



**America**<sup>™</sup>  
**IN BLOOM**

GROWING VIBRANT COMMUNITIES

# Choose Adventure – Plant, Grow, Explore!

Check Out  
the  
Pre-Symposium  
Educational  
Tour

**America in Bloom  
Symposium & Awards Celebration**

**SEPTEMBER 25-27, 2025**

**Rochester, Michigan**

**Hosted by Orion Township, Michigan**

**[AmericanBloom.org/Symposium](https://AmericanBloom.org/Symposium)**

A watercolor illustration of a serene lakeside scene. In the foreground, there are two flower pots: one with purple flowers on the left and one with pink and red flowers on the right. A small wooden boat is on the water in the middle ground. The background shows a soft, hazy landscape with hills and a warm, golden light, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. The overall style is soft and artistic.

# WELCOME TO THE 2025 AMERICA IN BLOOM SYMPOSIUM & AWARDS CELEBRATION

# ROCHESTER & ORION TOWNSHIP, MICHIGAN

**E**xperience the charm, beauty, and innovation of two of Michigan's most vibrant communities – Rochester and Orion Township – as they take center stage at this year's symposium. Nestled in the heart of Oakland County and just a short drive from Detroit, these two dynamic destinations offer the perfect blend of hometown warmth and forward-thinking community spirit, making them ideal sites for this inspiring annual gathering.

With thriving downtowns and abundant natural beauty, Rochester and Orion Township are outstanding examples of what it means to cultivate excellence in community enhancement. Whether it's strolling along the Paint Creek Trail, exploring the historic village of Rochester, or experiencing the energy of Orion Township, this event promises more than just education – it promises inspiration.

The symposium is your opportunity to connect with people who are as passionate about their communities as you. Together, we will share ideas, celebrate achievements, and learn how to create even more vibrant, sustainable, and beautiful communities. From expert-led sessions and panel discussions to learning tours and award ceremonies, this event is packed with experiences designed to inspire your community through educational opportunities and interactive best practices.

Boat watercolor artwork provided by  
Eugene Clark, Orion Township resident

Floral assets created by Adobe Generative AI

Design by Meister Custom Marketing Solutions  
[meister-custom.com](https://meister-custom.com)

# Message from Rochester & Orion Township, Michigan

## This Year's Host Community

Join us where nature meets innovation, where history meets progress, and where community pride is always in full bloom. Rochester and Orion Township are ready to welcome you with open arms and blooming streetscapes. We can't wait to show you what's growing here.

Sincerely,

### The Orion Township Host Committee

- Chris Barnett, *Orion Township Supervisor*
- Jenny Bhatti, *Orion Township Communications & Engagement Specialist*
- Bryan Barnett, *Rochester Hills Mayor*
- Kim Urbanowski, *Orion Township Planning Commission*
- Samantha Timko, *Orion Township Chief of Staff*
- Julia Dalrymple, *Orion Township Clerk*

### National AIB Symposium Committee

- Chair: Pam Newton
- Deborah Jayne
- Mason Day
- Lori Kelly
- Charlie Hall
- Kelly McWhorter
- Leila Hamroun
- Delilah Onofrey
- Kim Harden
- Susie Stratton

America in Bloom envisions communities across the country as welcoming and vibrant places to live, work, and play - benefiting from colorful plants and trees; enjoying clean environments; celebrating heritage; and planting pride through volunteerism. Our mission is to promote nationwide beautification through education and community involvement by encouraging the use of flowers, plants, trees, and other environmental and lifestyle enhancements. AIB is an independent, non-profit 501(c)(3) organization and contributions to AIB are tax deductible.



# Hotel & Airport Information

Make your hotel reservations at the **Royal Park Hotel** by calling **800-339-2761**. To receive the special AIB rate of \$199/night plus tax for single or double occupancy, you must tell them you are with the America in Bloom group. You may also reserve your room online at **AmericaInBloom.org/Symposium**.

**Reservations must be made by September 5.**

The Royal Park Hotel is a luxurious boutique hotel that offers an exceptional blend of elegance, comfort, and world-class hospitality. Nestled along the picturesque banks of Paint Creek, the hotel is a favorite destination for visitors seeking a refined yet inviting retreat. With its stately architecture, opulent interiors, and beautifully landscaped grounds, the Royal Park Hotel provides an unforgettable experience. Guests can enjoy well-appointed rooms and suites, a renowned on-site restaurant, and proximity to downtown Rochester's vibrant shops, dining, and cultural attractions.

**The Royal Park Hotel, located at 600 E University Drive in Rochester, Michigan, is approximately 1 hour from the Detroit International Airport or 45 minutes from the Flint, Michigan airport. Both have rental cars and taxi/Uber service.**

## THANK YOU

## To This Year's Symposium Sponsors



## THANK YOU

## To Our Media Sponsors



# Pre-Event Optional EDU Tour

## Enhance Your Experience

An Exclusive Opportunity for AIB Symposium Attendees.

**Special Registration Required.**

**Thursday, September 25**

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**8 AM – 3:15 PM**

**Pre-Tour:** Explore Elegance at Cranbrook Gardens and the Ford House & Gardens  
**(Special Registration Required)**

Step into a world of timeless beauty and rich history with our exclusive tour of two of Michigan's most treasured landmarks – Cranbrook Gardens and the Ford House & Gardens. Immerse yourself in the serene beauty of Cranbrook Gardens, a living museum of horticultural excellence and artistic design. These gardens were envisioned by famed landscape architect George Booth and feature formal plantings, flowing fountains, and enchanting vistas. Your journey continues at the stunning Ford House, the lakeside estate of Edsel and Eleanor Ford. Nestled on the shores of Lake St. Clair, the estate features a beautifully preserved home filled with original furnishings, art, and personal touches, offering a unique glimpse into the lives of one of America's most iconic families. Wander through the expansive gardens, designed by renowned landscape architect Jens Jensen, and experience the harmonious blend of nature and architecture. Whether you're a history buff, nature enthusiast, or design aficionado, this tour promises an unforgettable day of inspiration, insight, and scenic splendor. A waterfront lunch along Lake St Clair, which lies between the U.S. and Canada, is included in the price of the tour. **The cost is \$89. Seating is limited so register early. See the registration form for details.**





# Symposium Program

## Thursday, September 25

### **3:30 PM Newcomer Connection: Your Adventure Begins**

Welcome to all the first-time attendees. We are glad you are here! This informal session will allow you to meet AIB volunteers and staff, learn how to get the most out of the conference, and help get you ready for the learning, inspiration, and fun ahead.

### **4 PM Elected Leaders and Municipal Administrators Roundtable**

America in Bloom is pleased to present an idea sharing and networking program designed exclusively for elected leaders and municipal administrators. Through peer-to-peer discussion, learn about the solutions communities are using to solve some of today's challenges facing municipalities of all sizes. This roundtable is a must for all elected officials and municipal leaders.

### **5:30 PM Opening Night Reception**

Catch up with old friends and make new ones during this informal cash bar event.

### **6:30 PM Community Connections Dinner Celebration**

Now it's time to celebrate your achievements. This is a time for food, fun, and awards! Each AIB community will be recognized for their efforts. This is where we celebrate YOU and what YOUR community is doing to make America bloom! All Dwight Lund Community Champion nominees will be honored and the winner announced.

## Friday, September 26

**Submit your educational sessions hours to your professional organizations to earn CEUs.**

### **6:30 AM Sunrise Stretch: Meet Up to Walk or Bike the Paint Creek Trail by the Hotel**

Rise and shine, early birds! Start your day with fresh air and great company as we hit the scenic Paint Creek Trail right by the hotel. Whether you're a power-walker, a casual stroller, or an adrenaline-fueled cyclist, this relaxed morning meet-up is the perfect way to wake up your body and clear your mind before the day's sessions.

### **8 AM Morning Jolt: Cuisine, Caffeine, and Conversation**

Cuisine + caffeine + conversation = great start to the day. Grab some breakfast, coffee/tea, and converse with other AIB attendees and the Showcase of Innovation companies. These companies feature innovative products and services relevant to your community.

## **8:30 AM Welcome & Keynote Presentation: Revitalizing Main Street USA**

***John Bry, Main Street Oakland County***

Main Streets are the heart and soul of American communities, but how do we keep them vibrant, welcoming, and thriving in a changing world? How can communities breathe new life into their historic downtowns while fostering economic vitality and beautification? Through real-world case studies and actionable insights, you will learn how to enhance economic development while preserving a community's unique character; implement beautification strategies that drive foot traffic and boost local businesses; engage residents, businesses, and local governments in a shared vision for revitalization; and leverage grants, partnerships, and volunteer efforts for long-term impact. Whether you're a local leader, business owner, or community advocate, this session will provide inspiration and practical tools to revitalize your downtown and create a vibrant, welcoming place for residents and visitors alike.

## **9:15 AM Planning for the Unexpected: Natural Disaster Management for In Bloom Programs – Things We Wish We'd Known**

***Representatives from Tavares, Florida and Greenwood, South Carolina***

When disaster strikes, every moment counts, and for communities participating in America in Bloom programs, planning ahead can make all the difference. In this candid and eye-opening session, community leaders share real-life experiences navigating hurricanes, floods, and other unexpected events. Learn from their challenges, missteps, and triumphs as they offer the hard-earned lessons they wish they'd known before disaster hit. You'll walk away with practical tips, planning tools, and a new perspective on resilience, recovery, and how to protect the progress and pride your community has worked so hard to build.

## **10 AM Showcase of Innovation & Conversation**

This networking break allows you to continue sharing ideas and meeting Showcase of Innovation companies.

## **10:15 AM Succession Planning to Keep Your In Bloom Efforts Going**

***Representatives from Castle Rock, Washington***

What happens when your passionate leader retires or key volunteers move on? The success of your In Bloom program shouldn't hinge on just a few people. This session explores the critical – and often overlooked – need for thoughtful succession planning. Discover how to build a strong bench of future leaders, transfer knowledge effectively, and create a sustainable structure that keeps your momentum going year after year. With real-world examples and actionable strategies, you'll leave equipped to future-proof your program and ensure your community continues to flourish for generations to come.

## **11 AM Idea Roulette with the AIB Advisors**

Fast paced. High energy. Expert powered. That's what you'll get in this session as we put our Advisors on the spot. This rapid-fire session is your chance to tap into the brilliance of AIB's advisors. Have a burning question? A tricky challenge? Our expert panel of AIB Advisors will hit you with their sharpest insights, boldest ideas, and battle-tested advice. No long lectures. No slides. Just pure brainpower on demand.

**12 PM Showcase of Innovation & Conversation**

This networking break allows you to continue sharing ideas and meeting Showcase of Innovation companies.

**12:30 PM Buses Depart for Orion Township Adventure**

You get to immerse yourself in the natural beauty and innovative spirit of Orion Township, Michigan — where learning, community, and outdoor living go hand in hand. Known for its scenic trails, sparkling lakes, and lush green spaces, Orion Township becomes our guided outdoor learning lab as we explore firsthand the programs and spaces that have earned this community national recognition. From vibrant parks to thoughtfully designed public spaces, you'll get an inside look at the award-winning initiatives that are setting the standard for excellence. We'll also make time to stroll through downtown Lake Orion, a charming and walkable hub buzzing with local shops, cafes, and restaurants — perfect for inspiration and relaxation alike. Following the tour there will be a reception to mix and mingle, and then dinner is on your own to explore the local flavors at your leisure.

**8:30 PM Buses Depart for Return to Hotel**

**Saturday, September 27**

**Submit your educational sessions hours to your professional organizations to earn CEUs.**

**6:30 AM Sunrise Stretch: Meet Up to Walk or Bike the Paint Creek Trail by the Hotel**

Rise and shine, early birds! Start your day with fresh air and great company as we hit the scenic Paint Creek Trail right by the hotel. Whether you're a power-walker, a casual stroller, or an adrenaline-fueled cyclist, this relaxed morning meet-up is the perfect way to wake up your body and clear your mind before the day's sessions.

**8 AM Morning Jolt: Cuisine, Caffeine, and Conversation**

Cuisine + caffeine + conversation = great start to the day. Grab some breakfast, coffee/tea, and converse with other AIB attendees and the Showcase of Innovation companies. These companies feature innovative products and services relevant to your community.

**8:30 AM State of the Organization**

***Rod Barnes, AIB President***

Learn about the organization's current status and how AIB is striving to make even more of an impact in communities.

**9 AM 10-Point Plan to Implement the AIB Advisors Report**

***Pam Newton, Hawthorn Woods, Illinois***

You've received your AIB Advisors Report – now what? Turn feedback into action with this focused session designed to help communities move from recommendations to real results. Designed with both dedicated volunteers and hardworking city staff in mind, this session walks you through a practical 10-point action plan to turn recommendations into real, visible improvements. We'll walk through a practical plan that breaks down the report into manageable steps, helping you prioritize, organize, and mobilize people for maximum impact. Whether you're new to the process or looking to refresh your approach, this session will help you bridge the gap between planning and progress.



### 9:30 AM Showcase of Innovation & Conversation

This networking break allows you to continue sharing ideas and meeting Showcase of Innovation companies.

### 9:45 AM Hot Topics Deep Dive Breakout Sessions

We pick the topics, you pick where to go! Each breakout session will focus on a hot topic impacting communities. Be prepared to take lots of notes!

### 10:30 AM Meet with the Advisors

This time is set aside so community members can meet with Advisors and delegates from other AIB communities. Get excellent insight into the ordinary and extraordinary things towns and cities are doing across America. AIB Advisors will share what they saw during their visits to communities and how to enhance your town's participation in AIB.

### Afternoon Free Time or Offsite Educational Tours (Special registration required for offsite tours)

You have options on how to spend your time this afternoon. Within easy walking distance of the hotel is downtown Rochester where you will find restaurants, retail shopping, and more. The Paint Creek Trail runs from the hotel to downtown. Or if you are looking for some more learning and action, then hop on the bus to head back to Orion Township. We'll stop at Township Hall for lunch. Then you will get on a shuttle to head to one of the two educational tours available. **Seating is limited. The fee is \$25 for lunch and the tour. See the registration page.**

**Miracle League Field** – Join us for an inspiring visit that showcases Orion Township's commitment to creating spaces where everyone can play, learn, and grow together. Miracle League Field provides children and adults with physical and cognitive challenges the opportunity to experience the joy of baseball. The custom-designed synthetic turf accommodates wheelchairs and walking assistance devices, ensuring a safe and enjoyable environment for all players. Learn how the Miracle League fosters teamwork, builds self-esteem, and creates lasting friendships among players of all abilities. Explore the accessible features of the field, including wheelchair-friendly pathways, specialized dugouts, and accessible restrooms. Discover the impact of volunteer "buddies" who assist players, and how community support drives the success of the league.

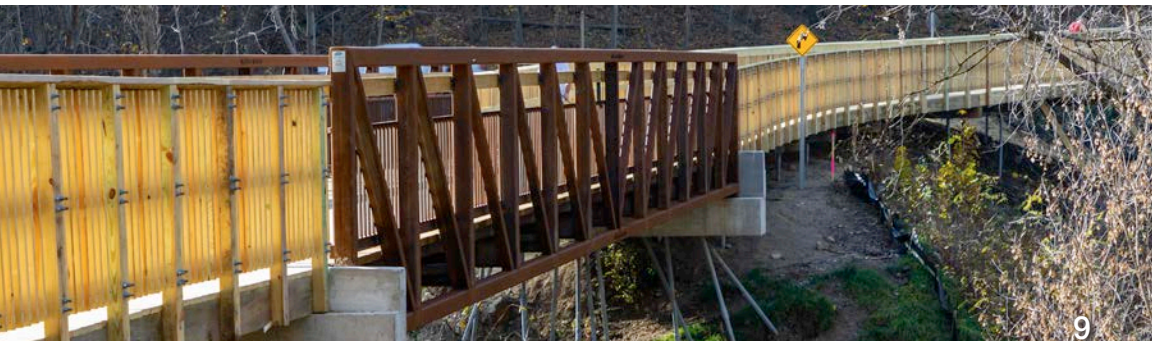
**Cannabis Cultivation** – Explore Orion Township's pioneering role in sustainable cannabis cultivation. Home to advanced facilities that exemplify innovation and environmental stewardship, Orion Township enforces stringent ordinances to ensure that cultivation facilities operate responsibly, minimizing environmental impact and addressing community concerns. These regulations include requirements for odor control and facility placement, maintaining a balance between industry and residential life. This insightful tour showcases how Orion Township integrates advanced agricultural practices with sustainable and community-focused initiatives.

### 5:30 PM Closing Night Reception

This final night cash bar reception allows you to mingle with old and new friends, swap contact information, and make plans to stay in touch.

### 6:30 PM Evening in Bloom Banquet

The anticipation goes into high gear with dinner, fun, and awards. This final-night event shines the spotlight on the transformative efforts by AIB communities.



# Schedule At-A-Glance

## Thursday, September 25

- 8 AM - 3:15 PM** Pre-Tour: Explore Elegance at Cranbrook Gardens and the Ford House & Gardens **(Special Registration Required)**
- 3:30 - 4 PM** Newcomer Connection: Your Adventure Begins
- 4 - 5:30 PM** Elected Leaders and Municipal Administrators Roundtable
- 5:30 - 6:30 PM** Opening Night Reception
- 6:30 - 9:30 PM** Community Connections Celebration

## Friday, September 26

- 6:30 AM** Sunrise Stretch: Meet Up to Walk or Bike the Paint Creek Trail by the Hotel
- 8 - 8:30 AM** Morning Jolt: Cuisine, Caffeine, and Conversation
- 8:30 - 9:15 AM** Welcome & Keynote Presentation: Revitalizing Main Street USA
- 9:15 - 10 AM** Planning for the Unexpected: Natural Disaster Management for In Bloom Programs – Things We Wish We'd Known
- 10 - 10:15 AM** Showcase of Innovation & Conversation
- 10:15 - 11 AM** Succession Planning to Keep Your In Bloom Efforts Going
- 11 AM - 12 PM** Idea Roulette with the AIB Advisors
- 12 - 12:30 PM** Showcase of Innovation & Conversation
- 12:30 PM** Buses Depart for Orion Township Adventure
- 8:30 PM** Buses Depart to Return to Hotel

## Saturday, September 27

- 6:30 AM** Sunrise Stretch: Meet Up to Walk or Bike the Paint Creek Trail by the Hotel
- 8 - 8:30 AM** Morning Jolt: Cuisine, Caffeine, and Conversation
- 8:30 - 9 AM** State of the Organization
- 9 - 9:30 AM** 10-Point Plan to Implement the AIB Advisors Report
- 9:30 - 9:45 AM** Showcase of Innovation & Conversation
- 9:45 - 10:30 AM** Hot Topics Deep Dive Breakout Sessions
- 10:30 AM - 12 PM** Meet with the Advisors
- Afternoon** Free Time or Offsite Educational Tours **(Special Registration Required for Offsite Tours)**
- 5:30 - 6:30 PM** Closing Night Reception
- 6:30 - 9:30 PM** Evening in Bloom Banquet

# Registration

Deadline  
September 5, 2025

First Name

Last Name

Company Name (if applicable)

Mailing Address

City

State

Zip/Postal Code

Country

Phone Number (including area code)

E-mail Address

Please list any dietary or mobility restrictions:

## Please select one of the following packages:

☐ **Full registration - \$375**  
(\$425 after September 5)

☐ **Thursday AIB dinner and  
awards only - \$150**  
(\$175 after September 5)

☐ **Saturday AIB dinner and  
awards only - \$150**  
(\$175 after September 5)

## Additional packages available:

**Thursday, Sept 25:** ☐ **Pre-Tour:** Explore Elegance at Cranbrook Gardens and the Ford House & Gardens at **\$89**

**Saturday, Sept 27:** Educational tours at **\$25:** ☐ Miracle League Field ☐ Cannabis Cultivation

Will you join us for the Friday afternoon and evening activities in Orion Township? ☐ Yes ☐ No

## Method of Payment (Registration will not be processed without payment.)

☐ U.S. check/money order enclosed (Make payable to America in Bloom)

Charge my : ☐ VISA ☐ MasterCard ☐ American Express

Account number: \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration date: \_\_\_\_\_

V-Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Name as appears on card (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Authorized signature: \_\_\_\_\_

(I hereby agree to the terms and conditions of my card issuer agreement)

Billing Address (if different from mailing address)

City

State

Zip/Postal Code

Country



**Register online at [www.AmericaInBloom.org/Symposium](http://www.AmericaInBloom.org/Symposium)  
or send a copy of this registration form to:**

America in Bloom • PO Box 44005 • Columbus, OH 43204

**P:** 614-453-0744 • **E:** [aib@AmericaInBloom.org](mailto:aib@AmericaInBloom.org)

Cancellations made on or before September 5 will be refunded in full, minus a \$25 processing fee.  
Cancellations made after September 5 are non-refundable.



America in Bloom  
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Columbus, OH 43204

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