



# MICHIGAN HISTORIC PRESERVATION NETWORK

July 2025 Newsletter

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*MHPN supports the sustainability and economic viability of Michigan's historic places through advocacy, education, and direct action.*

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*Looking eastward to Detroit, Belle Isle, Jefferson Avenue, the Grosse Pointes, and Lake St. Clair. Photo: Open Source.*

## Call for Abstracts

The Michigan Historic Preservation Network invites you to submit a session abstract to be considered for the 46th Annual Statewide Preservation Conference. With a working title of "Enduring Distinction," the conference will take place on Thursday, May 7 through Saturday, May 9, 2026, at the Visitor

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approximately 24 in-seat sessions needed for three program tracks. We are seeking sessions related to the theme, information, as well as applied skills and case studies.

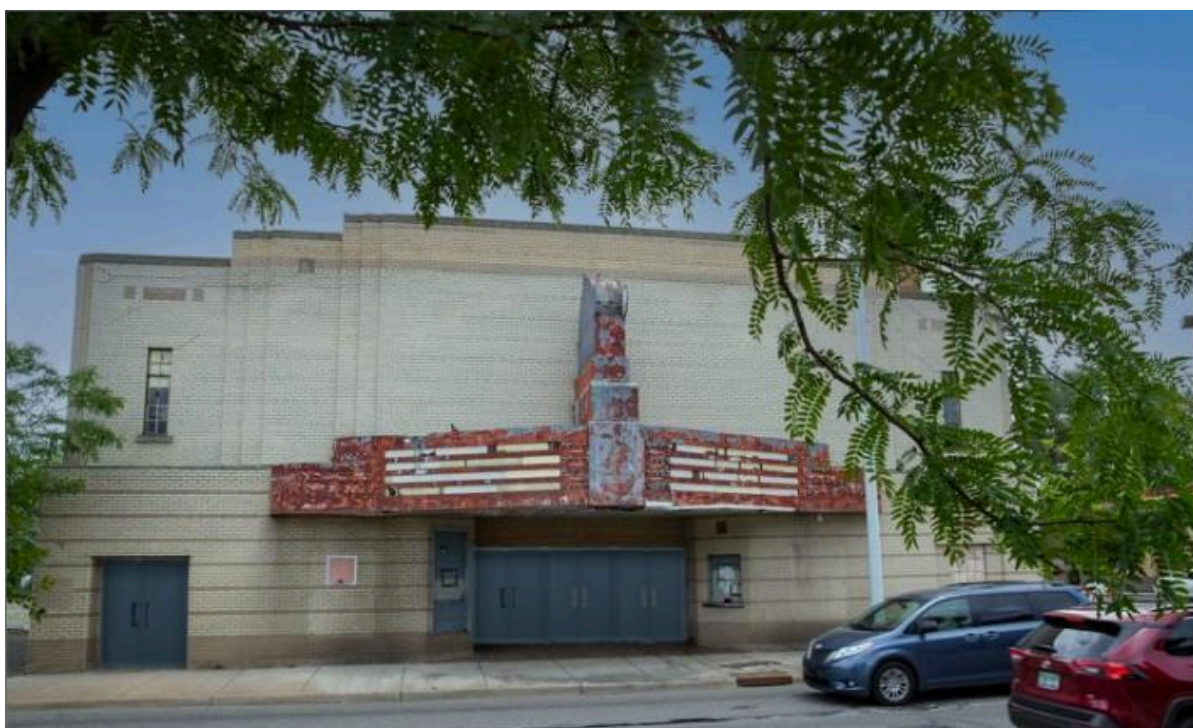
New this year is the Abstract Submission Portal, an online submission system through the Whova mobile app and website we used for the 2025 annual conference registrations. If you are already using Whova, your current login and account information is all that is needed to upload your abstract submission. New users will be required to create an account. You can [download Whova here](#).

The Abstract Submission Portal is open. [Visit MHPN's website to learn more about the portal, conference theme, and speaker information](#). The submission deadline is Sunday, September 21, 2025, at 11:59 p.m.

*Abstracts are welcomed from Michigan's Upper and Lower Peninsulas as well as from neighboring states and Canada and may come from individuals and panels.*

*Would a session idea of yours be a good fit? Talk with us!*

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*The Four Star Theatre in Grand Rapids.*

## **Save the Date! The MHPN Fall Benefit is October 4**

MHPN's Fall Benefit is Saturday, October 4, from 5 to 8:30 p.m. at the Four Star Theatre in Grand Rapids. The evening includes a strolling dinner, complimentary beer and wine, an auction, and awards ceremony. Registration opens in late July.

Members and friends of the MHPN have gathered for over 30 years to spend an enjoyable Fall evening together at a significant historic venue. This year, we'll gather at the Four Star Theatre, a Depression-era movie house built in the Burton Heights neighborhood by B & J Theaters. After being a single-screen theater, nightclub, music venue, youth center, and church, it was struggling by

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through the efforts of a visionary owner, a stellar board, and community partners.

The Four Star Theatre is not a finished project – the inside is more complete than the exterior and an MEDC award has just been announced for marquee repair. But its doors already are open to an increasingly full schedule. This is a rebirth you shouldn't miss!



*Maple Street is one of Sault Ste. Marie's beautiful residential districts. MHPN enjoyed being in the Soo for the 45th annual conference in May. Photo: Janet Kreger.*

### **Nothing beats summer in Michigan, but before you leave . . .**

There are so many things to do in our state during the summer! As you plan a road trip that motors you away from the work-a-day world, consider how often your compass points you towards one of Michigan's historic destinations. MHPN works with you throughout the year to protect these treasures.

[Will you consider going the extra mile to support our efforts with a summertime gift before you grab your travel mug and head off?](#)

Everyone involved with MHPN works on behalf of preservation year-round. This includes our board members around the state, our small-but-able staff, and many committed volunteers and partners. There are a lot of high-energy pros here! Through one-on-one as well as community-wide assistance, communications on all media platforms, workshops and trades trainings, advocacy on state and federal issues, and an endless stream of letters to the editor, blogs, and opinion pieces, they provide the assistance property owners and community leaders need as they preserve places that matter – the places you circle on your road map!

Michigan is a big, beautiful, culturally-rich state with historic destinations at every turn of the road. Please consider a donation today and visit [MHPN's online donation site](#), call us at 517-371-8080, or send a check made out to MHPN, to 313 E César E. Chávez Blvd, Lansing, MI 48906.

Help ensure that our efforts don't take a vacation!



Melissa Milton-Pung  
MHPN President

*PS: Seeking "new" historic towns to visit? Explore the resources of our partner, the [Michigan Main Street Program](#).*

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### **Some comments from the conference...**

Rest assured we carefully noted criticisms – i.e. there was no time to look around the Soo because the days and evenings were packed . . . you couldn't get to all the sessions . . . content was too advanced or not advanced enough. But, all in all, comments were overwhelmingly positive! Here are some highlights:

*"We were astonished at the level of polished organization which we saw throughout our time with you, from impeccable timing to terrific sessions... and the amenities which showed caring for your attendees. Our three tours really acquainted us with The Soo, a town which we have wanted to get to know for years. We have come away with a historical perspective which we never would have gained just through reading - and congrats to all of your guides/presenters, who shared their stories about a town of which they are very proud."*

*"The resources shared at this conference on how and why are really invaluable to furthering the community's knowledge and confidence...."*

*"This was perhaps the most valuable networking conference I've been to...."*

*"In this time of upheaval, when the field of historic preservation seems under siege by the federal government, it was good to be with a group of undaunted preservationists. So much has been done over the past 50 years, there is no way to erase that progress. Lack of funding and support will slow things down and make things harder, but the recycling of older buildings shall go on."*

*"Preservation advocacy is still strong in Michigan!"*

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*L to R: Wayne Lusardi, State Maritime Archaeologist, and Casey Ambrose, RAM Construction Services, at the Michigan History Center and Michigan DNR exhibitor's space during the recent MHPN annual conference. Photo: Stacy Tchorzynski*

## **Have you submitted your conference photos . . . how about your evaluation?**

Annual conference participants take some of the best photos of the action during our time together. If you captured interesting photos of people at the conference, buildings on the tours, or participants enjoying the events, upload them to [our Dropbox](#). Remember to add your name to your photos, too! If you can't identify who or what is in the photo, then we'll do that for you.

Feel free to add photos to your social media feeds with the hashtag #MHPNConference25. Tag us, too! Additionally, you can help us learn what went well and what could be improved by taking our [survey](#). It only takes a few minutes, and, *seriously*, we look at every comment that comes in. If you have the Whova app, you can upload your photos and take the survey there.

*If you haven't installed Whova, [download it here](#) and be ready for next year's conference on May 7-9 in metro Detroit!*





*Scholarship Recipient Candace Calloway at MHPN's annual conference in Sault Ste. Marie.*

### **A note of thanks from conference scholarship recipient Candace Calloway**

*While many longtime participants continue to enjoy and to gain insights and knowledge from the annual conference, newer participants find the conference equally worthwhile. We appreciate Candace's letter to Preservation Ladies & Gents of EMU, the scholarship sponsor. Would you like to sponsor a future scholarship? Let us know!*

Deepest gratitude to you for affording me the opportunity to attend the 2025 MI Historic Preservation Network Conference in beautiful Sault Saint Marie. I had an incredible time and learned a lot about the preservation efforts happening across the State of Michigan.

On behalf of the Detroit Association of Women's Clubs, Incorporated, I was inspired by the workshops and great information shared. Our 113-year-old clubhouse located in downtown Detroit is embarking on an incredible restoration and preservation journey! Attending the conference and connecting not only with subject matter experts, but licensed contractors who we can learn from and utilize, was invaluable. I'm so happy I was able to join so many incredible sessions with experts in preservation. I've got a lot to learn and this is only the start.

Please visit our website at [www.friendsofdawc.com](http://www.friendsofdawc.com) for more information about our progress.

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Candace Calloway  
Executive Director  
Detroit Association of Women's Clubs, Incorporated  
"Lifting As We Climb"



*Preservation Ladies & Gents is an over-30-year-old informal network of activists affiliated with the Graduate Program in Historic Preservation at EMU. They have funded a scholarship for years. Thank you!*

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### Upcoming Webinar

#### **Webinar - Dreamtroit: A Model for the Creative Reuse of Aging Facilities**

**Where:** Online using your phone or computer

**When:** July 17, 1 p.m.

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After housing varied tenants from the 1930s until 2020, the former Warren Motor Car Company factory complex buildings were rehabilitated into a mixed-use housing development called Dreamtroit. Using a complex financial structure that relied heavily on Historic Tax Credits (HTCs), the project repaired and restored the masonry facades, including cast stone and limestone trim; installed historically accurate windows; and restored character-defining interior materials. Dreamtroit's adaptive reuse has spurred substantial growth and diversification. By repurposing underutilized spaces, the project has introduced a diverse array of tenants, including affordable residential apartments, artist studios and commercial establishments. This mix of uses fosters a dynamic and inclusive community, contributing to the neighborhood's vibrancy and resilience. Dreamtroit was recognized by the MHPN in 2024 with its annual Tax Credit Award.

#### Learning Objectives:

1. Learn about Dreamtroit, the history of the Lincoln Factory, and the community that formed around Recycle Here.
2. Learn some of the trials and tribulations of a historic redevelopment project in Detroit.
3. Understand the complex financial structure and the use of Historic Tax Credits.
4. Learn about the strategies used to foster a dynamic and inclusive community.

**Speaker:** Oren Goldenberg, Owner, Dreamtroit

MHPN's monthly webinars are free and open to everyone. Registration is open! Click below to register.

[Register](#)

Did you miss a webinar or wish to review it again? [View past webinar recordings](#). Do you have a great webinar idea you would like to explore with us? Let us know by emailing us at [xbaosmith@mhpnp.org](mailto:xbaosmith@mhpnp.org).

The MHPN's Webinar Series is supported in part by the Michigan Arts & Culture Council and National Endowment for the Arts.



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## PRESERVATION NEWS YOU CAN USE!

### From the National Trust for Historic Preservation:

**Federal Advocacy Update Webinar:** The National Trust for Historic Preservation will hold a free webinar, "Federal Advocacy Update—What You Can Do Now," on July 16. The National Trust's Government Relations team will provide timely actions advocates can take to support historic preservation efforts and progress to date. [Register today!](#)

**Historic Preservation Fund (HPF):** Urge your federal elected officials to release 2025 HPF funding and fund the HPF in 2026. Despite being fully funded by Congress in March 2025 through a Continuing Resolution, Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 appropriated dollars for the Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) still haven't been released. This delay threatens the work of State and Tribal Historic Preservation Offices, puts historic places at risk, and could halt preservation projects nationwide. [Learn more.](#)



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