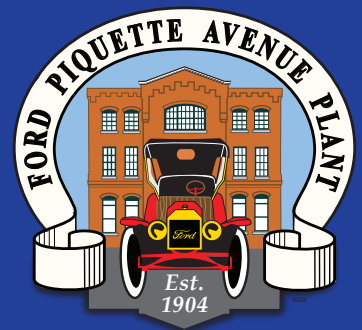




# ANNUAL REPORT 2024





Birthplace of the Model T

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461 Piquette Avenue  
P.O. Box 2127  
Detroit MI 48202  
313-872-8759

[www.fordpiquetteplant.org](http://www.fordpiquetteplant.org)

## Our Mission

The Ford Piquette Avenue Plant is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the preservation of the birthplace of the Model T and the interpretation and celebration of Detroit's automotive heritage and spirit of innovation.

## 2024 ANNUAL REPORT

The Ford Piquette Avenue Plant, one of the most significant automotive heritage sites in the world, turned 120 years old in 2024. It was an exciting year of change and evolution for the museum. This iconic Detroit landmark topped more than 250,000 visitors since it began tracking attendance 14 years ago, welcoming visitors from 77 countries and counting.

Success was made possible by the Board of Trustees, generous donors and many volunteers who provided countless hours of service in support of preserving and sharing this U.S. National Historic Landmark with the public.

The year was not without challenges, including those posed by the now completed construction of the adjacent Piquette Flats apartments. The entire neighborhood is now vastly improved by the revitalization of this historic Studebaker building for modern use.

Although the museum was awarded a \$500,000 Infrastructure Challenge Grant in 2024 from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) that was subsequently rescinded (along with all NEH grants nationwide), the organization is well-positioned for continued growth in 2025 due to strong fiscal management.

Highlights in 2024 encompassed many significant accomplishments and improvements to the former factory as detailed in this report.



New facade lighting installed by volunteers in 2024 enhances evening events.



# POINTS OF PROGRESS

- Ford Piquette Avenue Plant named “Best Visitor Experience” in the *Detroit Metro Times* Best of Detroit Readers Poll Awards
- New electrical system design work completed by Albert Kahn Associates, Inc. and project contractors engaged with support from a \$500,000 “Save America’s Treasures” grant from the National Park Service
- New exhibit featuring beautifully restored Model T speedometers, as well as a 1916 Detroit Electric and a 1908 Cadillac on display
- Upgraded security measures including new interior and exterior cameras and door sensors
- New LED lighting and fencing installed around the museum’s parking area
- Demolition of a dilapidated Studebaker-era garage attached to the rear of the plant to make room for electrical and future HVAC infrastructure
- “Excellence Award” for first-floor event space renovation received from MotorCities National Heritage Area
- New shipping & receiving entrance constructed opening to Beaubien Street. Exterior door panel features a photo mural of 1906 workers in that exact spot



Photo mural of workers in 1906.

- New wi-fi network switch and firewall installed, bandwidth increased for visitor use
- Steel structural supports for retaining wall at rear of property installed
- Historic windows and masonry kept in excellent working condition for the enjoyment of all
- Piquette Ts provide Model T rides for international media to celebrate reopening of Michigan Central Train Station
- Ford Piquette Avenue Plant wins Tripadvisor’s “Travelers’ Choice Award in 2024. Reviews from millions of Tripadvisor travelers place the museum in the top 10% of worldwide attractions



**Tripadvisor**  
Travelers’ Choice Awards  
Winner 2024



**Ford Piquette Avenue Plant  
docents from left: Jerry Porter,  
Mike Skinner, Jerry Elmy,  
Tom Genova, Greg Dabkowski**



# 2024

## By the Numbers



**26,210**

Total visitors

**79**

Private tours for 1,645 guests

**80**

Number of schools  
served over 50 days

**3,698**

Students from K-12 through  
higher education

**696**

Donors

**591**

Museum members

**7,257**

Items sold in the Museum Store

**52**

Events at the museum  
including weddings, meetings  
and community events

**10,842**

Total volunteer hours  
(We couldn't exist without  
our volunteers!)

**\$150,000**

Multi-year grants awarded by:



Young Womens  
Home Association

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**1** Grant awarded and *rescinded*:  
\$500,000 Infrastructure & Capital Challenge



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### 7 Visiting car clubs:

Western Michigan Corvettes

Central Michigan T's

Fiat Club of America, Detroit Chapter

SE MI Porsche Club of America

Great Lakes Classic AMC

(Michigan American Motors Owners)

Bronco Nation

Lambda Car Club International, Detroit Chapter



# Events in 2024

## Henry Ford's "Hot Rod" Model N A "T Talk" on Zoom — MARCH 24

Museum Trustee, Steve Shotwell, President of the Piquette Ts, a Model T club based out of the Ford Piquette Avenue Plant Museum, hosted an online discussion about a one-of-a-kind, 6-cylinder Model N built by Henry Ford in 1908. A marvel of early 20th Century mechanics, this privately-owned vehicle was on temporary display in 2024.

## Motor City Origins Tour — APRIL 5

This special, after-hours tour of the Ford Piquette Avenue Plant explores the history of Detroit's Milwaukee Junction neighborhood, where The Motor City got its start.

## "A Celebration of Horsepower" 60th Anniversary of The Mustang — April 14

Arthur Hyde, Associate Professor of Practice & Automotive Engineering Program Director at the University of Michigan spoke about his 40-year career at Ford Motor Company including Mustang development from 1977 to 1997, earning him the nickname "Mr. Mustang."

## The Great Race A "T Talk" on Zoom — May 26

Scott Thams, an avid car collector and museum Trustee, talked with members about his participation in The Great Race, a 9-day, 2,400-mile road race against other antique vehicles. Thams and his brother, Kirk Thams, raced a 1929 Model A from Owensboro, Kentucky to Gardiner, Maine, on single lane roads.

## "Sweet 116" Party for the Model T — September 29

The 116th birthday of the Model T was celebrated with free rides, food and family fun. The event featured a special guest from Ypsilanti Fire House Museum, a 1924 Model T fire truck and water pumping display. The Piquette Ts and volunteers provided the rides for the public. The day's event was sponsored by Absopure Water Company.



Tom Daldin, host of "Under the Radar Michigan" (UTR) featured the museum on his show in 2024. Pictured above with docent Tom Genova.

UTR is broadcast on every PBS TV station throughout Michigan, as well as in millions of households across Canada, Ohio, Wisconsin, Indiana, Illinois, Minnesota, Tennessee and Florida. Last season the program delivered over 30 million media impressions and aired well over 2,500 times across the country.



Photo by Bill Cook

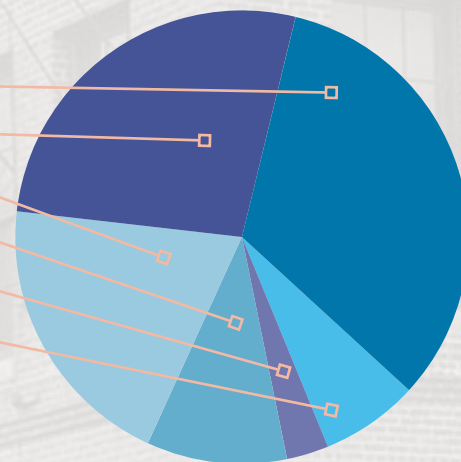


# 2024 Operating Financials\*

## REVENUE

Event Rentals & UBI Income.....	\$346,688
Admissions & Programs .....	\$275,281
Donations & Grants .....	\$198,488
Museum Store .....	\$103,284
Memberships.....	\$26,784
Investments .....	\$64,565

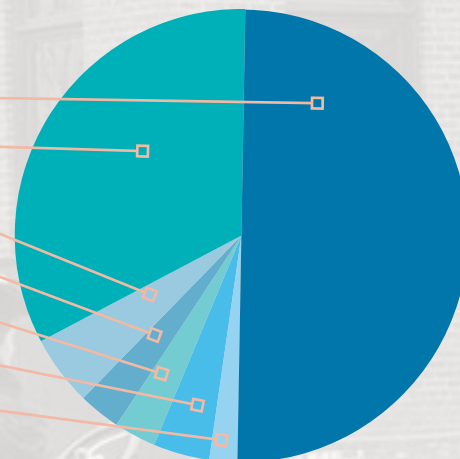
**Total Operating Revenue:..... \$1,015,090**



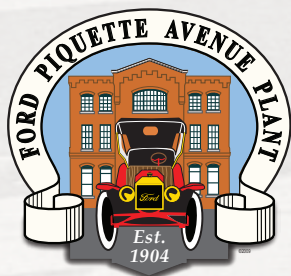
## EXPENSES

Administration & Program .....	\$390,855
Cost of Events .....	\$254,968
Building Operations & Maintenance .....	\$38,007
Utilities.....	\$18,846
Insurance Taxes & Fees .....	\$31,250
Professional Fees .....	\$40,736
Other .....	\$7,190

**Total Operating Expenses: ..... \$781,852**



*\*Pending completion of the accounting audit*





# In the News

On Sunday, March 10, 2024, the *Detroit Free Press* and the *USA Today* national newspaper network published a 12-page special section on the significance of the Model T.



## How Ford, Model T shaped Detroit into the Motor City

Detroit Free Press  
USA TODAY NETWORK

The story of the Model T is central to how Detroit became the Motor City. Here are some fast facts about Ford Motor Co.'s early days, the Model T and early factories.



Henry and Edsel Ford with Quadricycle and the 15th millionth Ford Model T in 1927. PROVIDED BY FORD MOTOR COMPANY ARCHIVES

in the Detroit Fordwood Ave. d designed by Piquette Ave. duced 8,729

in Walkerville er's corporate g facilities." It holders' and as the then- Piquette Ave- nists created ed at this site

I much larger Albert Kahn

1914: The moving assembly line at Highland Park produces 34,858 Model Ts — an 82% increase from Piquette's output.

1917: Ford introduces a truck, the Model TT, based on the Model T.

1927: The SUNDAY, MARCH 10, 2024 | USA TODAY NETWORK



A 1913 Ford Model T used as a T-span stake bed truck for transporting freight. PROVIDED BY FORD MOTOR CO.

## How the early Model T could be used for almost anything

Detroit Free Press | USA TODAY NETWORK

Ford Motor Co. did more than sell cars to drivers who needed to get from point A to point B. It also saw a market for crossing vehicles for businesses and other uses. Here are some examples of how the Model T could be fashioned for almost any purpose, including maintaining street lights.

## Piquette plant museum raising millions to re

Mark Phelan  
Detroit Free Press  
USA TODAY NETWORK

The volunteer group that saved the historic Ford Piquette Avenue Plant from demolition and turned it into a public museum has launched a capital campaign to protect and preserve the building and its historic contents.

The nonprofit acquired the building since 1999 and has been restoring it ever since. Donations are tax deductible. The museum is not part of Ford.

"We have major infrastructure needs to ensure the preservation of this U.S. National Historic Landmark," Piquette said. "Our one and only elevator is 97 years old. We have no heat or AC in most of the building."

The museum holds more than 65 vehicles, including No. 220 out of the 15 Opening 120 years ago, in 1904, the plant built eight of Henry Ford's "letter cars" — B, C, E, K, N, R, S and SR — as he developed technologies and processes



The Ford Piquette Avenue Plant Museum in Detroit. MANDI WRIGHT/DETROIT FREE PRESS

seum's vehicle collection includes all those, plus other historic and influential vehicles. Model T production in the

consider w Then we ha interfere wi with appo trols. That's million."

The mus \$500,000 c the Nationa ities to inc a passenger old freight ments inclu The musu from other

The mus fundraising early 1900s

Albert K architectur gion's most the Fisher plant, is "or money." Wo

The mus open 10 a n day, except Thanksgiv



The 1916 Ford Model T columnist Mark Phelan learned to drive at Greenfield Village, part of the Henry Ford museum in Dearborn. MARK PHELAN/DETROIT FREE PRESS

## Learning to operate a Model T is unlike anything else — and fun

Mark Phelan  
Detroit Free Press  
USA TODAY NETWORK

"Don't scare the horses." With that singular instruction, I was fully immersed in the Model T experience, engaging unfamiliar switches and levers, my feet dancing across pedals with exotic purposes as the 1916 Model T — black, of course — roared to life.

— Mark Phelan



# Legacy & Lifelong Learning

The Ford Piquette Avenue Plant provides educational opportunities for students throughout the year, as well as enrichment activities for all ages. These programs and unique experiences are made possible by broad support from the community.



Detroit Public Schools students enjoy Design & Build activities as part of field trips.



Volunteer driver John Ambrosio creates a special memory for a family at the 2024 Model T Birthday Party.



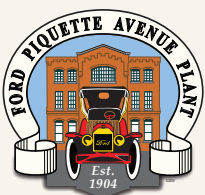
Three sisters and perhaps, future engineers?



Two tots race cars on the gravity track.



Docent Greg Dabkowski (Ford jacket) led many field trips and hands-on activities in 2024.



**Ford Piquette Avenue Plant**  
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