

1. Project Description

Prosperity defined is the state of being prosperous. Prosperous can be defined as being successful in material terms, flourishing financially, or to bring wealth. The City of Dowagiac, which is located in Cass County has a median household income level of \$30,023. It is estimated that 36.8% of Dowagiac citizens live in poverty. On paper, the City of Dowagiac is not considered prosperous. We point this out to state although our county isn't monetarily thriving there are advancements being made in the community that really does increase quality of life for all citizens.

Our project we are requesting a grant for is to add a pavilion structure to an existing community park. Russom Park is a unique entity to Cass County, it is home to the following playing fields; soccer, baseball, football and cheerleading, has a large ADA accessible playground and miles of walking paths. In speaking with leaders for the organized sports, there are over 500 children in our local community who play annually at Russom Park and their families spend quite a bit of there. The Greater Dowagiac neighboring communities are interested in continuing to develop our public spaces and it shows in the wonderful cooperation that each municipality has with the surrounding fellow municipalities and citizens. The YPGD has collaborated with the surrounding municipal and the many local groups that utilize the playing fields. The details have been vetted and overwhelmingly supported by all involved.

There is an emerging need for a gathering structure in our community as the one that used to be located in down-town Dowagiac was recently de-constructed due to lack of structural integrity. This structure will be located just outside of town and provide better parking than the previous one as well as be more centrally located for all Greater Dowagiac residences. Placing the pavilion at Russom Park where we already have walking paths, bike trails and playground equipment really allows us to enhance that area with this type of amenity.

There is an existing need for shade at Russom Park as there are sporting events that are hosted here for three seasons out of the year do not have any escape from the sun or elements when the weather turns. The children and families that commit so much time to this park deserve a place to escape the unpredictable weather or relief from the baking sun when they spend the majority of their spring, summer and fall days at this park cheering on their children.

Finally, this project will prevent children from overheating in the hot sun or getting drenched from an impromptu down pour. It will also supply a covered place for families to gather outdoors which isn't currently an option right now for the area. Adding this amenity to Russom Park will make this space more attractive and provide an outlet and/or opportunity for families and kids to have a place to go when they need something to do in the spring, summer and fall.

We are requesting \$10,000 for the erection of a pavilion, which will help enhance our community and promote an existing park in Cass County. Success will be defined as the complete erection of a structure that will provide shade for families that frequent Russom Park as well as a gathering place for our citizens of Greater Dowagiac. This structure will be extremely sturdy and as maintenance-free as it can be. It will be sized based on the collective use of the entities involved in maintaining it.

The funds that we are requesting will go towards the overall project cost of \$40,000.00 to get a new 20'-0" X 40'-0" all steel, pavilion shelter purchased and erected with concrete slab and ADA accessible walkway that will be placed strategically central to all playing fields at Russom Park. This structure will serve many purposes for our community some of which include supplying shade for kids and families that spend many hot days at the fields, a shelter to get out of a pop-up rain storm in the middle of a tournament, and it will fill the void of a community gather place (which was lost just this past year with the deconstruction of the Beckwith Pavilion in town).

YPGD are very excited for the opportunity to team up with a variety of municipal entities: City of Dowagiac, Silver Creek Township, Russom Park Board and the Silver Creek Parks and Recreational Board. In addition have also collaborated and have received overwhelming support from local AYSO Soccer, Little League, Rocket Football and cheerleading groups. All parties we've discussed this opportunity with have agreed this is something our area definitely needs, however none of the groups have been able to make it a priority due to finances.

YPGD wanted to take this project on because we care for our community, and we want to make Dowagiac that much greater by supplying this much needed infrastructure to our community. YPGD realize that the overall project cost is more than the grant we are requesting. As mentioned we are dedicated to achieving our goal of the pavilion. Since February of 2019 we have been able to raise just shy of \$8,000 for the project. This is a combination of being awarded two grants and fundraising within our group.

This project meets Southwest Michigan Prosperity Region's plans by development of additional recreation opportunities and amenities. Cass County's Russom Park is in significant need of a shelter structure due to not only how many sporting groups call Russom Park home, but there are also citizens who enjoy the walking paths, biking trails and ADA accessible playground.

This pavilion project also includes collaboration among both public and nonprofit sector, with the nonprofit championing the project.

2. Organization Description

Our organization was conceived 6 years ago when a handful of young professionals in the community rallied together with big ideas on how to make our community the best place it can be. A 501 (c) (3) established and 25 members later we now have six annual events that are focused on families, children, low or no cost, and community experience. Our mission statement is to increase opportunities that will involve and empower young professionals in the progress of the region and to enhance the quality of life for residents of the area.

Our pavilion committee dedicated to make this project a reality include: Stefany Holland, Becky Grabemeyer, Rebecca Steenbeke and Pat Bakeman.

Our pavilion committee is composed of individuals who work for local government, work for engineering firms, entrepreneurs and we are all active in the community. We are familiar with projects like this, and realize the dedication it takes to see the project through completion.

A number of our not for profit members have been acknowledged by Pat Moody in the Market's Top 40 under 40 for making a big difference in our communities.

3. Partners

Young Professionals of Greater Dowagiac have corroborated with the following groups:

City of Dowagiac – Behind us fundraising for the project and believes there is a need for a gathering structure in the community.

Silver Creek Township – Has requested to review the aesthetics of the pavilion and also has final say in naming rights, should someone donate requesting that ability. The pavilion will be located on their property. Silver Creek Township will insure/maintain it going forward.

Russom Park Board – Combination of both City of Dowagiac and Silver Creek board members, they are behind the project.

Silver Creek Parks and Recreation Board – Behind the project.

Dowagiac AYSO Soccer, Dowagiac Little League, Dowagiac Rocket Football, Dowagiac Cheerleading – all behind the project. Many stating they would take up collections for the project at their concession stands.

4. Project Timeline:

Complete fundraising by spring of 2020 with groundbreaking later in 2020.

5. Budget:

Itemized List	Cost	Secured
Steel Gable Shelter	15,855.00	
Structure Shipping	750.00	
Structure MI Engineered Drawings	850.00	
Concrete Material	1,500	1,500.00
Concrete Labor	1,500	1,500.00
Installation of Structure	19,545.00	
Unallocated		4,760.93
Total Cost	\$40,000.00	\$7,760.93