Lowell Area Community Fund

ANNUAL UPDATE 2025-2026



Pictured: Pickleball court covering

LOWELL CHARTER TOWNSHIP

Investing in a Space to Gather

The pickleball courts at North Riverfront Park are a popular spot for Lowell residents to unwind and stay active. For many, meeting at the courts is part of their weekly routine, creating space to connect with others and access to recreation. But showing up week after week to play, residents voiced to Lowell Charter Township that they need a comfortable place for players, families, and park visitors to gather and rest regardless of weather. To address this need, the Lowell Area Community Fund supported the construction of an open-sided shelter and windscreen. Now, rain or shine visitors can gather to enjoy a game and socialize after.

> *"Pickleball players have stated how much they appreciate the shelter. It gives them a place to get out of the hot sun to rest between matches and allows them to play longer without overheating.*
>
> - Jerry Hale, Lowell Township Supervisor

LOWELL ARTS

Public Art in Lowell: Muralocity

Alongside crowdfunding from residents, LACF invested in large scale murals throughout downtown Lowell, transforming prominent public spaces into community storytelling landmarks. Community input shaped the mural locations and their content.





Pictured (top to bottom): Creekside Park by Tess Marhofer, Lowell Light and Power by Sitki Dogan and E Main St by Christopher Catalogna. Photographed by Tess Marhofer and Keith Golinski.

Community Fund Financial Highlights

July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2026

REVENUE	
Investment Earnings	$3,343,452
Contributions	$2,500
TOTAL REVENUES	**$3,345,952**
EXPENSES	
Grants and Scholarships	$648,644
Investment Manager Fee	$104,710
Support Services	$86,216
TOTAL EXPENSES	**$839,570**
Change in Net Assets	$2,504,595
Net Assets, Beginning of the year	$18,402,320

NET ASSETS, END OF YEAR
$20,906,915

Community Fund Advisory Committee

Lisa Brown
Charitable Giving Advisor, The Catholic Foundation of the Diocese of Lansing

Michael Burns
City Manager, Lowell

John Darling
representing the Englehardt Family

Regan Doyle
Vice President of Operations, King Milling Company

Nate Fowler
Superintendent, Lowell Area Schools

Dominic Lowe
Principal, Lowell High School

Kelli Powell
CFO, Enwork

LOWELL AREA COMMUNITY FUND GRANTS JULY 1, 2025 - JUNE 30, 2026

PROGRAM NAME	DESCRIPTION	ORGANIZATION	GRANT AMOUNT
2025-2026 Lowell Community Marketing	To provide funding for implementation of the Greater Lowell Community Marketing Plan in an effort to promote commerce, community events and tourism.	Greater Lowell Chamber Foundation	$50,000
2026 Lowell Sizzlin' Summer Concerts	To support the 2026 Lowell Showboat Sizzlin' Summer Concerts series hosted in Historic Downtown Lowell.	Greater Lowell Chamber Foundation	$20,000
Annual Teacher Grant Awards	To provide the funds to educators at LAS to enhance the experience of their students beyond what is provided through ordinary school budgets.	Lowell Area Schools Education Foundation	$25,000
Declaration of Independence 250th	To provide programming and resources related to the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence.	Lowell Area Historical Museum	$5,100
Downtown Lowell Street Pole Banners	To support the implementation of new downtown Lowell street pole banners to welcome visitors, showcase community events and promote the tagline, "Your story starts here."	Greater Lowell Chamber Foundation	$4,945
Equipment for Lowell Area Fire and Emergency Services Authority	Supporting the purchase of additional Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) equipment to strengthen firefighter readiness and safety during emergency response and training.	Lowell Area Fire and Emergency Services Authority	$30,000
Expanding Access to Health and Wellness	To upgrade exercise studios and expand access to health and wellness activities for children, seniors, adults and families.	YMCA of Greater Grand Rapids	$75,000
FROM Building Foundations, Building Hope	To increase affordable and supportive housing stock in the greater Lowell community by building 17 units on Main Street.	Flat River Outreach Ministries Inc	$100,000
Future Success for Lowell Youth	To support the facilitation of JA Learning Experiences to K-12 to Lowell area students.	Junior Achievement of the Michigan Great Lakes	$4,000
Girls on the Run: A New Curriculum	To support the launch of new curriculum to meet the overall health needs of girls.	Girls on the Run West Michigan	$1,000
Greater Lowell Chamber: Building Remodel	To support the redesign and modernization of the Chamber space, showcasing Lowell as forward-thinking and relevant.	Greater Lowell Chamber Foundation	$19,000
Health and Injury Prevention Plan	To improve the health, safety and performance of firefighters through professional injury prevention, rehabilitation and fitness maintenance.	Lowell Area Fire and Emergency Services Authority	$5,000
Historic District History Booklets	For the production of two history booklets showcasing past and present historic buildings in the historic district.	Lowell Area Historical Museum	$10,000
LAS District-Wide Art Show	To support a district-wide K-12 student art show displayed in civic spaces, celebrating young artists while advancing community pride and civic engagement.	Lowell Arts	$12,600
Lowell Arts: It Starts With You	To support staff positions and operational expenses essential for delivering arts programming the Lowell community.	Lowell Arts	$25,000
Lowell Historic District Commission	To support the continued historic restoration and preservation of 54 buildings in Lowell.	City of Lowell	$30,000
Lowell Showboat VI Light Chaises	Rust removal and repainting of the Lowell Showboat VI to preserve the community landmark and support its continued use for community events.	Lowell Showboat VI	$16,000
Mobile Food Pantries: Lowell	To support the Mobile Food Pantry program in Lowell.	Feeding America West Michigan	$5,000
Pickleball Court Shelter	To build an open-sided shelter over gathering area and install wind screen on west side of courts.	Lowell Charter Township	$45,000
Public Art in Lowell: Muralocity	To support five community-driven murals activating downtown Lowell, creating vibrant public spaces while employing artists.	Lowell Arts	$45,000
Schneider Manor Campus Security	To enhance security for Schneider Manor's 115 residents by installing a keycard access system and security cameras.	Lowell Area Housing Inc	$50,000
Scholarships	College scholarships awarded to Lowell area residents.	Scholarships	$49,000
Updated Parks & Recreation Plan	Supporting an update to Vergennes Township's Parks & Recreation Plan, which will enhance their ability to apply for state grants.	Vergennes Township	$6,000
Weekend Food Support for Lowell Students	To sustain and expand Hand2Hand in Lowell, providing weekend meals to more students and supporting well-being and community partners.	Hand2Hand	$10,000
		TOTAL GRANTS	**$642,645**

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.