

Lowell Area Community Fund

ANNUAL UPDATE 2024-2025

Equipping Students to Succeed

Students need access to current technology to learn current and emerging trades. When Mr. Tony Ellis saw their students held back by inoperable and glitchy machines in their Technical Education department, they knew it was time for an upgrade.



The Lowell Area Community Fund contributed to the purchase of five new CNC machines. The new machines are bringing speed, reliability and opportunity back to the classroom. This project has empowered students across five classes and reignited partnerships with local schools and businesses.



Pictured: Home Essential Math and Science class

Building Futures

Flat River Outreach Ministries is a community hub for hope, resources, and gifts in Greater Lowell. From food to housing, FROM knows that equal access and opportunities to meet basic needs makes a thriving community.

Seventeen new housing units are underway, and with LACF's continued support, families in Lowell will soon have access to homes that offer stability, dignity and hope. Together, FROM and LACF are building more than housing—they're building futures. Building on that momentum, LACF deepened its commitment with an additional \$250,000 toward overall project costs. Together, these contributions provided \$300,000 in total funding, enabling FROM to expand services, strengthen infrastructure, and accelerate impact for the people they serve.

When FROM learned that no multi-family building permits had been issued in Lowell for 15 years, they saw an opportunity to provide greater access to housing. In 2018, FROM approached Lowell Area Community Fund with a bold vision: to create safe, affordable housing on East Main Street. LACF's early investment of \$50,000 was a powerful affirmation of FROM's mission and the community's potential.



Pictured: LACF Members from left to right: Ray Duimstra, City Manager Mike Burns, Kelli Powell and Superintendent Nate Fowler. Center - Wendie Preiss, Executive Director of FROM

Lowell Community Fund Financial Highlights

July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025

REVENUE
Investment Earnings \$2,179,631

Contributions \$3,700
TOTAL REVENUES \$2,183,331

EXPENSES
Grants and Scholarships \$558,031
Investment Manager Fee \$88,648
Support Services \$80,944
TOTAL EXPENSES \$727,623

Change in Net Assets \$1,455,707
Net Assets, Beginning of the year \$16,896,792

NET ASSETS, END OF YEAR \$18,352,500

Community Fund Advisory Committee

- Michael Burns**
Lowell City Manager
- John Darling**
representing the Englehardt Family
- Regan Doyle**
*Vice President of Operations
King Milling Company*
- Ray Duimstra**
Senior Vice President, Mercantile Bank
- Nate Fowler**
Superintendent, Lowell Area Schools
- Steve Gough**
Principal, Lowell High School
- Misty McClure Anderson**
Chief of Staff, Grand Rapids Community College

LOWELL COMMUNITY FUND GRANTS JULY 1, 2024 - JUNE 30, 2025

PROGRAM NAME	DESCRIPTION	ORGANIZATION	GRANT AMOUNT
Building Foundations, Building Hope Capital Campaign	Continued support to increase affordable housing options in the Lowell community.	Flat River Outreach Ministries, Inc.	\$100,000
2025 Gilda's LaughFest Events in Lowell	Support for LaughFest 2025 in the Lowell community, which brings community members together in laughter-focused activities and engage them in dialogue about emotional health.	Gilda's Club Grand Rapids	\$5,000
2024-2025 Lowell Community Marketing	Implementation of the Greater Lowell Community Marketing Plan in an effort to promote commerce, community events, and tourism.	Greater Lowell Chamber Foundation	\$50,000
2025 Lowell Sizzlin' Summer Concerts	Funding for the 2025 Lowell Showboat Sizzlin' Summer Concerts series.	Greater Lowell Chamber Foundation	\$16,000
Weekend Food Program for Lowell Students	To provide weekend food for Lowell students during the 24-25 school year.	Hand2Hand	\$2,500
Long-Term Success for Lowell Students	To provide Junior Achivement Learning Experiences to Lowell High School students.	Junior Achievement of the Michigan Great Lakes	\$4,000
Community Wetlands Protection	To support community engagement and critical wetland habitat protection at nature preserves in Lowell and Vergennes Townships.	Land Conservancy of West Michigan	\$10,000
Military History Exhibit	To create a new exhibit exploring the stories of those who served in the military from Lowell.	Lowell Area Historical Museum	\$9,000
Collection Storage Facility	To support the purchase of an off-site building for collection storage.	Lowell Area Historical Museum	\$50,000
Bridging Industry Standards for Success	Industrial tools for hands-on learning to prepare high school students for careers in technology and manufacturing.	Lowell Area Schools	\$47,020
Cameras for Senior High School Digital Photography Classes	To upgrade cameras used by Lowell Senior High School Digital Photography classes.	Lowell Area Schools	\$5,195
Library Media Center Renovation	To complete the Lowell High School Library Media Center renovation.	Lowell Area Schools	\$16,418
LEF 2024-2025	To fund innovative projects that enhance and support the learning experience at Lowell Area Schools.	Lowell Area Schools Education Foundation	\$25,000
LASSO Equipment & Website/ App Upgrade	For the purchase of soccer equipment and technical support to market the program online.	Lowell Area Select Soccer Organization	\$25,000
Lowell Arts: It Starts Here	Funding for general operations.	Lowell Arts	\$25,000
Grand River Bridge	Bolt-tightening maintenance to preserve the bridge's structural integrity and safety.	Lowell Charter Township	\$50,000
Grand River Bridge	To complete bolt-tightening maintenance to preserve the bridge's structural integrity and safety.	Lowell Charter Township	\$25,000
Flat River Invasive Species Mitigation	To preserve and sustain the health of the Flat River ecosystem through the control of invasive aquatic species in the City of Lowell.	Lowell Friends Of The Flat	\$10,000
MiCareerQuest 2025: 3D Mapping	Support of a 3D walkthrough of MiCareerQuest to allow students to explore career paths, employers, jobs, and gain virtual insights of the event.	West Michigan Works!	\$2,500
Lighthouse Family YMCA Community Center	To support the creation of a multipurpose Community Center for youth, seniors, families, and individuals looking to connect and be healthy.	YMCA of Greater Grand Rapids	\$40,000
Scholarships	College scholarships awarded to Lowell Area residents.	Scholarships	\$52,000
TOTAL GRANTS			\$569,633

Lowell Area Community Fund is a fund of the Grand Rapids Community Foundation. For more information, or to make a donation, please visit GRFoundation.org/Lowell.