We were a downtown development authority that became a Main Street Downtown Development Authority, and we have benefited from the resources, the technical assistance, the network, the training, everything you get by being a part of this phenomenal group of people that all have the same goal: to help make your town the best it can be. It’s phenomenal what you can do with ideas and networking, and we’re proof of that.

—Lisa Croteau, Executive Director, Niles Main Street/DDA

For more information, email michiganmainstreet@michigan.org or visit www.miplace.org.

The MICHIGAN MAIN STREET PROGRAM exists to help communities interested in revitalizing and preserving their traditional commercial district develop main street districts that attract both residents and businesses, promote commercial investment, and spur economic growth.

Michigan Main Street (MMS) staff provides technical assistance and services to communities at three levels: Engaged, Select and Master. Each level is designed to assist the community in tackling increasingly sophisticated district revitalization efforts by utilizing the Main Street Approach—a common-sense approach to tackling the complex issues of revitalization by capitalizing on a district’s history and identifying the unique assets of the community itself.

ENGAGED LEVEL
A community will officially be recognized as an Engaged Level Main Street Community once they complete the following activities:
- Participate in the Main Street training series
- Develop a communications plan following the Main Street Basics training
- Develop a fund development plan following the Main Street In Practice training

SELECT LEVEL
The Select Level provides communities with specialized training within their own community. The intent of the Select Level is to assist communities in implementing the Main Street Four-Point Approach. The Main Street program will have an active board of directors, providing oversight and direction, volunteer-driven committees completing projects, and a Main Street director assisting with day-to-day needs. In addition, at the Select Level, communities receive over $100,000 worth of specialized trainings designed to help revitalize their downtown or traditional neighborhood commercial district.

MASTER LEVEL
The Master Level is the most prestigious level of the MMS program. The intent is to continue assisting communities that have successfully integrated a full Main Street program into their community. This is achieved by continuing to offer select level trainings and networking opportunities through MMS, as well as the opportunity to act as mentors for other MMS communities. In addition, Master Level communities continue to receive specialized technical assistance based on the needs of the district.

VIBRANCY GRANT
Select and Master Level Main Street Communities are eligible to apply for the Main Street Vibrancy Grant Program. The Vibrancy Grant offers a unique opportunity to supplement the technical assistance, education and training provided by Michigan Main Street with financial support for innovative placemaking to help transform Michigan Main Street districts into vibrant places.

MICHIGAN MAIN STREET TRAINING SERIES
The first step for communities interested in participating in MMS is completing the Main Street training series, which provides:
- A basic understanding of the Main Street Approach
- An overview of the strategies that build awareness and participation in future Main Street efforts

For more information, email michiganmainstreet@michigan.org or visit www.miplace.org.
If your community invites public input, plans for future investment and offers superior customer service, then Redevelopment Ready Communities® is for you!

A community that achieves an RRC designation has a clear vision for the future and welcomes private sector investment through a proactive and predictable customer-centric approach to development. An RRC designation signals to residents, business owners, developers and investors that a community has removed development barriers by incorporating deliberate, fair and consistent processes.

A certified RRC has a clear vision for the future, established through collaborative community planning, and welcomes private sector investment through a proactive and predictable customer service approach to development. RRC certification signals to residents, business owners, developers and investors that a community has removed development barriers by incorporating deliberate, fair and consistent processes.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROVIDED

Communities engaged in RRC are supported with hands-on technical assistance throughout the certification process. They build productive relationships with their community planner and have access to a wide range of resources ranging from the RRC baseline report to the RRC library, webinars, workshops, planning documents, ordinance updates, and more. The community planner connects the community not only with resources to achieve certification, but also works to challenge naysayers and capture community development momentum at critical junctures which can lead to long-term prosperity.

RRC BEST PRACTICES

Developed by public and private sector experts, the RRC Best Practices are the standard for evaluation. Communities are able to choose from two available paths for a customized experience. Each best practice addresses key elements of community and economic development. To be awarded certification, a community must demonstrate that all best practice components have been met. The RRC Best Practice training series is aimed at building the capacity of local governments in communities eager to work toward and adopt RRC Best Practices.

CERTIFIED COMMUNITIES

When a community becomes certified, it signals that it has effective development practices. These include clear development procedures, a community-supported vision, an open and predictable review process, and compelling sites for developers to locate their latest projects. Certified RRCs gain access to the expertise of the Redevelopment Services Team, focused on a proactive approach to site redevelopment.

ESSENTIALS COMMUNITIES

Communities who have achieved the Essentials designation have all the key documents and practices in place to provide a predictable development experience and meet local planning and zoning responsibilities under Michigan law. Essentials communities gain access to technical assistance match funding opportunities.

For more information, email RRC@michigan.org or visit www.miplace.org.
The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) evaluates, protects, and promotes Michigan’s historic built environment and archaeological sites. This is achieved by helping property owners, developers and local and state agencies identify and seize opportunities to celebrate and rehabilitate historic places that define local communities and make our state uniquely Michigan. SHPO provides programs and services to encourage the preservation of, and investment in, historic places across the state.

**IDENTIFICATION & DESIGNATION**
Identifying and researching what is historic is the first step in preserving the state’s cultural heritage and historic character. This is achieved through:
- Historic Resource Surveys which identify and document historic properties to be considered in community planning.
- Listing in the National Register of Historic Places, which recognizes Michigan sites as places worthy of preservation.
- The creation of Local Historic Districts, enabled under Public Act 169 of 1970, which allows municipalities to protect and promote their own historic neighborhoods.

**CULTURAL RESOURCE PROTECTION & PLANNING**
The National Register program provides a framework for planning for future public development, which must take into account impacts on historic buildings, landscapes, and archaeological sites. SHPO works closely with other agencies, Native American tribes and local communities to consider these resources. Planning activities include:
- Consulting with federal partners to avoid, minimize or mitigate any potential effects on historic and archaeological resources for all federal-funded, permitted or licensed projects, per Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966.
- Maintaining the State Archaeological Site File, the state’s master list of reported archaeological sites, including shipwrecks.
- Retaining Historic Preservation Easements, legal agreements that protect significant historic properties, typically those transferred from the federal government to another entity and sites which receive SHPO grant funding.
- Creating a statewide plan for historic preservation every five years. This plan is informed by stakeholder and public input. Find the current statewide plan at www.michigan.gov/mhspplan.

**INCENTIVES & DEVELOPMENT**
A successful preservation project will preserve the character and history of a site while creating a vibrant space that meets a community’s 21st century needs. Various tools help to finance these projects:
- Certified Local Government Program (CLG) is a partnership between local, state and federal governments focused on promoting historic preservation at the grassroots level by providing annual grants to certified CLG communities.
- Federal Historic Preservation Tax Credits provide a credit of up to 20 percent of rehabilitation costs as an incentive for investing in underutilized and vacant structures.
- State Historic Preservation Tax Credits provide a credit of up to 25 percent of rehabilitation costs for both income-producing and owner-occupied historic properties. A limited amount of credits are available each calendar year.
- Michigan Lighthouse Assistance Program celebrates Michigan’s 120+ historic lighthouses by providing annual matching grants to rehabilitate and restore these stately icons.

The MEDC’s support of new and existing main street businesses, as well as the local entrepreneurial ecosystem, helps foster a supportive business climate and provides tools and resources that are accessible statewide to aid in small business success.

**MATCH ON MAIN**
Match on Main is a reimbursement grant program that serves as a tool to support new or expanding place-based businesses by providing up to $25,000 in funding to support an eligible small business through an application submitted, administered, and managed by the local unit of government, downtown development authority, or downtown management or community development organization where the business is located.

The MEDC finds value in supporting place-based businesses located in certified and essential Redevelopment Ready Communities® and Michigan Main Street districts, given the local capacity that has been built to support new and existing small businesses through the technical assistance, training, and education communities gain by participating in these programs. The focus of Match on Main is to support place-based businesses as they seek to launch and grow on Main Street.

**INITIATE (SMALL BUSINESS SUPPORT)**
Small businesses across the state now have access to new tools and resources to help them launch and grow in Michigan, including an online small business learning platform called “Initiate.” The Initiate resource portal covers topics such as money, marketing, management, and resiliency resources by using a variety of learning methods, including videos, templates, and guides.

To best position our business community to access these tools, the MEDC is partnering with community and economic development organizations, financial institutions, and other small business support organizations to work one on one with businesses at the local level. Business retention efforts are critical at the local level. Through a “Train the Trainer” model, partner organizations that serve small business customers will learn how to establish a consistent business retention program locally, how to build trust with business owners, how to use available tools to understand business needs, where to direct businesses using MEDC’s Initiate portal, and how to develop consistency, accountability and follow through in your organization’s small business support and development services.

**EDUCATION, TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**
Through the MEDC, communities and small businesses have access to a statewide network of resources that provides tools, trainings and technical assistance.

These resource providers are often referred to as business support organizations (BSO). Technical assistance offered by BSOS include education on diversifying sales channels, attracting new customers, implementing new systems and technology, increasing access to capital, and more. BSO programming for small businesses aligns with the MEDC’s strategic focus initiatives by improving businesses’ core business acumen and increasing coaching and mentorship opportunities.

From guiding entrepreneurs with an idea, to celebrating a bricks and mortar ribbon cutting, to ultimately supporting a business as it expands operations—resources are available to help entrepreneurs launch, stabilize and grow their #PureMichigan businesses.

**YOU CAN HELP SAVE OUR LIGHTS!**
Michigan has more lighthouses than any other state in the country. The Michigan Lighthouse Assistance Program (MLAP), a grant program which is funded through the sale of specialty license plates and administered by the SHPO, supports lighthouse preservation. Since the plate was first made available in 2000, the MLAP has awarded more than $2.7 million in matching grants for lighthouse rehabilitation projects. You can support this effort! Get your plate at www.michigan.gov/saveourlights.

The MEDC’s Small Business Services Team supports the creation, growth and retention of small businesses located in traditional downtowns or neighborhood commercial districts, in addition to downtown management organizations, community leaders and partner organizations.
OPERATIONAL SUPPORT
Provides operational support to nonprofit arts and cultural organizations. MACC defines arts and cultural organizations as those organizations whose primary mission is to provide an experience, including a learning experience, that is based in a specific arts or cultural discipline.

PROJECT SUPPORT
Provides support to nonprofits, municipalities and colleges/universities for the production, presentation and creation of arts and culture that promotes public engagement, diverse and excellent art, lifelong learning in the arts and the strengthening or livability of communities through the arts.

ARTS IN EDUCATION
Provides support to school-based arts learning projects, designed to introduce or enhance student knowledge of and participation in a particular art form such as dance, theatre, music, creative writing, storytelling, visual arts (including video, media arts and graphic design), or traditional folk arts.

NEW LEADERS
Provides support of arts and culture related projects or collaborations led by a young person (ages 14–30 years old) who is associated or connected to an established youth/teen council or young professionals group.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT
Provides support for nonprofit arts and cultural organizations and municipalities that provide funding assistance for the expansion, renovation, or construction of arts and cultural facilities; upgrade of equipment and furnishings to provide an up-to-date environment; provide or increase accessibility to persons with disabilities, or integrate energy efficient products and technologies.

MINIGRANT PROJECTS
Support special opportunities and address arts and cultural needs locally. The grant can assist in promoting public engagement, diverse and distinctive arts, lifelong learning in the arts and the strengthening or livability of communities. The arts, projects can support a broad range of artistic expression from all cultures through projects which produce, preserve and present traditional or contemporary arts and culture and/or arts education.

PROFESSIONAL/ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT GRANT
Assist non-profit arts and cultural organizations, artists, arts administrators, educators and film professionals with opportunities that specifically improve their management and/or bring the artist or arts organization to another level artistically. The Minigrant POD program may provide Michigan arts and cultural organizations, artists, arts administrators and arts educators a presence at national conferences and workshops.

EQUIPMENT & SUPPLIES GRANT
Provides K–12 schools with funding to assist with the purchase of arts equipment (including repairs of arts equipment) or supplies being used within the classroom/school setting.

FIELD TRIP/BUS GRANTS
Provides assistance to K–12 schools for the transportation cost of an arts or culture-related field trip.

From our historic monuments and museums to traditional practices and contemporary arts, the Michigan Arts and Culture Council is dedicated to ensuring that every citizen and community in Michigan enjoys the civic, economic and educational benefits of arts and culture.

For more information about MACC programs and services, visit www.michigan.gov/arts.

FINANCING AND INCENTIVES
ALL MEDC place-based investments will be evaluated on the following criteria to identify high priority projects:

LOCAL AND REGIONAL IMPACT CONSIDERATIONS
Competitive projects support a local or regional vision or goal identified in a master plan or economic development strategy. Projects in geographically disadvantaged areas will be most competitive.

GUIDANCE
LOCAL AND REGIONAL IMPACT CONSIDERATIONS
- Project supports the vision and goals stated in the local master plan, downtown plan, and/or capital improvements plan and economic development strategy.
- Located in a Redevelopment Ready, Michigan Main Street, or Certified Local Government community.
- Located in a geographically disadvantaged area (GDA); click here to see a public map of Michigan’s geographically disadvantaged areas.*
- Community financially supports the project.
- Project supports local/regional workforce and career opportunities.
- Project incorporates emerging developers.**
- Project serves as a catalyst within the community, fostering additional development and investment.
- Project promotes mixed-income neighborhoods.

PLACE CONSIDERATIONS
Projects should be designed and programmed in concert with basic tenets of urban design (mass, density, type and scale). Additional competitive elements include historic rehabilitation, mixed-use and mixed-income projects, inclusive design, and environmentally sustainable buildings and sites.

ECONOMIC & FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS
All projects will need to demonstrate financial need. All funding sources, including debt and equity, must be maximized and development costs must be reasonable.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS
- The community, developer and applicant must be in compliance with existing MEDC/MSF programs to be considered for support.
- Big Box retail and strip malls are generally not considered.
- Demolition of a structure, or other adverse effect to a historic resource, or structure that is eligible to be a historic resource, is generally not supported.

For more information on projects and MEDC Community Development priorities, please visit www.miplace.org or contact your community development manager.

* “Geographically Disadvantaged Areas” are defined as economically distressed and historically underserved census tracts and counties, especially in urban and rural areas, that tend to experience relatively high unemployment and low household incomes.

MEDC and State of Michigan operationalize geographically disadvantaged areas to constitute Treasury-designated Opportunity Zones and Small Business Administration-designated HUBZones (Historically Underutilized Business Zones).

** “Emerging developers” are defined as Michigan-based developers with limited real estate experience and financial resources who support local initiatives and have completed commercial real estate training programs.

The council guides the distribution of state and federal resources within Michigan to the following programs:

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
Growing vibrant, diverse, and resilient places that attract investment, innovation, residents and visitors.
Brownfield Redevelopment Act (PA 381)

Any city, village, township, or county may create a Brownfield Redevelopment Authority. Brownfield incentives promote investment in eligible properties such as contaminated, blighted, functionally obsolete, or historic properties. Tax increment financing (TIF) allows for reimbursement of costs incurred from eligible activities on brownfield properties from the incremental revenue generated by new investment on the property.

Build Mi Community

Is a tool that provides access to real estate development gap financing for small scale, incremental redevelopment projects. The Build Mi Community initiative has been established to reactivates underutilized or vacant space into vibrant areas by promoting capital investment into redevelopment projects being taken on by developers and property owners with limited real estate development experience and familiarizing them with the development process to position them to potentially undertake more complex projects in the future.

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development allocates CDBG funding to the state of Michigan through the MSF. Eligible local governments (UGLGs) may use the funding for a variety of purposes, such as public facilities, community services, and economic development projects.

Universalized designed public spaces focus on the design and composition of an environment so that it can be accessed, understood, and used to the greatest extent possible by all people regardless of their age, size, ability or disability. Projects that are universally designed may be eligible for additional support. This reward initiative provides matching grants for crowd-funded public space projects through Patronicity, an online crowdfunding platform.

State Historic Preservation Tax Credits (PA 343 of 2020)

Provide a credit of up to 25 percent of rehabilitation costs for both income-producing and owner-occupied historic properties. A limited amount of credits are available each calendar year.

Transformational Brownfield Plan (TBP) (Act 46–50 of 2017)

TBP is defined as a brownfield plan that, among other requirements, will have a transformational impact on local economic development and community revitalization and meet certain investment thresholds. TBP projects may request sales and use tax exemption, property tax increment capture, construction period tax capture, withholding tax capture, and income tax capture revenues as determined necessary to fill a demonstrated financing gap.

Business Improvement District (BID)/Principal Shopping District (PSD) (PA 120)

Cities, villages, and urban townships may create a BID or PSD to allow a municipality to collect revenue, levy special assessments, and issue bonds in order to address the maintenance, security, and operation of that district.

Corridor Improvement Authority (CIA) (PA 57, Part 6)

CIA is designed to assist cities, villages, and townships by allowing the use of tax increment financing or other funding tools to implement eligible improvements in designated commercial corridors.

Local Development Finance Authority (DDA) (PA 57, Part 2)

OAAs are designed to be a catalyst in a community’s downtown. It provides a variety of funding options including a tax increment financing mechanism, which can be used to fund public improvements and to leverage a limited millage to address administrative expenses.

Local Development Financing Authority (L DFA) (PA 57, Part 4)

LDFAs can promote economic growth and job creation through supporting companies in manufacturing, agricultural processing, and high technology operations.

Neighborhood Enterprise Zone (NEZ) (PA 147)

PA 147 provides a tax incentive to develop or rehabilitate residential housing units in qualified local units of government (i.e., Core Communities). Neighborhood Improvement Authority (NIA) (PA 57, Part 8)

NIA may use its funds, including tax increment financing, to fund residential and economic growth in residential neighborhoods. An authority may also issue bonds to finance these improvements.

Obsolete Property Rehabilitation Act (OPRA) (PA 146)

Tax incentives are available to encourage redevelopment, rehabilitation, and functionally obsolete buildings in eligible core communities. OPRA helps spur private development in urban areas and centers of commerce, by temporarily freezing local taxes up to 12 years.

Redevelopment Liquor Licenses (PA 301)

Through PA 501, the Liquor Control Commission may issue new liquor on-premises liquor licenses to local governments in addition to quota licenses allowed in cities under PA 58.

Water Resources Improvement Tax Incremental Finance Authority Act (PA 57, Part 7)

Through PA 94, a city, village, or township can establish a Water Improvement Tax Incremental Finance Authority to prevent deterioration in water resources, and to promote water resource improvement or access to inland lakes, or both.

SBA 504 Loans

These loans provide businesses with long-term fixed-rate financing for the acquisition or construction of fixed assets. Visit www.sba.gov/mi for more information.

Small Business Development Center (SBDC)

Michigan’s SBDC has 10 regional offices that provide counseling, training, and many other valuable resources to support small businesses. Visit www.sbdcmichigan.org for more information.

For more information about community eligibility and program guidelines, visit www.miplace.org.

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Dedicated to shared economic success, the Michigan Economic Development Corporation promotes the state’s assets and opportunities that support business investment and community vitality. MEDC’s programs and services connect companies with people, resources, partners, and access to capital.