



# 2025 ANNUAL REPORT



*Your Downtown*

MAIN STREET  
*Barberton*

[www.mainstreetbarborton.com](http://www.mainstreetbarborton.com)

# LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



## Dear Friends, Partners, and Supporters,

This annual report tells a story of a year marked by momentum, collaboration, and renewed belief in Downtown Barberton. What was once a vision is now clearly taking shape through tangible progress, strategic investment, and a growing sense of pride in the Magic City.

In 2025, Main Street Barberton continued to serve as a catalyst for economic development, historic preservation, and community connection. From facilitating the opening of eight new downtown businesses to supporting almost two million dollars in building renovations, we are seeing long-vacant spaces transformed into places of opportunity. Twenty-three properties have moved from vacancy toward activation since our inception, dropping our downtown vacancy rate to just 20%, a six percent reduction since 2023. When buildings are cared for, communities will begin to thrive.

Our work extended well beyond bricks and mortar. Through legislation, placemaking, and thoughtful event programming, we focused on creating a downtown that is welcoming, vibrant, and easy to navigate. New wayfinding signage, expanded DORA access, parklets, mini murals, and beautification efforts all contribute to a downtown experience that invites people to linger, explore, and return. More than 174,000 visitors spent time within the Main Street district in 2025—a testament to the growing appeal of downtown Barberton as a destination.

Equally important is the strength of our business community. Main Street Barberton supported entrepreneurs at every stage, offering tools, guidance, and connections to help businesses succeed. Thirteen new businesses have opened downtown to date, each one representing confidence in Barberton's future and a commitment to investing locally.

Digital engagement surged across all platforms, with a 240% increase in Google profile views, strong growth on social media, and more than 20,000 website visits in 2025 alone. These numbers confirm what we feel on the ground every day—people are paying attention, getting involved, and reconnecting with downtown.

None of this work happens in isolation. More than 1,400 volunteer hours supported our efforts this year, and our first-ever fundraiser brought neighbors together in a meaningful way while raising critical resources for the organization. Our sponsors, partners, board members, volunteers, and city leadership share a belief in Barberton's potential, and their support fuels every success highlighted in this report.

As you turn the pages that follow, I invite you to see this report not just as a summary of accomplishments, but as a reflection of what is possible when a community works together with intention and care. The foundation has been laid, the momentum is real, and the future of downtown Barberton is bright.

Thank you for being part of this journey. Together, we are creating opportunity, strengthening connections, and shaping a downtown that serves our community today and for generations to come.

With gratitude and optimism,

**MELANIE BLACK**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



## WE BELIEVE IN *Community*

### MISSION

Strengthening the revitalization of our historic downtown by supporting local businesses, encouraging investment, and fostering a sense of community pride.

### VISION

Create a vibrant downtown that celebrates Barberton's historic character while inspiring growth, connection, and pride.



## Wayfinding Signage

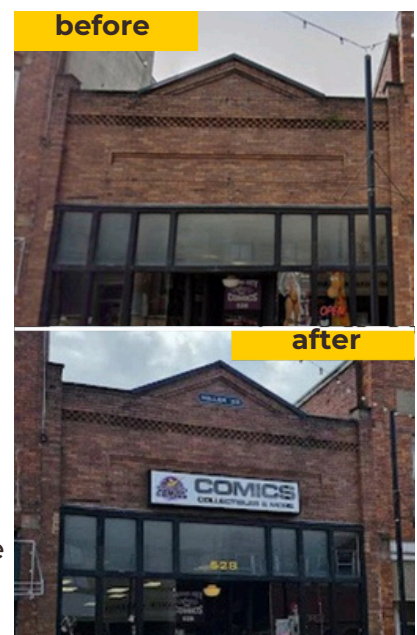
Wayfinding signage supports new and existing visitors in navigating our city while reconnecting long-time residents with the new and emerging businesses downtown. The five new wayfinding signs were purchased and installed with funding through an Arts Now Arts Forward grant and individual business support. Additionally, two new downtown Magic City map kiosks are coming this spring!

## Small Business Guide & Project Success Checklist

The Small Business Guide and Project Success Checklist were created in partnership with the City of Barberton and Main Street Barberton to serve as practical, step-by-step resources for new and aspiring businesses located in existing downtown Barberton buildings. These tools clearly outline required forms, inspections, and key processes, helping entrepreneurs navigate startup requirements efficiently and confidently while supporting successful business openings downtown.

## Downtown Signage Improvement Program

Through the Commercial Signage Grant Reimbursement Program funded by the Barberton Community Foundation, Main Street Barberton supported small businesses within the downtown district by providing matching funds of up to \$5,000 for new or improved exterior signage. In 2025, funding was awarded to Game On Arcade, Erin's Studio, Masterminds Escape Room, The Tea Lady, Clem's Viral Bites, and The Green Diamond Grille. These enhancements are strengthening downtown's visual appeal and brand identity— watch for these new signs as they come to life throughout Barberton this year.



# Events

Through twelve strategically planned events, Main Street Barberton energized the downtown district, welcoming more than **9,000** visitors to enjoy festivals, dining, and shopping experiences throughout the year. Visitors to our downtown generated an estimated economic impact of more than \$190,000.



## Parklets

Outdoor seating expands the number of customers a local eatery can serve while inviting patrons to enjoy outdoor dining and beverages alfresco. Building on the success of the two parklets designed and installed by the City of Barberton in 2024, MSB secured a \$7,000 grant from the Home Depot Foundation and utilized their team of fifteen volunteers to build two additional parklets to enjoy along 2nd St. NW and W Tusc Ave. These mobile outdoor seating areas go into storage every winter and reemerge in the spring and provide a unique vantage point for visitors downtown.





## 2025 OPENINGS

To date, MSB has facilitated the opening of 13 new businesses downtown since 2023. In 2025 alone, downtown Barberton saw the launch of eight businesses: The Tea Lady, Right Field Sports Cards, Rubber City Bargains, Styles and Finds, Masterminds Escape Rooms, TimberBeast Axe Throwing, Game on Arcade, and the Downtown Event Center. These small businesses drive the local economy, fill previously vacant spaces within our historic buildings, bringing the community together, and most importantly, represent a shared belief in the future of the Magic City.

### Mini Murals

Through a placemaking initiative, MSB introduced a mini-mural project behind Lake Anna Hall, turning a bare alley into an engaging public space. Funded by Power Graphics, this inaugural mural marks the beginning of a broader public art effort. This year, temporary art will continue to roll out downtown, with each alley named and curated around a unique theme.



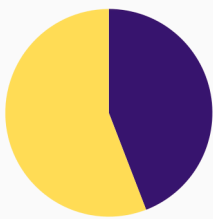
# Sales and Renovations

Momentum continues to build indowntown Barberton. Through strategic connections between building owners, investors, and entrepreneurs, Main Street supported the reinvestment and activation of historical buildings that had been neglected due to deferred maintenance. In 2025, 10 downtown buildings were sold. Building renovations generated \$1,871,164 in private investment.

In just three years and a one-mile radius, 23 properties in our downtown boundaries have sold. By maintaining an up-to-date inventory of available properties and serving as a connector between stakeholders, MSB ensured that buildings were not only sold, but matched with uses that strengthen the downtown ecosystem. Stewardship of downtown properties protects Barberton's architectural heritage while creating spaces for new businesses to thrive.



## Fun Facts



There are 79 businesses in our downtown boundaries and an opportunity to grow to more than 100 in just a one mile radius.



**One hundred and seventy four thousand** visitors visited the Main Street Barberton boundaries in 2025.



Seventy-eight bags of garbage were collected from our downtown cleanups



More than 1,400 volunteer hours were given to Main Street Barberton to see our community thrive.

# Beautification

When a city looks cared for, it feels cared for. Improving downtown cleanliness and visual appeal helps reshape how Barberton is seen by residents, visitors, and business owners alike, while reinforcing pride in the Magic City and confidence in its future.

Through the downtown cleanup initiative, MSB led monthly cleanups with community volunteers, collecting garbage from our sidewalks, lots and public spaces.



Fundraising efforts led by MSB resulted in the installation of 20 flower pots around downtown businesses and parklets. In support, the City of Barberton purchased an additional 40 flowerpots to expand the beautification program and kept them flourishing through regular waterings. Flower pots are decorated to match the season throughout the year by Main Street Barberton volunteers and staff.

Main Street Barberton advocated for new decorative flags and an increase in the number of trash cans along W. Tuscarawas and 2nd St. NW. With City funding and funding support from White Rabbit Galleries, as well as a grant from Project Graphics, this initiative went from concept to completion. These bright new additions highlight the beauty of our Magic City.

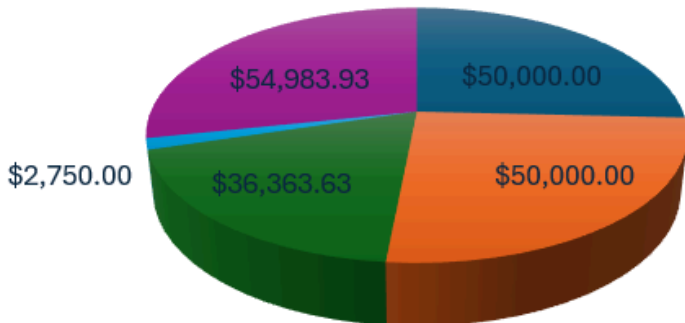


## Supporting Existing Barberton Businesses

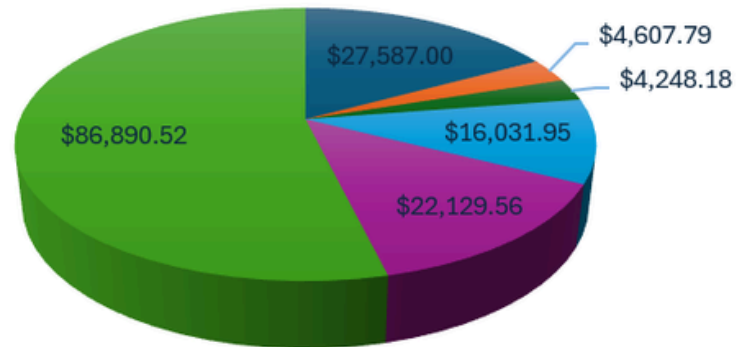
MSB remains committed to strengthening both existing and emerging businesses by providing practical tools, timely information, and access to expert guidance. In 2025, MSB hosted four small business meetings open to current and prospective entrepreneurs in Barberton. These sessions addressed essential topics for sustainability and growth, including downtown Barberton grant and loan opportunities, funding through the Economic & Community Development Institute (ECDI), and the use of AI tools to support daily operations, marketing, and business planning. MSB also secured industry speakers focused on restaurant marketing, with an emphasis on effective branding and messaging. In its role overseeing the Designated Outdoor Refreshment Area (DORA), Main Street Barberton partnered with the City of Barberton to host a mandatory DORA training to ensure compliance with outdoor alcohol regulations.

# INCOME AND EXPENSES

## 2025 INCOME



## EXPENSES



## 2025 Income

- City of Barberton
- Other Grants
- Fundraiser/Donations
- Barberton Community Foundation
- DORA Cups

## 2025 Expenses

- Second Saturdays
- Beautification
- Marketing
- DORA
- Signage
- Operations (Rent, payroll, supplies)



MSB held its first official fundraiser dinner, Speak Easy of Murder, a murder mystery at The Venue at Al's in downtown Barberton. It was a resounding success, raising more than \$9,000 and selling out every seat.

While the funds raised directly support MSB's work, the true value of this event extended beyond dollars. It brought neighbors, businesses, and supporters together. Events like this encourage civic involvement and create meaningful connections and memories.

# MARKETING & DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT

The data tells a compelling story of growing visibility and engagement for Main Street Barberton. In 2025, interest in MSB increased significantly, with Google profile views reaching 4,140—a 240% increase over 2024. MSB's Facebook presence also experienced strong growth, reaching 6,310 followers and generating 43,168 likes, reflecting broad community interest and engagement. Momentum continued on Instagram, where followers increased by 57% to 491.

This upward trend extended to the MSB website as well, which saw a 51% increase in users compared to the previous year. More than 20,000 visits were recorded in 2025, representing 19,629 individual users. Together, these metrics demonstrate that residents and visitors alike are actively seeking connection, information, and opportunities to engage in downtown Barberton.

## Volunteers

More than 1,400 volunteer hours were logged by more than 90 volunteers. This equates to \$46,425 in volunteer service value generated in our downtown.

## Moving Forward

In 2026, Main Street Barberton's motto is *Activating the Heart of the City: "365 Downtown"*. This motto simplifies our three areas of focus in 2026.

- Enhance Community Engagement and Identity
- Catalyze Downtown Revitalization
- Build Financial Sustainability and Partnerships

With a dedicated team of volunteers and staff, City of Barberton and the Barberton Community Foundation backing, and financial support from businesses and community members, Main Street will continue to be a economic development engine for our community.

The generosity of our supporters fuel the work of MSB. Each contribution a shared belief in Barberton's potential and a desire to see the Magic City flourish. We are deeply thankful for everyone who invested in Main Street Barberton in 2025 and we look forward with excitement to another year of creating community, opportunity and connection.



# List of Supporters

## Founders

Barberton Community Foundation  
City of Barberton

## Corporate

Full Spectrum Marketing  
Pedal Stomper Productions  
Raymond James Financial – Office of Dennis Liddle & Hugh McMichael

## Event Sponsors

Barberton Community Foundation  
Barberton Gazette  
Barberton Local Fire Fighters 329  
Block 7  
BWXT  
El Wray Records  
First Presbyterian Church  
Green Diamond  
Ignite Brewing Company  
Liedertafel  
Little Dragon's Hoard Shoppe  
M & M's Taphouse  
Magic City Pickleball Club  
Magic Pedal Pub  
Magical Theatre Company  
Mayor William B. Judge  
Mr. & Mrs. Tom Harnden  
Peak Family Chiropractic  
Pedal Stomper Productions  
Raymond James Financial – Office of Dennis Liddle & Hugh McMichael  
Renewal By Andersen  
S & T Balloonology  
Smart Infrared Inspections  
St. Andrew's Episcopal Church  
Summit Visitors Bureau  
The Corner  
The Hungarian Club  
The Red Hare Personal Chef & Catering

## Flower Pot Sponsors

Barberton City Schools  
Barberton Local Fire Fighters 329  
Bruce May- Kennedy & Collins Co. LPA  
Caines Flowers  
Christine Finan  
Debra Shreiner – Helen Scott Realty  
Dr Douglas A. and Jane C. Gormley Charitable Fund  
Mr. & Mrs. Tom Harnden  
Finley Plumbing, Inc.  
Jack & Connie Colanda  
Jeff and Shelly Habegger  
Kavé Coffee Bar  
Kiwanis Club of Barberton  
Magic City Kiwanis  
Remarkable Diner  
Shannon Davis  
VFW Post 1066  
White Rabbit Galleries

## Small Business Supporters

Al's Quality Market  
Anna Bean Coffee  
Aunt Hannah's Antiques  
Barberton Community Foundation  
Barberton Kiwanis  
Barberton Public Library  
Block 7 Bar and Grill  
Brookdale Barberton  
Caines Flowers  
Diamond Match Party Center  
Downtown Event Center  
El Tule Mexican Restaurant  
Fa Ray's Restaurant  
Flowers Galore  
Freedom Construction  
Full Spectrum Marketing  
Game on Arcade  
Green Diamond  
Ignite Brewing Company  
Kave Coffee Bar  
Kiwanis Club of Barberton  
Lake 8  
Lake Anna Tec Hub  
Lake Anna YMCA  
Liedertafel  
Little Dragon's Hoard  
M and M's Taphouse  
Magic City Comics  
Magical Theatre Company  
Mancan  
MasterMinds Gaming  
NMI Insurance  
Pedal Stomper Productions  
Pre game Tavern  
Raymond James Financial- Dennis Liddle & Hugh McMichael  
Rotary of Barberton  
S. Summit Chamber of Commerce  
Scott Cunningham DDS  
Skoops Ice Cream  
Slovene Center  
Snowball Books and More  
The Corner  
the implicit being  
The Red Hare Personal Chef and Catering  
The Tea Lady  
Tusk  
VFW 1066  
White Rabbit Galleries











# MAIN STREET *Barberton*

*We are a nonprofit organization focused on rehabilitating and revitalizing downtown Barberton*







## 2025 Economic Development

-  Economic Impact  
\$192,980 (\$20 per person)
-  Net New Full Time Jobs  
6
-  Net New Part-Time Jobs  
2
-  New Businesses Opened  
8
-  Private Rehab Investment  
\$1,871,164
-  Public Investment  
\$280,000
-  Downtown Buildings Sold  
10
-  Downtown Vacancy Rate  
21%
-  Avg rent per sq ft  
\$0.50

## Building Community

-  Special Event Attendance  
9,649
-  Events Hosted in 2025  
16
-  Façade Improvements  
7
-  Building Rehab Projects  
15
-  Downtown Housing Units  
73
-  Volunteer Hours Donated  
1,432
-  Value of Volunteer Hours  
\$46,425

## 2025 COMMUNITY *Profile*

-  Population  
24,624
-  Median Family Income  
\$47,951
-  Median Home Value  
\$129,183
-  Median Average Age  
39.6

## Main Street Barberton

-  Newsletter Distribution  
1274
-  Facebook Followers  
6,310
-  Instagram Followers  
491
-  Website Visits  
20,425



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