



STRAIGHT

LINES

SUMMER 2016

**Spicer**  
group

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*Front cover: New splash pad in Marlette, MI  
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## Spicer Promotions



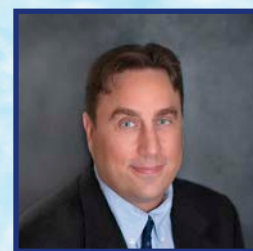
### **James W. Dixon as new Associate**

Spicer Group is proud to announce the recent promotion of James W. Dixon to Associate. Jamie has worked for Spicer Group since May of 1999, first joining our company as an intern and then working part-time until his graduation from Michigan State University with a bachelor's degree in Computer Science and Engineering in 2001. He began his full-time career as a Computer Technician, then a Technology Integrator, and now serves as the IT Manager for Spicer Group.



### **Aaron K. Bedford as new Senior Associate**

Spicer Group is proud to announce the recent promotion of Aaron K. Bedford to Senior Associate. Aaron joined Spicer Group's Marketing Group in March of 2004 as a Technical Writer. He was promoted to Marketing Manager in June of 2006 and currently holds that position, leading our Marketing team. He holds a bachelor's degree in Writing/Journalism from Northern Michigan University, and was selected as an Associate in 2013.



### **David S. Boersma, AIA, as a new Senior Associate**

Spicer Group is proud to announce the recent promotion of David S. Boersma, AIA, to Senior Associate. Dave joined Spicer Group in December of 2009 as a Project Architect and was chosen as an Associate in 2014. He holds both a bachelor's degree and a master's degree in Architecture from Lawrence Technological University and is a Registered Architect in Michigan and seven other states. He is also a Registered Code Official and Inspector for the State of Michigan.



### **Steven K. Roznowski, P.E., as a new Senior Associate**

Spicer Group is proud to announce the recent promotion of Steven K. Roznowski, P.E., to Senior Associate. After interning with Spicer Group for three summers between 2006 and 2008, Steve joined Spicer Group as a Design Engineer in the Saginaw office's Water Resources Group in August of 2010. Over the years he became a Project Engineer, a Project Manager, and in 2013 was named as an Associate. When our Southeast Michigan office opened, Steve moved to work out of the Monroe office and now currently serves as a Project Manager in our Dundee office. He is a Professional Engineer in both Michigan and Ohio, and has a bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering from Michigan Technological University and a master's degree in Civil Engineering from Colorado State University.



### **James E. Ensign, P.E. as a new Senior Associate**

Spicer Group is proud to announce the recent promotion of James E. Ensign, P.E., to Senior Associate. James began his career with Spicer Group as an intern in 2008. After graduating from Michigan State University with a bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering in 2009, he joined Spicer Group full-time as a Design Engineer in our St. Johns office's Water Resources Group. In 2013, he earned his Professional Engineer registration and was named an Associate of the firm. He now serves as a Project Manager out of our St. Johns and Lansing offices.



### **Paul L. Forton, P.E. as new Shareholder**

Spicer Group is proud to announce that Senior Associate Paul L. Forton, P.E. has become our newest shareholder, bringing the total number of company shareholders to 16. He was hired by Spicer Group to work in the St. Johns office in September of 2003 as an engineering intern. After earning his Bachelor's Degree in Biosystems Engineering from Michigan State University in 2004, he was hired as a Design Engineer in January of 2005. Mr. Forton received his Professional Engineer license and became a Project Engineer in 2009, and was promoted as an Associate in 2012. He is currently a Project Manager and is responsible for overseeing a variety of water resources-related projects across Michigan.

# Tennis court revamp includes popular new pickleball

## TENNIS COURTS & PICKLEBALL

SAGINAW CHARTER TOWNSHIP—Since the mid-1970's, rackets have been swung, aces have been served and backhands have been smashed at the tennis courts located at the George Olson Recreation Complex in Saginaw Township along Center Road.

The six professional-size tennis courts were separated into two sets of three courts each, and the entire 34,000 square feet of paved surface was enclosed by a chain-link fence.

Over the years, the six tennis courts were used by the general public, special athletic groups, and community schools, Herb "Sonny" Grunwell, the Director of Public Services for Saginaw Charter Township, said. Township personnel performed annual routine maintenance like crack repair or paint touch up, and a few times a professional tennis court contractor was hired to completely resurface the courts.

The age of the courts was beginning to show, however.

"We started to experience significant cracking and overall surface deterioration creating an unsafe condition for general use," Grunwell said.

The court's surface had become uneven enough that water would pool on the courts after rain events, making them unplayable.

In early 2015, the Township hired Spicer Group to do a full re-design of the tennis court area to completely replace all six courts. The existing asphalt surface was slated to be removed and the area regraded and repaved.

Originally, Grunwell said the Township wanted to build four adult courts and six youth courts that met United States Tennis Association (USTA) regulation sizes in hopes of hosting USTA-sanctioned tournaments. However, throughout the process it was learned that hosting sanctioned tournaments was "very unlikely."

With that in mind, the design was changed to include more youth-sized courts and pickleball courts, Mark Norton, P.E., Spicer Group project manager, explained.

Pickleball is a racquet sport that combines elements of tennis, ping pong and badminton and can be played by all ages and skill levels, according to the USA Pickleball Association (USAPA). It is

played on a short court with a whiffle ball and solid paddles wielded by two to four players and its popularity has skyrocketed throughout the U.S.

According to the USAPA, the number of pickleball courts in the U.S. has quadrupled in the past five years. Now, within the original square footage of the courts, there will be four USTA regulation-size courts, one that also has youth-court size lines, and six youth-sized tennis courts that can also be used for pickleball courts. Along with building new courts, the 10-foot fence was replaced and designed to reduce maintenance costs, and the walkways were made ADA compliant, Norton said.

Construction began in late August of 2015 and was finished by July of this year. "The project turned out great," Grunwell said. "The general public are already using the courts on a daily basis and they love it. Youth clinics are beginning as well. We are really happy with it."



# Fashion Square Boulevard

## TAKES A STEP NORTHWARD



KOCHVILLE TOWNSHIP—The goal of extending Fashion Square Boulevard has recently taken a huge northward step. Excavators and bulldozers are currently plowing a new route for a quarter-mile section extending to Kochville Road.

Fashion Square Boulevard originates several miles to the south and for many years has served as an important alternative for motorists travelling back and forth to work, home, and the bustling shopping districts of Kochville and Saginaw Charter Townships. In addition, the Boulevard has opened up vast amounts of sites for development including restaurants, professional buildings and shopping centers.

The boulevard currently stops at an agricultural field just behind the sprawling Sams Club, however the new road is taking shape as excavators are plowing the new route through the existing farm field which was donated from the owners to make this project feasible. About a quarter mile to the north lies Kochville Road and the remains of two homes left on

the property that had to be demolished to make way for the new road.

In most situations involving roadway projects, Spicer's engineers are used to tearing up existing roadways or roadway surfaces and putting new ones in. This was a unique experience for Project Engineer Mike Niederquell, P.E., because he was working with a clean slate.

"Normally, when designing improvements to existing roadways, you have to accommodate for existing features such as sidewalks, buildings and utilities," Niederquell said. "The more features you have to work around, the more complex the design can become."

This project is not void of challenges, however. According to Niederquell, even though his design team was starting from scratch, the proper permitting steps had to be taken.

"Getting Michigan Department Environmental Quality

permits for improvements to existing roadways is normally not a required task item, however, when designing an entirely new road on previously undeveloped land, acquiring the proper permits is one of the most important steps," Niederquell said. "In this particular case, part of the land was deemed to be in the 100-year floodplain so our design had to accommodate all factors associated with meeting MDEQ's floodplain standards."

Niederquell explained that a county drain runs through the property as well and angles towards the north side of property. He said a 100-foot-long 72-inch x 102-inch corrugated metal culvert will be placed along the county drain which will allow enough room for the entire width of the roadway, the sidewalk and accessible path to cross over it.

When completed, the new road will continue to look the same way as the existing section to the south. Decorative street lighting and park benches, sidewalks and a new bike path will be included as well. The existing water main and sanitary sewer ending at

Sam's Club will be extended to Kochville Road and provide an attractive site for future development.

According to Spicer Senior Project Manager Rob Eggers, in addition to supporting further development opportunities in Kochville Township, the new road will provide other benefits to the area as well.

"Fashion Square Boulevard has always been an excellent alternative for motorists to travel versus M-84 /Bay Road, which can sometimes get quite busy," Eggers said. "This new extended section will continue to provide the same benefits of the existing roadway and will also open up access to Kochville Road which will allow motorists to continue on to Bay Road or Davis Road which is another key route in the Township providing direct access to Saginaw Valley State University."

Currently, motorists only have the option of travelling west to Bay Road after reaching the end of the Boulevard. The project is expected to be completed by November 2016.

# Marlette Park Improvements



*New splash pad provides recreation for people of all ages in Marlette*

MARLETTE - Each year, more than 6,000 people make use of the Marlette Community Pool. The only outdoor public pool in the region, it is located at Marlette Community Park and has an average use of 75 visitors a day for open swim time or swim lessons. Originally built in the 1950's, the pool complex included a large swimming pool, a small wading pool, a bathhouse and parking areas.

The original pools at Marlette City Park were designed by Wesley Bintz, a pool builder who got his start in Flint and Lansing and eventually patented his design and construction technique to construct more than 100 pools nationwide.

Marlette's large pool was a Sunken Swimming Pool ovoid in shape varying in depth from 3-11 feet. On one edge, nearer to the bathhouse, was the wading pool varying in depth from 6-12 inches. Both pools had been renovated since they were originally built, but in recent years, began showing wear and outliving their life expectancy.

Marlette City Manager Corey Schmidt said there were times in recent years that the wading pool was not open during the swim season because of maintenance issues, also continuous repairs had to be made to the vinyl liner in the large swimming pool to extend its use.

In 2014, Spicer Group assisted the City with applying for a grant through the Michigan Department of Natural Resource's Land and Water Conservation Fund to help with improvements to the park and pool.

The \$97,800 grant was awarded for the project, which included replacing the pool liner with a PVC membrane system in the large swimming pool, removing the outdated wading pool and replacing it with a brand new splash pad.

"The idea to install a splash pad was the result of citizen feedback and planning over several years," Schmidt said. "Like the wading pool, the splash pad is a great recreation activity for younger children while also providing fun recreation for people of all ages."

The total cost of the project was nearly \$200,000, with half of that required by the grant to come from the City. To fulfill this requirement, in-kind labor and donations from the Friends of the Marlette Pool organization were used.

"These donations were a huge component to our matching program," Schmidt said. "Like many cities, there are a lot of demands on Marlette's General Fund. The donations helped relieve some of that pressure and ultimately helped us be more competitive for the grant funding. We are fortunate that the community came together to support this project."

After the wading pool, surrounding concrete and fencing were removed by the city, Spicer Group worked with Penchura, LLC, a Michigan-based playground and splash pad company, to design and install the splash pad features, which includes one large water tree and several in-ground features.

"The splash pad and its piping was also designed to easily incorporate a second phase of features, if additional opportunities to add onto the area come up in the future," Spicer Group Project Manager Tanya Moore, said.

Along with the design, Spicer provided the grant administration, bidding assistance, and construction administration on this project as well.

The project also included installing a pool lift for universal accessibility in the large swimming pool, additional handicap parking, new sidewalks for universal accessibility, new fencing, and new mechanical building for the splash pad controls. The newly-lined pool and splash pad were opened in early June of this year.

"The project has been well received by the public and has drawn new interest to our facility," Schmidt said. "We look forward to continuing to promote this new feature in summers to come. Spicer Group provided valuable services throughout, especially when helping us navigate the many requirements of an LWCF grant application and administration process."



# Jonesville Path



JONESVILLE—Years after it was abandoned, new life has been given to an old railroad bed, thanks to a \$296,000 Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund grant that provided funding to transition the abandoned rail into a 1.4-mile-long multi-use pathway.

The new path connects to the existing Hill-Jo Trail that runs from the City of Jonesville south to the City of Hillsdale.

The Hill-Jo Trail is also part of the 4,600-mile North Country National Scenic Trail that stretches from Crown Point, New York to Lake Sakakawea State Park in North Dakota. It is also part of the Baw Beese Trail that extends south of Hillsdale to Baw Beese Lake.

The new universally-accessible path begins at the intersection of Gaige Street and M-99, then heads east along Gaige Street, then north along Beck Street until it intersects with the abandoned railroad bed. The trail then follows the path of the old railroad line along a scenic nature route near the St. Joseph River before ending at an abandoned railroad bridge at the north end of the City.

Spicer Group assisted Jonesville with writing the grant application, along with providing design, permitting, and construction administration for the path.

Jeff Gray, the City Manager of Jonesville, said that the community was very instrumental in the development of the pathway. The Jonesville Rotary provided funding for the pavilion, map sign, and picnic table. A grant from the Hillsdale County Community Foundation and donations from local residents provided additional funding support for the project.

“The schools are exploring ways to incorporate the path into their curriculum for outdoor learning. It has really been embraced by the community and we are very pleased to see that enthusiasm,” Gray said.

Tanya Moore, Spicer Group Project Manager, said the design of the path along Gaige and Beck streets required the trail to travel through the streets’ right of way which included many utilities. This restricted

where the path could be built and its size. In some areas, the path had to be narrowed from 10-foot-wide to 8-foot-wide to fit within the allowable areas.

Not only does this path use an abandoned rail bed, but along Beck Street, it also crosses an active rail line, something not unusual for a rail trail but something that does present challenges.

Once the design was settled on and the permits issued, the project was bid out for construction in January of this year. Construction began in the spring and was finished by August.

Gray said one of the primary benefits of the path is that it offers the first public access to the St. Joseph River. “The river is an important part of the history and development of Jonesville,” he said. “Our annual festival, Riverfest, takes place each May and features river races and downtown events. The path will improve use of the river, allowing year-round access to its scenery and wildlife.”

*“Now you can have a quiet walk in the woods...and can experience the peace of the river.”*

Long-term plans for the trail include the rehabilitation of the railroad bridge and a trail extension that would connect back to M-99 in the northeast section of town, which is the current North Country Trail route. This newly completed trail offers an experience that wasn’t possible in the City before.

“I still remember the walks down the overgrown rail bed and having to fight through the brush. Now you can have a quiet walk in the woods. A lot of times you will see deer and you can always hear the birds sing and experience the peace of the river.”

“It is exciting seeing it come together,” Gray said. “Spicer Group was instrumental in helping us to secure a Michigan Department of Natural Resources Trust Fund Grant that made the project possible. Their knowledge and experience helped us to accomplish not only design and bidding for construction, but also to plan for the various state permits and reviews that were needed along the way.”

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A photograph of children playing in a splash pad. The children are wearing colorful swimwear, and water is spraying upwards from the ground, creating a misty atmosphere. The background shows green foliage.

# Spicer New Hires

**Shane Brennan:** Shane recently joined our Municipal Group in our Manistee Office as a Senior Designer. He has more than a decade of experience and earned an associate's degree from Michigan Technological University in Civil Engineering Technology.

**Daniel Hoyle:** Daniel was hired on as an Information Technology (IT) Technician at our Saginaw Office for our IT Group. He holds a bachelor's degree in IT from Central Michigan University.

**Heidi Loper:** Heidi recently joined our Manistee office as an Administrative Assistant. She has more than a decade of experience in administration and customer services and holds a bachelor's degree in Business Administration from Baker College.

**Emily Short:** Emily recently joined our Applied Technologies Group in our Lansing Office as a Water Quality Analyst. She began working at Spicer earlier this year doing quality control and sample collection and holds a bachelor's degree in Chemistry from Saginaw Valley State University.

**Mitch Thelen:** Mitch was recently hired for our Water Resources Group in our St. Johns Office. He began as an intern with Spicer in 2015 and became a full-time design engineer after earning his bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering from the University of Michigan.