

Innovation in Community Development – Recognizes a community that has made a measurable impact on the quality of housing options for a changing population, engaged residents in neighborhood issues, or promoted a safe and healthy environment.

The winner of the award is the City of Clio for their Code Enforcement Program. The City of Clio established a comprehensive code enforcement program to deter crime, encourage community viability, and maintain property values. This program seeks voluntary compliance; however, enforcement activities have resulted in the successful prosecution of code violators which has included the court ordered demolition of nine unsafe structures. This ongoing program began in earnest in 2012.

Posts to the City of Clio Michigan Facebook page and articles in the City's newsletter informed the public of this program. These sources and direct mail have since been utilized to educate the public of the program's intent and common and specific code violations.

Since 2012, nearly 600 properties have been subject to either building, sign, zoning code, or other code related violations. Through the active efforts by the City Administrator and Police Chief as well as the strong support of the Mayor and City Commission, Clio's program has made a positive impact on the City and its residents in promoting a safer living environment.

At this time, I would like to congratulate the City of Clio and present the award for Innovation in Community Development to representatives from the City including City Administrator Eric Wiederhold, Mayor Bob Smith, and City Commissioners Bonnie Bare and Doug Vance.

Innovation in Planning and Development – Presented to an organization or community with the best approach for engaging their citizens, preserving and improving the natural environment, or collaborating with neighboring agencies on a project that benefits multiple communities.

The winner is the City of Flushing for their creative and successful fundraising effort toward replacement of the decking on the Flushing Trail Boardwalk Project along the Flint River.

Two decades ago the City undertook the idea to build a non-motorized pathway. After a lot of hard work and planning, a 1.4 mile trail was constructed and is a well-utilized gem in the community. Part of the trail is a 400' boardwalk which, after many years, is beginning to show signs of deterioration. This portion is integral to the trail. Flushing initiated a crowdfunding effort to raise the needed funds through Patronicity. This is a civic crowdfunding platform that brings citizens and sponsors together to support community projects. The Michigan Economic Development Corporation and the Michigan State Housing Development Authority are a partner through the Public Spaces Community Places grant and match funds raised for qualifying projects in Michigan.

The goal for the fundraiser was \$50,000 and nearly \$58,000 was raised through direct donations and community fundraising events which was matched by the MEDC and MSHDA. Through this effort, work on the boardwalk is expected to begin this spring and the old wood decking will be replaced with long lasting composite decking.

At this time, I would like to congratulate the City of Flushing and present the award for Innovation in Planning and Development. Mayor Kevin Keane and Councilperson Teresa Salem are here to accept the award on behalf of the City.

Innovation in Infrastructure – Presented to a community that has promoted alternative uses of infrastructure, used the latest advancements in technology, or provided a positive impact on a variety of populations.

The winner of the award is the City of Fenton for their Downtown Streetscape and Road Reconstruction Project. The project provided significant upgrades and improvements to a portion of Leroy and Shiawassee Streets in Fenton’s historic downtown. The project aligned with the vision of the business owners, community leaders and citizens.

The \$4.5 million dollar project was completed on schedule in May of 2016. Federal Transportation funds as well as state revolving fund dollars were the main project funding sources. Specific streetscape enhancements consisted of a new concrete sidewalk, decorative brick pavers, new lighting, and irrigated planter boxes. New lighting was added and the existing streetlights were repainted and decorated with hanging planter baskets. Also, permeable paver parking bays were added to allow surface drainage to be channeled back into the ground. Another key part of the project was the improvement of downtown walkability to meet the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements. Many of the existing buildings in downtown Fenton were not ADA accessible. The required accessibility improvements were challenging, but the design team developed creative solutions to address these issues.

The project was a large undertaking that has successfully enhanced the character of the downtown and has been a good investment for the community. At this time, I would like to congratulate the City of Fenton and present the award for Innovation in Infrastructure to representatives from the City including Lynn Markland, City Manager, City Treasurer Cindy Shane, DPW Director Dan Czarnecki, Michael Hart Assistant City Manager, and Scott Grossmeyer Councilmember.
