maintenance. The 5 local Michigan Garden Clubs also stress ecology and landscaping with trees. Chippewa Nature Center and Little Forks Conservancy provide training on native species and control of exotic invasive species, as well as wood lot maintenance.

### ◆ *Community Involvement*

Community involvement programs have developed over the years to help preserve the natural environment of the area. Several exemplary community involvement programs include:

- Arbor Day activities with local elementary schools. For 30 years, the City of Midland has observed Arbor Day by partnering with a local elementary school, teaching children facts about trees and then planting a tree. The Arboriculture Society of Michigan awarded the City with the Gold Leaf Award for the 2014 Arbor Day activity, partnering with Dow Gardens to help school children plant trees in Central Park.



*City Forester at Arbor Day*

- **Wild Ones**, a nationwide natural landscaping movement, has a local chapter. **Trouts Unlimited** and **Ducks Unlimited** both have large local memberships, all dedicated to preserving the natural environment.
- **Little Forks Conservancy** and interns from AmeriCorps teach forestry management to local landowners and volunteers help create boardwalks and remove invasive species from conservancy lands. Recently, Little Forks Conservancy has been growing and gaining ground in preserving natural areas in the area.

- Non-profit organizations have been started by Midland volunteers over the years to help preserve the natural environment of the area. The largest and most successful is the **Chippewa Nature Center (CNC)**, a private nature center open to the public year-round. Its mission is to connect all people with nature through educational, recreational and cultural experiences, and its vision is to inspire people to be stewards of the natural world. Since 1966, CNC has grown from its original 198 acre parcel to over 1,200 acres. Its original ‘staff’ of dedicated volunteers is now 40 staff members and hundreds of volunteers, along with a Visitor Center, 15 miles of trails and a LEED™ Gold Certified Nature Preschool. There are more than 60,000 visitors to CNC each year, including 20,000 school kids and 900 Nature Day campers.



*Chippewa Nature Center*

- The Nature Center’s natural resources are its main feature for visitors and are maintained and improved for the purpose of interpreting the natural environment and the relationship people have to it. The Center’s land management focus is to produce and maintain ecosystems that are healthy and natural-appearing, composed of historically native plant communities, inhabited by animals in balance with the vegetation, generally characterized by natural events and show diversity of ecosystems.
- CNC is home to a variety of plants and animals. This area is the southern-most limit for many northern species like birch and the northern-most limit for many southern species like sycamore. Visitors can experience this diversity by exploring over 15 miles of trails winding through fields, woodlands, rivers and wetlands. Walking, jogging, skiing and snowshoeing are welcome.
- In 1976, volunteers worked with the Midland Beautification Advisory Commission, the Michigan Division of The Dow Chemical Company, the Midland Public Schools and Chippewa Nature Center to plant a **Bicentennial Forest** in an area that once was forested. More than 25,000 seedlings of 26 different varieties native to this part of Michigan were planted by about 3,000 persons (most of them students from grades 3 to 6) on 25 acres of land located at the Chippewa Nature Center. Midland Garden Clubs provided essentially all the supervisory personnel. The land was acquired through grants from The Herbert H. and Grace A. Dow Foundation.
- The **Saginaw Valley Nursery and Landscape Association (SVNLA)** hosts the educational seminar “Let’s Talk Trees” every fall for local landscapers and homeowners.
- Classes on woodland gardening have been offered by **Dow Gardens** at its annual Know and Grow Seminar and winter education classes. Whiting Forest has offered tree identification, chain saw and tree maintenance courses. In 2015, they sponsored wood lot management courses. Local master gardener volunteers also offer classes and advice to the community on tree health and maintenance. The five local Michigan garden clubs also stress ecology and landscaping with trees.

- **Chippewa Nature Center** and **Little Forks Conservancy** provide training on native species and control of exotic invasive species, as well as wood lot maintenance.

## ***Environmental Effort – Sustainable Development and Awareness***

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### ◆ ***Municipal***

The **City of Midland's Department of Public Services (DPS)** is responsible for providing a variety of environmental and clean-up services:

- **Household refuse** is collected weekly based upon the scheduled collection day assigned to the street address, Monday-Friday. Refuse is collected in tied plastic bags, covered garbage cans with handles, or 95-gallon carts available for purchase from the City of Midland.
- A **single-stream residential recycling program** started in August 2010 when Midland replaced a more restrictive bi-weekly curbside sorted recycling system. Under the single-stream program, recyclables are collected curbside once per month in 95-gallon carts on the homeowners normal refuse collection day.
- **Yard waste collection** includes grass clipping, leaves, small twigs, straw, plants and garden waste. Yard waste is collected for composting on the weekly refuse day from April through November. Yard waste is collected in paper compost bags that require a bag collection sticker and 95-gallon yard waste bins, which require an annual collection sticker. Yard waste bins are available for purchase from the City of Midland. For four weeks in the spring and fall, yard waste is collected curbside for free in paper compost bags and yard waste bins.
- **Bulk fall leaf collection** usually begins near the end of October. Leaves are raked to the street and collected with by city crews.
- **Heavy items and brush** are collected from residential properties once per month.
- In the **Borrow-A-Container Program**, a 4-cubic-yard dumpster can be reserved for overnight loading. Residents can reserve a container up to four times per year. There is no charge for this service.
- **Direct landfill disposal** of up to three cubic yards of refuse is available at no charge to all residents once a month. Additional volume can be disposed of for a fee.
- **Road maintenance** of over 250 miles of the city's major and local streets includes street sweeping and snow removal along with street, curb, sidewalk and catch-basin repair.
- The Department of Public Services also is responsible for a curb-to-curb public transit through the **Dial-A Ride transportation system**.



***Bulk Fall Leaf Collection***

In addition to these responsibilities, Midland has created more ways to protect the environment:

- **Garbage to Methane/CO2 to Power** -The City of Midland's landfill facility is a great asset to the city but at the same time can be a problem with the methane and carbon dioxide gasses generated by its operation, which are not friendly to the environment. Midland has developed a process by which these gasses are captured, piped to a burning facility and converted into electricity, which is then sold to The Dow Chemical Company for use in their buildings and plants.
- **Mulching** – Trees under municipal care that are removed by the City of Midland Forestry Department are chipped and used as mulch in the many parks and public areas of the city. Excess wood chips are made available to the public at no charge.
- **Invasive Species Removal** - The City has developed an active invasive species removal program. With help from foundation grants, and overseen by the Parks and Recreation Department, this team has removed invasive plants from the Rail Trail, Stratford Woods Park, Barstow Woods, and the Tittabawassee riverbank. The city's plans include a four-year maintenance program to help control

the return of the invasive species through the use of herbicides, along with the planting of native species to help establish a healthier ecosystem.

◆ **Business**

**Midland Farmers Market** is open from 7:00 am until 1:00 pm on Saturdays and Wednesdays. Market rules provide that produce vendors must grow at least half of the fruits and vegetables they sell on their own land, while the remainder must originate in Michigan. If a vendor doesn't adhere to that standard, they must label their stand with a neon green 'W' sign indicating they're a wholesaler. On busy Saturdays, visitors to the market can exceed 8,000. In recent years the market has diversified by adding vendors for fresh pasta, soap, organic meat, eggs and fish. This movement to consume locally grown products has helped to reduce the carbon footprint of the area.



*Farmers Market*

**Saginaw-Midland Municipal Water Supply Corp.** was established in 1946 by the cities of Midland and Saginaw to supply water for their use. To find the best source of water they went 60 miles north of Bay City to White Stone Point. Two pipelines were built (one 60" and another 48") to bring the water down to Junction Station on Three Mile Road just east of Bay City. The water is then diverted into pipelines that run to each city. Through conservation efforts by the cities and local industry over the last ten years the corporation has developed a surplus of pumping capacity. In 2013, the City and County of Bay City, along with several other smaller communities, approached the corporation requesting they supply raw water to them replacing their less-than-optimum water supply source. This linkage was scheduled to be completed in 2015 and will make the corporation the major supplier of water to the Great Lakes Bay Region.

**Brady News and Recycling** offers residential drop-off and programs for commercial/industrial recycling. Brady celebrated its 60<sup>th</sup> year in 2013, recycling plastics containers, metals, newspapers, corrugated cardboard, office paper, mail, magazines, phone books and catalogs.

◆ **Residential**

**2015 City of Midland's Curbside Recycling Program Data** shows that the City achieved an 86.38% participation rate among residents for the year. Each participating home recycled over 28 pounds of materials during an average month.

2015 Midland Recycle Data									
Months Covered		12	13940.00						
Month/Yr	Participation	Glass	Metal	Plastic	Fiber	Residue	Monthly Tons	Lbs/Total Homes	Lbs/Participating home
Jan-15	85.50%	25.60	21.34	17.07	149.35	9.60	213.36	30.61	35.80
Feb-15	85.50%	16.05	13.37	10.70	93.62	6.02	133.74	19.19	22.44
Mar-15	85.50%	17.14	14.28	11.42	99.96	6.43	142.80	20.49	23.96
Apr-15	86.25%	21.48	17.90	14.32	125.31	8.06	179.01	25.68	29.78
May-15	86.25%	19.61	16.34	13.07	114.40	7.35	163.43	23.45	27.19
Jun-15	86.25%	18.65	15.54	12.43	108.80	6.99	155.43	22.30	25.85
Jul-15	87.00%	23.53	19.61	15.69	137.26	8.82	196.09	28.13	32.34
Aug-15	87.00%	17.35	14.46	11.57	101.21	6.51	144.58	20.74	23.84
Sep-15	87.00%	20.31	16.92	13.54	118.45	7.61	169.21	24.28	27.90
Oct-15	86.75%	21.59	17.99	14.39	125.94	8.10	179.91	25.81	29.75
Nov-15	86.75%	18.69	15.57	12.46	109.00	7.01	155.71	22.34	25.75
Dec-15	86.75%	25.06	20.88	16.71	146.17	9.40	208.82	29.96	34.54
<b>Totals</b>	<b>86.38%</b>	<b>245.05</b>	<b>204.21</b>	<b>163.37</b>	<b>1429.46</b>	<b>91.89</b>	<b>2042.09</b>	<b>24.42</b>	<b>28.27</b>
<b>TONS</b>									

## ◆ **Community Involvement**

Since 1996, **The Little Forks Conservancy** has partnered with private landowners in or near the Tittabawassee River Watershed to protect and preserve the unique natural features of this region. Through the use of conservation easements, land donations, bargain sale of land, and land purchases over 2,200 acres have been conserved. Some preserved lands provide opportunities for public recreation and access to unique resources in our region, while other more sensitive sites require limiting public access to preserve native associations of flora and fauna. Trails have been developed and there is a continuing effort at removing invasive species. A new program, Conservation@Home, is an education and recognition program created by The Conservation Foundation and implemented in 2015.

The Midland County Health Department and the City of Midland Landfill co-sponsor a free **Household Hazardous Waste Collection Program** several times each year to provide residents with the opportunity to safely and properly dispose of hazardous materials in the home such as automotive products, cleaning products, paint and garden products. Residents may also dispose of electronic items such as computers and monitors, cell phones, old thermometers and other items containing mercury.

For over 25 years **Midland Recyclers** has been educating the community on resource conservation through waste reduction, reuse, and recycling. Its mission is to conserve resources by giving residents and businesses the opportunity to recycle by operating the Midland Recycler Center (located at the entrance to the Midland Landfill) where materials are accepted and processed.

Multiple **community gardens** have been developed throughout Midland as a source of fresh food. These gardens are sponsored by the City, churches, schools, charitable foundations and other community organizations and individuals. Many of these gardens are used to provide food to the emergency food pantry network.

Midland's **Habitat for Humanity** has many local businesses which sponsor volunteer builds and home rehabilitation projects for low-income neighborhoods in Midland. In 2014 and 2015, Habitat introduced Women's Build days to their programming as well.

## ***Heritage – Preserving Our Past for Future Generations***

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### ◆ **Municipal**

On the confluence of the Chippewa and Tittabawassee Rivers, Midland evolved from an Indian village, to a trading post for hunters, lumberjacks and farmers, to the second largest sawmill in the Saginaw Valley before becoming incorporated in 1887. Through the efforts of Herbert Henry Dow in 1890 using Midland's underground brine to produce chemicals in a new way by utilizing electricity, and successfully establishing The Dow Chemical Company in 1897, the city survived the demise of the logging era. Midland has grown to become the "City of Science and Culture" and the "City of Modern Explorers". Wayfinding signage throughout the city directs residents and visitors to the various historical sites, museums, parks and buildings of unique design and heritage, as well as communicating their historical significance.



***Midland County Courthouse***

Herbert Henry Dow laid the first cornerstone for the Tudor-style **Midland County Courthouse** on March 29, 1925, which is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. In 2013-2014, the jail and the Alden B. Dow-designed addition were removed in a renovation project to restore the Courthouse to its original configuration. It has records of historical and genealogical significance dating from the 1800s and remains in use as the current courthouse for Midland County. **The Midland County Veterans' Memorial** was established in 1949 and was refurbished in 2014 with

expanded recognition from the original World War II monument to include the Civil War, Korean and Vietnam Wars, Afghanistan, Iraq, and other conflicts.

**Revere Park** was the site for Midland's first cemetery. The current **Midland Cemetery** has been used since June 13, 1873. Originally 40 acres, it has grown to over 55 acres and in 1949 the City of Midland assumed maintenance and passed regulations to preserve its history and character. Volunteers have located, cleaned and documented the gravestones of Civil War veterans. Volunteers conduct the popular, living history tours within the cemetery annually, organized by the Midland County Historical Society.

**Centennial Park** was created as "a tribute to The Dow Chemical Company's relationship with the Midland community". The entrance is under a metal "gateway sculpture" representing the history between Dow Chemical and Midland. The large bronze mural, entitled "Midland: The City of Modern Explorers" highlights this lovely park. The original plaster mural is now showcased in the Doan History Center.

**The Nicholson-Guenther Community Band Shell**, located in Central Park, is a Midland landmark designed by Alden B. Dow in 1938 as part of a Public Works project under FDR's Administration. A major renovation effort in 2012, made possible through public fundraising and the Alden and Vada Dow Family Foundation, has helped this popular gathering place to continue its free, open air concerts. On Wednesday evenings in the summer, the Midland Chemical City Band continues this musical legacy. It is available for public use through the Midland Parks and Recreation Department.

**Discovery Square** is the city's name for a cultural-scientific grouping of three learning venues in close proximity to each other:

- The **Midland Center for the Arts** was laid out on one of the few remaining pieces of Herbert H. Dow's orchard property in July of 1968. Designed by Alden B. Dow, the Midland Center for the Arts is where art, history and science come alive through the Center's museums, interactive exhibits, lecturers and classes. Music, theater and art are enthusiastically supported through performances of residential and guest musicians, choral groups, artists, and theatrical talents. Classes and learning opportunities are offered for all ages. MATRIX: MIDLAND brings world-class performers, musicians, and professional speakers to the Center during each summer.
- **Dow Gardens** first surrounded the family home and estate of Herbert H. and Grace A. Dow. Built in 1899, Mr. Dow designed the house himself. Renovations and additions were made throughout the years and tours are available regularly. The Gardens' original flat and sandy eight acres has been transformed into an oasis of ponds, ornamental plantings and beds and graceful hills with sculpture and design elements. Alden B. Dow had his studio and home abutting the Gardens. The artistic and changing nature of the Gardens has been its appeal throughout the years. A beautiful educational, historical, and horticultural tool, the Dow Gardens are now 110 acres nurtured by The Herbert H. and Grace A. Dow Foundation.
- In 1899 Mary Dow, sister of Herbert H. Dow, was the first librarian in a subscription-type library of 25 paying members. In January 1919 a new, brick Carnegie Library of Midland opened. By 1935 the City of Midland was funding the library and by 1950 it had outgrown its facilities. The current building, **The Grace A. Dow Memorial Library**, financed in part by the Herbert H. and Grace A. Dow Foundation, designed by Alden B. Dow and named in honor of his mother, opened on January 24, 1955 in a corner of the former Dow Orchards. Various expansions and renovations have been made throughout the years, generously funded by the Herbert H. and Grace A. Dow Foundation and



*Dow Gardens in the Fall*

the City of Midland. It has a special, local genealogy room with volunteers to help research Midland area families and history.

### ◆ **Business**

**Heritage Park** consists of three “state-of-the-art archival and multi-purpose facilities” in close proximity within a park-like campus:



*Replica of First Dow Brine Well*

- **The Herbert D. Doan Midland County History Center**  
Considered the “gateway” to the Heritage Park, the Herbert D. Doan History Center offers interactive exhibits, highlighting Midland’s history from early days to the present. The Midland Historical Society maintains a collection of historical periodicals, early Court records and other documents as well as artifacts made or used over the past 120 years. Volunteers create special exhibits periodically. Tours and educational programs help preserve the heritage crafts and activities of Midland.
- Multi-media exhibits depict the creative beginning of The Dow Chemical Company. From the early brine well derrick to the experiments of pioneering chemist Herbert H. Dow, the **Herbert H. Dow Historical Museum** shares the rich chemical heritage Midland brought to the everyday life of people around the world.
- The restored 1874 Victorian **Bradley Home** shows what daily life was like for a Midland family in the late 1800s. The Carriage House holds a large collection of carriages and sleighs and houses mid-Michigan’s largest functioning blacksmith shop. Volunteer blacksmiths demonstrate their craft and volunteers in period clothing give tours of the Bradley home. Volunteer-led tours involving Victorian funeral practices, Christmas decorations, and a Civil War encampment and other special events are all very popular.



*Bradley Home*

**Dow Chemical’s Founder’s Garden** received the 2012 Honor Award for Architectural Landscape Design as presented to Hamilton Anderson Associates by the Michigan Chapter of the American Landscape Architects for work on this park.



*Founder's Garden*

- Visitors to the Founder’s Garden begin in the Rotunda Plaza where salvaged bricks from the former world headquarters of The Dow Chemical Company, Building 47, mark the location of that site.
- A statue of Herbert H. Dow sits in the center of the plaza, surrounded by his sketches, with a map highlighting how the company has expanded throughout the world. The five walls emerging from the earth symbolize Dow’s discovery of the first five chemicals he extracted from the brine deposits that sit below the Midland area.
- Hamilton Anderson Associates worked with the company leadership, community, historians and chemists to distill the local heritage into a design that is meaningful to local residents and visitors.
- The trail that is routed through the site has become popular for runners and cyclists. Utilized at night, lighting was an important part of the design process.

## ◆ Residential

The City-appointed **West Main Street Historic District Commission** oversees a city-established area of historic homes known as the Historic District. Close to the downtown area, the District is rich with homes of unique architectural history and cultural significance. The Commission is responsible for supporting preservation and restoration consistent with the heritage of that neighborhood.

A National Historic Landmark, the **Alden B. Dow Home and Studio**, was designed in 1934 when Alden B. Dow returned to Midland after studying under Frank Lloyd Wright in Wisconsin. It was built between 1937-1941 using Alden B. Dow's patented 'Unit Block' construction system.



*Alden B. Dow Home and Studio*

- Cited in Architectural Digest as “one of the two most beautiful contemporary homes in the United States (the other one being Wright-designed Fallingwater), the Home and Studio is an outstanding example of man and nature creating together.”
- Traditional Home magazine in 2014 designated it as one of 25 “Best Historic Homes in America,” celebrating the Home and Studio “on a national level and assigning significance to its part in the history of American Architecture”.
- In 1989 the Home and Studio was listed in the National Register of Historic Places by the National Park Service.
- The Alden and Vada Dow Foundation has preserved Alden B. Dow's Home and Studio for “architectural study, educational programming, and to share with the public” through tours and through the Alden B. Dow Archives. It offers summer youth programs as well as adult educational opportunities. The Home and Studio brings 10,000 tourists yearly to the Great Lakes Bay Region.
- The Foundation also sponsors the continually sold-out annual tours of other Alden B. Dow- designed homes and buildings within the city. He designed over 60 residences in Midland, 21 of which are on the National Register of Historic Places. Alden B. Dow designed more than 132 structures in Midland over four decades.

Midland is also known as “The City of Beautiful Churches,” with 101 houses of faith. In October 2013, The Alden B Dow Home and Studio organized a tour of nine of Midland's architecturally important churches, **The Light from Above - Midland Houses of Faith Tour**. This tour has continued every other year since Midland has several houses of faith that fit these architectural criteria.

## ◆ Community Involvement

**Chippewa Nature Center** showcases historical life in the mid-Michigan area. A dedicated CNC staff and many enthusiastic volunteers of all ages work together to provide educational and historical classes, demonstrations, field trips, workshops, festivals, summer camps, walk-in programs, hikes and displays.

- The **Homestead Farm** allows visitors to explore what rural life was like in the 1870s. Pigs, cattle, sheep and chickens inhabit the reconstructed log barn and chicken coop. The Leicester long wool sheep are a heritage breed that would actually have been in the Midland area in the late 1800s. Staff and volunteers, in vintage clothing, offer activities and demonstrations using farm tools, felting and dyeing, cooking on a woodstove, harvesting and storing vegetables and fruits and visiting an outhouse. The heritage varieties of fruits and vegetables grown in the garden provide **a Midland food bank with over 600 pounds of organic produce from one growing season**. Special educational/historical offerings include workshops such as candle and soap making, craft demonstrations, history programs geared toward children and the Fall Harvest Festival. This Festival uses more than 300 community volunteers to give visitors a view of an 1870 Michigan harvest season.

- The popular **Maple Syrup Festival**, a 1870's style sap boiling and tree-tapping event, involves volunteers and visitors gathering maple sap from the Sugarbush. An 1868 home built in Clare was dismantled by volunteers, transported to CNC in 1978 and re-purposed into a sugarhouse to boil down the syrup.
- A short distance from the sugarhouse is the **Log Schoolhouse**, where today's students can learn lessons with traditional implements and materials from the 1800s.
- In the **Wigwam**, a visitor can learn about the life of the Ojibwa Indians several hundred years ago along the Pine River. Using hands-on skills, a person can learn about the fur trade, making tools for hunting, and how local plants and animals were used to sustain Native American life in this area.

**Santa House** is on the grounds of the Midland County Courthouse. The charming architecture, paintings, clock and glockenspiel make the Santa House stand out in the downtown area year-round. It is transformed into a magical experience during the holiday season with support from the Midland Area Community Foundation, businesses and volunteers and a seasonal lease from the County. The world-renowned C.W. Howard Santa School is based here each fall.



*River Cruising during Riverdays*

**Riverdays** is a two-day summer celebration of the Tittabawassee and Chippewa Rivers and their role in the development of Midland. Riverdays has been a Midland Area Community Foundation (MACF) event for 31 years. The Riverdays committee is made up of volunteers representing several organizations in Midland. Riverdays is held in Chippewassee Park and hosted by the Midland Area Community Foundation. The festival provides free, family-focused activities such as blacksmithing demonstrations, wood branding, Voyageur canoe rides, Midland history displays, riverboat rides, music, food vendors, mud volleyball, fireworks and a pancake breakfast – all to bring area residents together to celebrate Midland's river history.

## Overall Impression

### ◆ Municipal

Midland has been named **one of America's top 100 safest communities** and was named **one of the top 10 best places to live in Michigan**. A lot of this appeal can be traced back to the overall appearance of the city to visitors. Midland is very proud of the working relationship that exists between the city government, state government, philanthropic foundations, and business community and citizens volunteers. These groups joined together to form the Entranceways Initiative Task Force, commissioned to improve the entranceways of Midland. This effort improved both landscaping and hardscaping at the major entrances to Midland. The project was completed over a 10-year period and has greatly improved the look of the entrances to the city. In addition to private funding for the project, monies were provided for maintenance of the new enhancements. The entranceways included the following:

- North and south fairgrounds entrances
- Eastman overpass plantings and medallions
- US10/Grand Curve entrance
- M20/Currie Parkway entrance



*US 10 Entranceway Plantings*

- Park-and-Ride lot Wackerly entrance
- New directional wayfinding signage for points of interest around the city
- Publishing of a tree planting guide for businesses

The **Midland Beautification Advisory Committee** encourages the development of aesthetics in the City of Midland by recognizing residential and business properties for beautification projects and their outstanding contributions that are readily visible to the public. Below are the two programs that the Beautification Advisory Committee sponsors each year:

- **Appreciation of Beautification Awards** presented annually to owners/renters of property in the City of Midland who have improved their property with regard to structural site improvements and landscaping, in the areas of development, redevelopment and remodeling. The awards are presented for improvements that have a positive impact on and are aesthetically pleasing to the immediate neighborhood and community and enhance the appearance of an existing structure or property or the construction of a new structure which is an extraordinary example of aesthetically pleasing architecture and or site design.
- **Make Midland Beautiful Art Celebration** is a poster contest for the more than 800 public and parochial students in 2<sup>nd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade to create a poster on what Makes Midland Beautiful to them. One poster is selected from each participating classroom to represent the school.

The **City Planning Commission** is responsible for overseeing the [City's Master Plan](#), conducting public hearings and offering recommendations to the City Council on a wide range of local land use issues including site plans for new developments, zoning law amendments and various land divisions.

Signage in Midland is controlled by Section 8 of the City Ordinances and designed to ensure the following:

- **Safety:** The requirements with regard to placement, installation, maintenance, size and location of signs are intended to minimize distractions to motorists, maintain unobstructed vision for motorists, protect pedestrians, and otherwise minimize any threat to public health or safety.
- **Aesthetics:** Signs should enhance the aesthetic appeal of the City. Thus, these regulations are intended to: 1) regulate signs that are out-of-scale with surrounding buildings and structures, 2) prevent an excessive accumulation of signs, and 3) encourage signs that enhance the appearance and value of the business districts.
- **Equal protection and fairness:** These regulations are designed to be fair to each property owner by establishing uniform standards that provide adequate exposure to the public for all property owners.
- **Land use planning objectives:** The placement and design of signs should further the land use planning objectives of the City, and protect neighborhood character and the value of surrounding properties.

The [City Code of Ordinances](#) regulates many other neighborhood and business activities as well, ranging from refuse collection to property maintenance to overall appearance of properties.

## ◆ **Business**

### **Overall cleanliness**

This is a city to which appearance is important! Properties are maintained, and there are no areas of boarded windows, vacant or abandoned buildings, trashed lots, or overgrown shrubs. Graffiti is rare, and when it does happen, it is painted over or erased quickly. The local Beautification Advisory Committee gives out both landscaping and structural improvement awards to local business annually.

### **Conditions of buildings and properties**

City Ordinances require that sub-standard buildings be attended to as indicated. Sections 12- 23 and similar ordinances dictate that buildings be kept in good repair or be removed. Throughout the City of Midland business areas, including the South Saginaw businesses, the Downtown Area, the City Center area, the Eastman-Saginaw area, or the Midland Mall area, buildings are maintained and kept clean.

◆ **Residential**

**Overall cleanliness**

As a “City of Neighborhoods”, each developed independently in various decades, Midland presents many faces and styles of housing, from older homes along Rodd Street, to small homes from the WWII era, to the ‘60s, ‘70s, and so on. City trucks collect trimmings from shrubs and trees on a monthly basis. Residents put out refuse containers as scheduled for weekly collection along with monthly curbside recycling. City Ordinance requires that lawns be mowed and forbids parking of inoperable vehicles on city streets. Streets are swept regularly by the city street maintenance crews, who also provide bulk curbside collection of leaves each fall, and snow/ice removal in the winter.

**Conditions of buildings and properties**

Articles III through VIII of the City Ordinances outline minimum standards for houses, rental units, and hotels, ensuring that safe standards are maintained throughout the City of Midland. City Ordinance also requires that houses and buildings be painted (section 12-102) and that public areas, yards, and premises should be kept clean and in sanitary condition. (Section 22-16)

◆ **Community Involvement**

Midland is a city of volunteers. Whether it’s planting flowers along Eastman Avenue, business-sponsored volunteer days to improve lower income housing, Arbor Day activities for school children, building and revitalizing the Plymouth Park Fun Zone, or any number of projects – when the call goes out, the volunteers come!



**Currie Parkway Bridge**

Midland has many local foundation funding opportunities and smaller grants available from the Midland Area Community Foundation’s donor funds as well. In addition, national service organizations and fraternal organizations have local chapters. Churches and organizations are involved in many projects to enhance the city.

Midland has remained a dynamic city with interest and involvement in all aspects of city planning, from the many volunteer commissions to charitable foundations, service organizations and business organizations. This level of cooperation and list of achievements is truly a reason for Midland’s many designations and awards. It is known as the City of Beautiful Churches and Tree City USA, among others as noted on the following list:

<b>YEAR</b>	<b>HONOR</b>	<b>SPONSOR</b>
2013-2014	100 Safest Cities in America (#72 and #61)	NeighborhoodScout.com
2015	5 Star Community - Entrepreneurial Climate	MiQuest
2011-2014	5 Star Entrepreneurial Support	University of Michigan, Dearborn - iLabs
2013	Award of Excellence - Citizens Academy	City & County Communications & Marketing Association
2011	Best City in America for Economic Growth (#8)	U.S. Business Facilities Magazine
2015	Best Michigan Community to Start a Business #15	Nerd Wallet
2014	Best Place for the Middle Class (County) 8 named nationally	CNN Money
2013	Best Place to Live in Michigan	Movoto
2013	Best Places for Job Seekers in Michigan (#2)	Nerd Wallet
2009	Best Tennis Town USA	USTA
2012	Bike Friendly Community (Bronze)	American League of Bicyclists
2013	Community for a Lifetime	Michigan Office of Services to the Aging

2015	Company that Cares	United Way of Midland County
2014	Most diverse place in Michigan (#3) #1 income diversity, top 10 educational diversity	Movoto
2014	Outstanding Service Award (legislative)	Michigan Municipal League
2010-2014	Top 100 Community for Young People	Americas Promise
2010	Top 5 Places in America to Raise a Family	Forbes
1995-2015	Tree City USA	Arbor Day Foundation

## ***Best Ideas!***

### **BLOOMing Where We Are Planted**

**Midland BLOOMS** gives special meaning to the words “springtime in Midland.” The Saturday before Memorial Day, 60 planting teams, comprised of 8-10 volunteers per team, plant flowers on a 2.5 mile route (total of five miles of planting space) along Eastman Avenue. This community volunteer project began in 1989 and is funded by local foundations. The most rewarding aspect of Midland Blooms is the community feeling of 600+ volunteers from area businesses, organizations, churches, clubs, scout troops, families and



neighborhoods working together. Once the flowers are planted by the volunteers, the City of Midland employs seasonal workers to maintain the 5 miles of planting beds with daily weeding and watering. Soil preparations for the spring planting are handled by the city and careful attention is paid to the health and condition of the soil through organic means. A soil bioremediation project was put in place in 2008 to improve the fertility of the soil and ensure a sustainable, flourishing display for years to come. Soil tests are taken each spring and an organic compost mix is custom formulated, then tilled in prior to planting. This careful

attention to soil health has allowed us to eliminate the use of synthetic fertilizers during the growing season, providing a rich organic soil for the volunteers to get their hands dirty in and a beautiful display to enjoy all season. Midland BLOOMS is more than pretty flowers. It is another example of our residents showing their civic pride to make a difference in our community!

### **New Life for Dead Trees**

Ash trees killed by Emerald Ash Borer can find a second life as beautiful, highly rot-resistant, kiln-dried lumber. The city’s forestry crew takes diseased, damaged trees down and brings the best logs to a storage area. A portable sawmill operator processes the logs into boards and timber; they’re then taken to a local dry kiln. The high heat of the drying operation kills any insects or eggs that may be present. This process can take from a few weeks to a few months.

The dried lumber is then transported to a facility with a specialized kiln to undergo thermal modification. The wood is heated to over 350 degrees Fahrenheit in a controlled, oxygen-free environment using both steam and hot air. This process, called pyrolysis, causes chemical changes in the cell walls of the wood. It makes the wood more stable and rot-resistant without the toxins and green color of pressure-treated wood. It also gives the wood a deep, attractive walnut color that can be clear coated or left natural to weather into a silver-gray.



*Fun Zone Ash Fence Pickets*

The lumber is used by the Midland Parks and Recreation Department in projects to benefit the community, such as the donor fence at the Fun Zone Playground and upgrades to the toboggan run staircases. This is a great way to recycle local resources in an environmentally-friendly way.

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## Judges' Itinerary – Tour Schedule

<u>Thursday, July 21 Event</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Activity</u>	<u>Attendees</u>
Pick-up	H Hotel	Drive to Breakfast	Gina and Carl, BAC
Breakfast	Doan Historical Museum, Bradley House & Brinewell	Midland Historical Presentation & Tour of Facility	Gary Skory, Mayor Donker, AIB Committee
	Northwood University, Dow High School, Senior Centers, MidMichigan Medical Center, Residential Areas	Driving Tour	BAC
	Dahlia Hill	Walking Tour	Peggy Kernstock
	Discovery Square: Library, Center for Arts, Dow Gardens, MMI	Driving Tour	BAC
	Dow Gardens	Walking or Cart Tour	Elizabeth Lumbert
	Throne Park, Bicentennial Park, Historical Area	Driving Tour	
Lunch	Alden B. Dow Home and Studio	Presentation & Tour of Facility	Craig McDonald, Stephanie Richardson, Selina Tisdale
	Downtown District & Santa House Court House, City/County Buildings, Tridge & Farmers Market, Riverside Place, East End, Dow Diamond, Founders Garden	Walking Tour	Stephanie Richardson, Celina Tisdale, & Tom Valent
Rest	H Hotel	Reflection Period	Judges
Dinner	TBD	Momentum Midland, Foundations Activity	Paul Barbeau , Mayor, City Council, BAC, Parks & Rec, City Manager, Dow Chemical PR, Bobbie Arnold (Strosacker Foundation)
	Tittabawassee River	Voyager Canoe Ride	Chippewa Nature Center & Little Forks Conservancy
	Return To Hotel		
<u>Friday, July 22 Event</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Activity</u>	<u>Attendees</u>
Pick-up	H Hotel	Drive to Breakfast	
Breakfast	Chippewa Nature Center	Tour Of Nature Center	Kyle Begnall, Dennis Pillaske--CNC reps, Doug Koop—Little Forks Rep
	Midland Recyclers	Walking Tour	Ester William
	Sanitary Landfill & Methane Recycling	Walking/Driving Tour	Noel Bush
	Grand Curves, Dow Headquarters, Midland High School, Plymouth Park, Stratford Woods, Residential Areas	Driving Tour	
Lunch	Midland Country Club	Roundtable on City Development Plans	Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Development, Center City Development, City Planner
	Memorial Presbyterian Church, Trinity Lutheran Church, Blessed Sacrament Church, Jerome Park, Barstow Woods, Center City, Community Foundation, Community Center, Central Park, Band Shell, Residential Areas	Driving Tour	
Rest	H Hotel	Reflection Period	Judges
Dinner	City Forest	Wind-up	Midland in Bloom Committee, Garden Club Presidents, City Horticulturist
	Mall Area, Soccer Fields, tennis Center, Fairgrounds/Airport, Little League Parks, Residential Areas	Driving Tour	