



# Downtown Development Authority

## December 20, 2018 Newsletter



### Garland Wraps Adorn Historic Lampposts

Once again, garland wraps adorn the historic lampposts in the city of Ionia welcoming the holiday season. A special thank you to all that contributed to this wonderful tradition.

Alice Springs Campground, American Inn & Suites, Carr Real Estate Inc., Caswell RV, CL Trucking & Excavating LLC, Divine Auto Body, Dixon Engineering, Inc., Farm Depot, Fahey Schultz Bruzych Rhodes PLC., First Presbyterian Church of Ionia, Fishbeck Thompson Carr & Huber Inc., Fleis & Vandenbrink Engineering, Grand River Physical Therapy Specialists PC, GreenStone Farm Credit Services, St. John's Episcopal Church - Just acknowledge us as a gift, Instant Cash, Ionia Community Theatre, Ionia Lock & Key, Lake Funeral Home, Lamplight Grill, Lites Plus / Todd & Mary Kananen, Lehman Funeral Homes, Little Caesars Pizza, Lyden Oil Company, Main Street Planning Company, Mary O'Connor, Matthew's House, Michigan One Community Credit Union, Miller Glass, Ostrander Windows Siding & Roofing, Particular Pets, Peterson Oil Company, Peterson Paletta Balice PLC, Portland Federal Credit Union / PFCU, Reurink Roofing & Siding Sales, Rural Gas & Appliance, S & K Printing, Seymour Furniture, Trevor Merren Auto Sales, Ventra, Walker Fluke & Sheldon PLC, Young Chevrolet Buick GMC of Ionia, Young Chrysler Dodge Jeep Ram of Ionia, Walmart.

In Honor of Elizabeth Winslow & Family, In Honor of FOP Lodge 157,  
In Honor of Joseph Benak, In Honor of My Outstanding Staff by Dr. Robert Payne,  
In Honor of My Children Ray Laurie and Shel by Mr. Ray Squires,  
In Honor of Shattuck Farms, In Honor of First United Methodist Church,  
In Honor of the Hard Working Families of Ionia by Central MI Building Services,  
In Honor the the United States Military, In Honor of VFW Post 12082,  
In Honor of William Shakespeare, In Honor Helen Arnold.

In Memory of Adam Miller, In Memory of All Veterans of All Wars,  
In Memory of Bill & Shirley Deschaine, In Memory of Bill Hawley,  
In Memory of Donald L. Faulkner, In Memory of Clyde and Maxine Cooper,  
In Memory of Dave Hawley, In Memory of Jerry Cusack, In Memory of John L. McNamara,  
In Memory of Kathleen Lake and Larry Price, In Memory of Keith & Phyllis Bush,  
In Memory of Keith Patterson, In Memory of Kelsie Henning,  
In Memory of Kent & Fran Schaefer, In Memory of Linda McPherson,  
In Memory of Lisa Miller, In Memory of Luella Pecktil / GG,  
In Memory of Marvin Beauchamp, In Memory of Matthew Robert Stein Bignell,  
In Memory of Our Dear Friend Richard Pohl, In Memory of Rex P. O'Connor Sr.,  
In Memory of Richard O'Malley MD, In Memory of Robert & Florence Hoppes,  
In Memory of Ronald Kananen, In Memory of Scott Hawley,  
In Memory of SJ Ball - KIA WWII, In Memory of Susan Dzik and Leonard Dzik,  
In Memory of William Lane, In Memory of George & Claire Buck  
and In Memory of Clair Arnold.



## Rising Tide Meeting Identifies Three Community Goals

By Mitchell Boatman, Ionia Sentinel Standard

IONIA — Ionia stakeholders identified three areas of community improvement to focus on at the Project Rising Tide meeting on Monday.

Now that those priorities have been established, the firm Beckett and Raeder (B & R) will work with the city to conduct surveys and research into housing, economic development and attracting and retaining youth.

Rising Tide is an initiative started by outgoing Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder to help transform “at-risk” communities into thriving, prosperous areas by identifying and improving areas that are holding the community back. Ionia was selected as one of 11 communities involved in Round 2 of the program, which began with a kickoff meeting on Nov. 1.

At Monday’s meeting, community stakeholders - who collectively serve as the steering committee - were introduced to Ionia’s state-appointed community development fellow, Robin Suomi, and B & R representative Michelle Bennett.

Suomi, Bennett and Sue DeVries of the Michigan Economic Development Corporation will help Ionia identify areas to address, connect the city with government programs and grant money, and guide the city’s Rising Tide efforts.

Suomi will be Ionia’s personal point of contact for Rising Tide issues and will have an office at Ionia City Hall for the length of the process. Originally from nearby Palo, she has a familiarity with the area and will work to help it improve.

Bennett comes from B & R, which is paid by the state to work on projects identified by stakeholders in each Rising Tide community.

Because funds are limited, the city had to chose three main areas to address.

Ionia stakeholders voted at Monday’s meeting to have B&R conduct a housing survey, develop an economic development strategy, and conduct a “Gen Z” survey, aimed at attracting and retaining younger generations of residents.

The housing study will take a look at what housing options are - and aren’t - available in the city, whether or not the city has appropriate housing available, and what the city can do to address these issues.

“What has been very common in Rising Tide, is that there’s a lack of housing variety for different demographics,” Bennett said. “That has a really big impact on the economy if you can’t house and attract people that are working in the industries you have.”

*Note: If you would like more information on Project Rising Tide, please contact the DDA office at 527-1420.*