



GLADSTONE PLANNING COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING

City Hall Chambers – 1100 Delta Avenue
February 03, 2026
5:15 PM

AGENDA

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

APPROVAL AND/OR CORRECTIONS OF:

- [1.](#) Planning Commission Meeting Minutes - January 6, 2026

ADDITIONS TO AGENDA

PUBLIC HEARINGS

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

- [2.](#) August Planning Commission Regular Meeting
- [3.](#) Master Plan Annual Review

PUBLIC COMMENT

INFORMATION SHARING

- [4.](#) Delta County Non-Motorized Trails (DCNT) Bike Trail
- [5.](#) Downtown Action Plan
- [6.](#) Leading Rural Michigan Program
7. Sign Ordinance Amendment Updates
- [8.](#) Small Business Support HUB Workshop | Creating Projections to Apply for a Bank Loan
9. Zoning Administrator Certification Program

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

ADJOURNMENT

The City of Gladstone will provide all necessary, reasonable aids and services, such as signers for the hearing impaired and audiotapes of printed materials being considered at the meeting to individuals with disabilities at the meeting/hearing upon five days notice to the City of Gladstone.

Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services should contact the City of Gladstone by writing or calling City Hall at (906) 428-2311.

Posted: 02-02-2026 | Patricia West, Community Development Director



GLADSTONE PLANNING COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING

City Hall Chambers – 1100 Delta Avenue
January 06, 2026
5:00 PM

Item 1.

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Commission Vice-Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:15 PM ET.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT	ABSENT
John DeFiore	Howard Haulotte (Excused)
Sam Hewitt	Nick Nastoff (Excused)
Mike Kennedy	
Jason Leonard	
Jennifer Harding	

City Commission Present: Mayor, Joe Thompson

Staff Present: City Manager, Rob Spreitzer & Zoning Administrator, Patricia West

APPROVAL AND/OR CORRECTIONS OF:

1. Planning Commission Meeting Minutes - October 7, 2025

Motion made by Kennedy, seconded by Leonard to approve the Planning Commission Meeting Minutes of October 7, 2025.

Voting Yea: DeFiore, Hewitt, Kennedy, Leonard, Harding

MOTION CARRIED.

ADDITIONS TO AGENDA

None.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

None.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

2. 2025 Zoning Annual Report

West presented a draft of the 2025 Annual Planning Commission Report, as required under the Michigan Planning Enabling Act. The purpose of the report is to consolidate a summary of planning and zoning matters addressed administratively and by boards during the 2025 calendar year.

During review of the draft, Commissioner DeFiore noted that a site plan appeared to be missing from the summary. The site plan referenced was for a triplex located at 602 Superior Avenue. West indicated she would revise the report to include this item.

It was also suggested that a regular review of Master Plan progress would be beneficial for the Planning Commission. West noted that the timing aligns well with the City's

internal budget planning process and committed to preparing a Master Plan update for discussion at the February Planning Commission meeting.

Item 1.

Motion made by Hewitt, seconded by Leonard, to approve the draft 2025 Annual Report for presentation to the City Commission, with the addition of the 602 Superior Avenue site plan.

Voting Yea: DeFiore, Hewitt, Kennedy, Leonard, Harding

MOTION CARRIED.

3. 2026 Regular Meeting Schedule

Motion made by Hewitt, seconded by Kennedy, to approve the regular meeting schedule for 2026, with the adjustment that meetings will begin at 5:15 PM.

Voting Yea: DeFiore, Hewitt, Kennedy, Leonard, Harding

MOTION CARRIED.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

INFORMATION SHARING

4. Future Land Use Map

West provided an overview of a zoning edge-case involving a lot within a B-2 (General Business) zoning district where the feasibility of constructing a residential home has been questioned. Although the lot is zoned commercial, it is surrounded primarily by residential homes, with some commercial uses also present on the block. West related the situation to the Future Land Use Map and the City's broader planning goals.

No action was taken on this item; it was presented to inform the Planning Commission of challenges associated with existing nonconformities and the role the Future Land Use Map plays in zoning decisions.

5. City Manager Updates

West reported that Interim City Manager Rob Spreitzer formally began his role on January 1. Spreitzer was congratulated by the Planning Commission on his appointment.

6. Gladstone Ski Hill Updates

West shared that the Gladstone Ski Hill officially opened on January 3rd.

7. Sign Ordinance Amendment Updates

West provided an update that the Sign Ordinance Amendment Subcommittee is scheduled to meet on Wednesday, January 14th at 5:15 PM.

8. "The Depot" Park

West shared an update on a project being undertaken by the Downtown Development Authority at 701 Delta Avenue, known as "The Depot." The revitalization project is intended to develop a railroad-themed park at the site, and the DDA is actively pursuing grant funding to support the project.

9. Winter Tax Bill Error

West reported that an error was identified on the Winter Tax Bill, and a corrected notice was issued to residents. Any questions regarding the calculation of the final tax bill may be directed to the City Treasurer.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Leonard shared an update in his liaison role with the Delta County Planning Commission, noting that their primary discussions are currently focused on the Delta County Master Plan.

Item 1.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:37 PM ET.



Board:
Agenda
Date:
Presenter:

Planning Commission
February 3, 2026
Patricia West

Staff Report

Agenda Item Title:

August Planning Commission Regular Meeting

Background:

An oversight was made in the drafting of the 2026 Regular Meeting Schedule for the Gladstone Planning Commission, as staff did not realize that the State Primary Election is scheduled for August 4, 2026. As a result, staff is requesting that the Planning Commission's regular meeting originally scheduled for that date be rescheduled to August 11, 2026.

Fiscal Effect:

None

Supporting Documentation:

[Proposed] Amended 2026 Planning Commission Regular Meeting Schedule

Recommendation:

Approve the amended Planning Commission Regular Meeting Schedule for 2026.

Gladstone

PLANNING COMMISSION

2026 Regular Meeting Schedule

The regular meeting schedule for the Gladstone Planning Commission will occur on the **first Tuesday of each month at 5:15 PM Eastern Time** unless otherwise noted by an asterisk in the **City Hall Chambers, 1100 Delta Ave, Gladstone, MI.**

In adherence to the Planning Commission By-Laws & Rules of Procedure, a schedule of the meeting dates, times, and places is set at the first meeting of the Planning Commission meeting in each calendar year.

Date	Time
January 6, 2026	5:00 PM
February 3, 2026	5:15 PM
March 3, 2026	5:15 PM
April 7, 2026	5:15 PM
May 5, 2026	5:15 PM
June 2, 2026	5:15 PM
July 7 2026	5:15 PM
<i>*August 11, 2026</i>	5:15 PM
September 1, 2026	5:15 PM
October 6, 2026	5:15 PM
<i>*November 10, 2026</i>	5:15 PM
December 1, 2026	5:15 PM
January 5, 2027	5:15 PM

**Meeting deviates from regular schedule.*

Approved: 01/06/2026
 Posted: 01/07/2026
 Amended: TBD



Board:
Agenda
Date:
Presenter:

Planning Commission
 February 3, 2026
 Patricia West

Staff Report

Agenda Item Title:

Master Plan Annual Review

Background:

At the January 2026 Planning Commission meeting, commissioners expressed interest in establishing an annual review process to monitor progress toward implementation of the City of Gladstone's Master Plan. The Master Plan was most recently amended in 2024 and includes an Implementation Section outlining key initiatives and action items for the City of Gladstone.

An annual review provides an opportunity for the Planning Commission to assess progress, identify emerging priorities, and determine whether future updates or amendments to the Plan should be considered.

Fiscal Effect:

None

Supporting Documentation:

Master Plan Implementation Section (Pages 33-44)

Recommendation:

Conduct an annual review of the Master Plan Implementation initiatives, discuss progress made over the past year, identify priority action items for the upcoming year, and provide direction to staff regarding any future updates or amendments that may be needed.

IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation strategies of this chapter will assist the city in putting the key recommendations of the Master Plan to work. This chapter first discusses the tools that will allow the city to pursue its goals, then follows with an implementation program. The implementation program sets priorities and correlates specific plan proposals with the appropriate implementation tools. These tools should be referred to frequently and used systematically so that the outcome is a consistent program of implementation over whatever period is required to achieve the Master Plan recommendations.

Implementation Tools

Code Enforcement

Code enforcement is the strongest tool the city has to ensure minimum safeguards are met within our community, while also preventing the deterioration of property values.

DID YOU KNOW?

Recreational vehicles and equipment
may not be parked on the
city street or alleyway
except for loading and
unloading purposes.



CODE OF ORDINANCES

Chapter 54 | Article III.
Sec. 54-105





GLADSTONE

MICHIGAN

Federal and State Grant Programs

Federal and State grants are much smaller and more competitive than in their heyday during the 1950's through the mid-1980's. There are still programs in place, however, particularly for pollution abatement (sanitary sewers), pedestrian enhancements (related to roadway projects), and parks and recreation. Proper planning in advance is generally the key to success in securing these grants. Often, the granting agency is particularly interested in innovative projects that stretch the grant dollars or present a concept that is transferable to other communities. Projects that involve two or more neighboring municipalities often receive priority for funding.

Site Plan, Special Land Use, and Rezoning Approval

Many essential components of the plan will be the subject of a site plan or special land use application, in some cases preceded by an application for rezoning. The standards for site plan and special land use review should clearly set forth any discretionary powers the city feels it must reserve. Once such standards are in place, the Planning Commission must adhere to them consistently when reviewing development proposals. The implementation of the Plan is likely to take 20 years or longer. In order to maintain the vision, consistent application of design criteria and development standards will be essential.

Special Design Plans and Functional Plans

Sometimes a Master Plan must be followed by more detailed design studies in order to illustrate specific concepts that can only be covered briefly in the plan. Functional plans can also help to implement certain ideals outlined in the plan.

Subdivision and Condominium Regulations

Subdivision Regulations and Condominium Regulations are valuable tools in achieving the type of residential development desired by the city. These ordinances should be periodically reviewed and updated to incorporate effective standards that will result in high quality, attractive residential developments.

Zoning Ordinance Standards

The most effective tool to implement the land use arrangement of the Master Plan is zoning standards and districts. A zoning ordinance is not meant to be a static document. The experiences communities undergo in the application of their zoning rules and the review of unusual new land uses constantly change the body of professional knowledge related to planning and zoning standards. Periodic review of the zoning ordinance will result in the application of the most up-to-date standards in the design of new uses and the maintenance of existing developments.

Re-evaluation and Adjustment of the Plan

The final—and sometimes most difficult—step in the planning process is re-evaluation and adjustment. The process is continuous. A community's population, economic status, goals, land uses, land use problems, and political climate are constantly changing. It is important to assess how well the Plan is addressing the present land use issues in the community, and whether amendments should be made to keep the Plan relevant and make it the most appropriate guide for the community's future land use. If the Plan no longer reflects the vision of the community, the Planning Commission can then begin the planning process again.

Implementation Program

Implementation approaches to the goals and recommendations of this plan are outlined on the following pages. These strategies constitute actions or series of actions that can be taken to reach a stated objective, after which the work will typically change to achieve a follow-up objective. This chapter addresses strategies for implementing this plan, establishing priorities and general timeframes.

Implementation Objectives & Strategies

Goal 1: Waterfront Redevelopment

OBJECTIVE	STRATEGY	PRIORITY	OWNER
Regulate proposed land use through the development of zoning regulations.	Support future development with revisions to the Zoning Ordinance to allow for a variety of single and multi-family residential uses, as well as mixed-use structures in appropriate areas, as determined by the Planning Commission.	On-Going	Community Development
	Develop screening standards to promote harmony with the implementation of mixed-use zoning areas.	Near Term	Community Development
	Develop regulations to preserve public access along the waterfront in future property developments.	Near Term	Community Development
	Establish height restrictions for future developments to accommodate a desirable viewshed for impacted residents within the city.	Mid Term	Community Development
	Encourage higher density residential for future development and create design standards to guide the development of a unified district.	Mid Term	Community Development
Develop the vacant land on the waterfront with high density residential properties.	Promote the development plan for the waterfront district, prioritizing public access along the waterfront and connecting the downtown district.	On-Going	City Manager
	Research advantages and challenges to development of the waterfront.	On-Going	Community Development
	Secure a developer(s) for the property.	Near Term	City Manager
	Coordinate the implementation of city utilities and all other necessary infrastructure with the developer(s), focusing on maintaining public access to the waterfront.	Mid Term	City Manager
Use the waterfront to grow new business and increase our population.	Encourage the development of hotels, restaurants, retail, and watersport activities to improve our resident's quality of life while also supporting local tourism.	On-Going	Community Development & Parks & Recreation
	Offer innovative architecture that can serve multiple purposes to adapt to ever changing market needs (co-working spaces, living spaces, remote work, social gatherings, etc.).	Mid Term	Community Development

Goal 2: Downtown Gladstone

OBJECTIVE	STRATEGY	PRIORITY	OWNER
Enhance the quality of life and develop a positive image of Downtown Gladstone to attract businesses, residents, and visitors.	Pursue revenue sources outside of the Tax Increment Financing Plan, such as mill levies, seeking private contributions, utilizing special assessments, considering event revenue sales, purchase, redevelopment of existing properties, and sales of property within the DDA district, grants, sponsorships, and municipal contributions.	Ongoing	City Administration & DDA
	Build upon the Gladstone Farmers Market to encourage foot traffic downtown.	Ongoing	DDA
	Coordinate with city departments on strategized street improvements and utility upgrades within the downtown district.	Ongoing	Multiple
	Encourage alternative and creative dining methods to promote future social districts.	Ongoing	City Administration & DDA
	Implement a program to serve and promote downtown businesses by utilizing our website to provide community resources and marketing our community both locally and regionally.	Mid Term	City Administration & DDA
	Create gateway corridors for visitors from M-35 and our waterfront districts to the downtown district.	Long Term	Multiple
	Work with MDOT to encourage safe and slow access into the City of Gladstone along US 2/41 and encourage beautification efforts on entrances to welcome visitors.	Long Term	Public Works
Increase property valuation by eliminating the causes of deterioration and promote economic growth.	Partner with property owners in the downtown district to promote residential and office space opportunities above downtown businesses.	Ongoing	Community Development & DDA
	Pursue development opportunities for key properties within the downtown district.	Ongoing	City Administration & DDA
	Update the Code of Ordinances to allow for the creation of a registration and inspection process for under-utilized buildings within the downtown district, ensuring property values are maintained, discourage long term vacancy, and identify hazardous conditions which may pose a safety risk to the community.	Mid Term	Community Development /Public Safety
	Secure funding to implement the façade improvement program.	Ongoing	DDA
	Support the development of the North Shore waterfront through infrastructure allowing mixed use commercial and residential zoning.	Near Term	Multiple

Goal 3: Economic Base

OBJECTIVE	STRATEGY	PRIORITY	OWNER
Expand job opportunities through the attraction, retention, and expansion of our local business industry.	Consider acquisition of vacant industrial sites to promote economic growth.	On-Going	City Administration
	Actively market industrial properties via MEDC and to trade groups.	On-Going	City Administration
	Develop a local tourism industry through the emphases of recreational opportunities and natural assets.	On-Going	City/Parks & Recreation
	Develop relationships with industrial tenants to maintain retention.	On-Going	City Administration
	Encourage and support the creation of a Gladstone Business Association to promote businesses through activities and events while serving as a resource to one another.	On-Going	DDA/EDC
	Develop screening and lighting standards for non-residential sites.	Mid Term	Community Development
	Encourage and support high speed internet infrastructure throughout the City of Gladstone to attract new businesses and remote workers to our community.	Long Term	City Administration
Maintain and rehabilitate existing commercial and industrial properties.	Improve code enforcement for properties through the implementation of a registration process for condemned, foreclosed and vacant properties.	Mid Term	Community Development /Public Safety
Create harmonious mixed-use districts within the city.	Continue to streamline and improve processes for upgrades and expansions to existing facilities.	On-Going	Community Development
	Improve off-street parking regulations.	Mid Term	Community Development
	Revisit the zoning map in all districts to encourage the best and highest use of property and support economic development.	Mid Term	Community Development



Goal 4: Residential Development

OBJECTIVE	STRATEGY	PRIORITY	OWNER
Shore up future population levels.	Market the city as a family-friendly place with excellent schools.	On-Going	City Manager
Expand the range of housing options.	Amend the Zoning Ordinance to allow for a variety of single and multi-family residential uses, as well as mixed-use structures in appropriate areas.	On-Going	Planning & Zoning
Accommodate the city's fastest growing population.	Enable residential retrofits for accessibility and plan for a diversity of housing styles by factoring standards for adult foster care.	Near Term	Planning & Zoning
Maintain and rehabilitate existing housing stock.	Continuously update our Property Maintenance Code to meet current standards.	On-Going	Community Development
	Improve code enforcement for properties through the implementation of a registration process for condemned, foreclosed and vacant properties.	Mid Term	Community Development /Public Safety
	Develop a set of neighborhood beautification awards.	Mid Term	Community Development
	Establish and support the city's homeowner and rental rehabilitation programs.	Long Term	Community Development
Plan for open space in future subdivisions.	Adopt fuller standards for open space subdivisions.	Long Term	Planning & Zoning
Enhance our rental inspection program to maintain property values while ensuring the health and safety standards are met.	Update our Property Maintenance Code to require all rentals post standard information relevant to the City of Gladstone and the community, which also requires a local contact be included in the event of an emergency.	Near Term	Community Development



Goal 5: Environment & Recreation

OBJECTIVE	STRATEGY	Priority	Owner
Continue implementation of the city's current five-year Recreational Plan to provide a year-round recreational environment.	Improve Gladstone's recreational opportunities, as defined in the current Recreation Plan, by seeking public input to identify needs and deficiencies while following necessary guidelines and standards for parks, open space, recreation areas, and recreation facility development.	On-Going	Parks & Recreation
	Pursue grants and other funding sources to execute the city's adopted recreation plan.	On-Going	Parks & Recreation
Ensure programming and organizing of recreational activities and opportunities are inclusive to all ability levels.	Update and redesign our recreational inventory to promote creative, challenging, and safe play.	On-Going	Parks & Recreation
Plan for expanding and improving the Gladstone Campground to attract more visitors to our community.	Construct a pavilion within the campground to create more usable space.	Near-term	Parks & Recreation
	Construct a restroom facility and expand infrastructure, which will allow for increasing the capacity for more camp sites.	Long-term	Parks & Recreation
	Explore alternative camping experiences which offer amenities that go beyond a traditional camping experience (yurts, luxury canopy tents, domes, etc.).	Long-term	Parks & Recreation
Develop the Sports Park facilities to increase opportunities and provide for recreational activities within our community while appealing to visitors.	Construct a Pickleball complex at the Sports Park.	Near-term	Parks & Recreation
	Develop an engineered plan to move forward with the ski lodge/convention complex.	Near-term	Parks & Recreation
	Expand and reconfigure the tubing hill to include 4-5 more tubing runs and a conveyer belt system.	Mid-term	Parks & Recreation
Provide a network of non-motorized walking paths and trails to improve recreational opportunities and connectivity within the community.	Secure funding to rebuild the boardwalk, which would complete our walking path from Saunders Point to Little Bay de Noc Trail.	Near-term	Parks & Recreation
	Connect, extend, and improve our walkways to increase accessibility to public facilities through implementing ADA requirements and replacing asphalt sidewalks with concrete.	Long-term	Community Development/ Parks & Recreation/ Public Works
	Safely and conveniently connect our bluff and downtown communities through the exploration and planning of a pedestrian crossing over Highway 41.	Long-term	Community Development/ Parks & Recreation/ Public Works
	Expand opportunities for water rentals.	On-Going	Parks & Recreation

Continue to improve the waterfront assets to encourage water activities.			
	Encourage and support dining experiences along the waterfront.	On-Going	Parks & Recreation
	Expand our head pier, adding additional docks, replacing gas pumps, updating the harbormaster building, and expanding the break-wall.	Mid-term	Parks & Recreation
	Explore plans to build a motorized bridge over the lagoon to increase safe options for pedestrians along the waterfront.	Long-term	Parks & Recreation
	Improve the city's stormwater water filtration and algae buildup within the lagoon by securing funding to build a temporary dike, circulating the water and dredging the lagoon deeper.	Long-term	Parks & Recreation

Goal 6: Complete Streets

OBJECTIVE	STRATEGY	PRIORITY	OWNER
Implement Complete Street strategies and principles to both existing and new developments.	Maintain a set of standards for both existing and new developments to allow and encourage all modes of transportation to exist within the city safely and cohesively.	On-Going	Parks & Recreation/ Public Works
	Identify and correct existing infrastructure in the Public Works Asset Management Plan that currently only prioritizes the needs of motorized vehicles to be more inclusive of all transportation.	On-Going	Parks & Recreation/ Public Works
Improve our pedestrian walking experience to enhance accessibility and safety, while also encouraging physical activity.	Replace existing sidewalk curbs not yet compliant with ADA regulations to improve accessibility.	On-Going	Public Works
	Create a set of standards for pedestrian accessibility in new developments.	Near-Term	Community Development/ Parks & Recreation/ Public Works
	Implement a system to improve the walking connectivity of existing developments within the city limits that were developed prior to the Complete Street initiatives.	Mid Term	Community Development/ Parks & Recreation/ Public Works
Prioritize the safety of our community's cyclists who share the road with motorized vehicles.	Ensure bike lane consideration is factored into new developments.	On Going	Community Development
	Work with the Parks & Recreation Board and downtown businesses to establish funding partnerships and determine the best locations for bicycle parking.	On Going	Parks & Recreation
	Establish bike routes to focus cycling traffic on roads with Complete Street principles in place.	Mid Term	Parks & Recreation

Goal 7: Sustainability and Services

GOAL	STRATEGY	PRIORITY	OWNER
Continue implementation of Gladstone's Capital Improvement Plan to ensure city services remain dependable and budgets remain financially sound.	Plan for funding to execute projects outlined in the City's Capital Improvement Plan, including each department's current capital improvement plan.	On-Going	City Manager
	Focus on the extension and maintenance of our public water and sanitary sewer assets outlined in the Water & Wastewater Asset Management Plans.	On-Going	Water Treatment & Wastewater
	Develop an Asset Management Plan (AMP) for Public Works forecasted out four years based on available funding. The AMP will incorporate Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating (PASER) scores and other required infrastructure maintenance, identifying and correcting existing infrastructure that currently only prioritizes the needs of motorized vehicles to be more inclusive of all transportation based on Complete Street principles. The street maintenance and pavement repairs will also plan for underground utility upgrades.	Near Term	Public Works
Adopt stormwater management best practices, as outlined by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).	Establish a new stormwater utility to collect fees related to the control and treatment of stormwater to fund the stormwater management program.	Mid-Term	Public Works
	Build a storm water settling system to treat storm water runoff prior to flowing into our watershed and Little Bay de Noc.	Long-Term	Public Works
Develop a comprehensive street maintenance plan.	Collaborate with the county and surrounding cities to secure federal funding to work towards the completion of the Public Works Asset Management Plan through the facilitated meetings sponsored by CUPPAD.	On-Going	Public Works
Implement a Right of Way Permitting System.	Develop an electronic permit application for data collection which routes to the relevant department for review.	Near-Term	Community Development
	Implement a consistent and timely permit review process following the submission of an application.	Near-Term	Public Works
Ensure the city's public water assets provide a safe, reliable, and sustainable water source to our community residents and surrounding environment.	Replace all service lines connected to lead by 2040, meeting state compliance requirements.	On-Going	Water Treatment
	Annually replace 5% of our water service lines connected to lead, followed by the completion of the Environment, Great Lakes & Energy's (EGLE) Annual Service Line Replacement Report.	On-Going	Water Treatment
	Replace all remaining 4-inch water mains to meet current quality standards for lead and fire hydrant water flow, allowing the city to maintain a favorable	On-Going	Water Treatment

	fire protection rating, as identified in the five-year Insurance Services Office Inc. (ISO) survey findings		
	Replace two nozzle fire hydrants with pumper nozzle hydrants on large water mains to improve the firefighting capabilities of our water system.	On-Going	Water Treatment
	Secure funding for an intake and a second transmission main to the elevated reservoir.	Near-Term	Water Treatment
	Upgrade the city's granular activated carbon (GAC) infrastructure to meet future water quality standards.	Near-Term	Water Treatment
	Inventory all water service lines by 2025 to identify remaining lines connected to lead.	Near-Term	Water Treatment
	Build a new water intake to correct the century old crib and piping found to be in poor condition with the last inspection.	Near-Term	Water Treatment
	Plan for the installation of an emergency backup generator to ensure water production during blackouts.	Mid-Term	Water Treatment
Meet the requirements of the Environment, Great Lakes & Energy's (EGLE)'s Administrative Consent Order.	Pursue facility updates to the wastewater plant to continue to meet water quality standards.	Near-Term	Wastewater
	Systematically upgrade our wastewater collection system's infrastructure based on the criticality and pipe conditions as outlined in the Wastewater Asset Management Plan.	Near-Term	Wastewater
	Relieve the load on the underpass lift station by moving the force main from the Industrial Park Lift Station to connect with Railway Ave.	Mid-Term	Wastewater
	Improve infrastructure to increase pipe reliability by finishing the force main from the underpass lift station to Superior Ave.	Mid-Term	Wastewater
Improve inefficiencies within our Public Works Department to better serve the community.	Secure funding to build the new Public Works facility as outlined in the current Community Improvement Plan.	Near-Term	Public Works
	Secure and prepare land, finalize designs, acquire material, and work with contractors towards the completion of the new Public Works facility.	Near-Term	Public Works

Goal 8: Marketing

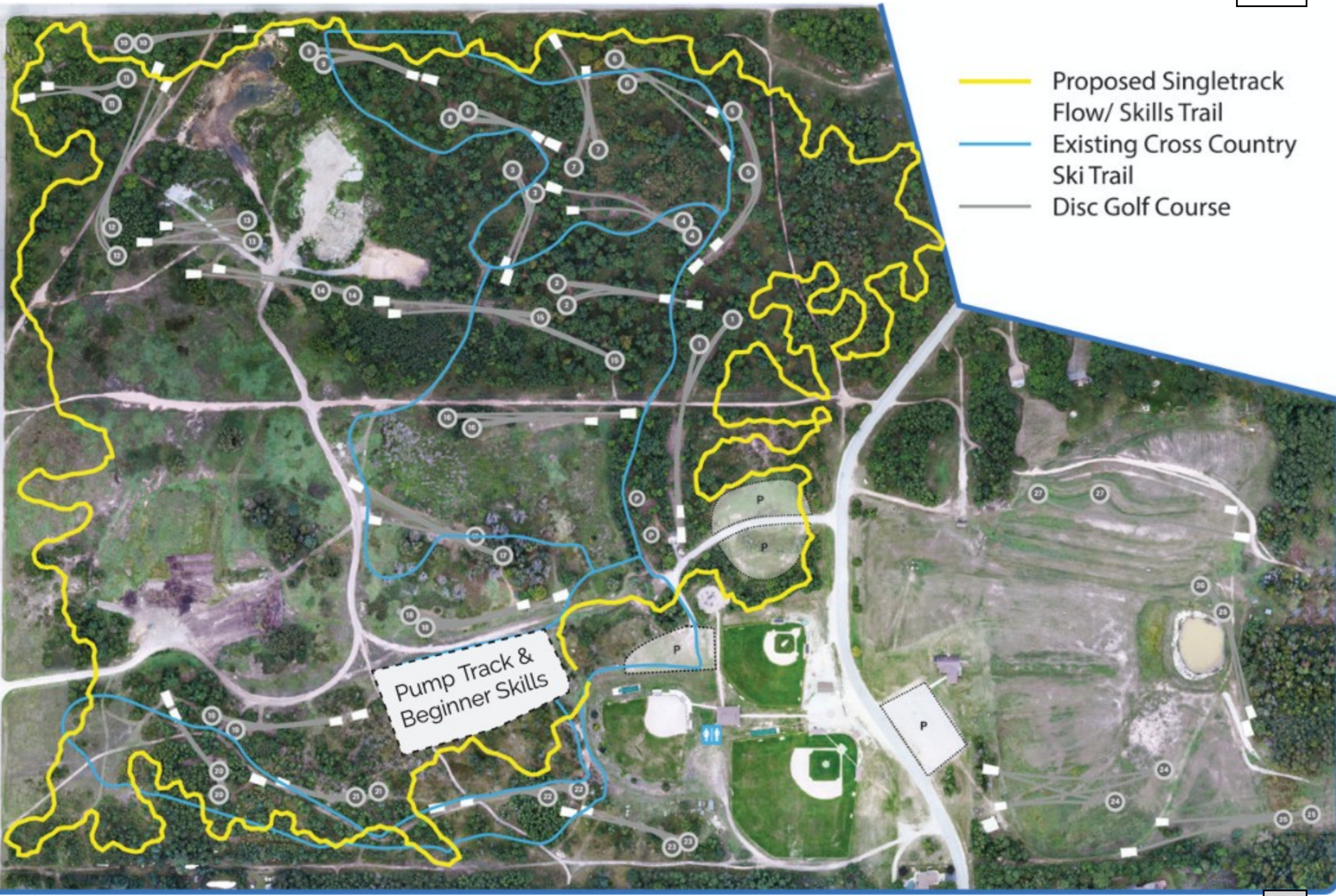
OBJECTIVE	STRATEGY	PRIORITY	OWNER
Build recognition for the City of Gladstone as a reputable and respected housing community throughout northern Michigan and Wisconsin.	Delegate ownership to fund and oversee marketing initiatives of the City of Gladstone.	Near-Term	City Manager
	Explore revisions to a new city logo and improve our branding toolkit to be used on future marketing materials and signage, making the community easily identifiable across all mediums and platforms.	Near-Term	City Manager
	Improve the City's communication efforts with its residents to increase awareness, involvement, and buy-in of current initiatives.	On-Going	City Manager
	Partner with Gladstone Area Schools to promote the benefits and strengths of the school system to attract new residents.	On-Going	City Manager
	Position the City of Gladstone as a recreational hub, promoting the outdoor recreational facilities located within our city, as well as the many amenities just a short drive away.	On-Going	City Manager
	Market the expansion of new waterfront housing on the North Shore with public outdoor recreational amenities available within walking distance.	Mid-Term	City Manager
Build a tourism industry to attract visitors to Gladstone.	Build relationships and partner with local visitor bureaus and the Chamber of Commerce to inform them of tourism opportunities within the city and encourage referrals to our community.	On-Going	City Manager
	Promote the city as a weekend get-away by ensuring the quality of short-term rentals are maintained for our visitors through the rental inspection program.	On-Going	City Manager
	Utilize resources from the State of Michigan, such as Pure Michigan and the Department of Natural Resources, to promote the City of Gladstone's waterfront amenities and recreational inventory.	On-Going	City Manager/ Parks & Recreation
	Partner with Midwest marketing publications to write promotional pieces about our community.	Near-Term	City Manager
	Consider billboard advertisements along highway routes leading to Gladstone to encourage visitors to stop at one of our many public assets.	Mid-Term	City Manager
Attract new business to our community to grow our economic base.	Streamline our practices to build a strong foundation of planning, zoning, and economic development by implementing Redevelopment Ready Community (RRC) best practices.	On-Going	City Manager

Goal 9: Wayfinding

OBJECTIVE	STRATEGY	PRIORITY	OWNER
Highlight the location of downtown Gladstone and the city's many recreation facilities to travelers on M-35 and US-2/41.	Ensure all city signage meets Federal Highway Administration (FHA) standards.	On-Going	Public Works
	Identify city owned property to provide directional signage to our city's assets and facilities visible from the highway .	Near-Term	City Administration/ Parks & Recreation/ Public Works
Develop a system of in-town wayfinding and directional signage.	Implement a system so that directional signage is created or replaced to meet FHA standards for both new asset developments and existing assets within the town.	On-Going	City Administration/ Parks & Recreation/ Public Works
	Identify locations where wayfinding signs are appropriate in town and determine the destinations to place on each sign.	On-Going	City Administration/ Parks & Recreation/ Public Works
	Place maps with walking distances in appropriate locations.	Near-Term	Parks & Recreation



Photo Credit: Visit Escanaba



Gladstone
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

DOWNTOWN ACTION PLAN

January 2026





DOWNTOWN ACTION PLAN

The Gladstone Downtown Development Authority (DDA) has developed this Downtown Action Plan to guide investments, programs, and infrastructure improvements that enhance the vibrancy, economic vitality, and overall experience of Downtown Gladstone.

This plan integrates the objectives outlined in the Gladstone Master Plan (2024) and TIF Plan (2020) to create a cohesive citywide vision. It ensures DDA initiatives advance broader goals such as community engagement, historic preservation, walkable streets, and economic development.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- **Vibrancy & Engagement:**
Encourage a lively downtown that attracts residents and visitors, enhancing social and economic activity.
- **Partnership & Collaboration:**
Coordinate projects with city departments, local businesses, and community organizations.
- **Preservation & Identity:**
Celebrate Gladstone's history and waterfront character while integrating modern amenities.
- **Sustainability & Measurable Impact:** Prioritize projects that yield long-term benefits and trackable outcomes.



NEAR-TERM PRIORITIES (0 - 24 Months)

BUSINESS ASSOCIATION FACILITATION

Objective:

Assist in forming a Downtown Business Association to encourage collaboration, joint promotions, and information sharing among business owners.

Why It's Important:

A strong business community is the foundation of a thriving downtown. While the DDA focuses on infrastructure, investment, and public space improvements, a business association provides the social and economic connectivity that brings those spaces to life. It gives local merchants and service providers a unified voice and a direct role in shaping the downtown experience.



Establishing a Business Association Would:

- **Encourage Collaboration:** Business owners can share ideas, pool resources, and coordinate efforts on issues like events, marketing, and customer engagement.
- **Enhance Communication:** Creates a consistent channel between business owners, the DDA, and City Hall, which ensures downtown decisions reflect on-the-ground perspectives.
- **Foster a Sense of Community:** Builds camaraderie among business owners who often face similar challenges, transforming competitors into collaborators.
- **Strengthen Promotion and Branding:** Collective marketing campaigns, such as “Shop Local” weekends, scavenger hunts, or themed events, are far more effective when coordinated as a group.
- **Support Economic Resilience:** A connected network of business owners can respond faster to change, share resources, and help new entrepreneurs integrate into the district.

City Partners:

Economic Development Corporation

"THE DEPOT" FOOD TRUCK LOT



Objective: Partner with local community members, the Historic Committee, and the railroad to create a permanent food truck lot featuring utility hook-ups, fencing, and a pavilion inspired by the historic Gladstone Railroad Depot.

Why It's Important: Downtown spaces thrive when they offer destinations that draw people together. A food truck lot provides a flexible, low-barrier way to activate underused property while enhancing the vibrancy of downtown. It offers not just dining options, but also a community gathering space that encourages social interaction, pedestrian traffic, and economic activity for surrounding businesses.

By incorporating design elements inspired by the historic railroad depot, the project:

- **Celebrates Gladstone's History:** Preserves and showcases local heritage, connecting residents and visitors to the city's identity.
- **Supports Local Entrepreneurs:** Food trucks offer small-business opportunities, allowing local chefs and vendors to test ideas and reach a wider audience.

City Partners: Parks & Recreation Department

DOWNTOWN STREETScape ENHANCEMENTS



Objective: Conduct a downtown inventory and replace or install benches, bike racks, and trash receptacles to create a cohesive streetscape with long-lasting, durable infrastructure.

Why It's Important: Downtown public amenities are a critical part of creating an attractive, welcoming environment that encourages residents and visitors to linger, explore, and engage with local businesses. Coordinating benches, bike racks, and trash receptacles ensures a consistent visual identity and improves the overall aesthetic of the district.

Design & Operational Benefits:

- **Cohesive Look:** Selecting products that complement each other creates a visually unified streetscape and reinforces downtown branding.
- **Durability & Longevity:** Choosing long-lasting, high-quality materials reduces replacement costs and ensures amenities maintain their appeal over time.
- **Operational Efficiency:** New trash receptacles can be emptied mechanically by the garbage truck, eliminating the need for staff to handle trash directly. This reduces labor requirements, lowers liability, and enhances safety.

City Partners: Parks & Recreation Department

DOWNTOWN PARKING LOT ENHANCEMENTS

Objective: Improve accessibility and aesthetics in downtown parking lots with better signage and a curb cut at the Laundromat lot.

Why It's Important: Clear, safe, and convenient parking is critical to encourage visits to downtown businesses. Upgrades make parking more intuitive and safer for pedestrians, reducing barriers to commerce.

City Partners: Public Works Department



PERMANENT CHRISTMAS TREE

Objective: Install a permanent downtown Christmas tree with power access for lighting and events.

Why It's Important: A permanent Christmas tree provides a visual anchor for the downtown district, enhancing the sense of place and fostering annual traditions. It creates a central location for holiday events, performances, and family gatherings, increasing downtown foot traffic during the winter season.



Staff & Sustainability Benefits:

Reduced Staff Burden: A permanent tree eliminates the yearly process of sourcing, cutting down, transporting, and installing a live tree, saving staff significant time and labor.

Long-Term Sustainability: Avoiding the annual removal of a living tree reduces environmental impact and aligns with sustainable practices by preventing the waste of natural resources.

City Partners: Gladstone Electric Department & Public Works Department

MID-TERM PRIORITIES (24 - 48 Months)

DOWNTOWN MARKETING & BRANDING INITIATIVE

Objective: Develop promotional materials and a unified slogan (e.g., “Meet Me Downtown Gladstone”) that tie into the social district, Farmers Market, and events.

Why It’s Important: A cohesive brand strengthens downtown identity, encourages visitation, and increases awareness of local businesses and events. Marketing materials can unify messaging across social media, signage, and physical promotional items.

Community Connection: Provides a shared identity for residents and businesses, fostering pride and encouraging engagement in downtown experiences and events.



DOWNTOWN PHOTO OPPORTUNITIES

Objective: Install interactive art, murals, or signage that create “photo spots” and encourage social media engagement.

Why It’s Important: Photo-worthy attractions generate excitement and free publicity through social media, increasing tourism and local engagement. They highlight downtown identity while giving residents and visitors reasons to explore multiple streets and businesses.

Community Connection: Promotes local creativity, allows residents to take pride in unique downtown landmarks, and encourages family-friendly exploration of the area.



DOWNTOWN SCAVENGER HUNT PROGRAM

Objective: Create an ongoing scavenger hunt connecting businesses, with rewards redeemable at City Hall or participating merchants.

Why It's Important: Gamifying the downtown experience increases customer circulation, supports small businesses, and encourages repeat visits. It creates opportunities for creative promotions and collaboration among merchants.

Community Connection: Engages families, residents, and visitors in interactive downtown experiences that highlight local businesses, landmarks, and community culture.



SMALL-SCALE FAÇADE GRANT FOR ARTWORK, MURALS, AND SIGNS

Objective: Separate from our large façade grant program, implement a smaller grant program supporting small aesthetic improvements like murals, signage, and artwork.

Why It's Important: Visual improvements elevate downtown's appearance, reinforce a sense of identity, and attract visitors. Murals and signage can also celebrate local history, culture, or storytelling, strengthening Gladstone's unique character.

Community Connection: Empowers business owners and artists to contribute to downtown's vibrancy, fostering pride and community ownership of public spaces.



CONTINUING COMMITMENTS & CORE OPERATIONS

The Gladstone Downtown Development Authority (DDA) maintains several cornerstone programs and partnerships that directly contribute to the long-term vitality, appearance, and success of the downtown district. These efforts reflect the DDA's ongoing investment in creating a vibrant, inclusive, and economically resilient downtown, one that remains true to Gladstone's character while evolving to meet modern needs.

FAÇADE GRANT PROGRAM MANAGEMENT



The DDA's façade program continues to be one of its most impactful initiatives, directly supporting property owners in revitalizing their buildings and restoring architectural integrity. Beyond aesthetics, these improvements strengthen property values, reinforce historic character, and cultivate a cohesive downtown image that reflects Gladstone's sense of place. The program's success also demonstrates how public investment can leverage private dollars and stimulate broader redevelopment activity.

FARMERS MARKET OPERATIONS

The Gladstone Farmers Market serves as a cornerstone of community engagement and local entrepreneurship. Operated under the DDA, the market creates economic opportunity for growers and artisans, promotes healthy living, and activates the downtown square as a gathering space. By supporting live music and local food access programs, the market reflects the DDA's commitment to both economic inclusion and social vibrancy.



INFRASTRUCTURE & INTERDEPARTMENTAL SUPPORT

Strong coordination with city departments, including Public Works, Parks & Recreation, and Planning & Zoning, allows the DDA to support the upkeep, safety, and functionality of core downtown infrastructure. From lighting and sidewalks to parking and public spaces, these partnerships ensure that the City of Gladstone and DDA priorities are aligned for maximum impact. Together, these efforts uphold downtown's physical integrity and contribute to an accessible, pedestrian-friendly environment.

NORTH SHORE DEVELOPMENT COLLABORATION

As the North Shore redevelopment project advances, the DDA plays a crucial advisory and facilitative role in ensuring that this emerging area complements and enhances the downtown core. By aligning investment, design, and infrastructure priorities, the DDA helps guide growth in a way that strengthens Gladstone's overall economic ecosystem, connecting the waterfront, residential, and commercial components into one cohesive community vision.



PROPERTY MAINTENANCE IMPROVEMENTS

The DDA remains committed to visible and ongoing improvements throughout the district. Routine maintenance, seasonal landscaping, and targeted clean-up of blighted areas help preserve public assets, enhance curb appeal, and ensure downtown remains an inviting destination for residents and visitors alike. A clean, well-maintained environment signals investment and pride, which are key ingredients for attracting both new businesses and private reinvestment.

Together, these ongoing commitments reflect the DDA's role as both a facilitator and a steward of downtown vitality. The plan also maintains flexibility to embrace new opportunities as they arise, whether through grants, partnerships, or community-driven projects, all while remaining grounded in the guiding documents that shape Gladstone's future: the City Master Plan, Downtown Development and Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Plan, and Public Act 57 of 2018.





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New Leading Rural Michigan program strengthens local leaders statewide

December 11, 2025

LANSING, Mich. — The Michigan Department of Labor and Opportunity (LEO) Office of Rural Prosperity (ORP) launched their inaugural [Leading Rural Michigan program](#) in partnership with Michigan State University Extension, bringing together emerging rural leaders for a 12-month program to increase engagement, collaboration, recruitment and retention rates in leadership positions in rural communities. The program's unique approach combines leadership and civic education and focuses on network-building among rural leaders at the state level.

"Investing in rural communities and empowering emerging leaders strengthens Michigan as a whole," said **LEO Director Susan Corbin**. "Giving people the tools, training and support to lead helps their communities thrive — and together, we build a more resilient, connected and prosperous Michigan for everyone."

The inaugural cohort includes 31 individuals identified as emerging leaders by established leaders in their respective communities. ORP worked along with MSU Extension and partners cross the state to identify emerging leaders and individuals were selected based on professional or volunteer roles in rural communities. Leading Rural Michigan participants will meet monthly in an online format and will join together for several in person events over the course of the 12-month cohort.

"Rural Michigan depends on strong leadership to take advantage of new opportunities and manage change; and we know that many emerging leaders are positioned to make powerful impacts in their communities. ORP is creating this leadership program in partnership with Michigan State University Extension to prepare people to step into those roles with the confidence, skill and network of resources needed to move their communities forward," said **ORP Director Sarah Lucas**.

Leading Rural Michigan program content focuses on the development of skills necessary to be engaged local leaders:

- **Individual Leadership:** Personality and strengths inventories, time management and effective communication.
- **Partnership and Collaboration:** Conflict management, civility in discourse, facilitation, change management, team building and change management.
- **Rural Leadership/Civic Education:** Working with elected officials and tribal leaders, community and economic development; visioning and planning; municipal funding structures, etc.

"We're excited to welcome such a strong cohort of rural leaders from across Michigan," said **Michigan State University Extension Senior Specialist of Government and Community Vitality Eric Walcott**. "There is great work happening in rural communities, and our goal is to support that progress by helping participants grow the skills and relationships needed to navigate challenges and strengthen their communities."

"This partnership between the Office of Rural Prosperity and Michigan State University Extension brings together high-quality resources and training to support emerging leaders in Michigan's rural communities," said **Director, MSU Extension Center for Local Government Finance and Policy Erika Rosebrook**. "The MSU Extension Center for Local Government Finance and Policy, Government and Community Vitality Team and Great Lakes Leadership Academy are excited to bring our teams together with ORP to provide an innovative, customized training program so that participants leave the program knowing how to maximize their individual talents, bring people together, and get things done for their communities."

2025-2026 cohort and their represented communities

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- Erine Wescoat, Manton
- Patricia West, Gladstone
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The program development and delivery are made possible by a \$154,000 ORP prosperity grant to Michigan State Extension, and participants pay a \$250 fee.

For more information on the Office of Rural Prosperity, visit Michigan.gov/ORP.

[Visit our webpage for more information](#) on Leading Rural Michigan.

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Tuesday, February 10th
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***Presentation to begin at 4:30**



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