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For Immediate Release

First Meeting of 2011 Set for February 10

Downtown Ferndale IGNITE Heats Up Entrepreneurial Spirit

Ferndale, MI – After a six month hiatus, Downtown Ferndale’s entrepreneur initiative is back on the front burner. Downtown Ferndale IGNITE relaunches Thursday, Feb. 10 at Go! Comedy Improv Theatre. Scheduled from 5:30 to 7:30 pm, the night’s presentation will focus on planning for your business, whether it is already open or still a dream. The session will include time for questions and is open to anyone. There is no charge.

Heading up IGNITE is Chris Ramos, entrepreneur owner of the green transportation company The Night Move. A volunteer for the Ferndale DDA and its Business Development Committee, Ramos is structuring the retooled Ignite to better help dreamers develop real game plans and to help those already in the game to improve their skills.

“We decided to take a step-by-step approach to the program, paralleling what needs to happen when you start a business,” said Ramos. Jim Muir of SCORE (Service Corp of Retired Executives) will be the speaker on February 10, sharing information on how to get started or keep going, including identifying what stage the entrepreneur is in the process – starting up, strategic planning, funding, etc. Muir typically leads SCORE’s workshops on “Writing A Business Plan” as part of his work with the organization.

In a business district where more than 40 new businesses opened in 2010, nurturing the entrepreneurial spirit just makes sense, said Cristina Sheppard-Decius, DDA Executive Director. “There are so many potential businesses out there. We want to encourage them to take the next step, but more importantly, we want to make sure they are stepping on solid ground.”

IGNITE is poised to help, says Ramos. “The Ferndale DDA and this business community is one of the most vibrant in the region. We have experts here, successful business people, who know and are willing to share what it takes to be successful.”

Each IGNITE agenda is designed to inform with facts and develop business relationships. A social half hour will precede the speaker, who will then be followed by more networking and brain-picking. Said Ramos, “Sometimes you just need a conversation to move you to the next step.”

Downtown Ferndale IGNITE will meet regularly in the evening of the second Thursday of the month, at Go Comedy! 261 E. Nine Mile Rd. Future IGNITE topics include: Where and How to Obtain Financing; Greening Your Business; Starting Fresh/Tax Options; How I Did It.

For more information about IGNITE, please visit Downtown Ferndale IGNITE on Facebook, www.downtownferndale.com or call the Ferndale DDA at 248-546-1632. For more information on SCORE, please visit its website at www.scoredetroit.org.

Downtown Ferndale is comprised of 350+ businesses, located in approximately 3.9 linear miles extending from the iconic intersection of Woodward Avenue & Nine Mile Road. Managed and marketed by the Ferndale Downtown Development Authority, the district follows the Main Street Approach™ to economic restructuring, as prescribed by the National Trust for Historic Preservation (NTHP) and is a part of Main Street Oakland County. In 2010, Downtown Ferndale received the NTHP’s prestigious Great American Main Street Award.

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