

**MICHIGAN
DOWNTOWN
ASSOCIATION**



Ann Arbor

ANNUAL STATEWIDE CONFERENCE

**Ann Arbor, MI
November 6-8, 2024**

In-person & Virtual Attendance Option

**People, Places, Planning,
& Preservation- The Power of
Strong Michigan Downtowns.**



Ann Arbor

P.O. Box 3591
North Branch, MI 48461



**MICHIGAN
DOWNTOWN
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Ann Arbor

Annual Conference People, Places, Planning, & Preservation- The Power of Strong Michigan Downtowns.

Strong downtown management organizations have never been more important to the economic development of a community, region, and state. Downtown organizations are charged with creating safe and equitable spaces for all, developing and nurturing small businesses, and providing redevelopment opportunities, all while planning for the future of the community and organization. Join us this fall in lively downtown Ann Arbor and be immersed in positive conversation with downtown stakeholders from across Michigan and experts in the field of economic and community development.

Wednesday November 6

4 pm **Mobile Tour of Downtown Ypsilanti**
Join us as we hit the road via trolley and travel to neighboring Downtown Ypsilanti. The tour will leave the Graduate Hotel Ann Arbor, 615 East Huron Street, Ann Arbor, at 4:00 pm. Wear your walking shoes as we will stroll downtown Ypsilanti and hear how the Downtown Development Authority is working to create places and events for all. Our tour will conclude with a networking event, with a cash bar and complimentary appetizers, at Thompson & Co in Downtown Ypsilanti. This is a ticketed event with only 30 seats sold. The ticket price is NOT included in the Conference registration fee and is an additional \$35.

Thursday November 7 - The Graduate Hotel

615 E. Huron Street, Ann Arbor, MI

9:00 - 11:00 am **Registration Vendor Expo**

9:30 - 10:00 am **Coffee and Conversation**
Participants of the MDA Professional Development Certificate Program (MiPDM) are encouraged to join us for a pre-Conference networking opportunity.

10:00 - 10:50 am **Bonus Session - 3 Round Tables, 15 Minutes, 100 Ideas**
Get a jump start on the Conference by joining us for this quick paced Bonus Session! Topics to be covered at three tables include: Best Practices for Social Districts, Downtown Organization & Chamber of Commerce Working Together, and Downtown Gift Cards.

**Regency Ballroom
Terrace & Regency Ballrooms**

Regency Ballroom

Regency Ballroom
Anne Gentry, *Director, Alpena DDA*
Lori Ward, *Director, Northville DDA*
Dan Hopp, *Director, Frankenmuth DDA*
Lydia Walker, *Director of Operations & Service, Frankenmuth Chamber of Commerce & Convention & Visitors Bureau*
Daniel Solomon, *Downtown Manager, City of Royal Oak*
Kelly Westbrook, *Executive Director, Oxford DDA*

11:00 am **2024 MDA Annual Meeting & Welcome Introductions of Vendors and Attendees**

Terrace Ballroom
Cristina Sheppard-Decius, *Chair, Michigan Downtown Association*

12:15 - 1:00 pm **Keynote Presentation Michigan Central Station: A Rebirth**
Celebrating the reopening of Michigan Central Station marks a significant milestone in Detroit's history and a promising step forward for the local community. After closing its doors in 1988, the once bustling rail station and gateway to Detroit's industrial powerhouse now serves as the anchor for a 30-acre research and technology hub developed by Ford Motor Company. Adaptive reuse projects like Michigan Central Station play a pivotal role in tackling climate change while preserving our city's rich, cultural and architectural heritage. They strengthen our communities, foster a sense of identity, and can serve as a catalyst for future economic and social well-being. Richard B. Hess, AIA, a principal at Quinn Evans and lead Architect for the station's restoration, will discuss the project and the impact of revitalizing this monumental, iconic symbol of Detroit.

Terrace Ballroom
Richard Hess, *AIA, NCARB, Principal & Regional Operations Director, Quinn Evans*

1:00 - 2:15 pm **Lunch Annual Awards MiPDM Ceremony**

Terrace Ballroom

2:15 - 2:35 pm **Welcome People-Friendly Streets-Prioritizing People, Placemaking & Resiliency**
Ms. Thomson will welcome us to Ann Arbor and highlight downtown's recent People Friendly Streets projects. The initiatives are value driven and focused on making the streets in downtown Ann Arbor safe and comfortable for people of all ages and abilities using all modes of transportation.

Terrace Ballroom
Maura Thomson, *Executive Director, Downtown Ann Arbor*

2:45 - 3:45 pm **Concurrent Sessions**
Session One: Where Am I?
The significance of wayfinding signage becomes evident as it seamlessly guides individuals through unfamiliar environments with ease. Whether you're exploring a bustling city square or navigating a sprawling university campus, clear and well-placed signage plays a crucial role in helping you find your way. Examples from communities and projects of all sizes will be shared and our presenters will demonstrate how wayfinding signage can be an economic and cultural driver for your downtown.

Terrace Ballroom
Matt Thomas, *Account Manager, Metro Signs & Lighting*
Paul Deters, *President, Metro Signs & Lighting*
Jeff Hamm, *Sales Manager, Metro Signs & Lighting*

Session Two: Intro to Real Estate Development

One of the many hats a downtown manager may wear is Real Estate Agent and/or Developer. Learn the development process from planning and site selection to construction, lease-up, sale, or disposition of the property. Pro forma modeling, community-initiated, development, incremental development, and different environmental studies will also be discussed.

This session is available for MIPDM credit.

3:55 – 4:45 pm **Concurrent Sessions**

Session Three: Oh, the Stories You'll Tell!

Whether your town has a brand or it's just starting out, there are ways to promote it, without any doubt. This session will guide you through telling your tale, with ads, and news, and events without fail. We'll dive right in, and explore every tool, to make sure your website is shiny and cool. With eye-catching visuals, announcements, and more, directories and polls that folks will adore. Meeting ADA rules, you'll ensure it is true, that your story will reach your whole community... and beyond, too!

Session Four: Protecting Our Past & Cultural Heritage

Is your community planning an infrastructure, streetscape, or development project and potentially applying for federal grant money? Are you considering the requirements found in Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 that requires identification of cultural resources around project areas? Join our experts from SHPO for a broad overview of Sec. 106 and what considerations you should take as you plan for your downtown projects. Learn about the responsibility of municipalities to protect sensitive cultural information, and proactive steps that can be taken to ensure historic resources are identified in advance of projects.

5:00- 6:00 pm **Walking Tour of Downtown Ann Arbor**

Members of downtown Ann Arbor's business districts will lead us on a walking tour of the State, Main, and Kerrytown areas. The tour will conclude at Conor O'Neill's, just in time for networking!

6:00 – 7:30 pm **Meet & Greet**

Conor O'Neill's
318 S Main St, Ann Arbor, MI 48104
Pep Rally- Go Green! Go Blue!
Wear your favorite school colors and enjoy complimentary appetizers & cash bar.

Regency Ballroom

Samantha Mariuz, *Economic Development Manager Environmental Group, Fleis & VandenBrink*
Matthew J. Farrell, *CCIM, CEO/Owner, Team CORE*
Kate Knight, *Director, Farmington DDA*

Terrace Ballroom

Kim Rivera, *Principal, Senior Creative Director, New Moon Visions Place Branding & Marketing*
Julie Braun, *Co-owner, Project Manager, Civic Clarity Website Service*

Regency Ballroom

Scott Slagor, *Cultural Resource Protection Manager, State Historic Preservation Office*
Amy Krull, *Senior Archaeologist, State Historic Preservation Office*

Generously sponsored by Lumecon

Friday November 8

8:30 am **Registration
Vender Expo and Coffee**

**Regency Ballroom
Terrace & Regency Ballrooms**

9:00 – 10:00 am **Partner Presentation MEDC
The Best Laid Plans- Strategic Planning – What Is It and Why Is It Important?**
Strategic planning is the process of defining a vision, setting goals, and identifying projects and programs that will lead to concrete outcomes that bolster downtown economic vitality and vibrancy. The practice is often overlooked, but it can be used to build board engagement and community buy-in towards downtown revitalization efforts. Learn the benefits and key best practices for conducting a strategic plan and how it will benefit your organization in the long run.

Terrace Ballroom
Leigh Young, *AICP, Senior Main Street Specialist, MEDC*

10:00 – 10:45 am **Brunch & Networking**

10:45 – 11:30 am **Concurrent Sessions**

Session Five: Enhancing Volunteer Participation, Board Involvement, and Organizational Capacity

In this engaging and interactive session, we will explore the essential strategies and practices for building capacity at the board and volunteer level. Participants will gain valuable insights into how to effectively enhance their organization's leadership, governance, and volunteer engagement to achieve greater impact and sustainability.

Terrace & Regency Ballrooms
Generously sponsored by Lake Trust Credit Union

Terrace Ballroom
Laura Nichols, *Executive Director, Blissfield DDA-Main Street/Economic Development*
Jay Marks, *Executive Director, Adrian Main Street*
Hollie McPherson, *Executive Director, Wayland Main Street*

Session Six: Matchmaking for Historic Buildings?

Can a long-term partnership be made between a historic building and an interested buyer? Learn from Jessica Flores, owner of Preservation Forward and statewide historic preservation expert, on how to pair the right party to a vacant, historic building in a match that's a mutually beneficial relationship. Jessica will share with you her success in matchmaking historic buildings and give you insight into making historic preservation a savvy, real estate tool in your downtown.

Regency Ballroom
Jessica Flores, *Owner, Preservation Forward*
Becca Murphy, *Historic Preservation Specialist, Preservation Forward*

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11:40 am – 12:40 pm **Concurrent Sessions**

Session Seven: Business Retention and Recruitment

Retaining the businesses located within your downtown district is just as important as attracting entrepreneurs. What are the tricks to keeping the doors of small businesses open while encouraging new businesses to locate within your community? What is the right business mix for your district? This session will recap what's new and here to stay and discuss classic business retention and recruitment approaches every downtown should keep in mind with their business development efforts.

This session is available for MiPDM credit.

Session Eight: The Delicate Art of Revenue Sharing

Hear from seasoned downtown professionals on the best practices for creating a Memo of Understanding with your municipality regarding services for bookkeeping, DPW, administrative support, and more. What should be expected from your organization and the municipality, and how you should be part of the process, will also be discussed. Creating a clear shared service agreement now can prevent misunderstanding and hardship in the future.

12:50 – 1:40 pm **The ABC's of MSHDA's Housing TIF Program**

This session will provide an overview of the new Housing TIF program that was signed into law in July of 2023. Learn how the first applicants are utilizing Housing TIF as a tool to create both for sale and workforce housing developments. Our presenters will also share how local Brownfield Redevelopment Authorities are approaching this program to achieve their local goals to encourage housing development around the State of Michigan. This new program is being utilized in both urban and rural communities so best practices and helpful hints will be shared for anyone to use.

1:40 – 2:00 pm **Twenty for Twenty**

Join Jennifer Shorter, a third-generation retailer, for an electrifying session where she will unveil insider secrets on how downtown organizations can help businesses through meaningful, low-cost efforts. In just twenty minutes, Jennifer will provide twenty ideas for you to walk away with and bring back to your downtown.

2:00 pm **Closing Comments & Raffle Drawing**

Terrace Ballroom

Andy LaBarre, *Executive Vice President and Director of Government Relations, A2Y Regional Chamber*
Angela Heflin, *Ann Arbor Spark & State Street District*

Regency Ballroom

Laura Cloutier, *Executive Director, Wixom DDA*
Elizabeth Morse, *Executive Director, Sparta DDA*
Cristina Sheppard-Decius, *Owner, POW! Strategies*

Terrace Ballroom

Bruce Johnson, *Owner, Revitalize L.L.C.*
Dave Van Haaren, *Director, Economic Development, Triterra*
Tony Lentych, *Chief Housing Investment Officer, MSHDA*

Terrace Ballroom

Jennifer Shorter, *C.E.O., Grandpa Shorter's Gifts*

Terrace Ballroom

Dana Walker, *Director, Michigan Downtown Association*



Ann Arbor



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If programming is scheduled in the Terrace Ballroom exclusively, we ask that you use the Regency Ballroom for your networking and/or private conversation needs.

Special rates for downtown hotels may be available. Please refer to the MDA's 'Events' page on our website, www.michigandowntowns.com, for current availability.



Ann Arbor



Registration Form: Annual Statewide Michigan Downtowns Conference 2024

Each attendee must provide the following information as unique login or registration information will be sent to each attendee via the email listed below. Registrant's information may be changed prior to the Annual Conference by contacting Dana Walker at the MDA, director@michigandowntowns.com or 248-838-9711.

Name _____
 Organization _____
 Phone _____ Email _____

Registration Fees (use registration form or register online at www.michigandowntowns.com):

Early Bird Rate (Now through 10/26): MDA Members: \$275 Non-Members: \$295 Students: \$150
 Regular Registration & At the Door (After 10/26): MDA Members: \$295 Non-Members: \$315 Students: \$160
 One Day Rate (either November 7 or November 8): \$150
 Virtual Format price is the same.

____ Yes, I will attend the \$35 ticketed Downtown Mobile Tour of Ypsilanti, MI, Wednesday, November 6.

____ Yes, I will attend the complimentary Meet and Greet, Thursday, November 7, at Conor O'Neill's.

_____ TOTAL AMOUNT DUE

Please return form with payment to MDA by Oct. 28, 2024. Once payment has been received, all registrants will receive unique login or registration information for the Annual Conference.

Make checks payable to:
 Michigan Downtown Association
 P.O. Box 3591 North Branch, MI 48461
 Credit card payment available at www.michigandowntowns.com or call the MDA at 248-838-9711.
 Sorry, no refunds will be offered.

_Visa _MC _Dis _Amex Card No. _____ Exp. Date _____ Sec. Code: _____

Name on Card: _____ Signature: _____

Zip Code: _____

AICP and AIA credits are available on a self-reporting basis.