



## MI Portland Downtown: A Favorite Small Town Escape

Mid Michigan's beloved small-town hub — a place where families thrive, friends gather, and visitors make lasting memories.

Summer Digest 2025

Portland Downtown Development

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miportland.org



## State of DOWNTOWN

**35** Blocks

**168** Parcels

**457** Public parking spaces

**143** First-floor storefronts

**109** Residential units

**11** Restaurants

**14** Retail stores

**k** Visitors

**10 7%** Storefront vacancy rate

## MI Portland DDA - Making a Difference

MI Portland Downtown values and builds relationships. Relationships are how we came through the Ice Jam together. During Covid-19 no established businesses were lost, and several gained funding through support and relationships built by the DDA. Relationships are how we raised \$253,000 in public donations for the Toan Park renovations. Most recently, DDA Relationships helped raise the Plaza RAP Grant from \$140,000 to \$200,000. These are just the highlights, relationships connect us, grow and strengthen our downtown daily.

### Downtown's Goals

- Preserve historic assets while enhancing community vibrancy through thoughtful development and engaging public spaces
- Support locally owned commercial ventures by providing regular resources, promoting the community as a whole, and offering opportunities for each business to gain additional recognition and promotion
- Foster and fortify lasting, mutually rewarding partnerships and connections with all stakeholders to drive shared success.



# TRANSFORMING PORTLAND'S DOWNTOWN



Independence Fireworks Celebration  
The DDA stepped up to ensure the fireworks tradition would continue. With fewer and fewer sponsors, a contract was negotiated with a new pyrotechnic company to ensure fair pricing through 2028.



During and after completion of Kent Street infrastructure and streetscape, Opera Block Properties got right to work investing hundreds of thousands of dollars into artfully restoring 7 additional storefronts.



Portland's Holiday Fest is becoming know throughout the region. In partnership with Opera Block and downtown property owners, the light display adds something new and exciting each year. We're already gearing up for 2025!

## REINVESTMENT STATS 2025 YTD

PRIVATE INVESTMENT  
**\$ 407,955**

**7** Façade & Building Improvements

**3** New / Expanded Businesses

Public Investment,  
CITY / DDA  
to date 2025

**\$ 2,892,220**

Water/Sewer Tx Plant  
BLP Upgrades  
Equip. Repair & Upgrades



**\$ 34,568**

Promotions, Events,  
Decor, Operations,  
Economic Development,



## Helping Businesses Thrive

- Pre-development assistance
- Small Business Saturday (s)
- Social Media Shares
- Community Calendar
- Featured Business
- Façade Improvement Incentive opportunities
- Downtown marketing program
- Networking opportunities
- Portland Prime

Portland Downtown Development plays a vital role in inviting and keeping patrons engaged in our downtown, which in turn helps the small businesses who participate prosper. Multiple businesses, have noticed the human connection the MI Portland program has provided in creating inviting spaces where people want to linger and explore. The variety of these public places have become a canvas backdrop for businesses to connect with clients and customers.

## DDA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

| NAME            | POSITION    | STAKEHOLDER                            | TERM EX-PIRES |
|-----------------|-------------|----------------------------------------|---------------|
| April Vogl      | Chairperson | Leads ORM Farm Market / Business Owner | 2026          |
| Lee Schneider   | Vice-Chair  | Property & Business Owner              | 2028          |
| James E. Barnes | Treasurer   | Mayor                                  | N/A           |
| Margery Briggs  | Secretary   | Resident / Property & Business Owner   | 2028          |
| Becky Ward      | Member      | Property & Business Owner              | 2029          |
| Andrew Dymczyk  | Member      |                                        | 2028          |

## In-demand Businesses

### Food & Drink

Farm to Table Options  
Vegan Options  
Grain Bowls / Soup / Deli  
Upscaled Choices

### Shopping & Retail

Bookstore  
Arts, crafts, and hobbies  
Specialty foods  
General/variety store