



**OAKLAND  
COUNTY**  
MICHIGAN  
*All ways,*  
MOVING FORWARD

# Encore

AN UPDATE FOR OUR OLDER ADULT RESIDENTS

WINTER/SPRING 2024

“

Oakland County's older residents are some of the most active and engaged people in our communities. It certainly makes abundant sense to invest more in expanded services, resources and programming.

”

Oakland County Executive Dave Coulter

Dear Residents,

As Oakland County continues to attract new people and young families, our older adult population continues to grow as well. Since 2015, the number of older adults has surpassed the number of children living within our cities, villages and towns. It's what drives our continued investment into services, programs and services for older adults.

This is the first of a series of newsletters where we will share information about all the resources we have to offer you and your families. In Oakland County, we're committed to serving the needs of all our residents, including the older adults who have contributed so much to our families, neighborhoods and communities. The county is improving and expanding the services we offer to help you live the best lives you can, full of friends, family, laughter and activity.

Here are a few highlights of what we've done for older residents:

- Free passes for entry into Oakland County Parks for recreational activities and other programming geared toward older residents.
- Health services in our public health clinics in Pontiac and Southfield, as well as information on Elder Abuse Prevention.
- A "nurse on call" hotline for people with questions about health and medical issues. You can reach the nurse at 1-800-848-5533.
- Financial coaching through our treasurer's office.
- We also have regular coffee hours for you to share feedback about the county. These events are led by our new director of Older Adult Services, former state Rep. and Royal Oak Mayor Jim Ellison.

We look forward to seeing and hearing from you,

With gratitude,

  
Oakland County Executive  
David Coulter

*All ways,* MOVING FORWARD

Greetings from your county commissioner and the Oakland County Board!

As we continue through the 2023-24 term, I hope this newsletter will come in handy for you and those around you. Your commissioners are committed to working with the county executive and all countywide elected officials to bring you meaningful solutions as you make Oakland County your home.

If you're looking for ways to get involved or learn more about your county government, please visit [www.oakgov.com/boc](http://www.oakgov.com/boc) to explore programs the Board is working on and to stay connected to the latest news from commissioners.

The resources on the following pages only scratch the surface of what's available to you in Oakland County. Please reach out to me directly if you need help accessing additional county information or finding other senior services.

Find your commissioner here

[OakGov.com/BOC](http://OakGov.com/BOC)





## Public Transit

Getting there is easier in Oakland County

Since Oakland County voters approved the Oakland County Public Transportation 10-year millage last year, ridership has grown more than 20 percent for five providers: SMART, Western Oakland Transportation Authority (WOTA), North Oakland Transportation Authority (NOTA), the OPC Social & Activity Center, and People's Express (PEX).

Among the influx of new riders are older residents who have found freedom from isolation, like Theresa Rogerson, who uses WOTA to get around and enjoy all of the benefits of living in beautiful Holly.



"Prior to WOTA, my only goal was to outlive my cat so she would not have to be rehomed. I had only one item on my bucket list, to go swimming in a pool again once before I died. I now swim at least once a week in a beautiful senior-friendly pool. I can schedule a ride



for groceries with only 48 hours' notice, and I am able to access my hometown businesses. I have been able to return to a much-needed medical specialist, whose geographic location was previously unavailable to me."

With public transit, older adults can continue to live independently. From grocery shopping and visiting doctors to going to a senior center and attending social events, public transportation supports older adults. And using it is as easy as calling a provider and reserving a ride.

When riders make a reservation, many transportation providers will pick them up at their door or curb and drop them off at the entrances of their stops.. Plus, many transit providers use small buses with lifts, making it easier for those who use wheelchairs.

Residents can visit Oakland County Transit Division's website at [oakgov.com/OaklandTransit](http://oakgov.com/OaklandTransit) to find which transit provider services their area and determine their next destination.





## Is that really your loved one calling?

Imagine you are at home cooking dinner, and in the middle of chopping vegetables, you receive a phone call from an unfamiliar number. When you answer, you recognize the voice on the line.

“Hey, Mom, it’s your favorite daughter.”

“Jen, is that you? What’s going on?”

“Yes, it’s Jennifer. Mom, I’m in trouble and need help...”

“Hello, Mrs. Robinson, this is Officer Williams of the Anytown Police Department, and we have arrested your daughter for driving under the influence. You need to wire \$4,000 to us right now or she is going to jail!”

“Oh no! Jen, are you there? Is this true?”

“We took her back to the holding cell, but she will be transferred to County Jail if you don’t send bail money in the next 30 minutes.”

“I’ll send it right now!”

Unfortunately, this is a common scam in Metro Detroit. According to the Federal Trade Commission Consumer Sentinel Network, in 2023, there have been more than 3,500 reports of imposter scams in the region.

Con artists are master manipulators and have a variety of tricks to get what they want. They’ll create deadline drama to get their target to act first and think later. They’ll pretend to be an authority figure, like a police officer. They’ll spoof any phone number on your caller ID to look convincing. They’ll even pretend to be a loved one, like a favorite granddaughter.

With the advancements in artificial intelligence (AI), scammers have more tools in their toolbox. Using audio from videos posted on social media, podcast recordings and even private phone conversations, they can clone a person’s voice and use it to say anything to convince their victim.

However, you can avoid becoming another statistic. Follow these steps if ever you receive a frantic phone call asking for money.

1. Stay calm: Don’t allow yourself to be whipped into an emotional frenzy no matter what the caller is saying.
2. Confirm the caller’s identity: Is the caller saying they are your loved one? Ask a question that only your loved one would know the answer to, such as: “What gift did I get you for your birthday last year?” or “What’s my favorite TV show?” If they can’t answer your question, hang up immediately.
3. Ask to call them back: Tell the caller you need to go, but that you will call back later. Then, call the phone number you know belongs to the loved one who supposedly called you. Tell them you are returning their phone call and ask if they are truly in trouble. If your loved one doesn’t answer, call family or friends. They should be able to help you to get to the bottom of it.
4. Call the police department: Local authorities would never call a family member to demand bail money.
5. Report the fraud to authorities and tell everyone in your circle about the phony call, so they can avoid similar scams. Don’t forget to report it to the Federal Trade Commission at [ReportFraud.ftc.gov](https://www.reportfraud.ftc.gov) and to your state attorney general at 517-335-7599 to stop the spread of the scam.





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Oakland County Parks provide plenty of opportunities for social networking, recreation and educational programming that help keep older residents engaged, active and healthier both physically and mentally well past retirement. As an added bonus, older residents can get a free pass for entry into county parks.

Oakland County Parks Commission Chair Ebony Bagley

## Need Assistance?

### Nurse on Call

1-800-848-5533

[noc@oakgov.com](mailto:noc@oakgov.com)

[OakGov.com/Health](http://OakGov.com/Health)

### Find a older adult center

[OakGov.info/OlderAdults](http://OakGov.info/OlderAdults)

### Looking for a park near you?

[OaklandCountyParks.com/ActiveAdults](http://OaklandCountyParks.com/ActiveAdults)

### Financial Services

[OakGov.com/Treas](http://OakGov.com/Treas)

### Need to go somewhere?

[OakGov.com/OaklandTransit](http://OakGov.com/OaklandTransit)

# Spotlight On

## Madison Heights Active Adult Center

The Madison Heights Active Adult Center (AAC) hosted a grand opening on Sept. 18 after more than a year of construction.

The center is one of 29 Oakland County senior centers to share \$5 million in funding from the county's American Recovery Plan Act to improve services and facilities. The Madison Heights Active Adult Center was one of the first places to complete renovations with the help of the grant funds.

"Since 2015, Oakland County's senior population has been greater than the population of children. So, it certainly makes sense to invest some of the federal COVID relief funding we received into helping our older residents," Coulter said at a press conference in March. "And what better way to make that investment than providing the funding for upgrades at the county's senior centers."

Madison Heights built a hub for older adults, nestled between the city hall and library at 360 West 13 Mile Road. Here older adults can socialize, stay active and have fun.

The 14,022 sq. ft. center boasts a large multipurpose room as well as smaller rooms, including a

computer lab, an exercise equipment room, a fitness studio, a fireplace lounge, a billiards room, and a hobby/cooking room for classes.

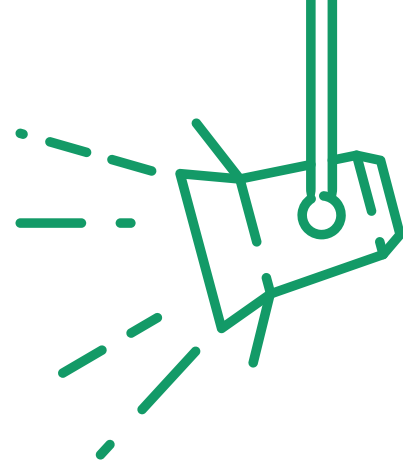
"I love it here. This gets me out of the house after my wife passed away," said Jerry an AAC member and avid pool player.

With the improvements made with the Oakland County grant, the Active Adult Center can welcome more members and offer more activities, increasing the quality of life for older adults.

"Everybody needs a laugh, and this is our laughing place," said Dwayne, another AAC patron.

How does your local older adult center make your life better? Share your story with Oakland County Older Adult Services by contacting Jim Ellison, Older Adults Services Director at [ellisonj@oakgov.com](mailto:ellisonj@oakgov.com), (248) 858-0593 or (248) 760-5659. It could be featured in an upcoming issue.

[OakGov.info/OlderAdults](https://OakGov.info/OlderAdults)







“

We're open to anybody age 50 and up. It doesn't matter what city you live in, what county you live in, we're accepting of everybody.

Madison Heights Active Adult Supervisor Jennifer Cowen



2350 Pontiac Lake Road  
Waterford, Michigan

7 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

**May-December**

Tuesdays, Thursdays  
and Saturdays

**January-April**

Saturdays only







## Experience nature's splendor at Oakland County Parks

Oakland County Parks offers a variety of opportunities to connect with nature, experience outdoor activities

- **Trails**
- **Programs**
- **Waterparks**
- **Golf Courses**
- **Fishing**
- **Dog Parks**

and learn about Oakland County history.

Programming for active adults is scheduled throughout the year. Examples include the popular Fireside Chats series, where Oakland County Parks Historian Carol Bacak-Egbo shares fascinating historical details that happened in or near the parks; a summertime picnic, featuring games, food and pontoon boat rides; and instructional kayaking programs.

Health and wellness activities include platform tennis, which provides a great workout during winter. During the summer, try River Walk, where participants walk with or against the River Ride's current at Red Oaks Waterpark for low-impact exercise.

Golfers can hit the links on five golf courses during spring, summer and fall at Glen Oaks Golf Course in Farmington Hills, Lyon Oaks Golf Course in Lyon Township, Red Oaks Golf Course in Madison

Heights, Springfield Oaks Golf Course in Davisburg and White Lake Oaks Golf Course in White Lake.

Visit the Oakland County Farmers Market for fresh produce and healthy meal inspiration. Have a four-legged friend? Lyon Oaks Dog Park in Lyon Township, Orion Oaks Dog Park in Orion Township and Red Oaks Dog Park in Madison Heights offer off-leash fun year-round.

Trails provide opportunities for hiking, jogging, biking, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing and walking. Fishing is available at seven parks: Addison Oaks, Groveland Oaks, Highland Oaks, Independence Oaks, Orion Oaks, Pontiac Oaks and Rose Oaks county parks. Please note that ice fishing is at-your-own-risk as staff does not monitor ice conditions.

Explore the parks with a Free Vehicle Permit. These permits, valid through Dec. 31, 2029, are available to senior citizens living in Oakland County who are a minimum of 62 years of age at the time the pass is requested. Free Vehicle Permits are also available for veterans of all ages.

For more information and details about current programming, visit [OaklandCountyParks.com/ActiveAdults](https://OaklandCountyParks.com/ActiveAdults)





**Nurse On Call**

**1-800-848-5533**

**[noc@oakgov.com](mailto:noc@oakgov.com)**

## Health and Human Services offers health and housing help

Oakland County is home to nearly 315,000 adults aged 60 years and over. Oakland County Health and Human Services strives to support and serve our older adult population through a variety of programs.

- **Vaccines**
- **Dental**
- **Housing Resource Center**

Oakland County Health Division (OCHD) has several vaccines available that are recommended for older adults – including senior dose flu, pneumonia, shingles, and COVID-19. No one is ever denied access to services due to inability to pay and all vaccines are available on a sliding fee scale.

OCHD also has a Dental Program that provides dental services for low-income County residents who have no dental insurance, and nearly 50% of program patients are seniors. Learn more by visiting [oakgov.com/community/health/public-health-services/healthy-lifestyles/dental](https://oakgov.com/community/health/public-health-services/healthy-lifestyles/dental).

For more information on OCHD services, contact Nurse on Call at 1-800-848-5533 or [noc@oakgov.com](mailto:noc@oakgov.com). Nurse on Call is staffed by experienced Public

Health Nurses who can answer general health questions and provide referrals to programs and services. Nurse on Call is free and available Monday – Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Want to receive monthly updates from OCHD? Sign up for our Healthy Oakland Newsletter, by registering your email at [oakgov.com/community/health/news-info/healthy-oakland-newsletter](https://oakgov.com/community/health/news-info/healthy-oakland-newsletter) or text HEALTHY OAKLAND to 468311 to subscribe.

Looking for housing support? Residents aged 62 and older can receive free housing information, education, and referrals in a confidential setting, including reverse mortgage counseling and resources on subsidized housing lists for those who qualify through Oakland County Neighborhood and Housing Development's Emergency Housing Support Program. Financial assistance may be available to help pay rent, utilities and moving expenses as well as security and utility deposits for qualified individuals. Please contact the Housing Resource Center for possible assistance at 248-269-1335 or online at <https://communityhousingnetwork.org/get-help>.

**OakGov.com/Health**

# Achieving Financial Stability

## How the Oakland County Treasurer's Office Can Help Older Adults

As an older adult, you've worked hard to achieve financial stability after retirement. Yet, unexpected expenses and financial challenges can arise, making it difficult to maintain your financial goals. That's where the Oakland County Treasurer's Office comes in. We understand the importance of financial stability, and offer services to help you achieve your goals.

### Preventing Property Tax Foreclosures

An unexpected issue that older adults may face is paying property taxes. Paying off your home mortgage is a significant accomplishment. However, it's important to remember that your monthly mortgage payments previously included summer and winter property taxes, which become your responsibility after your mortgage is paid off. The Oakland County Treasurer's Office can help you create a financial plan to ensure your property taxes are paid, preventing property tax foreclosures.



### Customer Service is key to success

An Oakland County resident contacted Treasurer Robert Wittenberg for assistance and shared the following message.

"I got behind in my property taxes. I had a lot of financial hardships at the time and reached out to Robert Wittenberg and his office. They not only worked with me on getting a payment plan in place so my home wouldn't be foreclosed on. They gave me information on several agencies to contact for help.

Anytime I had a question or wasn't sure how to proceed, I would email him, and he responded promptly and answered any questions I had. It's stressful enough being in any financial bind, and to have your home going into foreclosure on top of it was overwhelming, to say the least.

They never dismissed me or passed judgment on the situation I was in. They are true professionals who are dedicated to helping the people of Oakland County. I could never thank them enough.

- S. Clark - Oakland County Resident

If you're a senior citizen living in Oakland County and need assistance with financial management, contact Reda Nafso at (248) 858-0672 for more information or assistance.







### **Free and Confidential Financial Counseling**

The Oakland County Treasurer's Office Financial Empowerment Center provides free and confidential financial counseling services, including financial assessments, debt and credit counseling, budgeting, and even assistance with mortgage foreclosure and delinquent taxes. Our counselors understand the unique financial concerns and challenges that seniors may face and are committed to helping you manage your finances and achieve your goals.



## **MEET JIM!**

The office of Older Adult Services provides resources about services for the older adults in Oakland County. Find resources online at [OakGov.info/OlderAdults](https://OakGov.info/OlderAdults)

### **Jim Ellison**

Chief Older Adult Services

[EllisonJ@oakgov.com](mailto:EllisonJ@oakgov.com)

(248) 858-0593



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AN UPDATE FOR OUR OLDER ADULT RESIDENTS

WINTER/SPRING 2024

## IMPORTANT NUMBERS

Board of Commissioners:

(248) 858-0100

Clerk/Register of Deeds:

(248) 858-0581

County Executive:

(248) 858-0480

Nurse on Call:

(800) 848-5533

Prosecutor:

(248) 858-0656

Sheriff:

(248) 858-5000

Treasurer:

(248) 858-0611

Water Resources Commissioner:

(248) 858-1110

AgeWays Nonprofit Senior Services:

(formerly Area Agency on Aging 1-B)

(800) 852-7795

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