

Society of Environmentally Responsible Facilities

CASE STUDY

April 2011

Project: THE STADIUM DISTRICT

Location: 500 E. MICHIGAN AVE LANSING, MI 48912

Owner/Developer: GILLESPIE GROUP



Sustainability depends on balancing necessary services, jobs and housing with the needs of the community. Changing industry and a diversified workforce have led to revitalization

in Lansing, Michigan including new opportunities for mixed-use developments.

Gillespie Group's Stadium District building, located on Michigan Avenue between the major north-south corridor of Cedar and Larch Streets, is a prime example of the recommitment to the idea of downtown: a thriving urban core where people can live, work and play.

Gillespie Group was founded as Gillespie Development in 1994, and transformed into Gillespie Group in 2003 through the leadership of Patrick K. Gillespie. Traditionally considered suburban developers, they established apartment communities outside of Grand Rapids, Jackson and other areas.

Gillespie saw great potential in his hometown of Lansing and the vital need for a downtown area. He invested in a piece of city-owned property that was previously home to a mix of commercial and residential buildings - which had been flattened to a barely-used parking lot - with the goal of revitalization.

In 2008, Gillespie Group opened a four-story, mixed-use residential and commercial building on Michigan Avenue across from the Cooley Law School Stadium (also a SERF certified facility). Cooley Law School Stadium brought baseball to downtown Lansing and spurred an entire entertainment district, the Stadium District, for which Gillespie's development is named.

A \$100,000 *Cool Cities* grant from the State of Michigan was used to help reshape the surrounding neighborhood's image and attract young professionals to live and work in downtown Lansing. The purpose of the Stadium District development was to stimulate job creation and private investment, promote the area, remove a stigma which had become associated with Michigan Avenue and inspire the entire neighborhood to thrive.





Michigan Avenue as it was between the years of 1930 and 1970.



Photos courtesy of Capital Area District Library.

This mission of the Stadium District has been a resounding success. Awarded the *Large Community Redevelopment Project of the Year* by the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) in 2007, it was the first project in downtown Lansing to receive the award.

The building earned SERF certification in 2011, further showing its commitment to making downtown Lansing a better place to live. With Energy Star™ rated appliances and operations (including AC units, furnaces and boilers), bamboo flooring and energy-controlling monitoring systems, the Stadium District realizes SERF's mission of **Practical Environmental Stewardship™** from the ground up.

Not only does the Stadium District building host several local businesses, it provides housing for downtown residents and young professionals, allowing them to live and work within walking distance of Cooley Law School, Lansing Community College, the Capital Area District Library, state and government offices and numerous restaurants and

entertainment venues. Located directly on a CATA bus line, the Stadium District also provides clean commuting access to its residents.

Creating a downtown where people wanted to make their home was not easy. In fact, the story of downtown Lansing, Mich. is like so many others in the Midwest; what many call the "rustbelt" has seen its share of ups and downs.

Beginning in 1904, the Oldsmobile division of General Motors established its headquarters in Lansing. With plenty of apartments and businesses available along major streets such as Michigan Avenue, residents were able to live close to their jobs with access to the services they needed.

Following World War II however, returning soldiers and their families moved out of the downtown Lansing area and into the suburbs of East Lansing, and west toward Grand Ledge. To facilitate easier travel to and from work for those living outside the city, Lansing devised plans for an east-west corridor. Upon its opening in 1965, the Saginaw and

Highlights of the Stadium District building include:

50 condos and apartments

Approximately 34,000 square feet of retail space

Energy Star™ rated appliances

Bamboo floors

Efforts for energy

The Stadium District under construction.





Oakland corridor provided these workers with an east-west alternative to Michigan Avenue. Workers could end their shifts at the Oldsmobile plant and ride Saginaw Street straight out of the city, contributing to urban sprawl.

In the 1970s and 80s, downtown Lansing took a turn for the worse. The automotive industry began to close plants and lay-off workers. Blocks along Cedar Street and Michigan Avenue became considered “bad” areas and strewn with blight, causing many buildings to be demolished.

It wasn't until the late 90s that efforts were made to re-energize the city's workforce. Industries such as healthcare, education and insurance became the leading employers in Lansing.

Gillespie Group has been at the forefront of this revitalization, taking advantage of this new energy in Lansing to create buildings - like the Stadium District - that answer the need for stylish, comfortable housing and commercial space.

Combating urban sprawl by reusing and rebuilding the urban core continues to be a mission of Gillespie Group. They show a responsibility to the downtown

area by providing a place where people want to live that is also attractive to businesses. The Stadium District is a strong member of SERF for its sensible use of building materials, energy-efficient appliances and operations and promotion of placemaking, sustainability and walkability in downtown Lansing.

To learn more about the Stadium District or Gillespie Group, contact the director of commercial development Jason Kildea at 517-333-4123

Businesses located in the building include:

- Great Lakes Coffee and Chocolate Company
- Fifth Third Bank
- Citadel Broadcast Group
- Diversified National Title
- The (MSU) University Research Corridor
- Coldwell Banker Real Estate

Headquarters of:

- Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce
- Greater Lansing Convention & Visitors Bureau
- Lansing Economic Area Partnership (LEAP) Inc.

PRACTICAL ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

SERF is a coalition of property owners and professionals certifying and promoting environmentally responsible homes and buildings.

SERF affirms that with private property rights come *responsibilities* — not least of which is the responsibility to construct, rehabilitate and operate our homes and facilities to enhance our communities and minimize environmental impact.

SERF recognizes that protection of our environment is the duty of every steward of the land, and that such stewards who act accordingly should be recognized and encouraged.

SERF holds that honest cost-benefit analysis should be applied to building improvements and systems intended to help the environment. To endure, sustainability must be affordable.

SERF is an inclusive organization which provides live and online forums for members to share methods to cost-effectively meet our goals.

SERF builds future generations of environmentally responsible property owners. Our examples and support teach and endow future generations to live in harmony with our planet and to conserve its precious resources.

SERF: *Catch the wave — get certified!*

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