

Manager's Friday Memo – Week of 11-18-19

The week started out with a meeting with our technology support vendor to discuss the City's IT security and backup protocols. I'm gathering information about how the City's data is protected and backed up so that I can present the information to City Council. Councilman Miller requested information about the protocols in place to protect the City's data and IT systems.

Monday evening was the City Council Committee of the Whole meeting. We discussed the ongoing erosion issues along the lakeshore. I showed a brief video of the lakeshore in the City of Douglas and also discussed observed conditions as of last week. There are a few areas we are actively monitoring, but thus far the lakeshore erosion is not a significant threat to homes or infrastructure in Douglas. The City will monitor the lakeshore erosion throughout the winter and we will work with Allegan County Emergency Operations and notify residents if we find a significant erosion issue within the City limits.

We continued the Committee of the Whole meeting with a review of the City's master project list. The list is a compilation of projects and priorities put together in the first months of my being hired. It includes projects I've observed that need attention, projects brought to me by City Council and department heads, or projects that are in the works. At this meeting, we went over the list of projects completed since the last time we reviewed the project master list, and we also reviewed the projects listed on the intermediate timeline.

The regular City Council meeting immediately followed the committee of the whole meeting. Agenda items covered at the meeting included the swearing in of newly elected council members, selection of Mayor, Linda Anderson, committee assignments, a review of the ChargePoint electric charging system website, and the review of the joint resolution of the Blue Star Bike Trail. In new business, the Council decided to table the joint Blue Star Trail resolution in favor of working with the other communities to write a new resolution that sought the input of more stakeholders. Overall Council supports the development of the northern section of the trail.

Fall leaf pickup continues around the City now that the snow piles have lightened up a bit. DPW crews this week are balancing their routine workload and also having to help set up for the holiday season, so they are a bit behind schedule with leaf collection at this time.

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas in downtown as the Christmas banners, trees, and lights continue to be installed. Saturday (11-23-19) is the "Everything Christmas" event sponsored by the Downtown Development Authority. Gingerbread houses will be on display at City Hall starting at 1:00, Santa Claus and Mrs. Claus will be at the Police Station along with live reindeer starting at 3:00. Starting at 5:00 the merchants will have open house and the Christmas tree lighting ceremony will be at 7:00 at the intersection of Center and Main Street. Come down and enjoy beautiful downtown Douglas.

The City's snow removal contract is out for bid and all bids received will be opened on Monday at 2:00. The contract is for routine snow removal activities along Center Street sidewalks, bump outs, downtown parking lots, and safe routes to schools. The best qualified low bidder will be awarded a three-year contract with two optional one-year extensions.

The Department of Public Works has a labor position still posted. The posting closes on November 29th. If you know of anyone with public works experience looking for a great career, direct them to City Hall for an application.

That's all I have for this week.

Happy Friday Afternoon all. Here is the City Manager's week in review.

Douglas Beach - This week started out with a walk down to Douglas Beach bright and early Monday morning only to discover the high winds and waves had damaged the stairs and also eroded away the beach so that there was a significant drop off at the bottom of the stairs. Due to the dangerous condition of the stairs and the drop off, we had to close off the access to the beach stairs and install signage at the beachside and topside to notify residents that the beach stairs were closed. I also contacted the Police Department and the fire department to let them know the gate would be locked and also provided a key to Douglas PD. We don't plan to make repairs until the spring.

City Council - Monday evening was a busy City Council meeting. Council went into closed session to discuss pending litigation. At 6:30 a reception was held for Greg Harvath. Regular Council started at 7:00 and we had a presentation from interurban and the library board updated Council on the library construction project. The mayor issued a proclamation of appreciation for Greg Harvath for all his years of service to the City of Douglas

Annual Audit - For new Council business there was a presentation by the firm Siegfried Crandall who conducted the City's audit. Our City Treasurer received praise for his diligent work on the bookkeeping and how smoothly the audit process was conducted. The City as a whole is in a good financial position. Thanks Dave, for all your hard work on the audit. Copies of the audit are available for review at the City's website or the Treasurer's office during normal business hours.

RRC - the next new business item was the resolution to continue participation in the Michigan Economic Development Corporation's Redevelopment Ready Community Program. The Planning and Zoning Director presented on that topic and Council approved the resolution.

Street Administrator - Council next approved a resolution to designate the City Manager as the City's Street Administrator.

Invasive aquatic weeds - We had two representatives from Aquatic Doctors on hand to answer questions about controlling invasive weeds in Wades Bayou. The City approved hiring Aquatic Doctors to do a test application next year in the bayou, but the cost for the services will have to come back to Council once the permitting process and targeted species is identified. There was a question about how the currents and flows would impact the product application and Aquatic Doctors was confident that the granular herbicide when properly placed in the right conditions would be 70%+ effective.

License Agreement - Council approved a license agreement for placement of signage in the Blue Star Highway right of way for 2918 Blue Star Highway.

Snow Removal Contract - Finally, Council awarded a contract for a bidder to remove snow in the downtown, at City facilities, municipal parking lots, and along safe routes to school. Scott's Landscaping of Allegan was the lowest responsible bidder.

Taxes - Winter taxes were mailed out this week along with the first edition of the City's newsletter. The newsletter is another way to inform the community about what's happening with City Government.

Union Street Boat Launch Parking - Tuesday, myself and the Director of Public Works met with Joe Milaukas about our lease agreement on Union Street north of Blue Star Highway. It was great to meet with Mr. Milaukas and his son to discuss their expectations about the parking lot lease. The City will be

installing new signage next year to update the old worn out signage. We will also be aligning the parking blocks and work at keeping the grounds litter free.

BRA Orientation - Wednesday, was an orientation for the new councilman about the Brownfield Redevelopment Authority.

DDA Sign - I had a meeting to discuss the Downtown Development Authority sign design for the intersection of Center and Blue Star Highway. The design is very close to being approved by the DDA. They are aiming for a spring completion of the project.

200 Blue Star - Thursday, I met with the developer working on the 200 Blue Star site.

Engineering Projects - From that meeting I went into a meeting with Prein and Newhof to discuss ongoing and upcoming projects. We spent a lot of time talking about utility needs in the Felker's Neighborhood. We also talked about the rebidding of the water main projects for the special assessment districts that have already been established. The final key item we talked about was the paving of Union Street in the upcoming year and the repair to Campbell Road to stop the water weeping out of the hill.

Flood Insurance Rate Mapping - From that meeting I drove to Allegan to learn about the new Flood Insurance Rate Mapping and the required updates to the ordinance and the requirement to add a floodplain review to our site plan review process.

DPW Position - Friday morning started out with the first of two interviews to replace a DPW position. The next interview will be next Thursday and we will have two good candidates to choose from. FYI, I've formalized the interview process with prepared questions and an interview panel. The process ensures that we have an open and objective process with the intent of seeking out the best qualified applicants.

DDA - Late Friday morning I had a DDA executive meeting to chat about the organization of the authority and how the City can help the DDA.

BRA applicant - Finally, Friday afternoon, I had a meeting with an applicant for the Brownfield Authority. I believe this applicant can be a good addition to the Brownfield team. The authority currently has five members and there was a request to add additional members.

Gingerbread - The winner of the gingerbread house contest will be announced next week. If you haven't stopped by City Hall to see the creative confections, you have a week left.

That's all I have for now. Have a great weekend.

Rich LaBombard

City Manager

Week of December 9th – Friday Memo.

Happy Friday Afternoon all. Here is the City Manager's week in review.

DPW Team Building – Monday morning started off with a team building exercise with the DPW staff. We talked openly about expectations they have for each other as individuals on a team, and what expectations they have for their supervisors. Everyone had the opportunity to speak and share their input while I facilitated the discussion and documented the responses. All the responses were typed and shared with each person on the DPW team. We plan to revisit the expectations in six months or less to check on progress and keep adding to the discussion. Thank you DPW team for being open to the process.

Blue Star Trail – Immediately after the DPW meeting, I met with the two council members who showed an interested in working on revising the joint resolution in support of the trail. We spent some time focusing on the importance of trails to Douglas, and the importance of being a part of a larger connected network. This discussion was in preparation for a meeting with the neighboring communities and representatives of the Friends of the Blue Star Trail later in the day.

Adult Use Marijuana – Adult use marijuana was a hot topic at City Hall this week. The City is currently opted out of AUM. Since AUM sales became legal on December 1, we've received a lot of comments about creating the ordinance to permit sales. Expect to see some discussion in the new year on this topic.

Michigan Equality Index – Did you see the latest Michigan Equality Index report? Douglas didn't even make the list. I asked our Planning Intern to look into the scoring criteria so that we could make sure Douglas earned a place on the list and we are working on a plan to improve our score. Here is a link to the article. <https://www.michiganadvance.com/2019/11/19/4-michigan-cities-earn-perfect-scores-for-lgbtq-rights-2-macomb-county-cities-rank-near-bottom/>

Trail Meeting – The City of Douglas representatives joined Saugatuck Township, Saugatuck City, and Friends of the Blue Star Trail representatives to begin discussion about rewriting the joint resolution in support of the trail. The group focused on a rewritten resolution and suggested changes. I anticipate the revised joint resolution will be sent to City Council in January.

Brownfield Authority Membership – Per Council's direction, I've been talking to interested individuals who would like to be considered for a position on the Brownfield Authority. There are some great candidates out there who can provide some expertise to the Authority. I'll be making my recommendations to Council in January.

Director's Meeting – The Director's meeting was pretty short and to-the-point this week. It's our opportunity to review the previous council meeting, talk about the upcoming council meeting and agenda items, and then a round table discussion on any topic.

Building Committee – The Building Committee met this week to talk about the City's facility needs. We reviewed some information other communities have put together to analyze their facilities. We plan to use those documents as a resource and reference material. We agreed to have the next meeting to talk about the pros and cons of each of our facilities so we can develop talking points.

Brownfield Authority – The Brownfield Authority met for about 20 minutes this week for an organizational meeting. The Authority approved next year’s meeting calendar. I reported on a brief conversation with the developer, adding two members, the plan for an organizational meeting in January to elect officers, and I also shared an article about brownfields and affordable housing.

Harbor – Immediately after the Brownfield meeting, I had a conversation with a former council person who has a passion for boating. He shared with me the importance of the harbor to the community. I certainly appreciated his time, and learned a great deal from our conversation. I’m looking forward to working with the community to meet their expectations about the harbor.

Christmas Party – Thursday evening I attended the first Community Leadership Christmas Party hosted by Councilwoman Lion. It was a good opportunity to enjoy the company of individuals who serve on boards and commissions and get to know each other better.

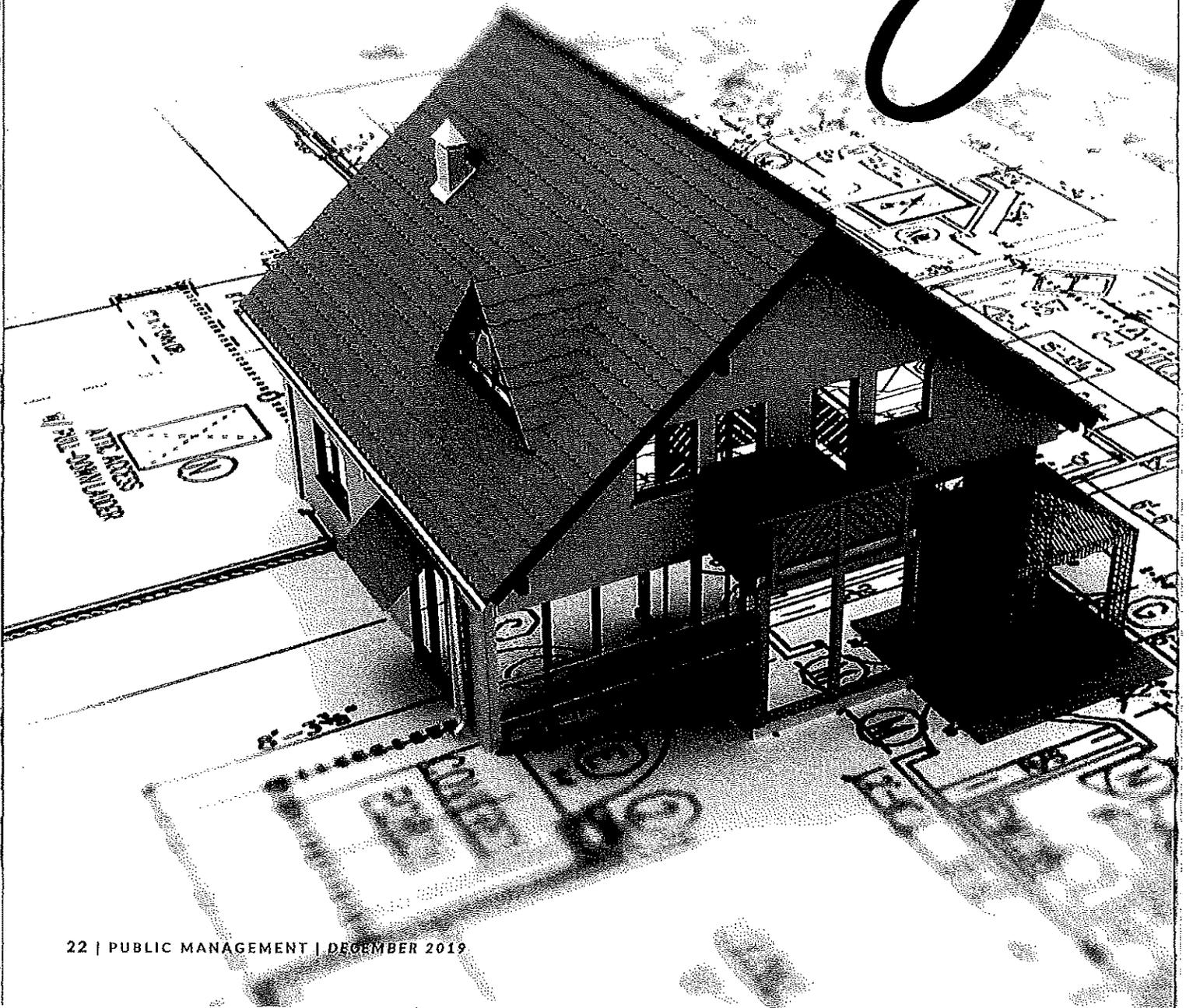
Staff Christmas Party – I’m looking forward to this evening’s staff Christmas party. The employees of the City of Douglas have a wonderful gift exchange tradition where they draw names from a hat and purchase a toy that draws on some characteristic of that person. The gifted toys are unwrapped and enjoyed before they are donated to Toys for Tots. It’s a wonderful concept, and I’m sure it will be a great time!

That’s all I have for this week. Have a great weekend.

Rich LaBombard

City Manager

Cleaning





Up HOUSE

Developing Brownfields into Affordable Housing

In the early 1940s, a small dry-cleaning business, Mt. Baker Cleaners, opened in South Seattle. Several years later, a run-of-the-mill corner gas station set up shop across the street. For decades, it was business as usual. But as the years wore on, these small businesses were slowly creating a big environmental problem. Dry cleaning chemicals, solvents, and petroleum found their way into the soil, slowly and silently leaching down to the groundwater. By the mid-2010s, the dry cleaner had moved to a new location and the gas station closed after changing hands many times. Both lie vacant since, leaving an array of environmental problems yet to be discovered.

BY MARCUS
HUMBERG,
MARTHA FAUST,
CHERYL ANN
BISHOP, AND
LYN HIKIDA

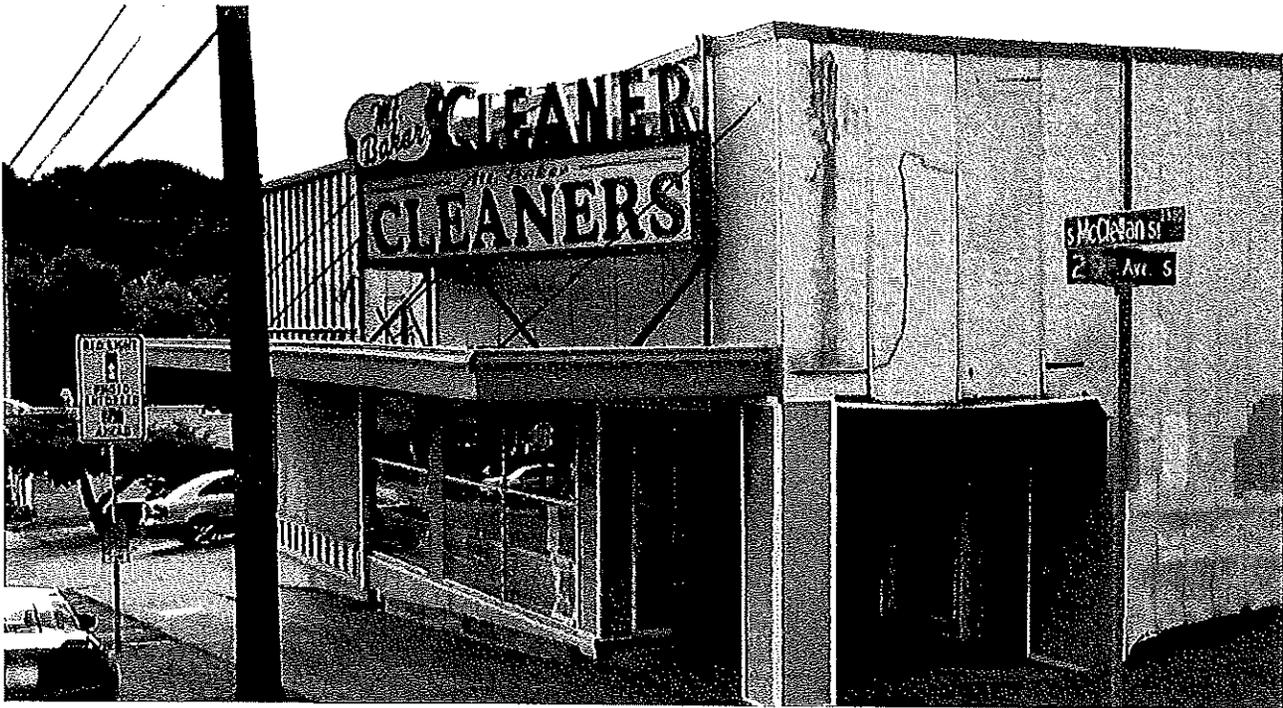


Photo attribution: Map data: Google, 2019.

This is a typical story of a brownfield. While the name itself inspires images of fenced off, unused grassy acres, brownfields are often just run-down, abandoned businesses or dusty gravel lots with crumbling buildings. Brownfields can seem like a Pandora's box, just waiting to unleash their toxic—and potentially costly—secrets to the unsuspecting property buyer. Or they could be nothing more than an unused property with little to no environmental contamination on the surface,

but with no one willing to pay to find out.

While there is no one definition that can describe a "typical" brownfield, the problems faced are the same: How can you clean it? How can you redevelop it? And who's going to pay for it? The next question, of course, is what do brownfield cleanups have to do with affordable housing? What sane planner or project manager would want to combine the complexity of both of these issues? After

all, how do you redevelop a brownfield property with unknown costs and uncertainty when you're already trying to navigate limited housing budgets, grant requirements, and strict timelines?

The current need for affordable housing for low- and middle-income families has reached crisis levels in many areas. Cities struggle with finding available land, while costs continue to rise. It's easy to see where housing demand has outstripped supply. And it's happening in urban, suburban, and even rural markets, driving up home prices and rents faster than incomes are rising. Formerly affordable neighborhoods are gentrifying, displacing lower income families, leaving them nowhere to go.

Here lies the conundrum—brownfields are developable land *in potentia*, but can take a lot of time, money, and work to be economically viable again. Affordable housing is greatly needed, but it's becoming more

difficult to build economically and administratively—especially in the current real estate markets many areas across the country are experiencing.

So, how can local governments leverage the opportunities brownfields offer while minimizing their drawbacks in order to build affordable housing—all without busting budgets or timelines?

When faced with public policy challenges of this magnitude, it takes a lot of dedication and determination to blaze a trail through the twin minefields of brownfields and affordable housing. But success can be found where others are unwilling to venture. Enter the innovators.

Schmidt Artist Lofts in Saint Paul, Minnesota

In the eastern half of the Twin Cities of Minneapolis-Saint Paul, lies Ramsey County. It includes the bustling capital city of Saint Paul and is the only county in Minnesota that has been fully built out.



Photo courtesy of Washington State Department of Ecology, taken by Marcus Humberg.

Even before the recent shift in market preferences toward infill development, county planners realized that redevelopment of existing properties was the only path to create new housing, jobs, and even green space. And this redevelopment, by definition, required tackling costly environmental legacy issues head on.

In 1997, Ramsey County, along with neighboring Hennepin County—home of the other twin city of Minneapolis—approached the State Legislature to help them establish a special fund. The goal of this fund was to offset the costs of environmental and brownfield remediation and enable urban land recycling for a range of new uses, including affordable housing.

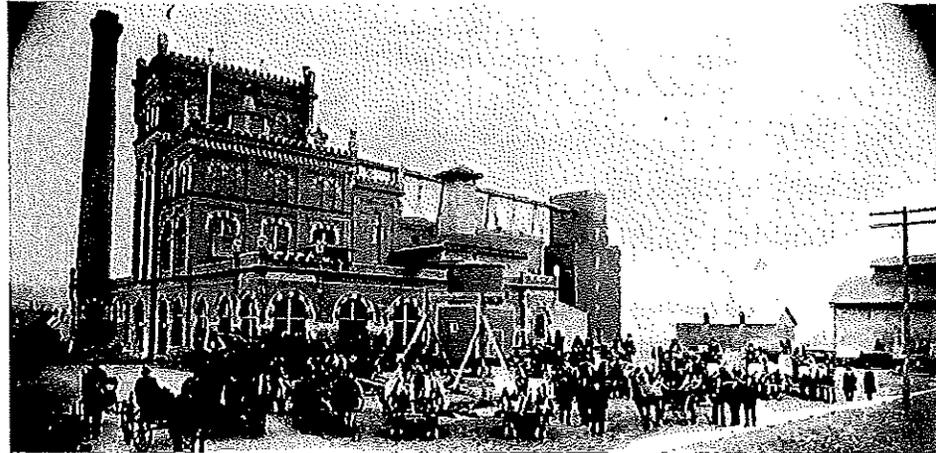
By 2004, Ramsey County launched their new

Environmental Response Fund, funded by a mortgage registry and deed tax. This tax collects one dollar for every \$10,000 in value for every property transaction in the county—around \$25 for the average \$250,000 home. Funding is split equally between the city of Saint

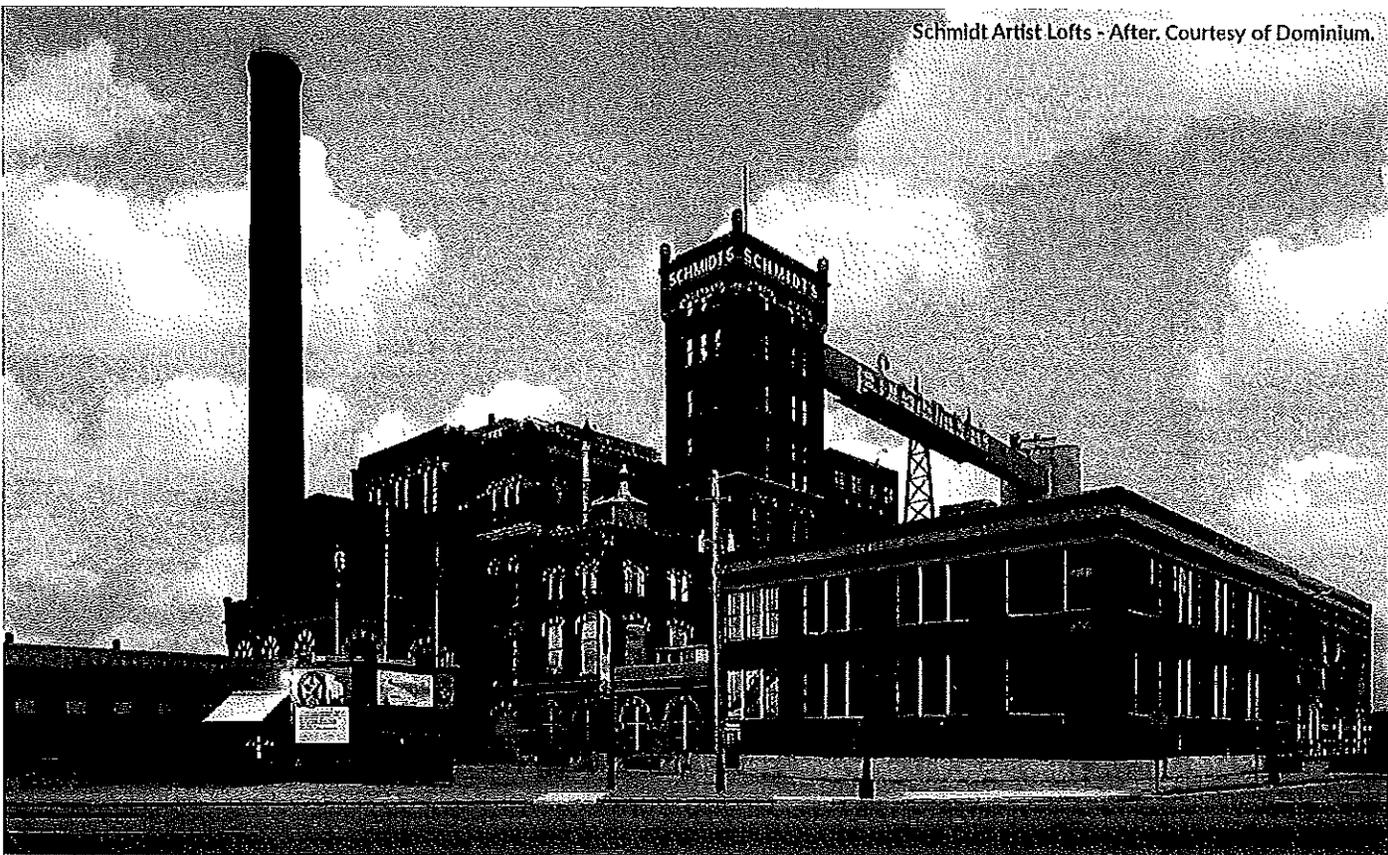
Paul and its surrounding suburbs, providing a critical tool in reviving the urban and suburban core of the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area.

The philosophy of the Environmental Response Fund is to be the last public money into a project, helping leverage private investment

into brownfield properties, and increasing the county's tax base. Many of these brownfields are located next to existing infrastructure, transit networks, and other services, making them especially desirable for redevelopment. Since its inception, the fund has helped remediate 330 acres of land,



Schmidt Brewery circa 1905. Courtesy of Minnesota Historical Society.



Schmidt Artist Lofts - After. Courtesy of Dominion.

assisted the development of over 600 affordable housing units and 775 market-rate housing units, creating over 4,370 jobs.

Patching an Urban Tapestry

In the heart of the working-class West Seventh neighborhood, just southwest of downtown Saint Paul, stands the towering, castle-

environmental conditions, including soil contaminated with poly aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), lead, and arsenic. Removal of underground storage tanks, significant asbestos and lead-based paint abatement, as well as installation of sub-slab vapor systems, would be required for all of the new residential uses. The total remediation costs ran upwards

Paul. The development was fully leased before opening in 2014, and remains 100 percent leased today.

Perhaps just as important as the successful adaptive reuse of the Schmidt Brewery complex is the catalytic effect the project has produced. Overnight, the restoration of the property injected new energy and historic pride into the neighborhood. In 2018,

still white-hot. Though prices are cooling, the median home value in King County has risen from \$350,000 in 2011 to \$625,000 in 2019.² Residents are being priced out of the market by a flood of high-paid tech workers moving to the area. This influx has pushed Seattle's lower-paid workers, who often rent their homes, to the brink—or worse, onto the streets.

In the realms of environmental justice, cleaning up properties like Mt. Baker Cleaners in lower-income neighborhoods is a step toward a more equitable and sustainable future.

like Bottling House and Brew House. This former Schmidt Brewery complex has been given a new life as affordable live-work units for area artists.

For over 100 years, the 18-acre site was home to a series of breweries and at one time was the largest brewery in Minnesota. Shortly after Prohibition, it was serving thirsty Minnesotans as the nation's seventh-largest brewery. But in the face of increasing competition, the facility shuttered in 2002. Following a short run as an ethanol production facility, the property was slated to be razed to make room for a Walmart, but ultimately sat vacant for over a decade. The contamination from a century of industrial use stymied any potential development. Enter local affordable housing developer, Dominion, who envisioned a new transit-oriented use for the property, drawing on its historic character and iconic architecture.

The first step in redevelopment required remediation of a myriad of

of \$3.5 million. Ramsey County contributed \$300,000 in Environmental Response Funds, other remediation grants had to be acquired, and the developer covered the remaining balance.

One of the unique steps in this project also included the historical designation of the site. Once recognized as one of "Minnesota's 10 most endangered historic places," the former brewery is now part of a new historic district listed on the National Register for Historic Places. As an adaptive reuse, the \$130 million project created 247 individually unique one, two, and three-bedroom rental lofts and flats, and 13 three-bedroom townhomes on a property adjacent to the bottling house. These units are not only affordable, but attractive to artists with a \$42,000 maximum income restriction for a single-person household. Onsite amenities include paint, clay, sound, and dance studios; a performance space; and a rooftop deck with views of the Mississippi River and downtown Saint

a 33,000 square-foot Keg & Case food hall opened in a former storage building in the new historic district, filled with local restaurateurs, vendors, and fittingly, a craft brewery. Keg & Case hosts a weekly neighborhood farmers market and was recently named the best new food hall in America by *USA Today*.¹

The Schmidt Brewery redevelopment illustrates the opportunities that brownfield sites hold for potential reuse for affordable housing. Success in this case required creative vision, persistence, and public-private partnerships to overcome the significant cost challenges. Projects such as the Schmidt Artist Lofts not only provide critically needed, transit-accessible affordable housing, but also fill holes in the urban fabric, and can even spur an economic revolution through strategic redevelopment.

The Maddux in Seattle, Washington

When it comes to overheated real estate markets, Seattle and surrounding King County is

One could think it odd then that only a few miles from downtown there are boarded-up businesses and vacant properties. Surely these lots would be quickly swallowed up and developed in such an insatiable, high-priced, high-demand market. But even white-hot real estate prices can't overcome that which lies beneath.

Creating Successful Partnerships

In 1988, Washington's citizens passed Initiative 97 establishing a statewide environmental cleanup law, the Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA).³ This act installed a tax on petroleum products, certain chemicals, and pesticides to fund cleanups across the state and prescribes the required cleanup process. The Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) manages the majority of MTCA funding, and regulates the cleanup process for public and private properties across the state.

Until recently, MTCA cleanup funds could not be

granted to private parties; they were instead routed only through local governments. When Ecology recently became involved with affordable housing-related cleanup, this limitation inspired two new variants of its main grants—Integrated Planning Grants (IPGs) and Remedial Action Grants (RAGs). These new grants support housing

and community planning and cleanup activities for brownfield sites that deliver affordable housing as an end use. They can be used by local governments and tribes, as well as nonprofit and private entities.

IPGs provide \$200,000–\$300,000 to support planning, investigation, and public involvement related to a potential cleanup. This

early funding can produce a much bigger return on investment later in the project. Whether that planning is for site assessment, or other innovative uses that benefit the public, the key is setting the stage early, which gives projects a strong foundation for later success. Affordable housing-related RAGs have no award limits and help investigation and cleanup of brownfield sites.

The ROZ also allows Ecology to connect prospective purchasers and developers with owners of brownfield properties and provide funding for parts of the project that are not directly involved with cleanup.

The city of Seattle voted in 2017 to create a ROZ encompassing two major cleanup sites—the abandoned Mt. Baker Cleaners and a run-down, former gas station and auto repair shop owned by Phillips 66. These derelict properties occupy an otherwise desirable location—a prominent corner, in real estate parlance—within walking distance of light rail, a bus station, and green space, mere minutes from downtown. It's almost everything you could want for affordable housing except, of course, for the cleanup price tag.

To kick-start the project, in 2017 Ecology offered \$400,000 to help

Inspiring Innovation in Affordable Housing⁴

In 2013, MTCA was modified to allow local governments new ways to use cleanup funds, including the creation of a Redevelopment Opportunity Zone (ROZ).⁵ Within a ROZ, the local government can create a brownfields renewal authority, a municipal authority that has broad powers to help manage and fund the cleanup and redevelopment of brownfields.



The Maddux in Seattle - Before.
Courtesy of the Washington State Department of Ecology.



The Maddux in Seattle - After.
Courtesy of Mt. Baker Housing Authority.

assess the contamination on the site and connect the property owner to a nonprofit developer, Mt. Baker Housing. This early funding spurred the project forward, and ultimately inspired future innovation. The environmental assessment showed the extent of the property's toxic unknowns—dry-cleaning solvents (perchloroethene and trichloroethene) and petroleum contaminants (gasoline, diesel, benzene, and heavy oil) in the soil and groundwater at levels below what had been anticipated, bringing the cleanup cost estimate from as high as \$31 million to around \$7 million.

Using this new information, the Mt. Baker housing authority went to work, securing \$56 million in private, state, and federal funding. With all the details in place, the state legislature approved



property values and affect residents' social and physical wellbeing. However, brownfield properties often attract projects that can easily price out the people who stand to benefit the most—the residents who

Housing Remediation Program, a pilot project exploring direct funding options for private, tribal, and non-profit agencies that connect the cleanup of contaminated sites to redevelopment as affordable

a housing crisis due to the influx of workers recruited by the defense industry. In the Watts neighborhood of South Los Angeles, the city contracted to build Jordan Downs, a 34-acre temporary housing development with hundreds of low-rise, barracks-style buildings, next door to a steel mill built to support the war. According to the Los Angeles Times, Jordan Downs was dedicated in 1944 for the city's war workers including members of minority racial groups that have faced a critical housing problem.⁷ In 1955, this cinder block "temporary housing" was converted into 700 units of low-income public housing. Over the decades, economic depression, racial conflicts, and disinvestment in the community contributed to its physical and social decline.

Bifurcating the Jordan Downs neighborhood today is a 21-acre industrial property that once housed the steel mill. Over time, the site was repurposed from steel manufacturing and truck repair

The success that early assessment and planning had on the Maddux eventually inspired Ecology to establish the Healthy Housing Remediation Program.

\$6.2 million to fund the site cleanup. In 2019, Mt. Baker Housing finalized the purchase agreements and will begin construction of the mixed-use project, including 144 affordable housing units and ground-level commercial spaces, which is essential in an area with limited retail services.

In the realms of environmental justice, cleaning up properties like Mt. Baker Cleaners in lower-income neighborhoods is a step toward a more equitable and sustainable future. Contamination and long-abandoned buildings depress

lived with the contamination and lower property values for so many years. Part of the success of the Maddux hinged on placing restrictive affordable housing covenants on the land, protecting the neighborhood from the pressures of market-rate development and gentrification.

Though providing funding through a ROZ worked for the Maddux, it was an inefficient way of providing direct funding to non-government entities. Given the success that early assessment and planning had on the Maddux, Ecology established the Healthy

housing.⁶ This program has already produced proposals for 110-units of affordable housing in Kennewick, Washington; and a mixed-use, seven-story waterfront development in Bellingham, Washington, that includes affordable apartments and a campus with a professional communal kitchen and food truck court.

Jordan Downs in Los Angeles, California
During the height of World War II, the city of Los Angeles was going full steam for America's war effort. At the same time, it was experiencing



Jordan Downs Phase 1
Photo by SVA Architects,
courtesy of BRIDGE Housing.

to waste handling and storage. In 1996, environmental studies were conducted that identified significant contamination. Recognizing an opportunity to eliminate this dysfunctional property so close to their public housing, the Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles (HACLA) acquired the site in 2008 with the intent to remediate it for future use.⁸ The California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) also gained oversight to ensure proper cleanup and abatement of the property.

Delivering Environmental Justice

In 2012, the nonprofit BRIDGE Housing, along with The Michaels Organization, was selected by HACLA to develop and lead the revitalization of Jordan Downs.⁹ Ultimately, this ongoing comprehensive, long-term effort will rebuild all 700 units of distressed public housing and create an additional 650 new homes

with a range of affordability, along with new roads and infrastructure, community facilities, retail, parks, and open space. While significant remediation was required, putting the old steel mill site into service as part of the Jordan Downs master redevelopment would achieve several important goals:

- Reknit the physical community, as the vacant parcel splitting Jordan Downs created turf wars and divisions between residents of the north and south sides.
- Allow the construction of the first 250 apartments and create replacement public housing units mitigating displacement of current residents.
- Enable the extension of Century Boulevard, a major thoroughfare, to reconnect Jordan Downs with the surrounding neighborhood.
- Provide land for 115,000 square feet of retail and commercial space, which is vital in a neighborhood that has had a dearth of retail services and jobs.
- Eliminate severe blight of the industrial parcel.
- Eliminate toxins immediately adjacent to Jordan High School, the public housing complex, and the community's recreation center.

The DTSC approved a remedial action plan for the former steel mill site in 2014, and remediation work began in April 2015. Based on earlier environmental studies, the conclusion was reached that only certain areas of the site had contamination requiring remediation, anticipating that the cleanup would take only

six months. However, it soon became evident that heavy metals and toxic contamination were spread across the entire site. Engine oil, diesel and gasoline, paint thinners, trichloroethylene (an industrial solvent), and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) had leached into the soil and groundwater. Contamination in some areas extended to a depth of over 20 feet, requiring the removal of more than 220,000 tons of impacted soil. Backfilling the space with clean soil has ensured safe occupancy for future uses. Due to the expanded scope of cleanup, the remediation costs rose to \$31 million, a significant investment in a community that had been neglected for decades.

In 2016, the remediation was completed and DTSC issued a "no further action" letter for the residential parcels, allowing construction of the first residential phases, the Century Boulevard extension, and retail spaces.

As of fall 2019, BRIDGE's 115-unit Cedar Grove at Jordan Downs is now leasing. Designed to a LEED Silver certification level, the new apartments will serve existing public housing residents and other low-income families. Retail establishments are nearing completion, and the new Century Boulevard extension connects the community to the services and amenities of greater Los Angeles.

The remediation and reuse of the 21-acre brownfield parcel was the critical first step in a multiphase process that is transforming Jordan Downs into a vibrant—and healthier—mixed-use community where thousands of residents will be able to thrive. **PM**

ENDNOTES AND RESOURCES

¹ St. Paul's Keg and Case named Best New Food Hall, *USA Today*, January 18, 2019, Accessed at <https://www.10best.com/awards/travel/best-new-food-hall/>.

² Northwest Multiple Listing Service Data, 2011–2019.

³ <https://ecology.wa.gov/Spills-Cleanup/Contamination-cleanup/Rules-directing-our-cleanup-work/Model-Toxics-Control-Act>

⁴ This section adapted in part from an article published in the *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce*. Article is attributed to Bob Warren, but was ghostwritten by Cheryl Ann Bishop. "State helps turn brownfields into affordable housing," *Daily Journal of Commerce*, September 27, 2018, <https://www.djc.com/news/en/12114941.html>.

⁵ <https://fortress.wa.gov/ecy/publications/SummaryPages/1809048.html>

⁶ <https://fortress.wa.gov/ecy/publications/SummaryPages/1809051.html>

⁷ Dedication of Housing Today (1944, May 28), *Los Angeles Times*, retrieved from <http://newspapers.com>.

⁸ <http://uli.org/wp-content/uploads/ULI-Documents/2009JordanDownsLA-Report.pdf>

⁹ https://bridgehousing.com/press_releases/los-angeles-celebrates-groundbreaking-of-first-residential-phase-of-jordan-downs-revitalization/

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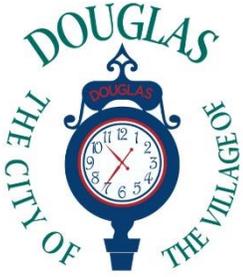


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Week of December 16th, 2019 – Friday Memo

Happy Friday afternoon all. Here is the City Manager's week in review.

Committee of the Whole - This week City Council toured Blue Star Highway between the Blue Star Bridge and Center Street with the City Manager, Police Chief, DPW Director, City Engineer, Interurban, and two members from the Fire Department. The tour was intended as a work session for attendees to experience the various turning movements and hear about the experiences and challenges being encountered. Particular focus was put on maneuverability of large vehicles and vehicles with trailers, as well as the visibility during nighttime driving particularly southbound on the Blue Star Bridge. The tour generated a good deal of information for Council to digest and was wrapped-up by the City Manager reading off a number of written complaints received by City Hall. As this was a committee meeting, no action was requested or taken.

Ugly Sweater – In the spirit of the holiday season, City Council was challenged by me to wear their ugly sweaters to Council. Since we had a large audience on hand, I asked the crowd to judge the ugly sweater competition. Our wonderful Mayor had the dubious honor of being the chosen one and she received a small token for the high honor of having the ugliest sweater. I believe everyone had a good time. In fact, a council person from Saugatuck commented that we have a good time at our council meetings.

City Council:

Aquifer Study – The regular business of City Council started with County Commissioner Kappinga reporting on erosion issues occurring along the lakeshore. Following those comments, the commissioner announced Allegan County is in the first phase of an aquifer study to evaluate the capacity and demands on the Allegan County aquifer. The county is investing \$150,000 for this phase of the study. The entire study will cost approximately \$600,000.

Isabell's – 301 Blue Star Highway - Next, we had a presentation from the partners of a new business coming soon to Douglas, called Isabell's, located at 310 Blue Star Highway. Isabell's will be a market and event space located at the intersection of Blue Star Highway and Wiley Road and will be open in the spring of 2020. The plan looks very exciting.

Recycling – The City Council reviewed the history of recycling efforts and heard from a representative from Republic Services. It had been discussed some time ago that a significant amount of recycled material is being contaminated by the currently employed yellow bag system. A proposed solution is to convert to a separate bin system that physically separates recyclable material from the waste stream. City Council directed the City Manager to work on an amendment to the contract to move to a bin system with a once-a-month pickup. The City will begin communicating the changes in January, with the anticipated change to take effect in February.

Traffic Control Orders – City Council approved three traffic control orders. The orders support the existing speed limit signs already in place. The public will not see any changes to existing speed limits on Blue Star Highway, nor on Wiley Road.

Siegfried Crandall PC Agreement – City Council approved an agreement with our current auditors to renew their contract for auditing services for the years 2020-2024. Only a \$100 per year increase was proposed.

DDA Variance – The City Council reviewed two variances to a DDA District sign. One variance was for size and one variance was for a digital sign board. Both variances were approved with the intent to support businesses located within the DDA. There are restrictions to the digital sign that the DDA must adhere to. The new sign project will be bid likely in January.

Salary Study – I was able to spend some time working on the staff salary study. I anticipate getting the information to City Council sometime in the first quarter of 2020.

Point Pleasant Marina – Our City Planner reached out to the State of Michigan about the status of the appraisals we submitted this summer. It is the City's desire to obtain Point Pleasant Marina and we have received an acquisition grant from the Natural Resource Trust Fund to assist with the acquisition. Our representative from the Michigan Natural Resource Trust Fund anticipated we would get some feedback next week.

Michigan Municipal Executives – I attended the monthly meeting of MME where a presentation from the Census Bureau was given. The Census is conducted every ten years and the next Census will begin in early 2020. Residents are reminded to participate by one of three methods – by computer, by mail, or by phone. The Census information is important to all communities because it represents population changes, which translates into changes in how Federal funds are allocated.

Coastal Resilience – I participated in a conference call arranged by the Township Manager to hear about the best practices and solutions for working with a changing shoreline and lake levels. LIAA—the group hosting the conversation—are currently working with other communities such as Alpena County and St. Clair County on incremental planning and zoning changes that are intended to buffer the problems lakeshore communities are experiencing. There is also a grant program that will cover development of mapping and models to identify problems before they happen. Any community looking for the services of LIAA can expect about a 12-month commitment to complete the mapping and modeling process.

Army Corps of Engineers – I was also a participant in an impromptu meeting and visit from the Army Corps of Engineers who were in the area reviewing flooding in the Douglas/Saugatuck area. ACOE can provide technical assistance to communities to supplement local resources during a flooding event. ACOE cannot provide assistance with erosion issues. With that knowledge, I showed the ACOE representative the flooding we are experiencing at the Union Street Boat Launch, Washington Street (under the Blue Star Bridge), Point Pleasant, and Wades Bayou. Of particular interest to the ACOE is public infrastructure that could be affected by flooding. I also pointed out that the high-water levels have reduced bridge clearance under the Blue Star Highway Bridge and if conditions persist, we could experience economic losses from that situation. The ACOE representative anticipated we could experience near record high water levels in February and March. Obviously, the flooding and erosion issues are situations I continue to monitor closely and I'm prepared to communicate if we see a change in conditions.

Liquid Brine – I received a few complaints/concerns from residents about the liquid brine being applied as an ice melt in the downtown. Specifically, residents are concerned about pet safety and there was one question about whether the product is corrosive. I've reviewed the material safety data sheets and the product is not corrosive on concrete. Also, because it's a liquid and not a granular product, it's safer on pet's feet. Overall, brine is a much better product for a downtown environment because it works at lower temperatures than salt, it's less messy and has better coverage than salt granules and pet friendly.

Marijuana – I spent some time this week reviewing the license for one of our medical marijuana establishments in town. I anticipate having that permit signed-off early next week.

Phone Scams – Be vigilant for phone scammers calling about unpaid credit card accounts. The caller attempts to get the victim to call another number to avoid being served civil papers, then they attempt to get personal information for identity theft purposes. Stay alert.

Toys for Tots – The toy drive hosted by the Police Department is complete. Two full boxes of toys were delivered. Great job everyone.

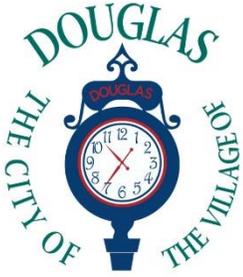
Food Drive – The Fill the Humvee Food Drive was a success. The Police Department collected 1 ½ loads of food!!!

Gift Card Drive – The gift card drive was a success as well. The collected gift cards were distributed to the selected families.

That's all I have for now. I want to wish everyone a Happy Holiday season. I appreciate how wonderful and giving the community has been with the toy drive, food drive, and gift card drive.

This is the last Friday memo of the decade.

Rich LaBombard
City Manager



Week of December 30, 2019 – Friday Memo

Good Friday afternoon and Happy New Year. This is the City Manager's week in review.

It has been a short work week for City Hall with the New Year holiday wedged into the middle of the week, so there isn't much to report.

Downtown Décor – DPW crews are taking advantage of the nice weather this week to remove the Christmas décor from the downtown.

DPW Position – We still have an open position in the Department of Public Works. We made a job offer to a candidate who elected to stay with his current employer. An advertisement will go out on-line and in local papers in the next week.

Recycling – I have a proposal from Republic Services to change our recycling method to a bin system as well as educational material. I'll review that information and get it posted as soon as possible.

Marijuana - The City Planner is working on developing the adult use marijuana ordinance. More to come on that topic as we begin to see the draft ordinance developed.

Erosion and Flooding – We continue to monitor erosion issues along the lakeshore. There was some concern about the house that fell into the lake north of Muskegon that brought new urgency to the erosion and flooding issues here in Douglas.

Flooding and Erosion Meeting – Monday, January 6, at Saugatuck High School, elected and municipal officials are invited to attend a RSVP only presentation about flooding, erosion and emergency management practices.

Tree Board – I've been working on developing a chart of potential urban trees and salt tolerant trees for the next tree board meeting on January 7th. The list will be used as a guide to residents for planting the right trees in the right places.

City Council - The regular City Council meeting is Monday, January 6 at 7:00 p.m.

That's all I have for now.

Rich LaBombard
City Manager