

# MICHIGAN PLANNER



American Planning Association  
Michigan Chapter

Making Great Communities Happen

A Publication of the Michigan Chapter of the American Planning Association

## Cities of Promise initiative brings hope for the future to eight Michigan cities

By **Mary Lou Keenon, communications director, ~~Communications Office of Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA)~~**



Cities of Promise was developed by Governor Jennifer M. Granholm in 2006, as an interagency initiative to revitalize eight cities in Michigan.

*"The revitalization of cities is key to Michigan's economic success. I created the Cities of Promise initiative as an important tool in helping to redevelop eight of Michigan's most distressed areas into thriving, vibrant cities that attract and retain jobs and people. All of these cities have experienced the devastating effects of population decline,*

*poverty, infrastructure challenges, and blight. The Cities of Promise program allows the state to engage in an unprecedented partnership with these cities to address their concerns and prioritize their needs using existing state resources. Now entering its fourth year, the Cities of Promise program, remains a critical part of my plan to transform and move Michigan forward."*

- Governor Jennifer M. Granholm

Just imagine! Walking down a neatly groomed tree-lined street pushing a baby in

a stroller while a toddler runs ahead to the park. They give a friendly wave to a retired couple busily planting flowers in a neighboring yard. A family walks down the street to the farmer's market to buy fresh produce from the local farmers. A few blocks over a group of twenty-somethings relax at a local hot spot and talk about the future. Close by, a local business man is meeting with a client over dinner at a trendy new restaurant in town.

Nearly every resident in Michigan would like their cities and neighborhoods to replicate this vision. It represents a panorama that community leaders strive for when developing downtowns and neighborhoods. It reflects a walkable, sustainable, and safe community. Best of all, it exemplifies a community that is attainable when local and state leaders combine efforts

to reduce poverty, blight, and crime, and increase local commerce, social and cultural events, and community bonding.

Governor Jennifer M. Granholm set the vision of vibrant cities in Michigan into action in February of 2006, developing



Participants in the Contractors Assistance Program (CAP) collaborate over blueprints during a training session.

a statewide quality of life initiative that is part of her strong urban agenda. This initiative, Cities of Promise, combines the resources of state government with the strength of local government and community-based organizations to help  
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The *Michigan Planner* serves as a medium for the exchange of ideas and information for the planning community in the state of Michigan. *Michigan Planner* is published monthly by the Michigan Association of Planning. Subscription to the publication is available only as a membership benefit. The *Michigan Planner* is currently circulated to the Association's 5,000 members. For information on joining contact:

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reduce urban poverty and redevelop and revitalize eight of Michigan's urban cities. Cities of Promise include Benton Harbor, Detroit, Flint, Hamtramck, Highland Park, Muskegon Heights, Pontiac, and Saginaw. These cities are those that are experiencing devastating conditions because of declining population, extreme poverty, loss of industry and jobs, and blighted neighborhoods.

## Unprecedented collaboration

An interagency effort, the Governor asked leadership of state departments to bring existing efforts and resources together in a coordinated way that leverages the state's ability to address cities' needs. The plan is to transform these "cities of challenge" into Cities of Promise—ones that are inviting, thriving, prosperous places to live and work—and to reduce poverty and create good jobs for the people who live there.

In laying the groundwork, the Governor's cabinet worked in a strategic manner to identify where efforts and resources intersect with the local communities' needs and existing plans. This exercise determined that the eight Cities of Promise need assistance in transportation, housing, environmental initiatives, and urban blight reduction.

Managed by the Urban Revitalization Division within the state's Michigan State Housing and Development Authority (MSHDA), this five-year program allows state agencies and local officials to collaborate in an unprecedented manner and brings hope to the vulnerable cities. Over 20 state agencies work together in concert to focus on local plans and presenting needs.

How exactly is this done? Cities of Promise provides technical assistance and "last resort" monetary contributions to the eight cities, based on their highest priority needs. Recognizing that good

planning helps create communities that offer better choices for where and how people live, Cities of Promise provides assistance in the form of capacity building dollars and technical assistance dollars for a comprehensive approach to the creation and use of a revitalization plan or master plan update.

## Partners of promise

The Cities of Promise program involves the creation of a Partnership Team at the local level that includes state agency representation, local unit of government partners, and other stakeholders including churches, schools, business community, hospitals, community development corporations, and human service organizations. The Partnership Team works on a subcommittee framework, with subcommittees formed around existing plans, top priority activities, and the signature project. Local vision drives the process, and state representatives build on existing efforts and assets.

From the Cities of Promise program inception, the high priority projects range from targeted neighborhood revitalization, to university and city partnerships, to youth farm stands, to foreclosure prevention and response.

To catalyze the sustainable revitalization, the Michigan Cities of Promise communities are relying on the master plan to present a clear vision and guide for the future. A master plan is a comprehensive long range plan intended to guide growth and development of a community. It includes analysis, recommendations, and proposals for the community's population, economy, housing, transportation, community facilities, and land use. It is based on public input, surveys, planning initiatives, existing development, physical characteristics, and social and economic conditions.

It is the only public document that describes the community as a whole. As a policy statement of long-term goals, it provides both a broad perspective and a guide to short-term community decisions, often with a blueprint for implementation of the goals and policies.

To kick-start the master plan update, Cities of Promise provides cities with a Request for Proposal (RFP) to solicit assistance from consultant planners. To date Benton Harbor, Muskegon Heights, and Hamtramck have used the RFP process.

## Programs for Cities of Promise

While responding to unique critical needs and agendas at the local level, the Cities of Promise initiative is also able to bring new and innovative programs to all eight cities. The following programs are described:

### SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOLS PROGRAM

Michigan's Safe Routes to School (SR2S) program is managed by the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), with training, logistical, administrative, and technical support from the Governor's Council on Physical Fitness, Health and Sports/ Michigan Fitness Foundation.

The Safe Routes to School program enables and encourages children, including those with disabilities, to walk and bicycle to school; strives to make bicycling and walking to school a safer and more appealing transportation alternative, thereby encouraging a healthy and active lifestyle from an early age; and facilitates the planning, development, and implementation of projects and activities that will improve safety and reduce traffic, fuel consumption, and air pollution in the vicinity of elementary schools.

Within the Cities of Promise communities, the Partnership Teams receive assistance from AmeriCorps staff to help schools move through the necessary steps to create effective action plans.

### **MSHDA PROGRAM HELPS GRADUATES PURCHASE HOMES**

The Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) offers a 30 year fixed-rate conventional loan at below market interest rate to college graduates with an associate's, bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degree. Through the Graduate Purchase Assistance (GPA) program, individuals must have graduated from an accredited institution within three years prior to the loan application date and meet MSDHA's sale price and income limit eligibility guidelines. The loans are only available to graduates who purchase homes in one of the eight Cities of Promise.

### **MICHIGAN STATE POLICE PROGRAM PROMOTES LEADERSHIP ACADEMY FOR YOUTH**

The Michigan Youth Leadership Academy (MYLA) is a one-week residential training program, hosted by the Michigan State Police Training Academy for youth between the ages of 14 and 16. The mission of the MYLA is to encourage leadership by promoting responsibility, respect, and trust through partnership building with local and state law enforcement agencies. By design, MYLA is operating in every City of Promise with the exception of Highland Park and Hamtramck. This program is a combined effort between the Michigan State Police and local law enforcement authorities in training and mentoring the young persons chosen to attend. The MYLA is supported by donations from local entities, allowing the students to attend at no cost to themselves or their families.



This abandoned building in Highland Park will be part of the demolition to create safer neighborhoods.

### **GENERATIONS OF PROMISE**

The Generations of Promise program is a \$5 million project funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, which links the Governor's Cities of Promise initiative with the Michigan Steps Up Healthy Lifestyles initiative, led by the Michigan Surgeon General and the Michigan Department of Community Health. The unprecedented project aims to achieve and sustain change at the policy, environmental, and individual levels in schools and communities with racial and ethnic health disparities. It empowers middle school youth, with the guidance of school and community mentors, to become change agents. Grant awards are made to schools with health teams in place. These awards support the three broad objectives of the program: to increase physical exercise, increase knowledge and availability of nutritional foods, and to prevent or stop smoking in middle school youth.

## **Spotlight on the Cities**

The following community spotlights are a glimpse at the diversity of work being done as a result of the Cities of Promise program and assistance.

## **Highland Park DEMOLITION OF ABANDONED PROPERTIES**

Hundreds of properties within the 2.9-square-mile area of Highland Park have been abandoned for years. These properties pose a safety and health hazard to citizens and provide a haven for criminal activity. As part of the renewal of Highland Park,



The "hands of industry and agriculture" touch the "holder of the flame of knowledge" on the bronze doors of the McGregor Library in Highland Park.



**Site of a former office building in Saginaw that was cleaned up by SCENIC enforcement. The overgrown weeds were cut to make a more appealing street front view.**

## Saginaw

### SAGINAW CODE ENFORCEMENT NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT COOPERATIVE (SCENIC)

The term “blight reduction” usually suggests demolition. While demolition is a key component of the strategy employed throughout the Cities of Promise, it is not the only tool in the box.

The first line of defense in blight reduction is community awareness and code enforcement, both preventative tools that can impede blight before it becomes a long-term problem.

The city of Saginaw launched a creative partnership tool to effectively combat blight. The Saginaw Code Enforcement Neighborhood Improvement Cooperative (SCENIC), established in June 2008, is a cooperative partnership initially created as a part of the Cathedral District Neighborhood Revitalization plan. The Cathedral District, a neighborhood east of the Saginaw River, has hundreds of blighted and abandoned parcels, but also is home to St. Mary's of Michigan Hospital, City Hall, and the DOW Chemical events center. The Cathedral District Revitalization plan gives the city an opportunity to leverage local, state, and federal resources.

SCENIC is a volunteer driven partnership that includes Saginaw firefighters, police, and city code enforcement staff. The SCENIC code enforcement team patrols the streets and issues notices warning residents of a violation. The notices are issued for a variety of blight-related offenses such as trash in yards, junk vehicles, or deteriorating fences and porches. Residents who receive violations have from 48 hours to a week to remedy the situation before the city imposes a fine.

The cost to property owners for violations may vary, but the notices alone have been a strong deterrent for

properties that are beyond recovery have been identified for demolition. Funds from the state of Michigan and Wayne County are making it possible to quickly acquire title on these abandoned properties. The first round of demolition has been concentrated in a specific area to maximize positive results. City-owned properties are first on the list.

The city of Highland Park was one of the first cities to receive demolition funds, and MSHDA created a \$25 million blight elimination program as a result of this request and similar requests from the other seven cities.

### MCGREGOR LIBRARY – HIGHLAND PARK'S SIGNATURE PROJECT

Directly across from Highland Park City Hall on Woodward Avenue sits the McGregor Library, a classic Beaux-style building that has been closed since 2002. The Library has a rich history and central location in Highland Park – making it a centerpiece for the community. It represented the zenith of its coming of age as an industrial power in the 1920s within southeastern Michigan.

The library was dedicated on March 5, 1926, and was the recipient of the Gold Medal for Architectural Merit by the AIA for 1926. McGregor Library

differs from most other libraries of its size because of the open interior of the main floor; its freedom from corridors; its few partitions; and in the fact that each room gives wide and direct access to each other—all supervised from the main desk opposite the entrance.

Bringing the building back to life requires community support and significant help from state agencies. The effort to restore the Library is led by the Michigan Department of History, Arts and Libraries, Department of Management and Budget, and the Michigan Department of Transportation.

In 2006, the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) provided the city with a use study of the McGregor Library. As a result, needs were assessed, possible uses examined, and potential funding models evaluated. MSHDA provided the city with a grant to assist in hiring a consultant for leveraging sustainable funds for the reopening of the city of Highland Park's McGregor Library. The consultant is only the first step in leveraging the dollars necessary for the total project. The city of Highland Park is actively seeking additional grants and sources to aid in the continued resurrection of a landmark building.

homeowners and landlords. According to the community staff, more than 80 percent of violators take care of the notices after the fact. Due to an overwhelmingly positive response to these efforts in the Cathedral District, SCENIC has expanded into a citywide effort. The SCENIC initiative has allowed the city to proactively address blight while creating positive relationships between local government and citizens.

## Muskegon Heights

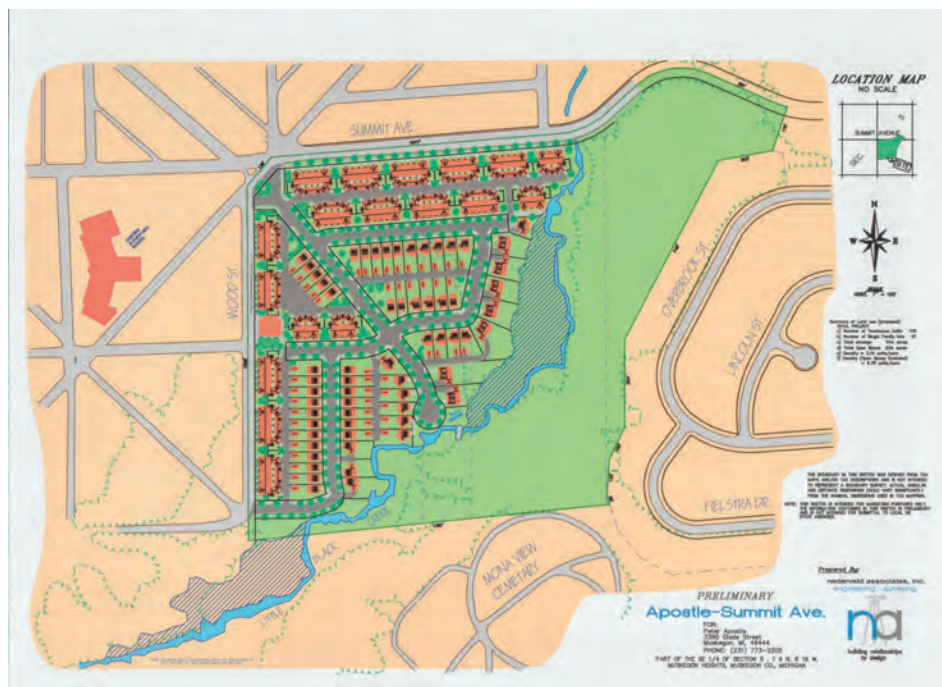
Muskegon Heights, like many of the other Cities of Promise, suffered in the late 1970s from mass migration to the distant suburbs, and again in the 1980s and 1990s as the automotive industry began its decline. These losses have taken thousands of jobs from the area, leaving this once proud municipality with blocks of empty storefronts and boarded up buildings.

MSHDA is just one of a number of community development partners that are working with the city to attract new businesses and new life into the area. The city is now home to a global manufacturing company, a large communications firm, and several more diverse, high-tech, companies, and a brand new, state-of-the-art high school.

### REDEVELOPMENT OF MONA LAKE PARK WOULD IMPROVE GREEN SPACE

In an effort to improve the green space and family-friendly areas of the city, Muskegon Heights envisions the revitalization of Mona Lake Park. With Cities of Promise support for park and improvements and Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding, the city was able to hire an architectural firm to assist the city in design improvements.

To date, the city has received \$629,000 in grant dollars for renovations. Construction is set to begin in May.



Development plans for Mona Terrace show the layout of the new development in Muskegon Heights.

### MONA TERRACE DEVELOPMENT WILL BRING NEW LIFE TO DECAYING SITE

With the assistance of Cities of Promise, this Brownfield redevelopment project is expected to help bring new homes and investment to a community where there has been little investment in housing since the 1960s. The Mona Terrace Development project will result in redevelopment of a 51-acre contaminated property into single and multifamily homes. The development area includes four properties, two of which are contaminated. All four properties are currently owned by the city of Muskegon Heights.

Following demolition of structures on the site and environmental cleanup to meet residential standards, Mona Terrace Development will construct approximately 95 homes, an investment of up to \$19 million. The developers are interested in incorporating social and environmental sustainability concepts into the plans, including green building, storm water management, and recycling materials from the demolition.

The design for the site is based on the principles of New Urbanism, and will

include single family and multi-unit row houses inspired by traditional designs. The neighborhood will be designed to integrate into the surrounding area and will be a pedestrian-friendly, walkable environment with tree-lined streets and rear alleys for garage entrances.

## Flint

### WITHERBEE'S: AN URBAN GROCERY STORE

Flint is working on bringing the community back together by delivering basic needs to its residents. A group of dedicated residents and nonprofits have committed to the unthinkable – an urban grocer in downtown Flint. Not just a grocer, but a neighborhood-based grocer that would carry green-produce, dry goods, dairy, meat, fish, bakery items, and a deli. The grocery store that would coordinate with the Flint Farmer's Market and its vendors to support local organic farmers and provide healthy alternatives seven days a week to community residents in a central-city location. Residents living in a here-to-for “food desert” will have an oasis of reasonably priced, fresh alternatives to the convenience items available at the check-out of the local liquor store.



**A rendering of Witherbee's – a new urban grocery store coming to downtown Flint.**

Witherbee's is located on the corner of Martin Luther King and University Avenues in the center of the 'Neon District' of Historic Carriage Town. It is close to inner-city neighborhoods, local institutions, public transportation options, and local expressways. New housing developments include Berridge Place Condominium Development, the Durant Hotel, Manhattan Place, new apartments being developed by the Uptown Development Corporation over retail stores in downtown Flint, and the University of Michigan – Flint dormitories.

The departure of supermarkets to the suburbs, inadequate public transportation, and a scarcity of healthy foods at corner stores are all factors that contribute to a lack of healthy food access in downtown neighborhoods. That fact, and a need for local grocers available seven days a week, led a group of neighborhood residents from the Carriage Town Neighborhood to come up with the concept of starting a small neighborhood grocery store and deli.

As an active member of the Partnership Team, the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), has provided ongoing technical assistance and support for this project. Other team members include local foundations, Flint Neighborhood Improvement Preservation Project (NIPP), Inc. (a local community development corporation), local lenders, and community residents.

It is estimated that the business will create at least 15 new employment opportunities and support farmers and other vendors from the city of Flint. It is the goal of the project to use as many local resources as possible while supporting the local economy.

Witherbee's is a 100 percent Michigan project – all Michigan business and companies such as accountants, legal assistants, consultants, a family-owned wholesaler from Alpena, and even technology from a point of sale vendor from Escanaba. Construction is slated to begin in 2009.

## Hamtramck FROM FARMER'S MARKET TO INTERNATIONAL BAZAAR TO WORLD'S FAIR

Hamtramck is working to create a sense of community pride and enjoyment through fun events that bring the diverse community of Hamtramck together. With over 35 languages spoken in Hamtramck schools, and a mysterious patchwork of symbols and languages emblazoned on the signs and windows of stores in the eclectic downtown, the rich cultural diversity is hard to miss. The Hamtramck International Bazaar is a celebration of this diversity.

The Hamtramck International Bazaar began life as a Farmer's Market in 2007. Although the market was appreciated by the community, a local committee decided they could attract a more diverse group of shoppers by calling it an International Bazaar and expanding the options.

The Bazaar is held monthly

on Saturdays, May through September, with the "Hamtramck World's Fair" as the grand finale in November at People's Community Services, a local nonprofit. The community embraces the event; volunteers translate the Fair information on flyers and banners; and spread them throughout the community to advertise the event.

With each Bazaar, the number and variety of shoppers and sellers increases. Each Bazaar offers a varied assortment of merchandise for sale, but also provides a wide array of cultural artifacts from a variety of groups including the African-American, Arab Chaldean, Muslim, Bosnian, Polish, and Bangladesh communities, as well as the Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Services, and the Hamtramck Historical Society.

The subcommittee added a recycling component to the Bazaar with a recycling trailer and recycling bins which proved to be so popular that the city is working on developing a year-round recycling program. In the interim during the winter months, the city has agreed to locate recycling containers at the residences of senior citizens in Hamtramck.

Tom Cervenak, executive director of People's Community Services, worked directly with the community to organize the World's Fair event.



**Hamtramck Mayor Karen Majewski visits with participants at the Hamtramck World's Fair – a celebration of the great diversity among the city's residents.**

Performances entertained the crowd and included; African-American poetry readings, Bangladesh poetry and music, and Polish dancers. The University of Michigan, Detroit Initiative worked with People's Community Services to develop a photo voice workshop asking participants from different age groups to take photos of their every day experiences and share thoughts about living in Hamtramck. Matt Winn (former MSHDA AmeriCorps Intern) created an historical film called Faces of Hamtramck that was shown during the day. He interviewed people of all ages and backgrounds about their thoughts and experiences on Hamtramck's history and future.

The Hamtramck World's Fair offered up many entertaining events for the community while showcasing its diverse culture and pride. Several visitors commented on how excited they were to see the changes going on in Hamtramck and the catalyst that Cities of Promise is providing to implement improvement in the community.

## Detroit BRIGHTMOOR SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOLS

Brightmoor is a community of 21,331 residents in northwest Detroit. Development of Brightmoor began in the early 1920s when it was annexed by the city of Detroit to provide housing for its rapidly growing population. A majority of early Brightmoor families were primarily working class families that supported the auto industry. Today, Brightmoor is still home to many working families including an estimated 7,380 children and youth. Brightmoor is a young community with 37.2 percent of the population under age 18.

These community demographics are relevant to the area's transformation; as the population constricts and concentrates along nodes, large tracts of vacant land have been created alongside new construction and infill housing. This transforming community



**Kids play basketball in the Brightmoor neighborhood in Detroit – part of an effort with Cities of Promise and NDNI to make safer neighborhoods for residents of Detroit.**

boasts well-organized community organizations, environmentally friendly initiatives, and an emerging cadre of local artists. On the cusp of reinvention, organizational partners like the Skillman Foundation and LISC (Local Initiative Support Corporation) Detroit are bolstering the established assets of the community.

During the Annual Brightmoor Celebration week in 2008, a total of 30 homes were targeted for demolition. The homes that were identified under the Cities of Promise Blight Elimination program were considered dangerous, open to trespass, and in close proximity to a school. The targeted homes were placed on this expedited list as a result of being identified during the Safe Routes to School walking audits that were conducted at Burt Elementary, Frank Murphy K-8, and Vetal K-8. This “demo blitz” could not have been done without the collaborative efforts of MSHDA, the city of Detroit Building and Safety Department, demolition contractors, and the countless volunteers that were involved with the walking audits at each respective school.

## NEXT DETROIT NEIGHBORHOOD INITIATIVE EFFORTS

The Next Detroit Neighborhood Initiative (NDNI) is the first step in the city's long-term effort to transform and restore neighborhoods in Detroit. As a part of a resident driven process,

community work-plans were developed for each of the six targeted NDNI neighborhoods: East English Village, 7/Livernois, Grant River Greenfield, Osborn, Brightmoor, and Northend. The NDNI has been identified by the Detroit Cities of Promise partnership Team as a high priority activity.

## CRIME PREVENTION & QUALITY OF LIFE IMPROVEMENTS

Crime and prostitution have been targeted through Project Fresh Start, a collaboration of the 36th District Court (Drug Court), the Detroit Police Department, the Wayne County Sheriffs Department, the Bureau of Substance Abuse Prevention, and the Detroit Department of Health and Wellness Promotion. More than 450 tickets have been issued and the offenders prosecuted. The lawbreakers are offered the option to participate in Project Fresh Start. Featured on the National Geographic Network in October 2008, Project Fresh Start has proved successful for Detroit by moving offenders into mandatory treatment. By receiving counseling and training, it is hoped that the project will significantly reduce the problem.

## LAND USE AND RE-PURPOSING

To accelerate the remediation of blighted residential structures, the City's Buildings and Safety Engineering Department secured a \$3.9 million grant from the Michigan State Housing

Development Authority's Cities of Promise Program. Priority has been given to open and dangerous structures in Next Detroit neighborhoods and others. Also priority is given to structures within 400 yards of schools. To date, approximately 1,500 structures have been demolished under the program.

Additionally, a \$500,000 Cities of Promise grant was received by NDNI to undertake a vacant land reclamation initiative. One hundred lots will be turned into green projects such as community gardens, tree nurseries, meadow monocultures, and pocket parks. With the commitments of local community and faith-based organizations, and institutions like Michigan State University, the Next Detroit Neighborhood Initiative will coordinate project maintenance, beautification, promotions, and enterprising of locally sourced produce and community food security networks.

Emphasis is also placed on upgrading green spaces for children to play and families to gather. Park renovations are being made possible by the city's Recreation Department with a \$300,000 overhaul to Optimist Stout Playground, a ten-acre urban oasis.

## Benton Harbor

A vibrant, bustling downtown attracts residents and visitors to the center of a community where they can shop, dine, and seek entertainment. Benton Harbor is working hard to attract unique and socially responsible shops to its downtown through support from the Cities of Promise initiative.

Through a grant from MSHDA, 6 Degrees, a funky, eclectic resale store opened shop in the Arts District in downtown Benton Harbor. The off-the-wall store offers a unique twist on a traditional thrift store by showcasing the front of the store as a boutique specializing in designer and retro



**Main Street in Downtown Benton Harbor is a traditional small downtown and home to some unique stores.**

clothing, vintage items, and antiques. The back of the store includes additional clothing, furniture, children's items, and household goods. Profits generated from the boutique area are used to employ Benton Harbor residents in an effort to support the ending homelessness campaign in Berrien County.

6 Degrees collaborates with the Department of Human Services, Jobs Education and Training (JET) program in conjunction with Michigan Works! This collaboration provides 8-weeks of on-the-job training for individuals involved in the JET program. The store also offers the opportunity to volunteer at 6 Degrees in order to earn "store bucks" to buy items they need.

The training program has worked so well at the 6 Degrees resale store that it is now being utilized at the Emergency Shelter Services, Inc., Berrien County's only homeless shelter.

## Pontiac CONTRACTORS ASSISTANCE PROGRAM BUILDS WORKFORCE SKILLS FOR WOMEN AND MINORITIES

Creating a vibrant and prosperous neighborhood involves more than just building attractive surroundings. It involves developing a strong and skilled workforce – one that can adapt to the changes in the economy and create and retain jobs and businesses. Pontiac has partnered with the Michigan State Housing Development Authority to bring a training program to the city

that develops a strong and sustainable workforce.

The Contractors Assistance Program (CAP) training was held for the first time in Pontiac in January 2008, for 25 small businessmen and women who committed time in acquiring invaluable new tools for achieving success in their fields. The group graduated in March from the free 64-hour, eight week course created to provide business skills training and business development support to eligible and qualified contractors.

In planning this training, certain industries were the focus and intended benefactors including electrical, drywall, plumbing, landscape, flooring/tiling, paint, and other construction-related trades.

The Contractors Assistance Program originated from recognizing the vast need to get more women and minorities involved in the technical aspects of the bidding process. The program provides training on conducting working relationships with various government entities, banks, architects, and developers. Skill sets in marketing, handling payroll, understanding how the legal structure can affect tax structure and operations, book-keeping, and how to land citywide development contracts are also emphasized in the teaching sessions.

## Learn more about the Cities of Promise

The Cities of Promise initiative reflects the hard work and passion that personifies the dedicated state and local partners who have taken these challenge so very seriously. Their actions and pioneering spirit show that there is indeed "promise" for the future in Michigan. For more information visit the Web site at [www.citiesofpromise.org](http://www.citiesofpromise.org).