



132 E. Broad Street • Linden, MI 48451 • P.O. Box 507 • Phone: (810) 735-7980 • www.lindenmi.us

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TO: Mayor Armstrong & City Council Members  
FROM: City of Linden Downtown Development Authority  
RE: 2025 Downtown Development Authority Annual Report

The City of Linden Downtown Development Authority (DDA) Board is pleased to present its Annual Report summarizing activities, investments, and accomplishments for the 2025 calendar year. The DDA continued its mission to enhance the vitality, appearance, and economic health of Downtown Linden through capital improvements, business support, marketing, and community partnerships.

#### Presentations:

The DDA hosted the following presentations in 2025:

- Informational Meetings were held in April and October (PA 57 of 2018 Compliance). During these meetings, Staff and Board Members presented on the goals and achievements of the Board, as well as projects planned or underway.

#### Capital Improvements:

##### *Millpond Walkway Revitalization*

In 2025, the DDA completed a major improvement to the Millpond area with the revitalization of the walkway. This project included the installation of a new stamped concrete walkway along with upgraded electrical infrastructure to better support events, lighting, and future enhancements. This investment further strengthens the Millpond as a signature gathering space and community destination.

##### *Downtown Parking Signage*

Updated parking signage were installed throughout the downtown district to improve wayfinding, clarify parking options, and enhance accessibility for residents and visitors.

#### Business Support & Development

##### *New Businesses and Chamber Memberships*

The DDA supported several businesses with chamber memberships in 2025, including:

- Evers & Ollie
- Jack's Record Stache
- Mae Designs XO
- Wylde Child

A DDA-sponsored ribbon cutting was also held for Houndstooth & Harlequin, celebrating its opening and contribution to the Linden business community.

## Marketing & Promotions

### *Expanded Downtown Marketing*

The DDA invested in additional marketing efforts throughout 2025 to bring increased attention to downtown businesses, particularly during community events and Music by the Mill. These efforts included enhanced promotions, branding, and outreach designed to drive foot traffic and business awareness.

### *Social Media Growth*

The DDA increased its social media presence to better highlight downtown businesses, events, and initiatives. This expanded digital outreach helped promote local shopping, dining, and entertainment while strengthening the overall downtown brand. Additionally, the DDA participated in the Michigan Downtown Association Social Media Takeover, increasing the reach and awareness of Linden, Michigan across a broader statewide audience.

## Events & Programming

### *Music by the Mill*

The DDA continued its support of Music by the Mill, which remains a popular community event drawing residents and visitors into the downtown area.

### *Christmas Tree Program*

A new Christmas Tree Program was launched in 2025, allowing downtown businesses to participate by decorating trees. This program added a festive and creative way for businesses to promote themselves while enhancing the holiday atmosphere downtown.

### *Basket Giveaways & Shop Local Initiatives*

To encourage local shopping and downtown visitation, the DDA hosted basket giveaways during Downtown Day and Small Business Saturday. Visitors who shopped locally were entered into giveaways, helping attract new patrons to downtown businesses. Free DDA-branded tote bags were also provided for businesses to distribute on these days, reinforcing the Shop Local message.

### *Restaurant Week Participation*

Few local restaurants participated in Restaurant Week in partnership with neighboring communities, promoting dining in Linden and strengthening collaboration.

## Sponsorships & Community Support

Throughout 2025, the DDA remained committed to supporting community organizations and events, including:

- Sponsorship of Happening in Linden
- Donation to the American Legion in support of community programming

These contributions reflect the DDA's ongoing commitment to community partnerships.

The DDA will continue to prioritize capital improvements, business support, marketing, and community partnerships in 2026. By investing in infrastructure, events, and local businesses, the Board remains focused on strengthening Downtown Linden as a vibrant, welcoming destination for residents, visitors, and entrepreneurs. As always —support our local businesses!