

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Historic Depot Project Receives Support from Howard City DDA and Village Council

HOWARD CITY, Mich. — The Howard City Downtown Development Authority (DDA) is pleased to announce that the historic depot project will move forward following majority votes of support from both the DDA Board and the Howard City Village Council.

The project represents an investment in Howard City's future while preserving an important piece of the community's history. For years, community leaders have recognized the importance of restoring the depot property and transforming it into a space that can serve residents, visitors, and future generations.

The planned improvements will create a functional community destination while maintaining the character of the historic structure. The renovated depot will include an indoor public restroom, a community gathering room for meetings, programs, and special events, and a covered outdoor seating area where residents, trail users, and visitors can gather, relax, and enjoy downtown Howard City.

Located adjacent to the Fred Meijer White Pine Trail, public parking, and the Timothy C. Hauenstein Reynolds Township Library, the depot is uniquely positioned to become a gateway into downtown Howard City and a welcoming stop for both residents and visitors.

Funding for the project comes from a combination of DDA funds and approximately \$185,600 in grant funding secured specifically for downtown revitalization and community development. The project will not increase local taxes. Instead, it is being funded through existing DDA resources and grant dollars that were specifically secured for community and downtown improvements.

The Howard City DDA was created to reinvest dedicated downtown development funds into projects that improve public spaces, encourage economic growth, support local businesses, preserve community assets, and enhance quality of life. The depot project is exactly the type of investment these funds were intended to support.

Beyond preserving an important historic landmark, the depot creates opportunities for a wide range of community uses, including:

- Community meetings and educational programs
- Historical displays celebrating Howard City's railroad heritage
- Gatherings for local organizations and community groups
- Seasonal events, festivals, and markets

- A welcoming stop for trail users and visitors
- Outdoor seating and gathering space for residents and families

The depot's location along one of Michigan's most popular recreational trails presents a unique opportunity to attract visitors to downtown Howard City while providing a valuable amenity for local residents. Increased visitation can help support local businesses, encourage future investment, and strengthen the downtown district.

The project also fulfills a longstanding community goal. The preservation and improvement of the depot property has been discussed in community planning efforts for years, and the DDA has remained committed to finding a way to preserve this important piece of Howard City's history while creating a meaningful public asset for the future.

"Preserving our history while investing in our future is what this project is all about," said DDA representatives. "The depot will provide a place for people to gather, learn about our community, enjoy downtown, and connect with one another. We believe this investment will benefit Howard City for generations to come."

The Howard City DDA appreciates the support shown by both the DDA Board and Village Council and looks forward to sharing updates as construction progresses.

About the Howard City Downtown Development Authority

The Howard City Downtown Development Authority works to strengthen and revitalize the downtown district through economic development, business support, beautification efforts, historic preservation, and strategic investments that enhance the community for residents, businesses, and visitors alike.