



# HOUSE of REPRESENTATIVES

## STATE OF MICHIGAN

### Appropriations Requests for Legislatively Directed Spending Items

---

1. The sponsoring representative's first name:  
Gina
2. The sponsoring representative's last name:  
Johnsen
3. The cosponsoring representatives' names. All cosponsors must be listed. If none, please type 'n/a.' A signed letter from the sponsor approving the co-sponsorship and a signed letter from the member wishing to co-sponsor are required. Attach letters at question #9 below.  
Representative Brian Posthumus
4. Name of the entity that the spending item is intended for:  
Flat River Outreach Ministries
5. Physical address of the entity that the spending item is intended for:  
11535 Fulton Street East, Lowell, MI 49331
6. If there is not a specific recipient, the intended location of the project or activity:  
n/a
7. Name of the representative and the district number where the legislatively directed spending item is located:  
Gina Johnsen, 78th House District
8. Purpose of the legislatively directed spending item. Please include how it provides a public benefit and why it is an appropriate use of taxpayer funding. Please also demonstrate that the item does not violate Article IV, S 30 of the Michigan Constitution.  
The purpose of this proposed legislatively directed spending item is to support the development of affordable and supportive housing through Flat River Outreach Ministries (FROM), a nonprofit human services organization serving families in eastern Kent County and western Ionia County. The funding will contribute to the construction of 17 new housing units for families struggling with high housing costs. The total project cost is \$3,310,000, and this request will help close the remaining funding gap, address potential cost overruns, and ensure timely project completion, with land preparation

expected to begin in summer 2025.

This initiative addresses a pressing public need by increasing access to safe, stable, and affordable housing. Research shows that children in stable housing are more likely to graduate from high school, experience improved mental health throughout their lives, and achieve stable housing as adults. In addition, stable housing supports workforce stability by enabling adults to maintain consistent employment, which benefits local businesses and strengthens the regional economy. FROM has received widespread community support, including contributions from 10 foundations, 15 businesses, and 120 individuals, underscoring the local demand and commitment to this project.

This proposed legislatively directed spending item is an appropriate use of taxpayer funding because it serves a legitimate and critical public purpose—housing stability for low-income families—and is administered by a nonprofit organization that provides more than a dozen community programs and serves approximately 1,000 households each year. All funds will be used for the development of public-benefit infrastructure and services.

This appropriation request fully complies with Article IV, Section 30 of the Michigan Constitution, which prohibits public funds from being used for private purposes. No portion of the funds will benefit private individuals or commercial interests. Any unused funds will be directed to other charitable programs operated by FROM, ensuring that every taxpayer dollar remains committed to the public good.

9. Attach documents here if needed:

Attachments added to the end of this file.

10. The amount of state funding requested for the legislatively directed spending item.

500000

11. Has the legislatively directed spending item previously received any of the following types of funding? Check all that apply.

["Private"]

12. Please select one of the following groups that describes the entity requesting the legislatively directed spending item:

Non-profit organization

13. For a non-profit organization, has the organization been operating within Michigan for the preceding 36 months?

Yes

14. For a non-profit organization, has the entity had a physical office within Michigan for the preceding 12 months?

Yes

15. For a non-profit organization, does the organization have a board of directors?

Yes

16. For a non-profit organization, list all the active members on the organization's board of directors and any other officers. If this question is not applicable, please type 'n/a.'

Chairman – Phil Gerard, Vice Chairman – Carla Stone, Treasurer – Paul Mundt, Secretary – Amy Bell, At-Large: Beryl Bartkus, Terry Conley, Dave Emmette, Jake Heitman, Bill Jones, Mary Nugent, Shelli Otten, Hunter Pham, Kelly Powell

17. "I certify that neither the sponsoring representative nor the sponsoring representative's staff or immediate family has a direct or indirect pecuniary interest in the legislatively directed spending item."

Yes, this is correct

18. Anticipated start and end dates for the legislatively directed spending item:

July 1 2025 - Dec 31 2026

19. "I hereby certify that all information provided in this request is true and accurate."

Yes



**FROM**  
FLAT RIVER  
OUTREACH MINISTRIES

*Supportive and Affordable Housing for Lowell  
Phase 2 Development project at 504 E. Main Street*

## PROJECT INFORMATION

- **\$3.3 million project** with 17 units consisting of 1-, 2-, and 3-bedroom units
- **\$2.8 million raised and committed** from 10 foundations, 15 businesses, and 120 individuals
- Case management support with goal-setting for tenants, leveraging 26 years of case management and 9 years of property management experience
- Maximum income at move-in, target up to 80% AMI
- Families up to 4 people

**Request consideration for \$500,000 to support the project**



## HOUSING NEED IN GREATER LOWELL

- In a 2024 survey of FROM clients, households with children are twice as likely to struggle paying rent or mortgage than those without children. (DataWise, 2024).
- Across Kent County, excluding Grand Rapids, there is a housing gap of 5,107 rental units over the next five years (Bowen National Research, 2022).
- 43% of renters in zip codes 49331 and 49302 are cost-burdened, meaning 30% or more of their income goes toward housing. (Baker Tilly Advisory Group, LP, 2024).

## COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Support includes both funds and in-kind services. Some contributors are listed below:

Christian Life Center Church Pastor James Peterson	King Milling Brian Doyle	Mercantile Bank
Pending: Cook Foundation	Look Memorial Fund	Meijer
Earthworm Dozing and Excavating Dave Gonyon	City of Lowell	Mojo Foundation Mick McGraw
Enwork Dave and Kelli Powell	Lowell Area Community Fund	Swisslane Farms Inc
Herbruck's Poultry Ranch	Lowell Area Schools Nate Fowler	Terra Verde Landscaping Mark Anderson
Impact Church Pastor Ryan Kresge	Lyonnais Inc. Todd Lyonnais	Timpson Transport John and Colleen Timpson

## PROJECT ALIGNMENT WITH City of Lowell

- Economic Impact: Over the first 25 years, the FROM project is projected to generate over \$900,000 of economic impact (not including the project costs paid to local contractors and builders in the initial site construction):
  - \$275,000 in property tax revenue to the City of Lowell
  - \$125,000 in water/sewer paid to the City of Lowell
  - \$450,000 in utility revenue to Lowell Light & Power
  - \$ 62,500 in local contractor revenue for ongoing building maintenance
  - Local employees to support local businesses, of the current tenants that work, all of them work within 3 miles of the site
- Community Improvement
  - Significant improvements near the entrance of the city from the east
  - Stable housing supports family and education stability for generations to come

## FLAT RIVER OUTREACH MINISTRIES (FROM)

Flat River Outreach Ministries (FROM) strives to identify the greatest areas of need within our community and then seeks out solutions to address them. You can see this lived out through our mission and vision; our Supportive and Affordable Housing development is no different.

- Purpose: To Demonstrate Christ's Love in Our Community, no matter what
- Mission: Be the greater Lowell community hub where hope, resources and gifts are shared.
- Vision: Equal access and opportunities to meet basic needs with an emphasis on learning and advancement for all