



KALAMAZOO COUNTY LAND BANK AUTHORITY 2018 Annual Report

Repurpose. Renew. Reconnect.

A Message from the Board

2018 marks nearly a decade since I first spearheaded the creation of the Kalamazoo County Land Bank. Land Banks were created in response to the growing number of tax foreclosures during the economic downturn. Now, eight years later, the Land Bank model has proven to be successful. This year marks the lowest foreclosure rates we've seen since before the recession. Beyond reduced foreclosure rates, our small but mighty Land Bank has far exceeded my expectations. Over the past eight years, Kalamazoo County Land Bank has:

- Stabilized property values in Kalamazoo County
- Strengthened the tax base
- Returned tax foreclosures to productive use
- Removed blight
- Increased availability of affordable housing

Strong partnerships, community engagement and finding new and creative ways to activate distressed properties are at the core of our mission. This past year, we were able to complete the demolition of 70 blighted structures within the county with a blight elimination grant from the state. This grant has paved the way for the newly greened properties to get back on the tax rolls through our side lot program to a neighbor, to non-profits for affordable housing, or through our responsible disposition program.

Another significant way we are impacting our community is through our Quiet Title Action. The Land Bank was able to clear titles on over 200 properties. Quieting the title on our properties protects the value of the property when it is returned back to private ownership. We are proud that residents throughout Kalamazoo County continue to support transformational projects that make a valued impact in neighborhoods and communities. We hope that you will read about them in our annual report.

The Kalamazoo County Land Bank continues to focus on results with an emphasis on achieving the best possible outcomes for the communities we serve. I would like to thank all of our residents, community partners and stakeholders who share our mission and vision. I am looking forward to 2019!

Mary Balkema

Mary Balkema, Board Chair

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Mary Balkema, Board Chair

Kalamazoo County Treasurer

Jerome Kisscorni, Vice Chair

Executive Director, City of Kalamazoo Economic Development Corporations

Terry Dorgan, Treasurer

Community Bank President, Huntington Bank

Becky Fulgoni

Vice President, Landscape Forms

Carl Roberts

Retired V.P. Engineering, BorgWarner Thermal Systems

Heather Isch

President and CEO, LKF Marketing

Brian Hudson

Executive Director, Chase Commercial Banking

Kalamazoo County Liason

Commissioner Scott McGraw



Not pictured: Heather Isch and Commissioner McGraw

A Message from the Director

STAFF



Kelly Clarke
Executive Director &
MALB President

Michelle Tombro Tracy
Assistant Director



Chelsie Hubbarth
Communications, Grants &
Operations Manager

Tammy Lahman
Finance Manager



Kenn Hartmann
Assets & Construction
Manager

Anna Roeder
Administrative Assistant



Francisco Lopez
LISC Americorps
Project Coordinator

2018 was a big year for land banks. For the first time, a statewide economic impact study was conducted, and Michigan's Land Banks can now place a dollar value on the impact they have in their communities. Kalamazoo was a case study in the report. We are proud to share that over the last eight years, the researchers estimated Kalamazoo County Land Bank has:

- Rehabbed or repurposed a total of 102 existing homes
- Demolished 276 unsafe and blighted properties
- Protected and restored \$61 million in surrounding property values
- Created 216-270 full time jobs
- Added \$35 million back into the local economy

As the report demonstrated, Michigan isn't just the Great Lakes State - it's the Great Land Bank State too! I am honored to head an agency that helps create safer, healthier neighborhoods. I am grateful our Land Bank programs and projects help pump new capital into the local economy, create jobs and bolster home values. I am proud to be a Michigander during a time of rebirth and reinvention after a difficult decade of economic distress and decline.

In 2018, I was honored to complete the final year of my term chairing the Michigan Association of Land Banks. During this time, I was able to shepherd the completion of the economic impact study and lead two highly attended statewide leadership summits.

As Michigan communities have begun to emerge from the impacts of the "lost decade," the timing for Michigan Land Banks to unleash their untapped potential for community reinvention is great.

We hope you enjoy reviewing the 2018 annual report highlighting how we repurpose, renew, and reconnect abandoned parcels to support neighborhood goals – one property at a time. We cannot thank enough all who support our bold vision for Kalamazoo County; a vision that supports and uplifts all in our dedicated and diverse community.

Best regards,

Kelly Clarke

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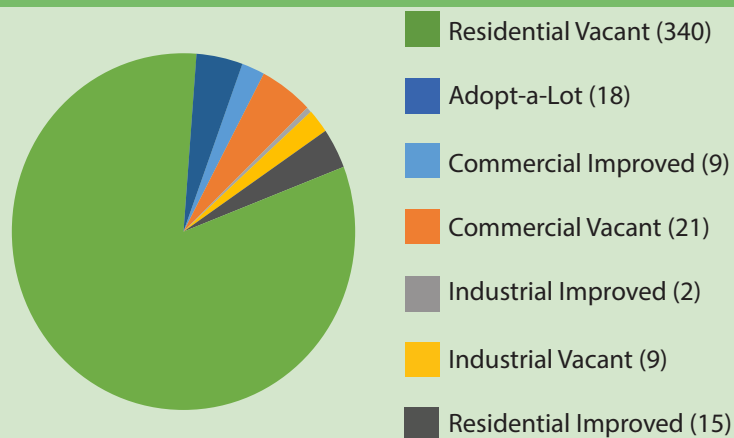


Progress by the Numbers

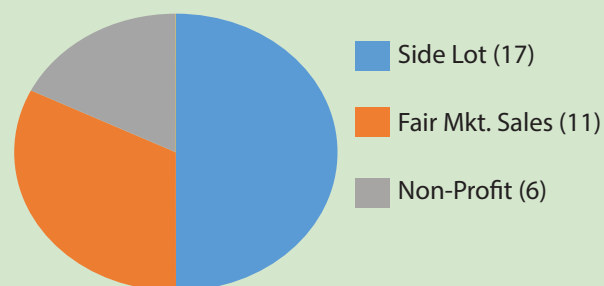
In 2018, a total of 414 properties were managed in our inventory, and 36 properties were returned to the tax rolls. A total of 225 properties received Quiet Title. There were a total of 259 property interventions.

The Land Bank acquired 28 parcels through the tax foreclosure process in 2018, completed 11 Fair Market sales, 17 Side Lot sales, and 6 Non Profit sales.

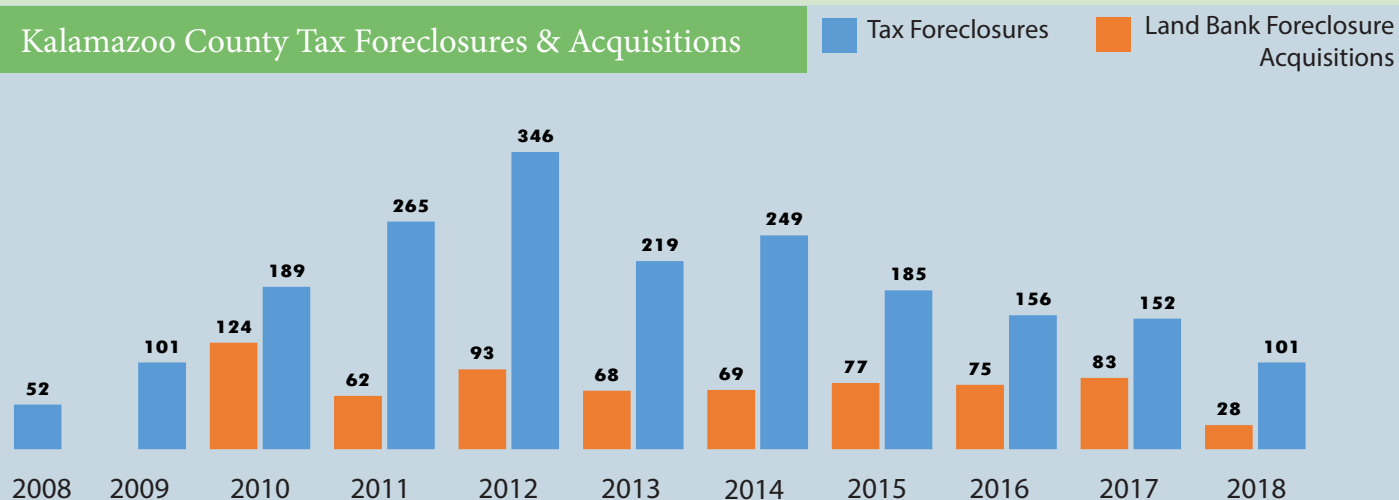
Year End Inventory



Disposition



Kalamazoo County Tax Foreclosures & Acquisitions



Economic Impact Study

MICHIGAN, THE GREAT LAND BANK STATE!

For more than a decade, Michigan has been a leader in innovative and creative approaches to addressing vacancy and problem properties. The Kalamazoo County Land Bank joined the other 42 Michigan land banks to celebrate the release of a groundbreaking economic impact study in 2018!

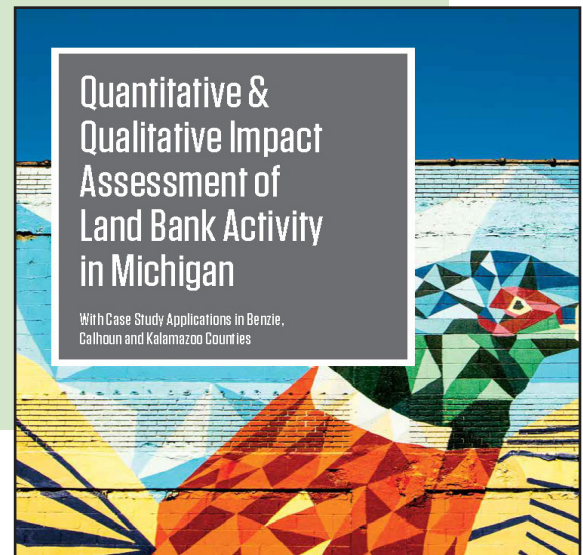
This impact study clearly demonstrates and quantifies the enormous economic impact land banks have in Michigan. This study, funded by the Michigan Association of Land Banks, quantifies how land banks benefit families, neighborhoods and local communities while serving as engines for economic growth.

The study found:

- Land banks positively impact home values - this impact far outweighs the cost of improving or demolishing a foreclosed property.
- Land banks help reduce mortgage foreclosure rates and crime rates in communities throughout Michigan.
- Land Banks are emerging as transformational drivers of inclusive economic growth and quality of life improvements.

"This report validates what we have all known for years: Land banks matter, land banks make a difference and land banks are part of Michigan's comeback."

- Kelly Clarke, Executive Director of the Kalamazoo County Land Bank



Michigan Association of Land Banks released a statewide economic impact study of Land Banks in Michigan.

See full report at <https://milandbank.org/>

KALAMAZOO COUNTY LAND BANK IMPACT

Kalamazoo was a case study in the impact study. Over the last nine years, the Kalamazoo County Land Bank has:

Rehabbed
102
existing homes

Demolished
276
unsafe &
blighted
properties

Impacted
\$61
million
in property
values

Created
200+
full time jobs

Added
\$35 million
back into the
local economy

Neighborhood Investment

EASTSIDE GATEWAY PROJECT



Similar to revitalization work in Washington Square and Riverview Launch, the aim of this project is to support community revitalization with a spirit of renewal. In the same way that blight can beget blight, progress can be both contagious and inspiring.

Over the past eight years, the Land Bank utilized state funds, including NSP, Blight Elimination and Hardest Hit grants, to take down unsafe structures and clean up blight. This resulted in a total of eleven parcels in the Eastside neighborhood.

In partnership with the Greater Kalamazoo Area Realtors and Eastside Neighborhood Association, the Land Bank invited residents and stakeholders to build a vision for the vacant parcels.

Four brainstorming sessions later, the Eastside Gateway Project was born. The Eastside Gateway Project's final vision was to build a community of energy efficient, affordable small homes and a community pocket park.

With the generosity and support of more than 50 community partners and stakeholders, the Land Bank was delighted to embark on the first phase of the project.



First community envisioning session for the project in 2017



Residents dreaming up the Pocket Park with landscape architect & design team



Over 50 community partners and stakeholders gathered to celebrate and honor the kick-off of the first small home being built in partnership with the Home Builders Association of Southwest Michigan.

FAST BUILT EVENT

The construction of the first small home was a project of the Home Builders Association of Southwest Michigan. Over 40 volunteers donated their time to build the first net-zero ready home over the course of two days.



After the Fast Built, Rossman Construction built two additional small homes and completed the first phase of the pocket park. The pocket park will include high quality green space, native plants, and a labyrinth.



Phase two of the project will include three more small homes in partnership with Habitat for Humanity and an exciting storytelling project called Eastside Voices. Eastside Voices is an intergenerational storytelling project intended to showcase the rich legacy of the Eastside Neighborhood. Stories collected will be turned into art and woven into the labyrinth in the pocket park.



The HBA was proud to be a member of the great collaboration of organizations and individuals to get the first home of the Eastside Gateway Project completed. Our partnership provided not only the HBA but also our member companies with the opportunity to do something very special for Kalamazoo. We sincerely hope that the Eastside Gateway Project provides a sense of community and sparks redevelopment in the area. We look forward to our next opportunity to work with the Land Bank to Build Homes, Strengthen Community and Change Lives."

— Jeff Tafel, Executive Director of the Home Builders of Southwest Michigan

Riverview Launch



Riverview Launch is a multi-purpose community facility that was redeveloped by the Land Bank. Riverview Launch is the home base of the Kalamazoo County Land Bank, Open Roads Bike Program, The Kalamazoo Watershed Council, and Farmers Bloom Flower Company.

Riverview Launch provides space for community events and in 2018, held 22 event rentals with over 700 people in attendance. Riverview Launch's unique and flexible indoor and outdoor spaces makes it a perfect place for a variety of events. This year, Riverview Launch welcomed graduation parties, baby showers, team building workshops, staff retreats and its first wedding!

Riverview Launch continues to be showcased as a model of riverfront redevelopment. Now that the native prairies and rain gardens are established and thriving, Riverview Launch is a wildlife paradise.

Find out more about Riverview Launch, it's history and current offerings by visiting www.RiverviewLaunch.com.



Riverview Launch Tenants

FARMERS BLOOM FLOWER COMPANY

Farmers Bloom is the new greenhouse tenant at Riverview Launch. Kristiana Coutu and her family run their small family farm in Cooper Township. We are delighted to have Farmers Bloom reactivating this former greenhouse as a local flower farmer. Kristiana specializes in over 70 unique varieties of cut flowers and sells to local florists, event designers and directly to individual flower lovers. Kristiana had a lot of fun experimenting with winter growing this first year. Her flowers brought big smiles to Riverview Launch visitors and Land Bank staff during the long Michigan winter. Welcome to Riverview Launch, Farmers Bloom. We look forward to seeing what next year brings!



OPEN ROADS BIKE PROGRAM



2018 marks 10 years since Open Roads first opened its doors and started delivering bike-focused curriculum to Kalamazoo youth. After a decade, Open Roads took the leap to expand their capacity and deepen their impact by creating a new youth lounge! Not only does this lounge offer youth a comfortable space to hangout, read, play games and make art, but it also allows for year-round programming. This change DOUBLED their student capacity, doubling their ability to engage and empower our next generation. Happy Anniversary, Open Roads! We are happy to share Riverview Launch with your bicycle community and see your mission in action first hand!

KALAMAZOO RIVER WATERSHED COUNCIL

Kalamazoo River Watershed Council aims to protect the Kalamazoo River and celebrate our watershed's heritage. By collaborating with residents, educators and governmental agencies, the Watershed Council is able to show people how they can manage land or water with fewer negative impacts. This year, the Watershed Council held rain garden and conservation classes for residents, hosted a river clean up day, and celebrated our waterway during their annual Kanoë the Kazoo event. Thank you Kalamazoo River Watershed Council for choosing to be a part of the Riverview Launch community and help make a difference in our watershed.



Vibrant Kalamazoo

SUPPORTING VIBRANT COMMUNITIES

Vibrant Kalamazoo is a 501(c)3 supporting organization that acts as the community engagement & fundraising arm of the Kalamazoo County Land Bank. Our community outreach efforts seek to engage residents, those who are the most knowledgeable of the needs and potential of vacant properties in their neighborhood. Vibrant Kalamazoo is able to turn resident input into highly impactful projects like Prairie Gardens, Marketplace, Riverview Launch, Washington Square and most recently, the Eastside Gateway Project.

In 2017, Vibrant Kalamazoo embarked on a transformative project called the Eastside Gateway Project. Through multiple resident engagement sessions, we learned the community priorities included mixed-income, energy efficient housing, shared community space, nature and art. Throughout 2018, Vibrant Kalamazoo was able to raise enough funds to initiate the project. Once the entire project is completed, there will be seven energy efficient, small homes and a community art park on the Eastside of Kalamazoo. Vibrant Kalamazoo makes this all possible!



Vibrant Board Members (left to right): Adrian Vazquez, Juliet Altman, Becky Fulgoni, Kelly Clarke, Paul Valentin, Mary Balkema, and Dwayne Powell. Not pictured: Holly Crump

"As a long time member of this community and also being a member of the Hispanic/Latino community, I can bring new ideas and ways to reach out to the Hispanic/Latino community in Kalamazoo. I look forward to working and supporting this board in the best I can to make our community better for all."

— Adrian Vazquez,
Executive Director of El Concilio

Common Ground

COMMUNITY GARDEN NETWORK

Common Ground is a collaboration between Vibrant Kalamazoo, Kalamazoo County Land Bank, Kalamazoo County MSU Extensions & Master Gardeners and the KVCC ValleyHUB at the Food Innovation Center. Common Ground supports community garden projects throughout Kalamazoo County, with a special emphasis on low-income and food-insecure residents. Common Ground strives to keep area gardeners connected, recognizing the benefit of gardeners sharing information, exchanging resources, and providing support for one another.



Dale Abbott & Tomme Maile lead the guided bicycle tour during the annual Garden Tour



The Gibbs Site at WMU is a popular stop during the Garden Tour. Gibbs is a living laboratory for students to implement their sustainable design solutions and



Common Ground tours KVCC Food Innovation Center for the first time this year!



During the Plant Giveaway, community gardeners have access to seeds and a variety of vegetable plants grown by students at the KVCC Food Innovation



Sunnyside United Methodist Church's mission is to "build a healthy community one relationship and one meal at a time."



Kalamazoo County Sheriff's Garden Project is in its 8th year of providing fresh produce to both inmates and County staff

Blight Elimination

RENEWING NEIGHBORHOODS

The Land Bank continues to devote time and resources to reduce blight, restore properties, and provide affordable homeownership opportunities in our community. This investment results in improved safety, improved property values, and increased neighborhood pride.

The Land Bank was able to continue partnering with KPEP's Building Trades Program on home rehabilitations. The first two homes were finished early in 2018 and sold to first time homeowners! Thanks to the success of this program, three additional homes were identified to be rehabilitated over the next year. Currently, one home is underway and two more will be started in 2019.



"KPEP is in the restoration business – rebuilding lives through structure and discipline," said Bill DeBoer, KPEP president and CEO. "This project allows us to help restore vacant homes, improve our neighborhoods and rebuild the lives of people in our programs."



"It is so wonderful to see this rehab collaboration take place on one of our main streets," said Pat Taylor, Eastside Neighborhood Association Executive Director. "Folks have been watching and admiring, and we are looking forward to welcoming two new homeowners to our neighborhood."

- Pat Taylor, Executive Director of the Eastside Neighborhood Association



Program Impact

SIDE LOT SURVEY

The Land Bank continues to work on repurposing, renewing, and reconnecting the properties under our care with the purpose of creating a more vibrant community for all residents. All Land Bank programs including Responsible Disposition, Blight Elimination, Land Banking, Side Lot and Adopt-A-Lot programs, are designed to reverse patterns of blight and decline, support the stabilization of property values and increase quality of life for residents throughout Kalamazoo.

Over the past 9 years, the Land Bank has been able to sell 190 Side Lots to neighbors. To understand the impact of the Side Lot program, the Kalamazoo County Land Bank administered a survey to program participants. The questions were conducted through e-mail and phone survey for all Side Lot participants from 2010-2018 where contact information was available. We were excited to receive a 22% response rate to the survey!

KEY SURVEY RESULTS

93%

responded the Side Lot increased feelings of safety

98%

responded the Side Lot increased quality of life for homeowner

98%

responded the Side Lot purchase increased feelings of pride for neighborhood

85%

responded the Side Lot purchase increased value of their original property

SIDE LOT SURVEY COMMENTS

"Before the drug house was removed we had concerns for the safety of our family, neighbors and foot traffic. We dreaded going outside or driving into the neighborhood because of the chaos and drug activity. People who have not lived next to something like this can't begin to imagine what impact this can have on your life. Thank you for selling us the property. We would do it again."

"The side lot purchased changed the quality of our lives drastically, both in our homes and in the neighborhood."

"I love what the lot has added to our home and family. I look at it every day and am so happy I was able to afford it. Thank you."

"I am so grateful for the opportunity to improve upon this lot. The entire neighborhood continues to benefit from this fruit garden."

"I have truly enjoyed the side lot. I have put a lot of sweat, time and money into it and it has paid off. I believe it has also helped to turn around the dynamic of the neighborhood. Other residents have improved their properties and things just seem quieter safer and friendlier. I am actually enjoying living in my neighborhood where as for almost 20 years I felt threatened and never talked with my neighbors. Thank you for the opportunity to purchase and improve the lot."

"I really appreciate the Kalamazoo County Land Bank. The side lot program rocks!!!!!"

Washington Square

In 2013, the Land Bank and several partners came together to envision the future of Washington Square. The redevelopment vision was BOLD. A vision to restore a vibrant & active commercial corridor in Washington Square. The community envisioned Washington Square to be unique and welcoming. A “destination place” where residents gather, visit and stay connected.

Five years later, the tide has turned in Washington Square. Washington Square is now a magnetic destination place, that is truly reflective of the diverse community that surrounds it. The storefronts are occupied by Kzoo Nutrition, Pho on The Block, Tremolo, Jersey Giants Subs, and Community Promise Credit Union. All of these businesses have brought a sense of renewal to the area.



Creative placemaking projects like the “We are Edison: Inside Out Project” used art to activate the former Color Lab building in Washington Square with the hope to attract new businesses to the area. KPEP, an innovative community corrections provider, purchased the commercial building in 2018 with the plan to build a community diner and coffee shop in the space – a business that aligns with the Washington Square Redevelopment Vision.

In June, a new ‘Welcome to Washington Square’ art mural was installed. This mural gives Washington Square a distinct local character and builds a strong sense of place. Events in Washington Square continue to engage residents and invite them to invest in their community. Our hope is that these revitalization efforts will continue to inspire residents to be intentional and keep the neighborhood vibrant, attractive and welcoming.

“We are excited about our recent purchase of the former Kalamazoo Color Lab on Portage Street in Washington Square. Plans for renovation and future use as a diner are underway. Our vision for this diner is to provide quality food at a great price in a welcoming atmosphere...similar to the current environment at the Walnut & Park Café. Whether people stop in for breakfast or lunch, or just coffee and a snack, both the students and graduates of KPEP’s Hospitality Program are excited to offer great service and hospitality.”

— William DeBoer, KPEP



Patrick Hershberger, an illustrator and muralist from Kalamazoo, created the Washington Square mural for the Edison Neighborhood Association. This project was made possible by KADI grant funds and support from the Kalamazoo Land Bank.

Thank You Partners!

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

ABC Supply Co.
 Abode Building Center
 All State Crane and Rigging
 Andrew MacKay
 Anthony Brooks
 Bartholomew Heating & Cooling
 Bellydance Kalamazoo
 Best Way Disposal
 Bierlein Companies
 Bolle Contracting
 Buddy Hannah
 Byce & Associates
 Carter Lumber
 Chau Nguyen
 Chemical Bank
 Chuck Vliek
 City of Kalamazoo
 Community Homeworks
 Community Promise Federal Credit Union
 Consumers Energy
 Country Lane Electric, Inc.
 Cutting Edge
 Dale Abbott & Tomme Maile
 DeLoof Builders, LLC
 Douglas & Son, Inc.
 Edison Business Association
 Eikenhout, Inc.
 Enviologic Technologies
 ETNA Supply
 Fader Equipment
 Farmers Bloom Flower Company
 Fido Motors Café
 Fifth Third Bank
 Fran Dwight
 Frente a ti
 Foundation for Excellence
 Glas Associates
 Great Lakes Waterproofing Company
 Greater Kalamazoo Association of Realtors
 Halls, Closets & More, LLC
 Heritage Community of Kalamazoo
 Hoeksema Builders, LLC
 Hoekstra Roofing
 Home Builders Association
 Home Energy Solutions
 Howard Printing
 Howard's Party Store
 Huntington Bank
 Hutcherson Construction
 InForm Architects
 Intrepid Professional Group
 Janette Evans
 Jaqua Realtors
 Jason McBride Drywall
 Jerome Gates
 Jersey Giant SUBS!
 Jim Roberts Construction
 Jim Schuon Photography
 JMB Demolition
 JP Sanderson Insulation LLC
 Juan Ruiz
 Kalamazoo Farmers Market
 Kalamazoo Metal Recyclers
 KPEP
 Kzoo Nutrition
 Lake Michigan Credit Union
 Landmark Homes of MI
 Landscaping Plus
 Layla's Cool Pops
 Lee Kellogg
 Linda Whitlock
 Lyster Exteriors
 Maria Ortiz
 Martz Home Builders, LLC
 Menards
 Michigan Realtors Who Care
 Mi Pueblo Mexican Restaurant
 Michigan LISC AmeriCorps

Miller Davis Company
 MSUE Master Gardeners
 Naylor Landscape Management
 NewCraft Cabinetry
 OCBA Landscape Architects
 Old National Bank
 Paramount Charter Academy
 Pho on the Block
 Portage Building Components
 Portage Plumbing, Inc.
 Porter Corp
 Public Media Network
 Quality Touch Painting, LLC
 Revite Group
 Rickey Lynch
 River Street Flowerland
 Rootead Drum & Dance
 Rotary Club of Kalamazoo
 Rossman Homes
 Ryan Koziattek
 Sackett's Flooring Solutions
 Second Wave
 ServiceMaster of Kalamazoo
 Sidney Ellis
 Signiture Wiring, LLC
 The Campus Beet
 Tremolo Guitar Shop
 Walnut & Park Cafe
 Warner Norcross & Judd
 Washington Square Co-op
 Senior Apartments
 Washington Square Library
 Washington Writers' Academy
 Waterways, LLC
 Wausau Homes Kalamazoo
 Wild Ones - Kalamazoo
 William Hicks
 WKZO - WVFM
 Wolhuis Brothers Concrete Construction
 Zion Lion Reggae Band

MUNICIPAL PARTNERS

Kalamazoo County Government
 City of Kalamazoo
 City of Parchment
 City of Portage
 Comstock Township
 Cooper Township
 Kalamazoo County
 Kalamazoo Township
 Oshtemo Township
 Schoolcraft Township
 Texas Township
 Village of Climax
 Village of Schoolcraft
 Village of Vicksburg

NON-PROFIT & FOUNDATION PARTNERS

Ascension Borgess
 Arts Council of Greater Kalamazoo
 Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Kalamazoo
 Building Blocks of Kalamazoo
 CEDAM
 Center for Community Progress
 Community Homeworks
 Consumers Energy Foundation
 Dorothy Dalton Foundation
 Eastside Neighborhood Association
 Edison Neighborhood Association
 El Concilio
 First Source Foundation
 Friends of the KRVF
 Harold and Grace Foundation
 Irving S. Gilmore Foundation
 Jim Gilmore Jr. Foundation
 Kalamazoo Community Foundation
 Kalamazoo County Government
 Kalamazoo County MSU Extension
 Kalamazoo County Parks Foundation
 Kalamazoo in Bloom
 Kalamazoo Nature Center
 Kalamazoo Neighborhood Housing Services
 Kalamazoo Public Library
 Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety
 Kalamazoo River Watershed Council
 Kalamazoo Valley Community College
 Kalamazoo Valley Habitat for Humanity
 Kalamazoo Institute of Arts
 KVCC Food Innovation Center
 Local Initiatives Support Corporation
 Michigan Association of Land Banks
 Michigan State Housing Development Association
 Michigan Land Bank Fast Track Authority
 Michigan Municipal League
 Mt. Zion Baptist Church
 Northside Association for Community Development
 Northside Ministerial Alliance
 Open Roads Bike Program
 Stryker Johnston Foundation
 Suzanne Upjohn DeLano Parish Foundation
 The Marvin and Rosalie Okun Foundation Urban Alliance
 Vine Neighborhood Association

“UNITY IS STRENGTH....WHEN THERE IS TEAMWORK AND COLLABORATION,
 WONDERFUL THINGS CAN BE ACHIEVED.” - MATTIE STEPANEK

What's Next?

Eastside Voices: Intergenerational Storytelling Project

In the summer of 2018, Kelly Clarke convened a Kalamazoo delegation to travel to Macon, Georgia to participate in a national learning exchange on the topic of creative place-making. This delegation included Belinda Tate of the Kalamazoo Institute of Arts, Kristen Chesak of the Greater Kalamazoo Arts Council, Laura Lam, City of Kalamazoo, Kelly Clarke and Anna Roeder, Kalamazoo County Land Bank, Adrian Vazquez, El Concilio, artist Shay Church and Pat Taylor, Kalamazoo Eastside Neighborhood Association (KENA) Executive Director.

Following the trip, Pat Taylor developed the idea of uplifting the history of the Eastside through an intergenerational storytelling project. Pat identified lead artists, Buddy Hannah and Sidney Ellis, who have established connections in this neighborhood with storytelling and performance backgrounds. Stories and imagery that come out of this oral history project will be incorporated into permanent art elements of the Eastside Gateway pocket park and in a public neighborhood mural on a vacant commercial property. KENA and Vibrant Kalamazoo will work with neighborhood residents and youth on this inclusive community collaboration.



Kelly Clarke gathered a team together from Kalamazoo to participate in a national learning exchange on creative place-making.

2019 Farm-to-Table Harvest Dinner

On September 12, 2019 Vibrant Kalamazoo will be hosting an "Out by the River" fundraiser event at Riverview Launch. Guests will dine at long tables winding through the gardens and prairie alongside the river. The Organic Gypsy will serve a fresh, local 3-course meal paired with local wine, craft beer and music. All proceeds will benefit Vibrant Kalamazoo and support community engagement efforts to help guide transformative projects of the Kalamazoo County Land Bank. Vibrant



Kalamazoo makes it possible for the Land Bank to support catalytic reinvestment projects like Riverview Launch, Washington Square, Fare Games competition and the Eastside Gateway Project!

To register or to learn more, please visit:
<https://vibrantkalamazoooutbytheriver.eventbrite.com>