

DLI Board Meeting

September 17, 2026, | 11:30 am
215 S. Washington Square Ste. 100, Lansing, MI 48933

Agenda

1. Call to Order:

2. Citizen's Comments (items not on the agenda) – None

The public may comment for up to three minutes.

3. Correspondence:

4. Consent Agenda Approvals

- Agenda September 10, 2026
- Minutes from August 13, 2026
- Committee Reports
- Monthly Financials – J. Durham

5. Old Town Updates:

6. Reports

- Director Report:
- President's Report:

7. Action/Discussion Items

- Big Red Ball Updates
- Downtown Safety Meeting Next Steps
- Business & Property Improvement Grant
- Walk of Fame
- Clean & Safe Ambassador Program

8. New Business:

9. Adjourn DLI Board Meeting (Motion Required for Adjournment):

Board Members:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| • Jen Estill, <i>President</i> | • Ozay Moore, <i>Member</i> |
| • Josh Pugh, <i>Vice President</i> | • Alex Rusek, <i>Member</i> |
| • Julie Durham, <i>Treasurer</i> | • Kris Klein, <i>Member</i> |
| • Jennifer Hinze, <i>Secretary</i> | • Jesse Flores, <i>Member</i> |

Board Advisors: Peter Spadafore, James Lenon

DLI Board Meeting

August 13, 2026 | 11:30am

215 S. Washington Square Ste. 100, Lansing, MI 48933

Members Present: J. Estill, J. Pugh, K. Klein, A. Rusek, Flores, O. Moore

Members Absent : J. Hinze, J. Durham

Board Advisors Present : James Lennon

Board Advisors Not Present : Peter Spadafore

Staff Present: C. Edgerly, K. Litwin, J. Markham

Guests Present: , Jason Kildea—Gillespie Group

Minutes

1. CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 11:46 a.m. by J. Estill

2. CITIZEN COMMENTS: None.

3. CORRESPONDENCE: Cathleen Edgerly shared correspondence related to downtown safety, including concerns from Abbey Weston, owner of Firefly Hot Yoga Barre Studio, regarding illegal activity and the resulting loss of staff.

4. GUEST PRESENTATION: GILLESPIE GROUP

Jason Kildea of Gillespie Group provided a guest presentation regarding several projects in the PSD including Brick Row, properties on S. Grand near new City Hall, and discussed new businesses moving in on Shiawassee, including the former Sparrow Bloom location.

CONSENT AGENDA: Cathleen Edgerly reported that the second portion of the assessment information was received between the Executive Committee meeting and the Board meeting. Final reconciliation with the City and the accounting firm is expected at the end of the month.

Motion by A. Rusek, seconded by J. Pugh, to approve the Consent Agenda. Motion carried unanimously.

5. OLD TOWN UPDATES

James Lenon provided an update on activities in Old Town. He reported that the district is midway through a busy festival season and that the JazzFest experienced strong attendance. ArtFeast was scheduled for the Saturday following this meeting, with organizers hoping to build on momentum from JazzFest and recent Fish Ladder events. Approximately 6,000 people attended ArtFeast the previous year.

Several business updates were also shared. 'That Candy Store' recently opened with an old-fashioned candy store concept and has been well received. Pablo's restaurant rebranded as Catalina's under the same ownership and staff, with the new name honoring the owners' grandmother. Good Truckin' Diner received a Match on Main grant and plans to convert the adjoining space into a full coffee shop. Discussions are also underway regarding another potential coffee shop at the corner of Turner Street and César E. Chávez Avenue. Good Truckin' Diner received final liquor license approvals and planned to begin alcohol service during ArtFeast. The Unicorn is expected to open within approximately two weeks and participate in the social district.

OTCA received a Certified Local Government grant to update the district's design guidelines, which were last completed in the 1990s. The PSD Advisory Committee will meet to discuss use of funds in 2027. Old Town's rebrand is expected to be unveiled at the September 30 celebration marking the organization's 30th anniversary. Tickets will be on sale the week of 8/17.

6. DIRECTOR'S REPORT: C. Edgerly reported on the following:

Cathleen Edgerly thanked Board members who completed the Main Street America self-assessment forms and reviewed the accreditation process. The Board also discussed historic preservation advocacy and downtown murals.

The final Downtown After 5 event of the season is scheduled for August 20 from 5–7pm. Board members were asked to attend and support downtown merchants.

Updates were provided regarding changes to the Tenant Improvement Grant Program. Two applications have been received, and staff hopes to have the available funds committed by the end of the calendar year. Two submissions were also received in response to the recent RFQ for the Signature Streetscape Planter Initiative. Those respondents will be contacted regarding the next RFP phase in coordination with the City.

The artwork/mural at the Grand Avenue parking ramp has been removed, and discussions are underway regarding next steps. Staff is also obtaining estimates regarding whether the mural panels on Michigan Avenue (near the Nuthouse) can be reattached.

7. PRESIDENT'S REPORT: No report outside of what will be covered further in the agenda.

8. ACTION ITEMS

New Board Member: The new Board member, Ozay Moore, was thanked for their interest, ongoing service to the community, and welcomed to the Board. Members expressed appreciation for adding the perspective of someone who has activated a downtown storefront.

Downtown Safety Meeting Recap: The Board reviewed the recap of the initial downtown safety meeting facilitated with the City. Key concerns included increasing violence and illegal activity and the impacts on downtown businesses, employees, residents, and other stakeholders. Members noted that the meeting brought together diverse perspectives and allowed stakeholders to hear directly from one another.

The Board discussed the importance of continued meetings with the City and consideration of ordinances and practices used in other Michigan communities and elsewhere. The use of 311 for non-police issues was also discussed. J. Pugh expressed disappointment that much of the initial meeting became an opportunity to raise both recent and longstanding concerns, but noted that the commitment to future conversations was a positive outcome.

Board members emphasized that DLI's role should include holding the City accountable for convening future meetings and implementing concrete solutions. Questions were raised regarding the City's action plan, expectations for DLI's role in this process, and whether patrol information could be obtained from City Hall. Additional discussion addressed police staffing, enforcement, effective ordinance options, conversations with City Council members, and potential use of the State Capital City Allocation for health and safety initiatives.



Staff responsibilities discussed included continuing to research ambassador program options, coordination of additional meetings, and collection of data from 311 and other reporting tools to establish baseline information.

Big Red Ball: Board members were asked to assist with sponsorship outreach. A list of potential sponsors was included in the meeting packet, and members were asked to notify staff if they could contact any of the identified prospects. The print deadline is September 4. Cathleen Edgerly also reviewed volunteer needs for event setup and teardown, noting that 97 volunteer roles need to be filled.

Michigan Downtown Allocation. C. Edgerly and J. Estill reviewed updates made to the Michigan's Downtown allocation packet. Revisions were made based on current downtown strategic priorities as shared by stakeholders at our State of Downtown workshop this past Spring, and built off our Strategic Action plan. Also was created in consideration of the Downtown Allocation comprehensive plan made by the Governor in Albany, New York. We've been collecting ongoing feedback from stakeholders, shared with the Mayor, our council liaison, and will also work with the Chamber to get this in front of the State. This will be a priority led by DLI and the Chamber, hopefully City lobbyists and staff after the new year and newly elected leaders are sworn in.

CSO Marketing Proposal. The Board resumed consideration of the CSO marketing proposal, which had been tabled at the previous meeting. J. Pugh referenced the prior discussion regarding Redhead's marketing proposal and the CSO plan and asked which components should be completed first. The Board discussed whether portions of the proposed cost could be assigned to remaining LEO grant funds. An extension of those funds has been approved, with potential uses including improvements to the 100 block of South Washington Square, public art, and repair of flower boxes. The possibility of applying the \$39,950 marketing expense to that funding source was discussed, although no definitive determination had been made. The Board also considered whether to proceed with the expense if general funds were ultimately required.

Motion by J. Pugh, seconded by A. Rusek, to approve the first three items in the proposal included in the packet, for a total of \$39,950. Motion carried unanimously.

CLOSED SESSION:

Motion by K. Klein, seconded by J. Pugh, to enter into closed session at 1:00 p.m. to discuss the Executive Director's annual review. A roll-call vote was taken. Klein—Yes, Moore—Yes, Flores—Yes, Rusek—Yes, Pugh—Yes, Estill—Yes. Motion carried.

Motion by A. Rusek, seconded by J. Pugh to end closed session at 1:35pm. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by A. Rusek, seconded by J. Pugh to re-open regular session at 1:36pm. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by A. Rusek, seconded by J. Pugh to approve an 8% salary increase for Executive Director Cathleen Edgerly. Motion carried unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion by A. Rusek, seconded by J. Pugh to adjourn the meeting at 1:45pm. Motion carried unanimously.



From: Norm Witte <ncwitte@wittelaw.com>

Sent: Friday, August 28, 2026 12:52 PM

To: Lansing Mayor <Lansing.Mayor@lansingmi.gov>

Cc: Info@downtownlansing.org <[info@downtownlansing.org](mailto:Info@downtownlansing.org)>; Police Chief <Police.Chief@lansingmi.gov>; Joy Witte <jlwitte@wittelaw.com>; Allison Witte <aawitte@wittelaw.com>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Downtown blight

Mr. Mayor, two things, both of which seem to be relatively new problems.

First, one of the worst properties downtown from an appearance and maintenance standpoint is this one:





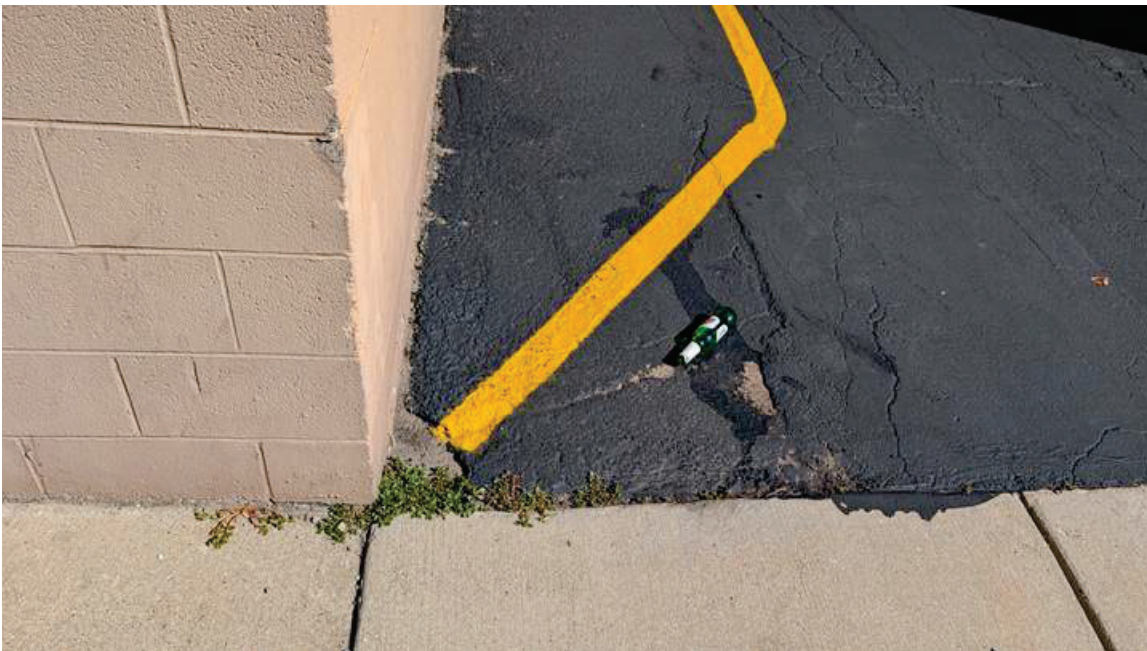


I understand that a new City Hall is being built, but this is the current City Hall, and it speaks volumes that the City can't make even enough effort to keep these beds clean and attractive. I was in Fort Wayne a few weeks ago, and their downtown is beautiful. After seeing their city hall and their downtown area, all I could think was what a complete dump Lansing has become.

This leads me to the second issue. My office is at 119 E. Kalamazoo Street. The homeless population around here is making the property uninhabitable. Every day brings some new disaster. I'm spending money as we speak to board up an opening under my air conditioning units so that homeless people don't use that space. There is trash everywhere. The other day a drunk was laying in the alleyway where we park so that my staff and I could not leave without him having to move. The property a couple doors down from me is constantly trashed from the homeless occupying the entryway. The following pictures were taken today:



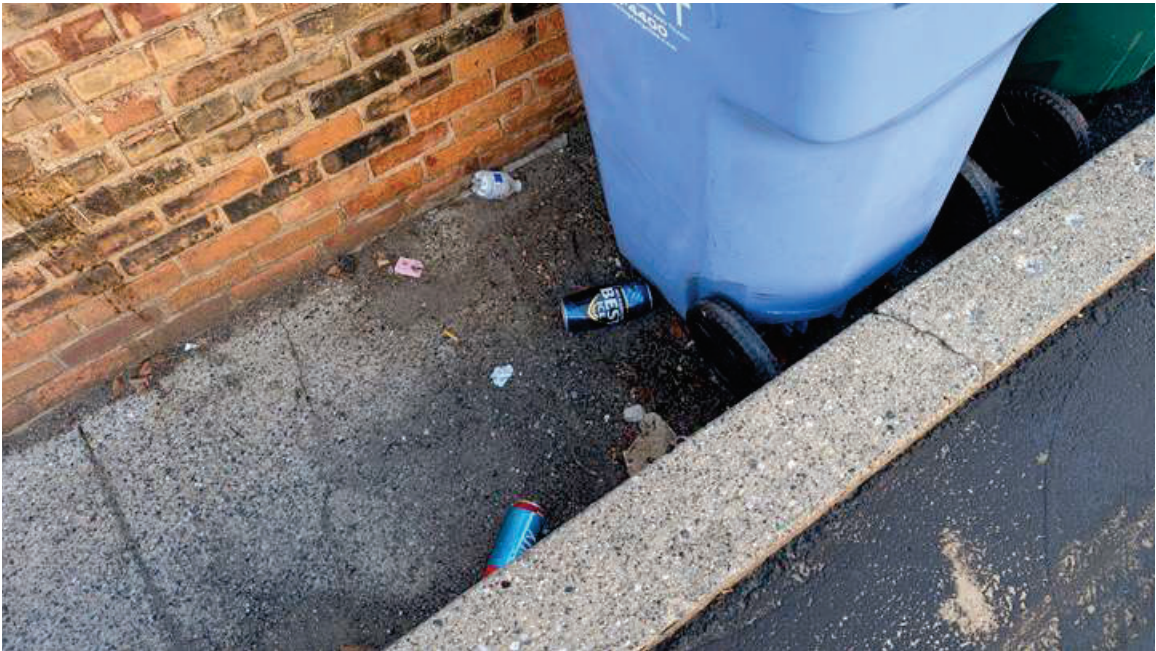
(While I was taking this pictures, one of the zombies across the street was yelling, "Whatcha takin' a picture of?" as though I shouldn't be concerned with this.)



This is at then entrance to the alleyway.



Where we keep our trash cans next to Edge Partners.





This broken bottle has been here for a couple weeks.

I see this as a combined failure of the city, Downtown Lansing, and the police department. The problem down here has become a daily scourge. We regularly have people trashing our building, hanging out overnight in the entryway. It is completely unacceptable. The city has decided that this is a good area for homeless people to stay, Downtown Lansing's maintenance of the downtown area is laughable, and it seems that the police department does nothing to prevent these people from camping out here. A few weeks ago, I got to the office only to find three people sleeping in my entryway. They completely trashed the place.

This week my daughter and I had to dump my recycling can into my regular trash because the homeless had dumped a bunch of rotting food in there, and if I were to put that out for pickup, Granger would threaten to pull my can. I suppose I should be thankful that at least they saw fit to put it in the trash instead of dumping it in the alley, also a common occurrence. It seems like they haven't been stealing the trash cans as much but I had to buy a bike lock to chain them together to keep that from happening.

I would suggest that patrol cars actually stop and roust people out of this area in the middle of the night. Maybe the Downtown Lansing folks, who receive assessments I have no choice but to pay, could clean up the trash these people leave behind. Maybe a real effort could be made to educate the homeless population to understand that this isn't their garbage dump.

I have owned this building since 2000. It has been a safe and clean place to work until the last year. I have four women who work in my office and who have to worry about the people loitering around here. It's no longer a safe and clean place. It seems inevitable that we will move our business out of downtown, that the hundreds of thousands of dollars I have invested in this building to make it nice will be wasted, and that this property will return to the blighted condition I found it in 26 years ago. I will probably lose a lot of money I invested in this building relying on its value to enhance my retirement.

I used to be proud of my hometown. I'm not anymore because apparently the people who run this city don't care. This is completely unacceptable and I'll be glad when I don't have to come here again. Mr. Schorr, I hold you personally responsible for letting things get to this condition. Do something.

Norman C. Witte

Witte Law Offices, PLLC

119 E. Kalamazoo St.

Lansing, Michigan 48933-2111

From: Norm Witte <ncwitte@wittelaw.com>

Sent: Thursday, September 3, 2026 11:21 AM

To: Lansing Mayor <Lansing.Mayor@lansingmi.gov>

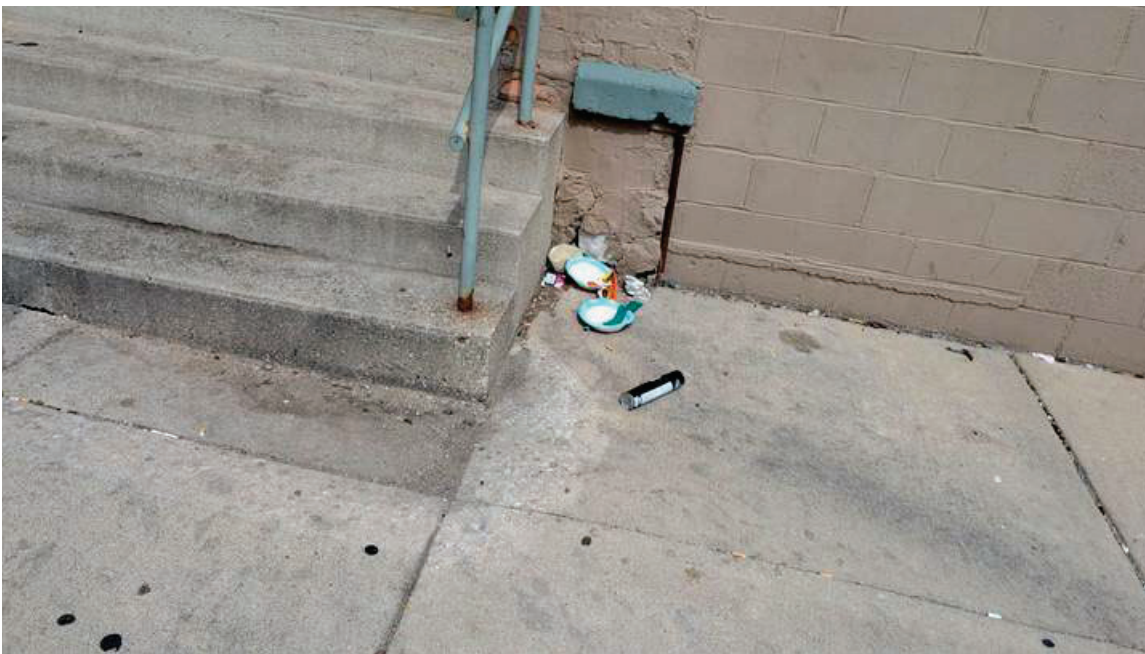
Cc: Info@downtownlansing.org <info@downtownlansing.org>; Police Chief <Police.Chief@lansingmi.gov>; Joy Witte <jlwitte@wittelaw.com>; Allison Witte <aawitte@wittelaw.com>

Subject: RE: [EXTERNAL] Downtown blight

Mr. Mayor, Downtown Lansing had some additional cleanup work done on East Kalamazoo and sent me a follow-up letter. From your office, crickets.

However, I did notice when I went to 54A that the city's weed patch has essentially remained the same except for maybe accumulating a little more trash.

If you don't care how this city looks, I don't know why anyone else should. It's shameful. Also, the entryway down the block from me looked like this yesterday:



There are people hanging out in that entryway persistently at night and during the day, and they also constantly leave trash there. What is the plan to resolve this problem?

Norman C. Witte
Witte Law Offices, PLLC
119 E. Kalamazoo St.
Lansing, Michigan 48933-2111
(517) 485-0070
Direct Dial: (517) 913-5104
Fax: (517) 485-0187
ncwitte@wittelaw.com
www.wittelaw.com

Organization Committee

Sept 2nd 8:00 a.m. via Zoom

Committee Members Present: Melissa, Alison, Chioma

Staff Present: Jenea

1. Call to order: Meeting called to order at 8:11 am

2. Approval of May Meeting Minutes: Motion to approve by Chioma, seconded by Melissa

3. Volunteer Hours: 15

4. Communication Team:

- **MERCHANT NEWS:** (ARTICLES DUE MONDAY, Sept 21)
 - Jenea will write the BOM Lugnuts article, Melissa suggested we add an Autumn construction update.
- **E-NEWS - (ARTICLES DUE MONDAY, Sept 21))**
 - Business of the Month: see above.
 - Volunteer of the Month: Keri Tomac, Jenea will tap Kate to write or write it herself. Jenea shared Keri's work on the Board and Promo committee.
 - Alison will write a preview of TOTS
 - Jenea will write an article about the upcoming changes to Reutter Park, throw in some history and vintage photos.
 - Chioma will write the volunteer perspective post
 - Melissa will cover the 517 Restaurant Week and a recap of the new traffic circle decorations and other Spooky Season offerings downtown.

5. Volunteers & Events: Jenea shared that there is a great need for volunteers for TOTS and BRB. The group will share links within their circle. Jenea will email informaiton

6. Social Stats: Jenea shared social stats for August, talked about continued growth on both platforms.

8. DLI Board & Committee Updates (staff): Jenea shared updates from DLI committees and board including new board member Ozay Moore, upcoming event volunteer needs, Big Red Ball planning, Legendary Women of Lansing.

9. Motion to adjourn: Motion to adjourn at 8:30am by Alison, seconded by Chioma. Motion passed.

Promotions Committee Meeting Minutes

August 12th, 2026

4:00 p.m. | DLI Office

Staff: Jenea M.

Present: Tony B., Mary T., Keri T.

1. Call to Order: 4:05pm

2. Approval of July Minutes: Motion to approve by Mary T., seconded by Keri T.

3. Volunteer Hours from July: Mary:1. Tony: 2, Keri: 1

4. Committee Projects & Discussion Items

- **Downtown After 5:** August 20th 5–7.: Mary will send out another email to ask for additional vendors. She would also like to set up in the vending area, not in front of the Atrium. Jenea will email volunteer link once again, Tony said he might be able to help with set up. Mary volunteered to help as well.
- **Downtown Day:** Saturday, September 26th
 - Jenea shared that we will be collaborating with OTCA on this event. Shopping passport for both districts, prizes from DLI and OTCA, historical walking tours in both, possibly get cider and donuts donated.
 - Ideas: Committee would like to invite the REO Town merchants to participate in the shopping passport. Tony's wife will talk to her troop and Habibi about performing, Mary suggested reaching out to chalk artist David Zimm, to see if he would come and do art or lead a workshop. Jenea will investigate what the Capitol museum is offering that day and/or ask for a collab. Mary suggested sharing the event with the Cherry Neighborhood Association FB group. Jenea will update the Promo committee over email as plans progress.
- **Big Red Ball:** November 21st
 - Keri volunteered to meet with Jenea to work on the experientials. Volunteer link was shared with the group.
- **TOTS:** Jenea shared updates on the progress of this event. Tony asked what new elements are being added with the additional street closure. Jenea shared the entertainment options that are being explored.

5. DLI Board & Committee Updates

- Jenea asked that committee members secure their tickets if they have not already done so. Jenea shared reports from DLI committees.

6. Chairperson:

- Jenea shared that the Chairperson position is still available for this committee. She went over what the position entails and asked that anyone interested please email her.

8. Motion to Adjourn: Motion to adjourn at 4:41pm by Mary, seconded by Tony.

Business Development Committee

September 3, 2026

12:00pm | DLI Office, 215 S. Washington Square

Agenda

1. Call to Order: Meeting called to order 12:06 p.m.

2. Volunteer to Take Minutes: Jesse

3. Volunteer Hours from Last Month: 13

4. Approval of August 2026 Minutes: Motion to approve by A. Woodbury and second by J. Flores. Motion approved.

A. Woodbury also motioned to approve the July meeting minutes. Second by J. Flores.

5. Board and Committee Updates:

Board: The September Board meeting will be reschedule for September 17. Also Big Red Ball planning is going well with the final details and sponsorship commitments being finalized this month. Tickets are now on sale at TheBigRedBall.com. Ending the first quarter of our fiscal year. Discussing recent violence and activity downtown and especially on the riverfront.

Organization: Evening of Excellence held tonight at Jackson Field. Awards start at 6:00 p.m. Working on volunteer recruitment over the next 2 quarters.

Promotions: Downtown Day September 26 in collaboration with REO Town and Old Town. Also Trick-or-Treat on the Square is scheduled for Friday, October 30 and we are in need of 28 more volunteers. Sign-up on the event page. Pumpkins Big Red Ball updates given above.

Design & Public Spaces: The Legendary Women of Lansing art files are all with the printer and we await installation later this month or in October. The sculpture is on track for an October install. We still have \$10,000 to fundraise. Also thanks to Big Red Ball fundraising, we're excited to have large stacked jack-o-lanterns, similar to the red ornaments, being installed next week for Spooky Season.

6. Sub-Committee Discussion/Action Items:

- Block House Grant Application: A. Woodbury and C. Edgerly shared updates regarding review committee's recommendation on approving this business's interior and exterior improvement application.
- R2R Technical Service Update for December 9 meeting. C. Edgerly reviewed what is needed in preparation for that meeting and an general outline of the day's activities. Reminder for the October 1 meeting. Kate Litwin to send out calendar invites for October 1 and December 9.
- Grand Opening: Theoretical Tech opened last month
- Business Huddle: September 17, 8:00am
 - Location: Starbucks
 - Speakers Confirmed: Lori Lanspeary, *Devils Day and Tiffany Marie Luke not confirmed yet!*
- Michigan's Downtown and R2R materials Business Resource Guide
 - Window clings (collab with LEDC) in design phase w/ Redhead
 - Deliverables for R2R 2.0 including a Business Recruitment Package in print and digital format.
 - MEDC funding support

7. New Business: See you at tonight's Evening of Excellence!

8. Motion to Adjourn: Motion to adjourn at 12:50 p.m.

Downtown Lansing Inc

Budget vs. Actuals:

DLI General Fund

August Financial Report

August

Financials

YTD

Budget

% of Budget

Revenue

Assessment Transfer Income	0.00	0.00	631,300.00	0.00%
Total Grant Income	0.00	0.00	1,000,000.00	0.00%
Match on Main	0.00	0.00	25,000.00	0.00%
Misc Income	0.00	1,000.00	500.00	0.00%
Business Development.	0.00	0.00	7,000.00	0.00%
Organization	0.00	918.51	6,000.00	0.00%
Promotions	9,379.32	3,000.00	135,000.00	6.95%
Design & Public Spaces.	7,108.03	0.00	121,000.00	5.87%
Operations Transfer	0.00	0.00	85,000.00	0.00%
Total Revenue	\$ 16,487.35	\$4,918.51	\$ 2,010,800.00	0.82%
Expenditures				
Salaries	24,423.09	52,807.73	432,600.00	12.21%
Fringes	1868.38	4039.8	26,800.00	15.07%
Information Technology	4,517.00	9,034.00	54,200.00	16.67%
Property Maintenance Allocation	1,867.00	3,734.00	22,400.00	16.67%
Misc. Operating	52,371.70	131,766.90	769,600.00	17.12%
Business - Match on Main	0.00	0.00	25,000.00	0.00%
Business Development	0.00	3,990.00	14,100.00	28.30%
Design & Public Spaces	28,905.43	33,050.78	530,200.00	6.23%
Organization	4,540.00	5,927.02	19,300.00	30.71%
Promotions	1,670.74	1,970.74	116,600.00	1.69%
Total Expenditures	\$ 120,163.34	\$246,320.97	\$ 2,010,800.00	5.98%
Net Operating Revenue	-\$ 103,675.99	-\$241,402.46	\$ 0.00	
General Fund	1,517,716.05	\$1,405,035.00	\$ 500,000.00	
Net General Fund Balance	\$1,414,040.06	\$1,163,632.54	\$ 500,000.00	282.81%

DOWNTOWN LANSING INC. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DASHBOARD

Reporting Period: September 2026

MONTHLY SUMMARY:

With the year-end financial reports being completed by the City, we have received the second installment of the PSD assessments, as well as the annual Operations Fund Transfer. Cathleen has requested a meeting with the City Budget and Strategic Planning director to revisit the Property Maintenance Allocation that was added to our budget by the City.

Speaking of city and continued updates regarding downtown safety & well-being concerns, you may have seen updates regarding Council Member Kost introducing the removal of Flock Cameras being used within the city. This action was approved. In addition, due to increases in violence and illegal activity in Rotary Park and along the riverfront- as well as due to cooler air on the horizon and repairs needed, seating in Rotary Park has been removed. We hope increased enforcement and patrols will be enacted along the river trail based on recent violence. We also look forward to seeing increased enforcement dedicated activation of Rotary Park and the return of placemaking and accessible public seating in 2027.

This week we look forward to new Spooky season décor coming to downtown, with jack-o-lanterns from Bronners. This décor is made possibly thanks to Big Red Ball fundraising.

PROGRAM PRIORITIES & STATUS:

Key:

-  = Accomplished/Accomplishing Goal
-  = In Progress
-  = Challenges to Be Aware Of

Fundraising & Donor Relations:

Strategic Plan Goal & Objective: Goal #4 Build Sustainable Funding for a Sustainable Organization, Objective #1 and #2

Staff Lead: Cathleen

- To date, the Big Red Ball has generated 8 new sponsors and over \$70,000 in fundraising.
 - To date, Legendary Women of Lansing has resulted in 12 new donors and \$20,500 in fundraising.
 - Evening of Excellence resulted in 1 new donor for this event and \$6,500 in fundraising
 - Trick-or-Treat on the Square has resulted in no new donors, and \$8,000 in fundraising
- Total New Donors:** 21 Our Strategic Plan goal was to bring in 20 new donors
Total Fundraising this Calendar Year: \$105,500

DOWNTOWN LANSING INC. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DASHBOARD

LEO Funding & 100 Block of S. Washington Square Redesign:

Strategic Plan Goal & Objective: Goal #3: Cultivate Active and Welcoming Public Spaces. Objective #1.

Staff Lead: Cathleen

- LEO had approved our revised scope of work
- LEO is reviewing our updated project scope and budget entered into their egrams system to include in the funding agreement amendment.
- SmithGroup has provided DLI staff a revised street design for the 100 block of S. Washington Sq to fit existing budget and matching funds provided by private projects taking place downtown. DLI and SmithGroup will continue to work on this with the city for the project to be complete by September 2027.

Funding total left to expend: \$1,308,000

Project to be completed by September 2027.

Ready to Recruit Technical Service:

Strategic Plan Goal & Objective: Goal #2 Nurture a Vibrant, Diverse and Robust Business District. Objective #1 and #2.

Staff Lead: Kate Litwin

- Technical service provided by Michigan Main Street to our Business Development Team.
- Business Development Committee held 1 in person meeting with the consultant leading this service, and 3 virtual meetings have been held to tailor this service to the needs of Downtown Lansing, while also preparing for our December 9 Pitch Challenge Day.
- Materials including cut sheets, property inventory, and business development materials are currently being worked on for December 9 Pitch Challenge Date
- MEDC has agreed to pay for a portion of recruitment materials including digital files and design of business development guide.
- Next steps:
 - Secure at least 3 bids for Business Development Guide materials.
 - Finalize funding support from MEDC.
 - Itinerary and planning for Pitch Challenge on December 9

Michigan's Downtown Allocation (State Funding Ask):

Strategic Plan Goal & Objective: Goal #4 Build Sustainable Funding for a Sustainable Organization, Objective #2

Staff Lead: Cathleen

- Final Draft of Michigan's Downtown Allocation complete per the Board's review.
- Next Steps:
 - Schedule dates to share with Chamber PAC Committee
 - Start scheduling meeting with city and chamber lobbyist
 - Board to provide any recommendations of who Cathleen should meet with.

DOWNTOWN LANSING INC. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DASHBOARD

Business & Property Improvement Grants:

Strategic Plan Goal & Objective: Goal 2: Nurture a Vibrant, Diverse and Robust Business District. Objective #1
Staff Lead: Kate Litwin

- 2 applications received to date
- Review committee approved 1 application or Board approval, totalling \$50,000 in interior improvement funding and \$50,000 in exterior improvement funding.
- Additional application still needs to provide cost estimates and other additional materials.
- Next Steps:
 - Board review and approval of committee recommendation.

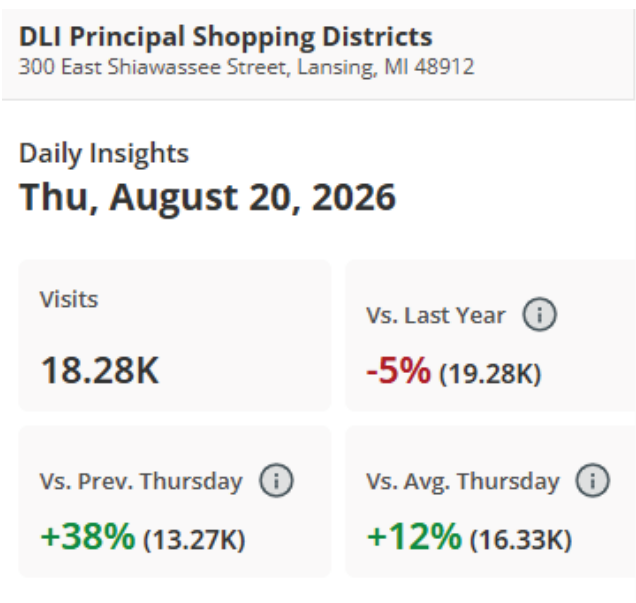
UPCOMING EVENTS & PROJECTS:

Please mark your calendars and plan on attending, volunteering, or supporting the following upcoming projects & events:

- **Downtown Day:** Saturday, September 26 all day. Support downtown businesses, bring your dog (if you have one) downtown from 11am–noon, and post your pics on social, send them to Jenea.
- **Legendary Women of Lansing Art Installs:** Art wrap installation taking place with Foresight Super Sign late in September–early October based on weather and installer availability. The sculpture installation portraying Women Empowerment, and designed by Tiffany Marie Luke, will be installed in October. All city department approvals have been completed, and final permits will be filed next week.
- **Trick or Treat on the Square:** Friday, October 30 from 5:00–7:00 p.m. along Washington Sq. We need 28 more volunteers
- **Big Red Ball:** Saturday, November 21 from 7–10pm at the Michigan Historical Museum. Purchase your tickets today! We also would like your help promoting our volunteer needs to your networks.

Downtown After 5 Recap:

Downtown After 5 brought a noticeable boost in activity to Downtown Lansing on August 20, with 18,280 visits recorded in the Principal Shopping District that day. This represents a 38% increase over the previous Thursday and 12% over an average Thursday, providing a great snapshot of the event’s ability to bring additional people and energy downtown. Zooming in on Washington Sq., our reports show 147 people visiting the event area. A special thank you to Jen & the team at Nelson Gallery for adding to the evening with live music and a community crosswalk painting activity that gave attendees a chance to leave their own colorful mark on downtown.



MARKETING REPORT DLI AUGUST 2026

DLI Google Analytics

Active Users: 8.2K

How do they find us?

- Direct Search: 5.6K
- Organic Search: 3.0K
- Referral: 163
- Organic Social: 124
- AI assist: 103

Top Page Visits:

- Home Page: 891
- Events: 742
- Big Red Ball: 243

Earned Media

Earned Media Placements:

- Online: 10
- Print: 2
- Broadcast: 5

Earned Media Impressions:

- 29.7 million

Outreach:

- Press Releases: 2
- Media Advisories: 2

SOCIAL MEDIA

LinkedIn

Key Metrics:

- Impressions: 1147
- Engagement rate: 19%
- Post Clicks: 127
- Audience Growth: 10
- 50 Post Reactions
- 3 Comments
- 4 Reposts

Top Performing Posts

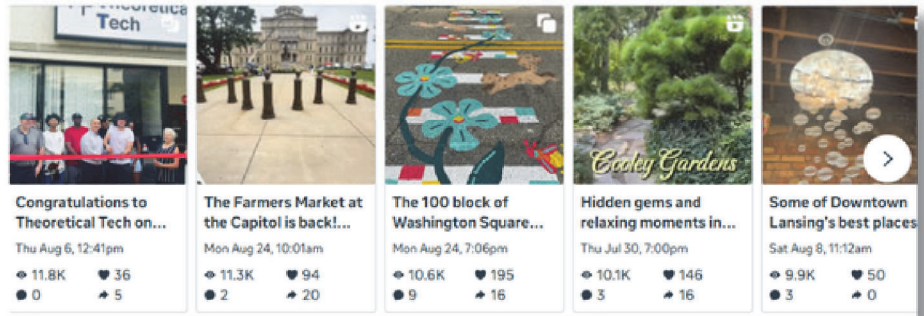
- Business Huddle STD
- Downtown After 5
- Volunteer of the Month
- Business of the Month

Facebook

Followers: 13,605

Key Organic Metrics:

- Views: 130K
- Engagement rate: 30%
- New Follows: 142
- Link Clicks: 254
- Shares: 203
- Content Reactions: 1.5K
- Event Follows: 1208



Top Performing Posts

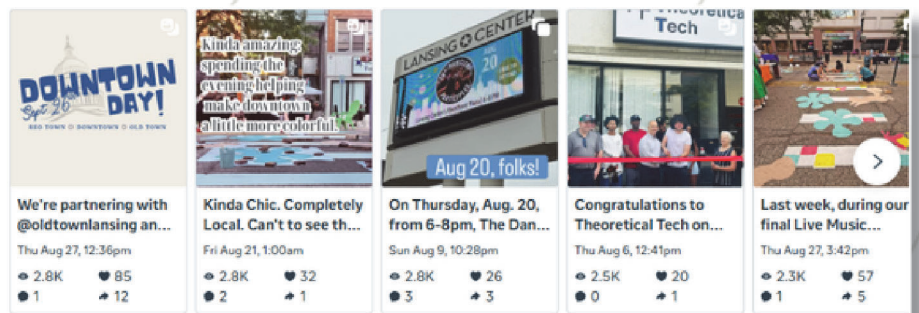
- Theoretical Tech ribbon-cutting
- Farmers Market promo Reel
- Crosswalk painting
- Relaxing spots Reel
- Hidden gems Reel

Instagram

Followers: 13,666

Key Organic Metrics:

- Views: 71.8K
- Engagement rate: 21%
- New Follows: 128
- Content Interactions: 1.2K
- Total Reach: 5.8K



Top Performing Posts

- Downtown Day promo
- Downtown After 5 partnership Reel
- Grand Concert promo
- Theoretical Tech ribbon-cutting
- Crosswalk painting



MEMO

TO: Downtown Lansing Inc. Board of Directors

FROM: Kate Litwin, Community Development Director

DATE: September 2, 2026

RE: Block House Lansing Grant Recommendation

DLI Staff and the Business & Property Improvement Grant Review Committee recommend approval of a Business & Property Improvement Grant award of up to \$100,000 to Blockhouse Holdings, LLC for the development of Block House Lansing at 505 E. Shiawassee Street. The award includes up to \$50,000 for eligible interior improvements and \$50,000 for eligible exterior improvements.

The project represents approximately \$793,000 in private investment to activate a vacant downtown storefront with a new restaurant, bar, gaming and entertainment concept. Planned improvements include a commercial kitchen, ADA and safety upgrades, customer areas, façade and masonry work, lighting, signage and other exterior improvements.

The Review Committee recommends approval based on the project's strong alignment with program priorities, including vacant storefront activation, substantial private investment, increased downtown amenities, new job creation, and additional daytime, evening and weekend foot traffic. The project also includes sufficient eligible costs to support the full \$100,000 award.

Requested Action:

The Business & Property Improvement Grant Committee recommends approval of a Business & Property Improvement Grant award to Blockhouse Holdings, LLC in an amount not to exceed \$100,000, subject to compliance with all program requirements and reimbursement documentation.

Walk of Fame

HISTORY: The walk of Fame was originally a project of the Principal Shopping District (PSD) before we were known as DLI and prior to our Main Street status. This project was the first statewide walk of fame concept in the U.S., modeled after the Hollywood Walk of Fame. Featuring 23 plaques embedded in the sidewalks across Downtown Lansing, the [Michigan Walk of Fame](#) inducted its first group of honorees during Michigan Week in May, 2006., Honorees included Honoring Michigan residents, past or present, who have made significant contributions to the state or nation. The second installation took place in 2007 before the project was discontinued. We have no clear documentation of why this project was discontinued.

PROJECT SUMMARY: We are looking to re-energize the Downtown Lansing Walk of Fame because it provides a unique opportunity to celebrate the people whose contributions have shaped Lansing, Michigan, and our nation, while strengthening Downtown Lansing's role as Michigan's Downtown. The project directly supports DLI's public realm strategic goals and connects with our Main Street framework for historic preservation, design and telling the story of our community through its people and places.

Over the past two years, numerous individuals and community groups have reached out to inquire about DLI reviving this important project—demonstrating both continued interest and a desire to see Lansing's stories more visibly celebrated in our downtown. Reimagining the Walk of Fame gives us an opportunity to build on that legacy while creating a sustainable, long-term program for maintaining existing installations and recognizing new honorees.

Ultimately, the Walk of Fame can become more than a collection or the basic rehab of plaques. It can serve as a public storytelling experience that helps residents and visitors discover the people, accomplishments and history that make Lansing unique—cementing Downtown Lansing's role as the place where the story of our city, state and people comes together.

For this project and the new nominees to be honored, nominees must have a meaningful connection to Michigan, demonstrated through at least one of the following:

- Born in Michigan
- Resided in Michigan for a significant period
- Educated in Michigan
- Built a career or achieved major accomplishments in Michigan
- Made a substantial contribution to the state or its communities

STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN GOALS & OBJECTIVES:

Goal 3: Cultivate Active and Welcoming Public Spaces.

- a. Objective 1: Develop a Downtown Lansing public realm plan for public spaces, green spaces and street placemaking.
- b. This project also addresses Goal 4 by helping Build Sustainable Funding for a Sustainable Organization.

2. COMMITTEE STRUCTURE:

- a. **DLI Board:** The DLI Board of Directors will provide budget and mission oversight for this project, with regular updates from the Executive Director.
- b. **Project Planning & Advisory Committee:** This 7-10 person committee meets regularly to plan the framework of this project, review nominations and narrow them down, issues RFP's for the production of plaques or other materials needed, works with the City for installation, and leads fundraising in cooperation with CFA.
- c. **Nominations Committee:** This committee will serve with the goal of 100+ individuals, with representation from across our city, region and state, submitting their nominations via a nomination form that will be distributed widely.
- d. **Selection Committee:** This smaller committee will serve with a handful of individuals who will select the final nominees for each installation, research to ensure proper representation/look for any past history that would disqualify a nominee.

3. TIMELINE

Sept-October: Lead Project Planning & Review Committee members determine roles & Responsibilities of committees.

December: Announce return of the Walk of Fame at the 2026 Big Red Ball

December-Feb.:

-Build project webpage

-Complete Nomination form and distribute

-Start to Gather Nominees

Spring: Begin Sponsor Outreach

Summer: Sponsor Follow-up, final commitments due in August

End of Summer/Early Fall 2027: Install of current honorees in new style and public announcement of new honorees

Spring 2028: Installation of Walk of Fame honorees.

Summer 2028: Determine next round of outreach for future Walk of Fame nominations and honorees.



4. BUDGET

Personnel: \$10,000 Per the Executive Director's annual goals, all project budgets will account for income covering a minimum of 10% admin costs.

Marketing & Communications: \$12,000

Plaque Production: 57,000 for the updates to existing 24 honorees or we look at budgeting \$19,200 annually to include existing nominee plaques being installed and a couple new honorees. (for up to 8 plaques annually at up to \$2400/plaque).

Plaque Installation: \$2400-5,000

VIP Unveiling reception: \$10,000

Public Walk of Fame Event: \$15,000

Project Webpage: \$4,800

Total: \$63,400 - \$103,800



Clean & Safe Ambassador Program

1. **PROJECT SUMMARY:** Based on the top priority shared at our State of Downtown workshop, and via continued communications from our stakeholders, we have been researching Clean & Safe ambassador programs across the U.S. A Clean & Safe Ambassador program is the downtown development professionals industry name for a supplemental program deployed in numerous urban city centers. Ambassadors typically include visible, uniformed, and unarmed personnel focused on enhancing the cleanliness, safety, and hospitality of downtowns.

These programs are typically managed by downtown management districts, business improvement districts (BIDs), or local nonprofits like DLI – in cooperation with city governments and specialized operators who hire ambassadors via contractors such as Block by Block, StreetLife, or CiviCity. Some downtown management agencies also build their own internal programs and employment agreements. This is an option we could also model in partnership with our downtown maintenance contractor as well as a local social service agency if they have the capacity.

2. **STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN GOALS & OBJECTIVES:**

Goal 2: Nurture a Vibrant, Diverse and Robust Business District.

Objective 1: Reduce Downtown First Floor Vacancy Rate to 10% as this program could lead to less businesses leaving, and newer businesses seeing DLI as leading a cleaner & more welcoming downtown.

Goal 3: Cultivate Active and Welcoming Public Spaces.

Objective 1: Develop a Downtown Lansing public realm plan for public spaces, green spaces and street placemaking.

3. **TIMELINE: Spring 2027 at the earliest.**

We would need the DLI Board and Staff, along with the City of Lansing administration and public partners secure funding, determine liability coverage, and employment model.

4. **BUDGET: \$250,000–\$700,000**

5. **POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCES:**

- Council Liaison and 4th Ward Representative Peter Spadafor has taken this to Council Committee for a \$250,000 budget priority, utilizing existing state funding supplied to the City.
- Michigan's Downtown Allocation
- Sale of Macotta Club kitchen equipment