

ICEA

Ionia County
Economic
Alliance

Powered by The Right Place

2025 ANNUAL REPORT



Letter from the Chair

Fifteen years ago, the Ionia County Economic Alliance (ICEA) formed a strategic partnership with The Right Place, Inc. to drive long-term job creation, investment and overall economic prosperity in Ionia County.

Since then, ICEA has significantly increased its capabilities, and become an even more valuable resource to the Ionia County business community. ICEA provides Ionia County businesses with the tools, resources, and support they need to flourish.

In addition to directly supporting the business community, ICEA also works on long-term initiatives to create strong foundations for sustainable economic growth. Examples include our continued work to help with expansion of current businesses while attracting new, working with developers on more housing options, and assisting municipalities with placemaking projects.

ICEA looks beyond the more immediate gains of economic development through investments in strategic, long-term initiatives within the county. Infrastructure, work-ready talent, and quality of life are all critical factors in creating healthy foundations for continued economic growth.



**PRECIA
GARLAND**
Chair, ICEA

THE PARTNERSHIP

ICEA is a public-private partnership, and receives financial support from both communities and businesses to sustain this partnership and enable long-term building of economic prosperity in Ionia County. We look forward to our continued work together to create the next generation of economic growth in our community.

ICEA Overview



Our Mission

Long-term, sustainable economic growth is the goal of the ICEA. By supporting existing businesses in Ionia County while attracting new business to the area, ICEA provides a firm foundation for future growth of the county.

Our Board

- **Precia Garland** (Chair), *City of Ionia*
- **Ethan Ebenstein** (Vice-Chair), *Ionia County ISD*
- **Rose Willson**, (Treasurer), *Union Bank*
- **Amber Rood** (Secretary), *The Daily News*
- **Amy Herbruck**, *Herbruck's Poultry Ranch*
- **Andrew Dymczyk**, *City of Portland*
- **Chad Shaw**, *Ionia County Administrator*
- **Gordon Kelley**, *Ionia County Commissioner*
- **Jamie Rye**, *West Michigan Regional Planning Commission*
- **Jenny Dinehart**, *Independent Bank*
- **Linda Reetz**, *U of M Health Sparrow*
- **Rebecca O'Connell**, *Consumers Energy*
- **Scott Mattson**, *Montcalm Community College*
- **Steve Holt**, *ICEA Board Member*
- **Voula Lapinski**, *PFCU*

2025 at a Glance

For more than twenty-five years, ICEA has partnered with business and community leaders to advance long-term economic prosperity in Ionia County. Residents and employers alike recognize the positive impact of this work, from increased access to quality employment opportunities to the economic ripple effects created when local businesses grow and invest.

Partnering with The Right Place, ICEA is focused on advancing strategic initiatives that support business attraction and retention, workforce development, housing readiness, and community collaboration. These efforts are essential to ensuring Ionia County remains a place where businesses can thrive and residents can build prosperous lives.

ICEA prioritizes its work in three main pillars of focus: People, Place, and Prosperity! This work includes serving and supporting local employers, attracting new businesses and investment, collaborating with municipalities and regional partners, and strengthening the overall economic competitiveness of Ionia County.



→	Company Visits	60+
→	Company Assists	300+
→	Project Pipeline	10

ICEA Investment Report

A contribution to ICEA is not just financial; it is a statement of belief in our county’s future and a partnership in shaping that future together. Support from local businesses and municipalities is critical to sustain our work in making Ionia County an even better place to live, work, and play. An investment in our work produces a direct return in the form of new jobs, capital investment, strong businesses, and increased quality of life in Ionia County.



→ Investors	40
→ New/Increased	5
→ Total Raised	\$116,000+

Our Investors

 **21** Private Investors

 **19** Public Investors

- APEC
- Cargill Kitchen Solutions
- C.L. Trucking and Excavating
- Coldwell Banker Frewen Realty
- Consumers Energy
- Herbruck's Poultry Ranch
- HomeWork's Tri-County
- Independent Bank
- Ionia County Community Foundation
- ITC Holdings
- Jordan Manufacturing
- Mercantile Bank
- Michigan One Community Credit Union
- PFCU
- SoZo Coffee Roasting
- The Daily News
- Triangle Associates
- U of M Health-Sparrow
- Union Bank
- West Michigan Works
- Wolbers Possehn

- Belding Public Schools
- Boston Township
- City of Belding
- City of Ionia
- City of Portland
- Easton Township
- Ionia County
- Ionia County Intermediate School District
- Ionia Public Schools
- Lakewood Public Schools
- Montcalm Community College
- Odessa Township
- Portland Public Schools
- Saranac Community Schools
- Village of Clarksville
- Village of Lake Odessa
- Village of Muir
- Village of Pewamo
- Village of Saranac

*Thank you to our 2025
Investors that made all of
this work possible.*

Strategic Partners

Thank you to our strategic partners who support Economic Development work in Ionia County.

Belding Area Chamber of Commerce

Ionia County Career Center

Ionia Area Chamber of Commerce

Ionia County Community Foundation

Ionia DDA

MI Portland Downtown

United Way of Greater Central Michigan

West Michigan Works!

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2025 Highlights



5th Annual MIPitch Event

ICEA partnered with area Chambers, Strategic Partners, and the Montcalm Economic Alliance for the fifth annual MIPitch event. \$16,000 was awarded to five promising start-ups with Smith + Blossom taking 1st place. Four finalists were businesses in Ionia County. The event, which was attended by over 70 people, is designed to encourage entrepreneurship in Ionia and Montcalm Counties, which is a key economic growth strategy for the region.

Pure Aluminum Expansion

Pure Aluminum is a greenfield secondary aluminum manufacturing facility located in Berlin Township just outside Saranac that completed construction and expansion work late in 2025. At full capacity, the facility is expected to process over 30 million pounds of recycled aluminum per month. Total investment after a multi-phase expansion will be over \$50 million.



2025 Highlights



K-12 Business Awareness

ICEA coordinated business tours with multiple area high schools. The goal of these business tours is to create a pipeline of talent by exposing high school students to the many different careers in their community. In 2025, ICEA worked with Belding High School, Ionia High School, the Ionia County Career Center, and Saranac High School to gain exposure to multiple businesses in the Ionia area. Looking ahead to 2026 and beyond, ICEA will be expanding engagement to all K-12 levels.

City of Ionia RAP Grant

The City of Ionia received \$185,000 towards Steele Street Park which is a multiphase project to revitalize a vacant 7.7-acre parcel into a vibrant recreational complex, with the centerpiece being a performing arts pavilion.

The initial phase of the project will establish critical infrastructure and amenities on approximately one acre of the site. Parking facilities will be constructed to accommodate visitors, ensuring convenient and accessible entry to the park and its offerings. ADA-compliant sidewalks will provide connectivity between the parking area, the performing arts pavilion, the Fred Meijer Trail and the downtown area.



Contact Us



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