



OAKLAND COUNTY
M I C H I G A N

Presents the
2009
AWARDS

October 2009

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**Additional categories were not awarded in 2009.
For a full list of the Nomination Categories, award descriptions
or full nomination requirements, please see the
Main Street Oakland County 2009 Awards Nomination Packet
(www.MainStreetOaklandCounty.com)**

INTRODUCTION

MAIN STREET OAKLAND COUNTY'S 2009 AWARDS

Main Street Oakland County instituted a new awards program in 2008. This new awards program recognizes excellence in downtown revitalization in five categories (Special, Organization, Promotion, Design, and Economic Restructuring) and has been designed to:

- be more educational, providing outstanding examples in the Main Street Four Points
- spotlight and provide more benefit to the Main Street communities, volunteers, and businesses
- more significantly honor the awardees with beautifully customized awards, featuring a handcrafted tile from Pewabic Pottery of Detroit, Michigan

Only the eleven (11) officially designated Main Street Oakland County (MSOC) Communities were eligible to submit nominations. MSOC 2009 Awards were presented at the Main Event, October 23, 2009.

AWARD JUDGING GUIDELINES

MAIN STREET OAKLAND COUNTY'S 2009 AWARDS

Nomination packages were judged on the following criteria:

- **Significance:** Is the nomination for someone or something *outstanding*?
- **Innovation:** Does the project or program offer an innovative or unique approach to a downtown management or development challenge?
- **Representation:** Is the project or program inclusive? Were partnerships (public and private) effective in getting the job done? Was the community involved in the effort? How? (Describe, not just list, the history of the participation).
- **Outcome:** Was the impact of the effort significant? How was it measured? Was it compared to an initial goal? Were the goals and objectives reached?

A panel of impartial judges, half from outside Oakland County, judged all nominations. The decisions of the panel of judges are final. The panel of judges reserves the right to move submissions to more appropriate categories, if necessary, or to decline to make an award in any particular category.

**For a full list of the Nomination Categories, or for more information:
see the *Main Street Oakland County 2009 Awards Nomination Packet***

**A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR JUDGES
FOR THE MAIN STREET OAKLAND COUNTY'S 2009 AWARDS**

Lola Aré, Oakland County Business Center Senior Business
Development Representative and Business Consultant

Ann Barnette, Milford (Michigan) DDA Executive Director

Dan Carmody, Eastern Market Corporation (Detroit) President

Mary Liz Curtin, Owner of Leon & Lulu, Clawson
and Clawson DDA Chair

Nancy Finegood, Michigan Historic Preservation Network
Executive Director
and MSOC Advisory Board Member

Jackie Hoist, AIA, THA Architects Engineers (Flint) Principal and
Project Architect

Jody La Londe, Owner of Creative Designs & Signs, Inc., Pontiac
and MSOC Advisory Board Member

Diane Larkin, Marshall (Michigan) Main Street Manager

Russ Lewis, Architect, retired from Oakland County PEDS
and MSOC Advisory Board Member

Bryan Lijewski, Michigan State Historic Preservation Office
Architect

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Honoring the MSOC 2009 Award Nominees

Bayside Sports Bar & Grille, Walled Lake

The Big, Bright Light Show, Rochester DDA

Brand & Imaging Campaign, Ferndale DDA

BUILD Program, Ferndale DDA

Business Development Incentive Program, Walled Lake DDA

Carlson Building, Lake Orion

DIY Street Fair, Ferndale

The Downtown Ferndale Summer Times newsletter, Ferndale DDA

Elegance by Design, Ferndale

Ferndale DDA Business Retention / Expansion Program

Holly Candle Shoppe, Holly

In Town Magazine, Rochester DDA

Kreger Farm Buildings, Franklin

Veronica Lujic, Ferndale DDA

Maher Restoration and Construction Company, Walled Lake DDA

Pinwheel Bakery, Ferndale

Public Improvement Project, Ferndale DDA

Public Improvement Project, Walled Lake DDA

Public Relations Effort, Ferndale DDA

Public Relations Effort, Rochester DDA

Stacey Tobar, Ferndale DDA

Walled Lake Beach Party, Walled Lake

~

Congratulations to All Nominees for Your Work and Contribution to Your Downtown!

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE MSOC 2009 AWARD RECIPIENTS!

FOUR-POINT AWARD WINNERS

ORGANIZATION

Award features a Gingko tile ~

- ***Outstanding Public Relations Effort Award:***
Ferndale DDA

PROMOTION

Awards feature a Flower Botanical tile ~

- ***Outstanding Special Event Award:***
DIY Street Fair, Ferndale
and
The Big, Bright Light Show, Rochester DDA
- ***Outstanding Promotional Design Piece Award:***
In Town Magazine, Rochester DDA

DESIGN

Awards feature a Chrysanthemum / Daisy tile ~

- ***Outstanding Sign Award:***
Holly Candle Shoppe, Holly (Holly and Dan Jablonski, Owners/operator)
- ***Outstanding Façade / Building Rehabilitation Under \$10,000 Award:***
Pinwheel Bakery, Ferndale (Ann St. Peter, Owner)
- ***Outstanding Façade / Building Rehabilitation Between \$10,000-\$50,000 Award:***
Elegance by Design, Ferndale (Dan Behnke, Co-owner)
- ***Outstanding Public Improvement Project Award:***
Ferndale DDA Design Team

ECONOMIC RESTRUCTURING

Awards feature a Celtic Spiral tile ~

- ***Outstanding Business Development Incentive Program Award:***
Walled Lake DDA Urban Design Committee
- ***Outstanding Business Retention and Expansion Program Award:***
Ferndale DDA Business Development Committee

MSOC 2009 AWARD RECIPIENTS

SPECIAL AWARD WINNERS

Awards feature a Tudor Rose tile ~

- **Outstanding Preservation Success Story Award:**
Kreger Farm Buildings, Franklin
- **Outstanding Volunteer of the Year Award:**
Stacey Tobar, Ferndale DDA
- **Outstanding Board Member of the Year Award:**
Veronica Lujic, Ferndale DDA
- **Outstanding Main Street Business of the Year Award:**
Bayside Sports Bar & Grille (Johni Semma, Owner), Walled Lake

MSOC SELECTED SPECIAL AWARDS

- **Community Commitment Award:**
 - Gene Carlson, Valkyrie Group LLC, Carlson Building, Lake Orion
 - James E. Maher, Maher Restoration and Construction Company, Walled Lake
 - Michael Plesz, Mind, Body & Spirits, Rochester
- **Sponsor of the Year Award:**
National City Bank
- **Guts & Determination Award:**
Suzanne Perreault, Holly DDA

A traveling award that features an iridescent glazed Oak Leaf tile ~

- **Main Street Spirit Award:**
Ferndale DDA

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All of the Main Street Oakland County 2009 Awards feature a handcrafted tile from Detroit's Pewabic Pottery, and were custom made by Creative Designs & Signs, Inc. of Pontiac, Michigan.

MORE ABOUT THE 2009 AWARD RECIPIENTS ~

PLEASE NOTE:

With the exception of the Special MSOC selected awards, the following award narrations were copied directly from the award nomination packages submitted to MSOC by August 19, 2009 and have not been revised or edited.

ORGANIZATION

OUTSTANDING PUBLIC RELATIONS EFFORT: FERNDALE DDA ORGANIZATION COMMITTEE

For more than a year, the Ferndale Downtown Development Authority has vigorously promoted its mission, its goals and objectives and its relevance as the essential element in the continued revitalization of Downtown Ferndale. Part of this effort was to develop a strategic marketing plan, adopted in January of 2009.

Soon thereafter, the DDA embarked on a multi-layered effort to engage district businesses, develop an emotional bond with our target market, address community critics, showcase our assets and educate the general public on what, exactly, a Downtown Development Authority is. Besides raising approval ratings, a companion goal was to recruit new and enthusiastic volunteers. The plan was executed with the advice and assistance of the entire board, which stepped up to be consistent and positive messengers of DDA news. The value of word-of-mouth cannot be overstated.

To achieve the most at the lowest cost, we focused our efforts on FREE or in-place platforms for information dissemination concurrent with positioning ourselves as THE source for everything about Downtown Ferndale. If it's happening downtown, you will find it in our eblasts, on our website, in the local press or featured on TV.

We have generated major coverage for all of our events – from a full morning of Fox 2 TV coverage of our Green Week celebration to consistent page 1, 2 or 3 story placements in local newspapers. If there's a story in Downtown Ferndale, the press likes to cover it and our target market wants/expects to know.

Efforts to better connect businesses to the DDA have included friendly merchant visits to explain the DDA and to empower them to be active participants. In March, all downtown businesses were invited to participate in our first FREE business forum about available resources called Ferndale First -- four businesses choose to accept the FREE business consultations offered. Through various communications, the DDA reminds businesses of what is available to make their business better – from build grants to website listings to promotions.

We have also engaged local charities, inviting them to display their event or cause in the window of the DDA storefront.

Other avenues utilized to build the DDA's image include:

- Monthly presentations to the Ferndale City Council, aired on WFRN TV. These reports began as promos for upcoming events and transitioned into regularly scheduled, well-developed power point presentations, written and delivered by a DDA board member, outlining a specific aspect of the DDA, i.e. organization, the budget, committee work, etc.
- Bi-monthly eBlasts to 1,400+ consumers, highlighting the week ahead, calendar listings, merchant features, etc.

MSOC 2009 AWARD RECIPIENTS

- Bi-monthly eBlasts to downtown businesses, advising them of special promotions pertinent issues, unique marketing opportunities and soliciting their “story” as a subject for future blasts.
- eBlast distribution to local press to keep them up-do-date, supported by traditional timely press releases and media alerts.
- www.DowntownFerndale.com. Free on line listings helps businesses expand their audience and establishes the site as an important resource. Businesses are, of course, encouraged to optimize their own sites by linking to Downtown Ferndale.com.
- Weekly www.DowntownFerndale.com homepage updates generate consistent return visits by consumers and businesses, measured in increased usage on Mondays as well as Thursdays, as our target audience plans its week ahead or weekend activities.
- Greater utilization of local TV. WFRN broadcasts to every cable-connected home in Ferndale and neighboring Pleasant Ridge. The DDA has established a solid relationship with the station to film and produce shows about events in Downtown Ferndale.
- Social networking has arrived in every downtown and in Downtown Ferndale being internet savvy is absolutely mandatory. Our Facebook fan page has grown to nearly 1,900, with daily updates, photo uploads, links, etc.
- www.DowntownFerndale.blogspot.com provides daily updates and Downtown Ferndale can twitter with the best of them.
- Restart of the Downtown Ferndale Print Edition Newsletter, Summer '09. Distributed to 20,000+ homes in Ferndale and neighboring communities.

The results of this ongoing, budget-conscious effort are noteworthy. From January to June of 2009, the DDA board added 4 new members, expanded its promotions committee from a membership of 3 to more than a dozen including a new promotions chair and stepped up its business development efforts with the addition of ongoing monthly networking meetings, featuring ‘volunteer’ experts. The arrival of all these new volunteers provides Downtown Ferndale with new opportunities and the manpower required to do more with less.

Plus, those who are involved share their stories and the good news about Downtown Ferndale continues to spread. We have transitioned from the 4 Fs – fun, funky, fashionable and fabulous – to a city where “Change Is Good.” “We Have the Proof” – more than 50 bars and restaurants, a thriving retail district, services from psychic readings to chiropractic adjustments and leading by example, a progressive, proactive and optimistic DDA.

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PROMOTION

***OUTSTANDING PROMOTIONAL DESIGN PIECE:
IN TOWN MAGAZINE by the ROCHESTER DDA***

While the Rochester DDA conducts an aggressive, year-round marketing effort, the cornerstone of our program is the In Town Magazine. The magazine was created in 1995 and has evolved into a 40-page, full-color glossy piece that is distributed bi-annually to 50,000 households in Rochester, Rochester Hills, Oakland Township, Washington Township and Shelby Township. It is also distributed through the downtown merchants, Chamber of Commerce, Royal Park Hotel and welcome centers across the state.

What makes this piece significant? The In Town Magazine was created with two goals in mind. First, to connect to the residents in the surrounding communities and to inform them of all Downtown Rochester has to offer; second, to provide an effective, low-cost advertising tool to the merchants. We are proud to say that over the years we have not just accomplished, but exceeded our goals.

Producing a magazine is quite an undertaking, both creatively and financially. To justify such a project, it needed to be designed to have an extended shelf life so it was not just a quick read and then off to the recycle bin. We saw an opportunity to not only inform the community, but to engage them as well. Every magazine includes guest articles from a variety of community leaders and organizations. Recent issues have included articles from the Paint Creek Trailways Commission, Chamber of Commerce, local business owners and residents.

But make no mistake, it is a marketing tool. We like to call it a “covert advertising piece”. The In Town Magazine was our first cooperative advertising project. To provide a stage for the merchants to be featured, we offer two opportunities – display advertising and gift guides. The display advertising is available in ¼, ½ and full page sizes. Ad costs range from \$600 – \$ 2,000. This is a fraction of the cost a merchant would pay to be in a regional magazine with similar distribution. The gift guide sections are free to the merchants. They have the opportunity to submit items to be photographed in assorted categories that change from issue to issue.

Every issue includes several staple articles and listings to ensure that the magazine is seen as a “must keep”. The Taste of Rochester lists all the downtown dining options, also noting if kids’ menus are available. New Neighbors features all the new businesses, both retail and service, moving into the downtown and serves as their introduction to the community. The Event Calendar is the primary reason many people cite for enjoying the magazine.

The Event Calendar goes beyond the downtown and lists events happening in the greater Rochester area. This provides us another opportunity to engage community organizations. Contributors to the event calendar include the Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen Farm, Rochester Symphony, Older Persons’ Commission, Paint Creek

MSOC 2009 AWARD RECIPIENTS

Center for the Arts, Leader Dogs for the Blind, Rochester Neighborhood House, Women's National Farm & Garden Association, Dinosaur Hill Nature Preserve, Rochester Hills Public Library, Assistance League of Southeast Michigan, Chamber of Commerce, Meadow Brook Theatre and Meadow Brook Hall.

So how do we gauge the effectiveness of the magazine? We listen to people. We know the day that magazines hit homes because the phones start ringing off the hook with questions about what they saw in the magazine. We have an 80% retention rate with our advertisers because they inevitably sell out of whatever item is featured in the magazine. We also receive requests throughout the year from residents wanting large quantities of the magazine for weddings, family reunions and out-of-town guests.

The best example of the power of the In Town Magazine happened during our Sidewalk Sales in 2007. We had the magazine prominently displayed at our booth at the event. A visitor approached the booth, picked up the magazine, then put it back down saying that she already had that copy at home. Why is this significant? Because the magazine she referred to had arrived at her home at the end of April. The Sidewalk Sales take place in mid-July. How many advertising pieces not only have a 2 ½ month plus shelf life, but also are known on sight?

The In Town Magazine is a great vehicle that allows us to engage our trade area and inform them of all of the great things happening in Downtown Rochester. It gives the merchants the opportunity to participate in a quality, cost-effective advertising campaign. It provides a platform for community organizations to promote their efforts. We are consistently pleased with the reception our magazine receives and believe that it will continue to be the cornerstone of our marketing program for years to come.

~

PROMOTION

OUTSTANDING SPECIAL EVENT:
DIY STREET FAIR, FERNDALE

In September of 2008, a band of dedicated volunteers took an idea to the streets to produce a resoundingly successful first year event – the DIY Street Fair, held September 20 & 21, 2008.

Driven by the vision of local entrepreneurs Chris and Krista Johnston (he was a DDA Board Member at the time) and a DIY steering committee they assembled, the DIY Street Fair set out to be a convergence and celebration of local artists, crafters, businesses, groups and organizations, musicians, restaurants, brewers and others who live and work with a do-it-yourself ethic. The event would showcase the immense creative energy, independent spirit and innovative talent found throughout the area.

The Johnstons, who own and operate three thriving businesses in Downtown Ferndale, rallied a dedicated group of like-thinking contributors – from cash sponsors to enthusiastic volunteers. Key players, from local artists to marketing and promotion execs to local business owners, began planning the event eight months out, allowing time to address every key component – from street closures, to directional signage, staging, a special kid's zone and, of course, artist and vendor participation. An all-inclusive website www.diystreetfair.com was built to efficiently answer every question by vendors and visitors.

The DIY physically and philosophically positioned itself in Downtown Ferndale in complement to the city's emerging and growing reputation for all things green, eco-friendly and progressive. Organizers reasoned that the city epitomized the DIY ethic on many levels -- from the national success of such companies as Garden Fresh Salsa, the local popularity of Woodward Avenue Brewers and The Magic Bag Theatre, and the fertile creative soil that is home turf to so many artists, musicians, entrepreneurs and activists. Downtown Ferndale has often been described as 20 minutes from nearly everywhere in Metro Detroit, making it the logical choice for an event of this scale.

Several dates were considered before deciding to share the weekend with the long standing Funky Ferndale Art Fair, whose organizer Mark Loeb enthusiastically welcomed the synergy of another show just one block south and 8 lanes east across Woodward Ave. While the Funky Art Fair is a juried event that showcases select talent, the DIY Street Fair was something else entirely. It had its own distinct location, spread out in a different part of the downtown district – east of Woodward and south of Nine Mile. Among the many special characteristics that pushed the event beyond the traditional, the DIY Street Fair was about community outreach and growth. Its goal was to be a homegrown, forward thinking solution, showcasing eco-friendly products, businesses and ideas. Even event clean up was consistent with the goal, carried out by Green on Site, an environmentally-friendly company.

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The volunteer component was huge. The DIY board of 12 people, working on average 10 hours a week from February through September, and more than 50 volunteers working before, during and after the event, collectively clocked approximately 4,840 hours of donated time! The mammoth effort resulted in a first year DIY that exceeded all expectations and produced some very impressive numbers, including:

- . 14,000 plus attendees
- . 4,500 kids (playing in the kid zone)
- . 36 bands playing back-to-back sets
- . 70 vendors
- . \$65,000 in editorial coverage in more than 25 media outlets

The event and the Johnstons have been recognized by The Ferndale Chamber of Commerce with the “Best of Ferndale” designation at its 2008 awards ceremony. The couple also received the Chamber’s “Good Neighbor” award, largely because of their involvement with the DIY.

MSOC acknowledgment of the DIY and the Johnston's efforts is deserved credit not only for a job well done but for an effort that exemplifies the success of public/private endeavors, the power of empowered volunteers and the broad impact of a single vision given an opportunity to grow.

The DIY Street Fair puts the spotlight on Downtown Ferndale for an entire weekend and reinforced the DDA’s role to support a good idea and nurture it for the benefit of everyone in the district. Many Downtown Ferndale merchants embrace the very same Do-It-Yourself philosophy as the event and encouraged its return in 2009. Immediately following the launch event, the second DIY planning began in earnest. It culminates with an even bigger event with more assets, including an additional day – September 18, 19 & 20, 2009.

~

PROMOTION

***Outstanding Special Event:* The Big, Bright Light Show, Rochester DDA**

In 2005, the Rochester DDA was looking for a way to drive sales to our downtown merchants during the ever-important holiday season. We knew that we could not compete with the advertising budgets of the big-box stores and local malls, so we had to create something that would make Downtown Rochester a must-visit holiday destination. We chose to focus on creating an experience unlike anything that had ever been done before, something that we hoped would attract visitors from across the state.

Created in 2006, The Big, Bright Light Show started with 500,000 LED (light-emitting diode) holiday lights blanketing four blocks of Downtown Rochester's Main Street. The opening night of the show saw over 30,000 people filling the streets of Downtown Rochester to witness the holiday happening. When the lights went on, everyone knew something special was happening.

After over one million visitors found their way to Downtown Rochester over the 35 days of the show and the merchants reported an average 29% increase in business compared to the same period the previous year, the decision was made to continue and expand the show in 2007.

The 2007 show included one million lights covering eight blocks of Main Street and several side streets, plus new event areas on the east and west sides of downtown to draw traffic to our off-Main Street businesses. New event areas included the Snowflake Spectacular – a dazzling display of over 60 giant snowflakes that flash to the beat of holiday music every fifteen minutes; Candy Cane Lane – featuring larger-than-life animated displays of giant toys; and the Dancing Tree of Lights – our traditional Christmas tree wrapped every inch with holiday lights that “dance” in sync to music.

In 2008, The Big, Bright Light Show was selected by Travel Michigan to be featured in their Pure Michigan - Shop Metro Detroit Campaign. Images of The Big, Bright Light Show were used in an online campaign and on billboards throughout Ontario.

To continue our mission to support small, independent businesses, The Big, Bright Light Show was funded by the Rochester Downtown Development Authority (DDA), Rochester City Council, corporate sponsorships and The Big, Bright Light Show Membership Program, supported by residents.

Every element in The Big, Bright Light Show is LED, making the event affordable and energy-efficient. This initiative was also a successful tool to motivate our merchants to have extended hours, seven days per week, a goal that had previously seemed unattainable.

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Since 2006, The Big, Bright Light Show has been featured by The Detroit News, Detroit Free Press, Oakland Press, Hour Detroit Magazine, Fox News, CNN and Good Morning America.

Since the beginning of the show, we have been overwhelmed by the letters, emails and phone calls from residents, visitors and merchants. Some say that we have restored their holiday spirit, others are proud to say that Downtown Rochester is their community. Most importantly, people have taken ownership of both the event and the downtown. We couldn't have hoped for a better outcome and hope that The Big, Bright Light Show will become even bigger (and brighter) in the years to come as it solidifies its place as a new Downtown Rochester holiday tradition.

ADDITIONAL BENEFITS

The Big, Bright Light Show personifies innovation in downtown revitalization. It is an example of finding a creative solution to an issue that every downtown faces - how to bring people to your city.

The effect of The Big, Bright Light Show goes beyond just the actual event days. Many times, attending the light show is the first time that visitors have experienced our downtown. We are hearing from our merchants that we are seeing many repeat visitors from the holiday season throughout the year from all across the state.

The Big, Bright Light Show has also proved to be a very effective business recruitment tool. Many new businesses have cited the event as a main reason why they selected Downtown Rochester to locate their business.

Overall, the long-term benefits of The Big, Bright Light Show are still unknown. If the results to date are any indication we believe the event has great potential and are working hard to capitalize on it in the years to come.

~

MSOC 2009 AWARD RECIPIENTS

DESIGN

***OUTSTANDING SIGN:* HOLLY CANDLE SHOPPE, HOLLY**

The Holly Candle Shoppe opened its doors on May 1, 2009. The business is a wonderful addition to the mix of retail, specialty and services businesses located in historic downtown Holly. The Holly DDA Board is excited to nominate owners Holly and Dan Jablonski for the outstanding sign at 211 S. Saginaw Street. The sign greatly adds to the overall charm of downtown Holly and is a vast improvement to the building space which previously sat empty for over two years.

The Holly Candle Shoppe has taken their image, brought it outside and on to the street through the use of a hanging projecting sign and sandwich board sign. The color, font, and overall style incorporated in the sign can also be found inside of the store, on their website, and it is consistent in their overall brand.

After receiving approval from the Historical District Commission and the Village Building Department, Holly and Dan Jablonski utilized a local sign-maker, Calypso Signs, another DDA District business, to make their vision a reality. They invested almost \$1,400 in the construction of the projecting sign and have truly set a new standard regarding signage in the downtown.

At the July 2009, regular meeting of the Holly Downtown Development Authority, the DDA Board unanimously agreed to nominate the Holly Candle Shoppe for Outstanding Sign Award, part of Main Street Oakland County's 2009 Awards.

~

DESIGN

***OUTSTANDING BUILDING REHABILITATION UNDER
\$10,000:
PINWHEEL BAKERY, FERNDALE***

Ann St. Peter had a vision. She wanted to open a local bakery that was friendly, inviting and most important, tasty. A small 2,000 square foot 1940's storefront on West Nine Mile was perfect in her eyes. Ms. St. Peter saw the potential and hoped the beauty the building once had underneath the wood mansard awning was still intact.

The portion of Spanish-style building that her bakery was going to be a part had been originally one large storefront, Woolworth's, consisting of store striped awnings and transoms of detailed leaded glass. The warm taupe brick naturally invited passers-by into the store. Over time, the building was first divided into three smaller stores and recessed vestibules were added. These new entries were installed a bit unconventionally with awkward angles, but there were quality materials used worth keeping. Detailed materials of black marble, marble tile flooring in the vestibule and tall glass windows directly captured and lured in the prospective customers. However, also with time came not-so-wise architectural alterations: drop ceilings, can lights, mansard awnings over the transom glass during the 1970s and 80s. From the exterior it was difficult to see the original brick work and details. The remaining single feature that hinted to the original architecture was the terra cotta stone shingled parapet.

Ms. St. Peter was set on her dream. Through careful demolition, the contractor, the DDA Design Committee, and Ann witnessed the original tin ceiling was still intact, as well as the leaded glass transom windows. This was thrilling to see and further confirmed the design plan was going in the right direction. Ms. St. Peter wanted to repurpose the display windows as part open display and part children's seating. One hurdle to overcome was how to insulate the vestibule ceiling and stabilize the main entry door and display windows now that the vertical interior access wall to the display area was removed to expose the original transom windows from the inside, as well as the tin ceiling. The Design Committee provided construction recommendations and worked with the contractor to devise a cost effective plan that would stabilize the main entry door and glass vestibule entry. One of the committee members whom is also a contractor, worked together to devise a well thought out construction solution that presented the vision both symbolically and architecturally. Construction costs for the exploratory demolition, detail repairs, entry stabilization, drywall and paint, and new lighting was \$10,000. In addition, with the investment of \$1550, the re-exposed transom windows have been repaired where needed and discrete interior storm windows added for improved insulation. The southern exposure allows the lead glass to act as prisms when viewed from the inside. The removal of the drop ceiling opened up this architectural detail that was once forgotten.

An appropriately sized fabric panel awning was put in place where the roll-out awning mechanism once was. This new awning also acts as signage for the bakery, yet maintains

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a simple and clean look so as to complement the newly uncovered Spanish architecture. This was also a cost effective solution for \$1575, the entrepreneur has an awning and signage for her business. The brick that was encased for years received a wash down and simple planter pots displaying season blooms lay foundation to the entry today.

It is refreshing to stroll by the Pinwheel Bakery and see the ever-changing display of aprons and other thematic pieces in the forefront while children appreciate a pint-sized seat right up front to enjoy their favorite cookie and color a picture for the Pinwheel Wall of Fame. The Pinwheel Bakery is truly a value added project to the downtown and community, and was a stellar example for BUILD funds from the Ferndale DDA, which the DDA gave \$2626 to Pinwheel Bakery for their improvement. The overall cost of the project was a little over \$13,000, but some of those costs were interior in nature, therefore, we are nominating this project for the Outstanding Façade/Building Rehabilitation Under \$10,000 Award.

~

DESIGN

***OUTSTANDING BUILDING REHABILITATION
BETWEEN \$10,000-\$50,000:
ELEGANCE BY DESIGN, FERNDALE***

Before Office Depot and Staples was Better Business Systems, the office space one-stop-shop in Downtown Ferndale that is now home to Elegance By Design. The prime retail space now lends design tips and wares to those homeowners seeking high design. Many HGTV aficionados would recognize the Candice Olson promotional items in the forefront of the open storefront display as it spills into the mid-ground furniture vignettes. Chrome chandeliers, mirrored end tables, lush suede sofas with handcrafted finishes are leaps and bounds as eye candy to the gently reused tweed swivel office chairs and taupe colored filing cabinets that once lined the clouded storefront window. Brian Ashburn and Daniel Behnke together have a style and service they felt Ferndale deserved to have, Elegance By Design.

The transformation of this seasoned office supply store was a large undertaking, both in size and girth. The 6,000 square foot footprint was covered in over-glued aged commercial carpeting. Efforts to remove the carpet and glue to expose the original hardwood floors was the first opponent to tackle. During the removal, the history of the building revealed itself for evidence pointed to where hardwood floors were patched to replace where the wood counters stood within the original Five and Dime store. Now the hired flooring expert had to devise a plan to refinish the two types of wood, oak and maple, to match. After testing and retesting, the floors are fabulous. This \$10,200 investment set the baseline for the rest of the store's refurbishment.

The plan for the exterior had the original stainless steel kickboard flashing under the front windows to be removed and replaced with slate tile. The new tenant was unaware the metal was actually stainless steel until the initial meeting with the DDA Design Committee. As a team, they investigated the material of concern. Working with the tenants and their design intent, the Design Committee was able to direct Mr. Ashburn and Mr. Behnke to keep the stainless steel panels explaining it was a superior material to the proposed slate tiles, and the material just needed some basic repairs and maintenance. The \$2,500 cost of repairing the stainless steel panels and stabilizing the window sills to accept new windows, was well worth the investment and may have been scrapped if the Design Committee had not acted quickly and thoroughly. This was a key component in the façade rehabilitation.

A second component was discovered underneath the faded fabric awning. Once removed, the original porcelain panels were found to be intact, as well as a ghosting of the Five and Dime circular symbol as embellished on the panels, one had a 5 cents, the other 10 cents. Mr. Ashburn and Mr. Behnke favored incorporating the Five and Dime symbol into their façade scheme, which can be seen as the circles with the Art Deco-like lines running through them above the signage panel. This historic detail complements the

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new signage of Elegance By Design. The pin-mounted chromo-like letters dance against the black background and the metal Art Deco frame adds simple and elegant detail. The signage was cost effective at \$1910.

Addressing the porcelain panels was easier than anticipated. The panels were in great shape with few cracks and holes. The project design selected a taupe color, a shade darker than the original color as found under the old awning. This step cost \$2300. The major cost for the project was new partition glass at \$20,600. This allowed for the building to be more energy conscience going from single pane to double pane. The glass was an investment the tenant wanted to make to ensure the delicate products were well kept and to improve the interior appearance for passers-by. The tenants also opted to build out one of two entry doors to improve store flow and safety. The original indentation was kept and the void is filled with a planter urn of seasonal flowers.

The last design component worth mentioning is the \$4,200 investment in the awning under the sign over the front display windows. The simple awning offers a place of refuge from the rain for passers-by, helps keep the windows clean, and adds a touch of class to the façade.

Elegance By Design is a refreshing and albeit surprising addition to Downtown Ferndale. The Ferndale DDA contributed \$8508 in reimbursement dollars from its BUILD program to support the overall renovation of the building, and serves as a true example of design assistance from the DDA to instill more quality in the final design. The clientele radius far exceeds Mr. Ashburn's and Mr. Behnke's expectations. Despite the recent passing of Brian Ashburn, Daniel has chosen to keep the doors open. We, as a DDA, are proud to have such an establishment in the downtown and hope for continued success.

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DESIGN

OUTSTANDING PUBLIC IMPROVEMENT: FERNDAL DDA DESIGN TEAM

What began as a foreshortened list of dilapidating planter pots grew into a landscape overhaul. In continuing efforts to provide lush landscape to Downtown Ferndale, assessments of the current streetscape were made. Volunteers of the Design Committee walked the West Nine Mile streetscape between Woodward and Planavon to see where more pots could be placed or replaced for a majority of the 80 planters pots were 10-years old and had succumb to the harsh Michigan weather influxes. However, the Design Committee could not come to a conclusion on what type or style of planter to purchase. Should it be fiberglass or concrete? What color? What size? How many can we get with our limited budget? All of these questions posed hesitation that ultimately was a blessing in disguise.

The Design Committee had an eureka moment. In lieu of purchasing planter pots at \$300 to \$500 each and having to develop a Pot Replacement Program knowing the maintenance process is cyclical, why not invest in in-ground planters that will not only provide us with perennials, but also allow the addition of shade trees. A “minor” streetscape detail that was left out with the revised Nine Mile streetscape reconstruction in 1998.

Now the question of cost effectiveness and materials came into play. The Design Committee assessed the best areas to add the in-ground planters was in the existing brick bump-outs. The cost for brick removal was lower than sawcutting and removing concrete. Plus, evidence of lack of use pointed to the underutilized brick areas. Next, to maximize the size of the planter pre-cast concrete blocks, 8” wide x 12” tall x 4” deep, were set on the existing set bed from the brick pavers soldier style, providing a slim profile of 4”. The blocks were recessed down on average of 4” and mortared together side-by-side. The volume of the soil and plant material behind provided vertical stability. Had the planter been constructed of traditional straight concrete curb, and average of 4” per side may have been lost, plus the form labor would have been complex and costly due to the fluid curved forms the planter beds had.

The West Nine Mile streetscape now has seven new planter areas complete with shade trees (6 total), ornamental grasses, drought tolerant perennials, and seasonal annuals. Though irrigation was not installed provisions were made by selecting drought tolerant grasses and perennials should the landscape maintenance program change. Currently, the planter areas are watered through the landscape and grounds maintenance contract. The final cost for seven planter areas with an average size of 150 sq ft was approximately \$10,000.

The team also evaluated the two-mile loop of Woodward Avenue from Marshall to Cambourne and identified existing tree wells that needed some attention. With the onslaught of the Emerald Ash Bore many of the Woodward Avenue streetscape trees

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were missing. Efforts to fill the tree wells were marginal due to incorrect species or caliper of tree installed. Also basic watering and soil amendments were direly needed.

In partnership with Woodward Avenue Action Association, a \$10,000 grant helped put shade trees back on Woodward Avenue for a total project cost of \$23,500, the remaining funds supported by the DDA. The grant purchased 33 shade trees of 2" to 2 ½" caliper in size. The tree species were mixed per block to avoid tree monotony and to derail any future shade tree wipe-outs due to disease.

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ECONOMIC RESTRUCTURING

***OUTSTANDING BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT
INCENTIVE PROGRAM:
WALLED LAKE DDA URBAN DESIGN COMMITTEE***

Project Overview and Goals:

The vast majority of commercial property in the City of Walled Lake DDA district is developed, with the majority of businesses being more than 25 years old. As the existing buildings represent a valuable resource worthy of preservation and rehabilitation, and because commercial business loans for lesser expenditures such as signs, exterior painting, and window and door replacement are often difficult to obtain, the Walled Lake DDA charged its Urban Design Committee with developing a program to address this challenge.

Community Involvement and Partnerships:

The Urban Design Committee is comprised of 8 volunteers from the residential and business community, many of whom are members of other DDA and City of Walled Lake committees such as the Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals or DDA Board. (A current membership roster is included in the supporting documentation.) The group is chaired by Wendell Allen, a member of the DDA Board and the Board of Directors of the Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce, who at the time of the development of the Facade and Sign Grant Program also owned a residential construction and remodeling company in the City.

Throughout the development of the Facade and Sign Grant Program for the City of Walled Lake DDA, members of the Urban Design Committee sought and obtained considerable assistance and advice from their Main Street Oakland County colleagues who had similar Facade/Sign Grant programs in place. In addition to obtaining advice and documentation from many of these communities, members of the Urban Design Committee made site visits to the Main Street communities of Rochester and Royal Oak to observe first-hand how effective the programs were and to learn from their experiences in developing, administering and marketing the program to the business community. Advice and assistance was also sought and received from the National Main Street and Main Street Oakland County leadership and staff, as well as Oakland County Planning and Economic Development Department staff members.

Collaboration with the City of Walled Lake, especially the Planning and Development Department, was also essential, as was working with the Planning Commission. Facade/Sign Grant Program Guidelines and an application form were drafted, reviewed and ultimately approved by the Walled Lake DDA Board and by the Walled Lake City Council. The Facade and Sign Grant Program was originally approved for \$25,000 with the 2004-2005 DDA Budget, which began July 1, 2004. Subsequently, the Urban Design Committee created the guidelines and application, taking ideas and suggestions from other downtowns.

Program Organization

The Facade and Sign Grant Program requires that the City of Walled Lake DDA budget funding for the program annually. The Program funds facade grant projects up to fifty percent of the cost of the facade project, or \$5,000, whichever is less. Sign grants are for fifty

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percent of the cost of the sign, or \$500, whichever is less. Eligible businesses fill out an application and submit renderings or plans, which are then reviewed by the DDA Urban Design Committee to determine if they are consistent with the adopted Design Guidelines and policies, the Main Street program guidelines and all local and state codes and requirements. If the proposed work is not in compliance, the DDA Urban Design Committee works with the applicant to achieve the desired compliance.

Once an application is approved, the Urban Design Committee continues to work with the business, providing counsel and advice and acting as a liaison between the applicant and the City. The applicant must show proof of the project being completed within one year of approval to obtain their grant payment. All building and site improvements are subject to reviews and approvals required by city codes and ordinances. The DDA markets this program to businesses in a number of ways, with the most effective being through personal contact with business owners. The DDA also created a brochure to market the program and direct mails the brochure and a letter to businesses several times each year. The brochure and a sample letter introducing the program to businesses are included in the supporting documentation.

Project Impact

When the grant program was first announced to the business community in 2004 the DDA's Urban Design Committee received so many requests for funding, it was apparent that the initial \$25,000 allocated for the program was inadequate. Additional funding was sought and approved by the DDA Board, bringing the total funds available for the 2007 budget year to \$45,000.

From January 1, 2007 through June 2009, 17 projects have been completed, and a total of \$36,919.60 has been awarded through the program.

One of the most notable facade renovations was part of a \$1.5 million expansion of Shuman Chrysler Jeep. Shuman could have chosen to relocate his business elsewhere, but chose to stay in Walled Lake where his father and grandfather started the dealership more than 50 years ago. While the facade grant covered only \$5,000 of the total cost of the new building and facade, the dramatic difference generated media attention, which further served to promote the program.

“It’s unbelievable how successful the program has been,” says Urban Design Committee chair Wendell Allen. “We have even had the opportunity to serve as a mentor to other communities in Southeast Michigan. Not only that, but we’ve seen other positive initiatives that are outgrowths of the collaboration fostered within the various departments, councils and committees within the city as we implemented the Facade and Sign Grant Program, with the most notable being a 90-day site plan guarantee from the City of Walled Lake. That’s just unheard of in most cities.”

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ECONOMIC RESTRUCTURING

***OUTSTANDING BUSINESS RETENTION &
EXPANSION PROGRAM:***
FERNDALE DDA BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

The Ferndale DDA believes it should be recognized for Outstanding Business Retention and Expansion Award for its amazing efforts in fulfilling some of the goals of the Downtown Ferndale market analysis, retaining a 95% occupancy rate during an economic depression and assisting local businesses with their expansion efforts.

First off, the Ferndale DDA conducted a recent market analysis that identified specific gaps in types of businesses, and niches that the Ferndale DDA could strengthen for the downtown area. Also, the Business Development Committee set goals and objectives that would address retention efforts in the downtown and growing our local business owners, such as in-store consultation services, training and promotions.

In one fell swoop, the Ferndale DDA was able to address two identified gap and niche opportunities; the first, rounding out our cultural diversity of cuisine, specifically Mexican or Spanish; and the second filling a 8,000 square foot vacant location on a prime corner in the downtown area. Ferndale DDA Executive Director Cristina Sheppard-Decius met with potential restaurateurs regarding Mexican cuisine, but after speaking with a local business owner, Brian Kramer who owns Rosie O'Grady's, a game plan was laid to not only develop the Mexican restaurant concept, but also relocate and expand Rosie O'Grady's in Downtown Ferndale. Not as easy as it sounds though.

Rosie O'Grady's originally wanted to expand its business on its location on West Troy Street in Downtown Ferndale, but ran into infrastructure issues, as well as a disconnect for the vision of the future of his business. Sheppard-Decius suggested that he purchase another property in the downtown to accomplish his vision, but also to keep his business local. She identified the property of 279 W. Nine Mile, which had been vacant for about a year (previously occupied by an eyeglass store), located at a prime corner in Downtown Ferndale. This site was also identified in the Downtown Development Plan of 2006 as a prime location for either a pocket park where the parking lot was located or a café setting. The property owner at that time did not want to sell the property, but Sheppard-Decius urged Kramer to pursue the owner further knowing that he had the ability to negotiate a deal, which eventually Kramer did. Kramer then developed his plan for the new Rosie O'Grady location which opened July 2009, while rehabilitating his Troy Street location into "Diablo's", a Tex-Mex restaurant, set to open this Fall.

Kramer also took direction from the DDA regarding its building design for the new Rosie O'Grady's, including restoring the original façade, keeping the mural on the side of the building that the DDA installed and integrating it into the design, and improving the quality of window units for the three-seasons room on the outdoor café (replacing the parking lot). All of this helped them to qualify for BUILD funds from the DDA, which is the Ferndale DDA's façade improvement program. Diablo's is in the planning and design

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stages at this time for the West Troy Street location, and also plans to come before the DDA for BUILD funds.

One of the DDA's largest accomplishments is maintaining an occupancy rate that is not seen by other communities during this economic depression. One factor is that the Ferndale DDA provides consultation services to businesses with the assistance of local volunteer consultants and Oakland County Small Business Center. Another factor is that the DDA works to refine government processes to make business easier, such as amendments recommended to ordinances such as the Sidewalk Café permit process and Sandwich Board Sign process. Our Business Development Committee volunteers review ordinances that seem to be prohibitive or difficult for operating local businesses effectively, and make recommendations to the Board of Directors which then sends them on to City Council for approval. Much of these reviews can take up to four months for review and recommendations, but it is worth the time and effort, and it shows with our business retention. There is still turnover in the downtown, but the Business Development committee has put this as one of their goals to reduce the turnover rate these last few years, and we are beginning to see a reduction of 2% thus far this year, and a net gain of 2% more businesses opening business in Downtown Ferndale.

Business retention is not a single job of one person, it requires a group effort between the DDA, business owner, property owner and consumer. One must listen to the needs of their business owners, address those needs, explore options with property owners when needed such as rent reduction or building assistance, and promote to consumers the importance of shopping local, which Downtown Ferndale does on a daily basis through multiple communication sources such as e-blasts, Facebook, Twitter, daily website updates, publicity and media relations. The Ferndale DDA is proud of its accomplishments over the last 9 years in the MSOC program, but we are especially proud of our results during this economic downturn because we are bucking trends and remaining strong.

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SPECIAL

OUTSTANDING PRESERVATION SUCCESS STORY:
KREGER FARM BUILDINGS, FRANKLIN

Those involved in the Kreger Farm Team were the Committee Members: Bill Lamott, Ann Lamott, Gary Roberts, Betty Lee Hepworth, Leslie Fricke, Pat Burke, Lew Eads, Eileen Pulker, John Pulker, Madeline Haddad, Rick Herman, Paulette Lerman, Bonnie Cook, Mike Seltzer, Shalli Williams, Donal Hepworth, Diane Lake, Pat McQueen, Casey McQueen. Additional Kreger Farm Team Volunteers are: Fire Chief Tony Averbuch, as well as other volunteer firemen, Boy Scout Troop 1699, Debbie Roberts, John Lake, Suzanne McClow, Roger McClow, Connie Ettinger, Libby Lamott, Teresa Natzke, Jane Roberts, Judy Shagena, and run club members.

The specific goal of the project was to preserve the three (3) privately owned Kreger Farm Buildings (c.1860), identified for demolition, by relocating them to Village owned property, and securing the structures.

The project has met success in a number of areas, with work still to be completed on renovations. The new property owners, Mr.& Mrs. Craig Bauer, donated the structures to the Franklin Historical Society in August 2008, and provided some of the funding necessary for the move. Donations were sought through a direct mail campaign (copy of the brochure is included). Gene Hopkins of Hopkins Burns Design Studio met with the committee members and provided site and use plans for the buildings (copy of the workshop Agenda in enclosed).

The Franklin Village Council accepted the gift of the Kreger Farm buildings at their December 8, 2008 meeting and approved the building placements on Village Property, after review and recommendations by the Franklin Village Historic District Commission, Planning Commission, and Zoning Board of Appeals. Kreger Farm buildings were moved through the streets of Franklin Village on December 18, 2008 requiring the moving of many cables and lines across the roadways, between two snowstorms, and was placed on the designated village owned property beside the historic Village Hall, Broughton House (c.1830's) (DVD depicting the move as provided by Bloomfield 15 local cable affiliate is included).

The Franklin Foundation provided a matching grant for the first \$50,000 raised. A Barn Raising event On June 13, 2009 raised approximately \$2,000 and featured a 5K run, 5K walk, dog walk, and pancake breakfast during which there were over 400 participants. Additional mail campaigns and other publicity have resulted in a total of approximately \$150,000 raised to date.

Foundations have been laid for each of the buildings and the buildings have been moved to their permanent locations. Work continues on renovations and landscaping of the grounds. Further fundraising events are planned including an additional mail campaign and a Dinner/Barn Dance to be held on October 10, 2009 (draft flyer enclosed).

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The project was originally organized and launched by the Franklin Historical Society in August 2008, when they received word from the property owner Bauer, that Bauer wished to donate the buildings to the Historical Society and requested that the buildings be moved by December 31, 2008. The Historic Society invited members of many different organizations within the Village to a meeting held at the Village of Franklin/Bingham Farms Fire Hall. As a result of that meeting a committee was formed and work began on events, promotions and design of the project.

The Kreger Farm Team is worthy of this award due to their successful efforts of moving the structures in the short available time allotted for the project. The project entails the historic preservation of a valuable Village asset and will provide for needed additional community space in the reuse of the buildings as meeting and assembly areas. Additionally the team as assembled is unique in its combination of the resources and members of so many different Village groups, including but not limited to: Franklin Village Council, Historic District Commission, Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, Franklin Historical Society, Franklin Foundation, Franklin Community Association, Franklin Community Church, Franklin/Bingham Farms Fire Department, Franklin Police Department, Questors, Franklin Garden Club.

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SPECIAL

OUTSTANDING VOLUNTEER:
**STACEY TOBAR, FERNDALE DDA BOARD OF DIRECTOR & DESIGN
COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON**

The Ferndale DDA nominates Stacey Tobar, a resident of Ferndale, for Outstanding Volunteer of the Year. Stacey has been involved as a volunteer with the Ferndale DDA since 2001 and served as the Design Committee Chair for the DDA for the last six years, and was appointed to the Board of Directors in 2009 because of her service and accomplishments with the Ferndale DDA.

As a landscape architect, Stacey's contributions of time, energy, vision and design make her one of our most valuable resources. She has dedicated over 600 hours of volunteer service towards improving the physical and visual environment in Downtown Ferndale, with projects such as designing the Woodward and Nine Mile Median Improvement, serving on behalf of the DDA in the Art in Public Space Plan, coordinating student murals, assisting businesses with BUILD funds from the DDA, developing portions of the Downtown Development Plan and serving on focus groups, and developing the Design Guidelines of the Ferndale DDA.

What makes Stacey particularly outstanding this past year and a half is her contribution of creation, time, design and implementation of five significant projects downtown, including Pimp Your Pot, Woodward & Nine Mile Tree Well and Bike Rack Programs, Foley Mansfield Alley Design, and the Preserve America Wayfinding Program. The value of her time and services equals about \$20,000, which would make these projects out of reach for the Ferndale DDA if we had to pay for these services.

Pimp Your Pot, a brand new event for Downtown Ferndale this past spring, included encouraging businesses to think outside the "pot" when making Downtown Ferndale green. Any vessel could be used for a planter pot, and businesses were recognized for their creativity. Also, kids were able to decorate their own pot to take home and a visual artist promoted Pimp Your Pot in a vacant storefront window, all of which was supported by sponsors that Stacey recruited totaling \$1100.

The Woodward & Nine Mile Tree Well and Bike Rack Programs continue to make Downtown Ferndale green. Stacey designed the 7 new tree wells on Nine Mile, assessed our need for 35 additional and replacement trees on Woodward, and plotted out the landscape materials and locations for over 30 new bike racks this past year. Stacey is a large proponent for going green, and it is her passion that is helping to push the subject here in Downtown Ferndale. Both of these projects combined were an investment by the DDA of \$40,000.

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One of our community's goals brought about in the Downtown Development Plan process was to beautify and make our alleys more pedestrian friendly. Stacey saw in a few other communities through her studies at MSU that alleys could become these public areas that people wanted to congregate to and be pleasantly surprised when used. The alleys in Downtown Ferndale back up against businesses and tend to be heavily used because of the public parking locations. In general, most of these alleys are utilitarian and ugly, but with Stacey's landmark design, this Fall we will have the first of its kind, the Foley Mansfield Alley, transformed into a beautiful oasis. Stacey has worked on this particular project for the last two years, from concept to public buy-in, private property and city support to working with engineers. This \$60,000 project should be completed by November 2009.

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SPECIAL

***OUTSTANDING BOARD MEMBER:* VERONICA LUJIC, FERNDALE DDA CHAIRPERSON**

The Ferndale DDA nominates Veronica Lujic, co-owner of local Ferndale DDA business State of the Art Framing and Gallery, as the Outstanding Board Member of the Year. Veronica has served on the Ferndale DDA Board of Directors since 2006, and immediately jumped into service by producing a new event as part of the DDA Promotions Committee for Downtown Ferndale called the Tour of the Town. Tour of the Town was a retail promotional event that occurred twice per year for two years, totaling \$4400 in sponsorship dollars which Veronica raised to cover the cost of the events. The events brought hundreds of consumers out each evening for a night of shopping, food and entertainment.

Serving as the Promotions Committee Chairperson for a year and a half from 2007-2009, she then went on to produce two more retail promotional events as the volunteer leader, including a gallery walk and a home furnishing design tour, raising all of the sponsorship dollars (over \$2000) necessary to make these events a new success. Since January of 2009, Veronica has been serving as the DDA's Board Chairperson, and is bringing a new passion and commitment of board members to the DDA. After attending the National Main Street Conference in Chicago in 2009, she was inspired to inspire others. With her vision and enthusiasm for Downtown Ferndale, she has built a full membership on the Board, the four committees, and a handful of subcommittees. Although her job is not complete, she continues to inspire more volunteers to take the lead on more and more projects each day and become actively involved in revitalizing their downtown; a not so easy task at times.

She also had the daunting task of trying to reposition the DDA as a positive organization for the business owners after a year and a half of turmoil due to political upheaval on an expansion of the DDA boundaries and a proposed PSD special assessment. Her continual focus on how the DDA could improve communication and service to the businesses has left a very positive impression on the business owners and has convinced many of those who were opposed to the assessment to reconsider the DDA as the vital organization that it is and the assets it brings to our community. Her dedication to building her own business makes her an ideal advocate for the entrepreneurs of Downtown Ferndale; as well as an understanding liaison for all businesses.

Veronica spends 10 hours per week towards bringing the DDA to a new level. She has proven that she is a leader, and stands up for what she believes in. She has committed to helping staff develop internal standards and processes that are improving our overall service to the community. In total, Veronica has committed over 300 hours of volunteer service for Downtown Ferndale in her three years of service. Veronica visits merchants and presents at City Council and local TV the DDA's goals and mission. She is increasing public awareness about the DDA, carefully guards every tax dollar, and is fearless when asking for help or funding for essential DDA projects.

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Veronica's unshakeable commitment to the DDA provides solid footing for staff, her fellow board members and other volunteers who are inspired by this woman who leads by enthusiastic example. We at the Ferndale DDA are lucky to have Veronica, and we hope that we can continue to inspire and support her to excel in her mission of revitalizing Downtown Ferndale.

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MSOC 2009 AWARD RECIPIENTS

SPECIAL

***OUTSTANDING BUSINESS:* BAYSIDE SPORTS BAR & GRILLE (JOHNI SEMMA, OWNER), WALLED LAKE**

From a Grand Opening held on September 9, 2007, to a second birthday party this Fall, Bayside Sports Bar & Grille owner Johni Semma and his staff have orchestrated an entrance onto the Walled Lake scene which has skyrocketed them from an unknown entity to “THE” place for community gatherings seemingly overnight.

In May of 2006, Semma, a resident of Walled Lake, purchased and began extensive renovation work on a piece of property located on the shores of Walled Lake, on Walled Lake Drive near Pontiac Trail. The site had been occupied by a car dealership for about 70 years, then was home to Key Largo Restaurant starting in the mid-1980s, and The Boathouse Restaurant in later years. The Boathouse closed in early 2000 and the property stood vacant until Semma purchased it. Bayside’s emergence as a magnet to attract crowds to the Historic Lakefront District can be attributed to a combination of efforts. From hosting new and exciting events like the American Power Boat Association (APBA) sanctioned Hydroplane Races, to hosting a Christmas dinner for clients of the local food bank, to hosting the regular Tuesday meetings of the Rotary International, Semma is always role modeling what it means to be a good neighbor. “We receive about 10 to 15 requests for assistance from individuals and community groups each week,” says general manager Debra Findlay. “Johni says ‘yes’ way more than he says ‘no.’ He is one of the most generous, kind, thoughtful and humble people I have ever met. I’ve been in the hospitality business a long time and I have never worked for anyone like Johni in my life.”

Volunteers and staff at the Hospitality House Food Pantry in Walled Lake, and at HAVEN, a shelter for abused and at-risk families in Pontiac, are just a few of the many charities who have benefited from Semma and his staff members’ generosity. This past winter, Semma contacted Hospitality House to inquire what he could do to help with the Food Pantry’s annual holiday celebration for their clients. In the past, the Food Bank presented each family with the items to fix a holiday meal, but donations were down and it wasn’t looking like they would meet their goals. Semma stepped in to host a holiday party for 600 of the Food Pantry’s clients on-site at Bayside. “Our staff volunteered to work for free on the day of the event,” said Debra Findlay. “We arranged for Santa to make a surprise visit, giving out coloring books and crayons to the children. Everyone went home with fresh baked cookies. By far it was one of the greatest days that Johni and I, and the staff have ever had. The reality of what we’d accomplished really hit me when one participant told me that she had never eaten in a place so nice.”

Kristy Hudson, director of the Food Pantry provided testimony on Johni’s nomination for the Business of the Year Award. “Johni is a wonderful man,” writes Kristy. “Before Bayside even opened its doors, Johnny contacted us and wanted a tour of the local food pantry in Walled Lake. During his tour, you could see how deeply touched he was at the amount of clients that we serve monthly in the town where he would be opening his business. He has supported Hospitality House food pantry ever since.”

Bayside also provided the venue for the highly successful, In Her Shoes, designer shoe fashion show and charity event for HAVEN on June 27, 2009. The event, which featured Miss Michigan USA, Lindsey Tycholiz, raised \$12,000 for HAVEN’s domestic violence and sexual assault prevention programs. Over 300 people were in attendance and many local businesses donated to the event. Semma, himself, donated 5 percent of sales on the evening of the event. “I feel that

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community events are all very important,” said Semma. “If the community sticks together it will succeed.”

Semma knows, however, that success takes innovation, hard work and a lot of marketing. His unique downtown waterfront location has been key to bringing a host of new events to the area. On June 14 and 15, 2008, Bayside hosted the first-ever APBA sanctioned inboard hydroplane races on Walled Lake. The event, called Walled Lake Thunder, drew 37 boats and hundreds of spectators; in 2009, participation swelled to 50-60 boats and nearly 4,000 spectators. Semma and his staff coordinated all logistics of the event from arranging for tents to shade spectators, to leveling of the huge cranes needed to hoist the boats from their trailers into the water, to making arrangements for public safety and security, to providing the award trophies. “We couldn’t have done it without the support of so many people and agencies,” said Debra Findlay. “The City of Walled Lake and the Walled Lake DDA, the City of Novi, Commerce Township, various Oakland County Departments, including the Sheriff and the Health Department, and even the state Department of National Resources (DNR) assisted in this event. We also had great support from the APBA, more than 20 volunteers from the community and the DDA who organized the business community to do co-op advertising of the event in the local newspaper.” The event was promoted extensively on the internet, in radio spots and through flyers posted and distributed by local businesses.

Semma also brought the Monster Energy Midwest Watercross Tour personal watercraft races to Walled Lake. The inaugural Walled Lake event was held in May 2008, and the 2009 races were held May 30 and 31. The top watercraft racers from the Midwest and Canada descended on Walled Lake for this APBA-sanctioned competition. The series finales are also held in Walled Lake in August of each year. Bayside also participates in the majority of City of Walled Lake and Walled Lake DDA-sponsored events such as the annual Beach Party and Walled Lake Market Day, and the Walled Lake Carnival that was held on June 25-29, 2008. He continues to promote other area businesses by distributing plastic cups with the logos of area businesses on them, a true example of co-op advertising, and is a staunch advocate of purchasing services locally.

Not only does he buy locally, but he also hires local talent to entertain in the restaurant and initiated an aggressive effort to hire local high school students to fill summer positions. “We feel it’s doing a real service to help these students build their resumes and cultivate solid work ethics,” says Debra Findlay. “It also helps local parents by providing a convenient place for their children to work and keeps dollars in the local community.”

This past winter Bayside also hosted a Winterfest, which drew 50 teams who played baseball on slushy ice while 4,000 spectators cheered them on. An Ice Fishing Tournament, held last winter, benefited the family of a fallen soldier, Staff Sergeant Duane Dressler. A Moon Bounce was installed in the restaurant’s dining room so the children attending would be warm and comfortable. Each child also left the fishing tournament with their own live goldfish. “We do what we can to help,” says Findley.

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SPECIAL ~ MSOC SELECTED AWARDS

COMMUNITY COMMITMENT:
GENE CARLSON, VALKYRIE GROUP
THE CARLSON BUILDING, LAKE ORION

Gene Carlson chose to locate his business in Downtown Lake Orion and purchased a Gothic Revival style house at 10 N. Lapeer Street. Working with the Lake Orion DDA and the MSOC Design Assistance Program, Gene received a Facade Grant from the DDA and proceeded to completely rehabilitate the building without any federal or state tax incentives. Gene invested more than \$150,000 to complete the project and have it listed as a part of Lake Orion's National Register Historic District. The house now adds significantly to the visual quality of the western entry to the downtown.

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COMMUNITY COMMITMENT:
JAMES E. MAHER
MAHER RESTORATION AND CONSTRUCTION COMPANY,
WALLED LAKE

In 2008 James Maher purchased one of the 2 remaining 1940s World War II, U.S. Navy Surplus "Quonset Huts" in Walled Lake, at 861 N. Pontiac Trail, for use as his corporate headquarters. Working with the DDA, its Urban Design Committee and the MSOC Design Assistance Program, he received a Façade Grant from the DDA to help finance the restoration project. His vision for the unique building, and property, which was vacant for many years, resulted in the dramatic, high quality rehabilitation of the front facade while not changing the remainder of the distinct rounded roof, corrugated metal exterior of the "Quonset Hut". Extensive landscaping was also undertaken to greatly improve the visual quality of the building and site. Jim's investment of thousands of dollars is a tremendous positive statement in these tough economic times and has significantly enhanced the eastern entry of the Walled Lake DDA in the City's historic railroad district.

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COMMUNITY COMMITMENT:
MICHAEL PLESZ
MIND BODY & SPIRITS, ROCHESTER

Mike Plesz has created a unique restaurant concept based upon all organic and natural foods, which are predominantly grown locally and on-site. The restaurant interior design and complete building renovation is the first LEED certified restaurant in Michigan. Mike's investment of several hundred thousand dollars to create an exciting and one-of-a-kind restaurant experience has been a tremendous boost to Downtown Rochester. The high quality destination business is a model for sustainability, healthy eating and healthy food choices that is bringing people and attention to Rochester from across the Metropolitan Detroit area. Mike also owns and operates the very successful Rochester Mills Brewing Company in the old Western Knitting Mill at E. Fourth & Water Street. Mike's enthusiasm and passion for his businesses and commitment to the community has been a tremendous addition to downtown Rochester.

GUTS & DETERMINATION:
SUZANNE PERREAULT, HOLLY DDA

Suzanne Perreault has consistently shown her professionalism, diplomatic skills and leadership qualities to further the objectives of the DDA. The Holly DDA & its 2008 Nationally Accredited Main Street Program has consistently supported Suzanne in her efforts, even while the Village has not always fully understood the need for the long-term objectives of the DDA. Suzanne is always determined to help Downtown Holly improve and succeed.

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SPONSOR OF THE YEAR:
NATIONAL CITY BANK

National City Bank has consistently utilized its Community Reinvestment Funds to sponsor the MSOC Program since it began in 2000. In 2008, National City's sponsorship, more than any other MSOC sponsors, again allowed MSOC to promote its program nationally by providing unique MSOC shirts, designed by MSOC's Karla Richey, to all of the sixty-three representatives from Oakland County's Main Street Communities and MSOC Staff who attended the National Main Streets Conference for Downtown revitalization in Chicago, this past March. National City's sponsorship dollars also helped to finance other MSOC promotional efforts and conference presentations in 2008. We appreciate National City's support.

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MAIN STREET SPIRIT:
FERNDALE DDA

The Ferndale DDA has had another outstanding year. With an incredible amount of private investment, over \$23 Million, in several new buildings and businesses, great crowds at all of their events, several new and expanded businesses and many new volunteers to assist the DDA Staff in all of their projects and events, it is clear to see that Ferndale is one of our hottest downtowns in spite of Michigan's continued economic problems. The new staff members that have come on board over the past year and DDA Executive Director, Cristina Sheppard-Decius, have developed positive team chemistry that is contagious. They all perform their jobs in all-star fashion. That positive chemistry has extended itself to the DDA Board and the Committees. The energy and enthusiasm of the Staff, Veronica Lujic, as the Board Chair, and the Committee volunteers really makes a difference. The Mayor and City Council and the Administration are very positive and supportive of the DDA and its community involved management style. This positive spirit in Ferndale is a model for others.

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