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HART TIFA SELECTS PREFERRED DEVELOPER FOR 3 E MAIN STREET; RECOMMENDATION HEADED TO CITY COUNCIL APRIL 14

Hart, Michigan – April 1, 2026 – The Hart Tax Increment Finance Authority (TIFA) has selected Wolverine Building Group’s “Lofts on Main” proposal as the preferred development for the 3 E Main Street property in downtown Hart, following a competitive review of the top three submitted proposals.

The 2.6-acre site, formerly part of the Ceres Solutions property acquired by TIFA in 2023, presents an opportunity to redevelop a nearly full city block in a location just steps from Hart Lake and downtown shopping and dining.

Wolverine Building Group’s proposal features a thoughtfully designed, approximately 60-unit apartment community that will introduce new housing and live/work options while complementing the character of downtown Hart. The development includes a mix of one- and two-bedroom units, modern architectural design, and a site layout that integrates green space and parking in a cohesive, pedestrian-friendly environment.

The selection comes at a critical time, as recent housing analysis has identified a significant need for additional housing in Oceana County. The county’s rental market is operating at near-full capacity, with occupancy rates exceeding 98% and widespread waitlists, while limited inventory and affordability challenges continue to impact residents and employers. These conditions highlight the importance of new housing development to support workforce needs and sustain long-term economic growth in the Hart community.

Following detailed evaluation, the TIFA board identified several strengths in the Wolverine proposal, including the overall quality and thoroughness of the submission, the architectural design and building style, confidence in the development team’s experience and ability to execute, and a clear, detailed project timeline. The board also expressed strong support for the layout of the buildings, green space, and parking, as well as the long-term vision for a potential Phase II expansion.

The selection follows a multi-phase process that included community input, release of a Request for Proposals, and a reopened qualification period to ensure a strong and competitive pool of developers. The community’s vision consistently emphasized the need for quality housing, downtown vibrancy, and long-term economic sustainability.

“TIFA was presented with three strong and thoughtful proposals, each bringing unique ideas to the table,” said City Manager Nichole Kleiner. “Wolverine’s ‘Lofts on Main’ stood out for its quality, completeness, and readiness to move forward. The board had a high level of confidence in the team and their ability to deliver a project that will have a lasting impact on our downtown.”

Additional proposals were submitted by Heyboer Bro Co. and West Lake Homes. Heyboer's concept proposed a modern, multi-building apartment development with approximately 60 units and a future retail component, while West Lake Homes' "The Mill" concept focused on a neighborhood-style layout featuring a mix of for-sale homes, townhomes, and duplexes designed to complement the surrounding residential character.

The TIFA board's recommendation will be presented to the Hart City Council for consideration at its April 14 meeting. In accordance with TIFA bylaws, City Council must approve the conveyance of the property. Pending approval, the City will enter into negotiations with Wolverine Building Group to advance the project toward final design, approvals, and construction.

"This project has been a priority since TIFA acquired the site, and we're excited to take this next step," Kleiner added. "Redeveloping this property is about more than new housing, it's about strengthening our downtown, supporting local businesses, and creating new opportunities for residents and future growth."

For more information and to view the submitted proposals, visit: www.takemetohart.org/ceres

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