



# HaasCaywood PC

BUSINESS OWNER  
MICHAEL CAYWOOD HAS  
WITNESSED  
OPPORTUNITIES BECOME  
REVITALIZATION IN  
DOWNTOWN COLDWATER

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Photos and Story by Phil Eich,  
Storyville Social, as part of the  
Michigan Main Street Story  
Series

Living and working in Coldwater provides me with a unique sense of belonging and connection to the city. When I lived in Chicago, 'work' and 'home' were two distinct places: I took the train to the loop, went to work, and took the train home. But here in Coldwater, I walk to work every day, along with my dog that stays with me at the office. We rarely drive, and there are a lot of activities downtown we can enjoy within walking distance.

Our firm is about not just being good lawyers and helping our clients, but also about being participants in our community. Instead of just going to work and going home every day, we want to be part of the community doing things. One of those things is being part of Coldwater's DDA. The DDA helps the community with

economic development, not only by bringing in new businesses, but also by assisting existing businesses in the downtown area. The DDA is also about creating a feel about who we are and what we do. We play a major role in encouraging development, like our façade program that offers rebates for painting exterior façades. This program encourages people to improve the overall look of downtown. The better the downtown looks and the more support we provide for businesses, the more active and sustainable it becomes.

The driving force behind our efforts was the structure we gained by joining the Michigan Main Street program. Instead of working individually from our different walks of life, we were able to come together



and brainstorm ideas that would move us in a similar direction. None of us are economic developers, but the Main Street program provided us with tools, guidance, and resources that help us implement initiatives to support existing businesses and attract new ones. One prominent project the DDA spearheaded is the Children's Museum, which has garnered a lot of attention. We believe it will serve as a catalyst for attracting other businesses. When I joined the DDA, I came into it with a mindset of 'create a snowball effect.' A couple of long-standing downtown businesses had ceased operations without a succession plan, and while many viewed it as a negative, I saw it as an opportunity: we had two vacant spaces that we could do great things with, and we could actively influence what kinds of businesses would occupy those spots. The DDA played a significant role in bringing the Children's Museum to fruition, serving as an initial success story that people can point to. As a result, the surrounding restaurants, coffee shops, retailers, and other businesses stand to benefit. Moreover, individuals who were previously uncertain about investing in downtown Coldwater may be inspired by the influx of visitors and consider opening establishments like ice cream shops or candy stores that appeal to young families.

Coldwater is just at the beginning point of revitalization. We're gaining momentum, and hopefully, we can make some bigger snowballs.

-Mike Caywood, HaasCaywood PC, Coldwater, MI

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