

MICHIGAN BUSINESS

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**JOSH LINKNER
REINVENTING:
CAREER, COMPANY,
COMMUNITY**
Innovation can
save lives on
roadways 2B



MATTHEW DAE SMITH

This is one of the two buildings that once housed the Charlotte Chair Co.

DEVELOPMENT

Aging brick buildings could get millions in upgrades

CHARLOTTE, Mich. — They're aging brick buildings sandwiched between homes, within walking distance of the railroad tracks that cut across North Cochran Avenue.

Home to a local manufacturer, the Charlotte Chair Co., from 1912 to 1988, the two dilapidated structures date back nearly 150 years.

A year and a half ago, Anthony Faulkner saw what everyone else did at 339 and 401 N. Cochran Ave. — two rundown buildings with broken windows and crumbling facades surrounded by overgrown weeds and vegetation. "Walking into the building, it's got really great bones," Faulkner said. "It's timber framed, the old 1860s, 1870s frame, and that's what I like — high ceilings and exposed brick and all that kind of stuff. It's built really, really well."

A restaurant or brew pub, apartments, a place for new manufacturing or office space. All are possibilities for the future of the property.

Faulkner bought them for about \$50,000 has spent the last year cleaning out the interiors, clearing away the weeds and overgrowth and securing the buildings. Over the next four to five years he plans to invest from \$600,000 to \$2.75 million into their rehabilitation and marketing.

If realized, officials say it will be largest investment in a commercial property Charlotte has seen in years.

JOBS

Soft skills are in demand

Filling positions with qualified people can be a challenge for employers. Candidates usually must have a certain skill set to perform the critical duties. Whether it's a college education, a certificate or a certain amount of years of experience, the requirements for a job position are varied.

However, employers also look for something else in applicants — soft skills.

Soft skills are the interpersonal skills that help an individual mesh well at an organization. For example, at Capital Area Michigan Works!, various employers have had problems finding employees with leadership and management traits, the ability to work as a team member and communication skills.

With experience, practice and education, job seekers can learn to develop soft skills that employers are looking for.

Many resources are available regarding soft skills, and one in particular is Pure Michigan Talent Connect's eLearning Soft Skills Program. This program, made up of 14 modules, highlights key soft skills for students and job seekers.

This program is available free of charge.

MARK PHELAN

Muscle cars power auctions

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CAROL CAIN

Insiders want focus on manufacturing

PAGE 7B

Fraudsters bet on scamming you again

Crooks target previous victims with pitch to 'recover' money

Scam someone once and they feel plenty of shame, maybe so much that they hand over more money to the next round of con artists promising to help them get their money back.

Of course, you have to pay an upfront fee. And of course, it's another scam. And the victims are usually elderly people, already suffering from a financial loss.

It's bad enough losing thousands to a fake timeshare investment or some crooked business "opportunity" to be your own boss.

But scammers are now running something called "asset recovery" cons that target consumers. The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau noticed a pattern in its complaint data of scam victims getting scammed again. It discovered a



SUSAN TOMPOR

company charging fraud victims anywhere from \$500 to as much as \$8,000 for this "service," which usually involved filing a complaint they could file themselves for free. These

victims already had lost from \$1,000 to \$30,000 and ranged in age from 62 to 82, the bureau reported.

One major tip: Don't pay upfront fees for services that you've not received.

Another tip: Never get involved with a company or group that asks you to keep your relationship a secret from your family or friends.

Some state regulators have issued similar warnings. Last year, the See **TOMPOR**, Page 7B

DOWNTOWN DETROIT REDEVELOPMENT



COBO CENTER

Cobo Center will start marketing the outdoor space on Washington Boulevard at Jefferson Avenue as Cobo Square, as another place to hold events in downtown Detroit. Activities will include music, art events, yoga and other exercise programs and biergartens.

Cobo to have activities at new outdoor plaza

With the \$279-million renovation and upgrades of Cobo Center complete, Detroit's convention facility plans to start programming the final piece added in the renovation, the outdoor plaza known as Cobo Square.

Thom Connors, general manager of Cobo, said activities such as music, art events, yoga and other exercise programs, biergartens, outdoor movie nights, corporate game



JOHN GALLAGHER

events and possibly a downtown farmers' market could all be programmed for the Cobo Square space that fronts onto East Jefferson.

The adaptive reuse design of the old Cobo Arena into Cobo's new Grand Riverview Ballroom included the development of 45,000 square feet of outdoor flex space including the terrace now called Cobo Square. Connors said the main use of Cobo Square will be as a reception area for events taking place inside the facility during warmer months. But a lot of outside activities not tied to

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COBO CENTER

The main use of Cobo Square will be as a reception area for events taking place inside the facility during warmer months. But a lot of outside activities not tied to Cobo conventions will also be taking place there. Cobo is leading a trend in convention center design.



MANDI WRIGHT/DETROIT FREE PRESS

Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx wants automakers to borrow from the aviation industry.

NHTSA, FAA using similar playbooks

Auto industry is told to follow aviation model

By Brent Snaveley

DETROIT FREE PRESS

The nation's top transportation official is looking to the friendly skies for answers on how to reform auto safety regulation after a series of recalls and lethal auto defects put a spotlight on lax oversight by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

U.S. Department of Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx, along with the NHTSA administrator, is modeling new safety programs and agency culture on the U.S. aviation industry, which hasn't suffered a fatal airliner crash in seven years.

Foxx has adopted something called a "proactive safety culture," based on programs put in place by the Federal Aviation Administration, which is in charge of ensuring airline safety. That culture champions and encourages sharing of safety data among airlines and stakeholders to look constantly for weaknesses and areas that can improve. It relies on self-report of errors by pilots and other personnel, among other key changes.

"That allows us together to isolate where risk exists and to eliminate that risk before a problem emerges," Foxx said. "... that requires a culture shift within DOT, and it requires a different way of thinking outside of this building. So, hopefully there'll be more to say about the specifics down the road but you know this is a very early conversation."

Foxx, who oversees 12 agencies, including NHTSA and the FAA, made it clear in December he wanted automakers to borrow from the aviation playbook.

The automotive industry

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START-UP MICHIGAN



With 5G, you could download a TV show in less than 3 seconds.

PHONES

5G coming your way from major carriers

NEW YORK — AT&T said it is ready to conduct 5G field trials by the end of the year, following a similar announcement from Verizon.

5G is shorthand for the “fifth generation” of wireless and it translates into speeds, AT&T says, that are 10-100 times faster than today’s average 4G LTE connections. That means you might be able to download a TV show in less than 3 seconds.

AT&T will be collaborating with Ericsson and Intel on 5G solutions starting in the second quarter; the field trials will take place in “fixed” locations in Austin, Texas.

Back in September, Verizon announced that it would also begin 5G field tests this year and has been working with Alcatel-Lucent, Cisco, Ericsson, Nokia, Qualcomm and Samsung to make it happen.

It is still going to take a while before 5G is commercially viable — 2020 looks like a reasonable bet. There is still no formal agreement on what 5G is, though standards are expected to get hammered out in 2018.

STOCKS



Visa bought a major stake in Square, a mobile payments services firm.

Tech 5: Baidu shares up on buyout offer

Chinese company Baidu and payments service Square rose last week while game publisher Activision slid.

Let’s look at tech stocks to watch:

Baidu. Shares of the Chinese Internet search provider surged after the company revealed it received a \$2.8-billion offer for its stake in video service Qiyi.com. Baidu owns an 80.5% stake in Qiyi. The company said Qiyi would stay a “strategic partner” if a deal was finalized.

Square. Credit card giant Visa revealed it has grabbed a 10% stake in the mobile payments service. According to Reuters, the stake was revealed in a regulatory filing. Shares of Square climbed nearly 9%.

Pandora. Shares of the streaming music service traded lower following a report from the New York Times the company has held discussions about a sale.

Activision-Blizzard. The video game publisher disappointed Wall Street with fourth-quarter profit that fell short of forecasts. Activision reported earnings per share of 83 cents, short of the 86 cents forecast by analysts. Activision also confirmed a sequel to its action game Destiny will launch next year.

Alphabet. Google is reportedly working on its own high-end virtual reality device. The VR headset would compete with several other devices headed to the market this year, including Oculus Rift and HTC Vive.



COBO CENTER

Programming Cobo Square is part of a broader effort downtown to enliven streets with greater activity. It also is a trend showing up in convention centers around the country. “We’re leading a trend in convention center design,” said Thom Connors, general manager.

COBO: Center to host outdoor events

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Cobo conventions will also be taking place there.

“We’d like to see something going on every week,” Connors said. “That’s what we’re working toward. It’s going to take a while to catch on, but we’ve got interest from companies that work downtown doing specific events for their employees.”

Programming Cobo Square is part of a broader effort downtown to enliven streets with greater activity. It also is a trend showing up in convention centers around the country.

“We’re leading a trend in conven-

tion center design to use more outside space, creating a more campus effect,” Connors said. “You’re going to see this effect around the country. There’s a number of centers right now looking to expand their footprint to incorporate outside activity. So Cobo is very much in the forefront in terms of creating and utilizing that outside space.”

Larry Alexander, chairman of the Detroit Regional Convention Facility Authority and CEO of the Detroit Metro Convention and Visitors Bureau, echoed that.

“The Detroit Regional Convention

Facility Authority began on a mission of regional cooperation and through the success of this renovation, became an example of what is possible when people work in consensus,” he said. “Cobo Square will continue this important mandate, bringing people throughout the metro Detroit region together in community celebrations.”

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RULES: NHTSA, FAA on same page

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has been marred in recent years by high-profile recalls by General Motors for faulty ignition switches, Takata’s succession of air bag recalls that continue to grow, a public spat with Fiat Chrysler over the scope of a Jeep recall and Toyota’s recall of millions of vehicles for unintended acceleration.

Making a ‘hard pivot’

Foxx and NHTSA Administrator Mark Rosekind met with automakers in December and again in January during the Detroit auto show to hammer out a commitment to new safety principles.

By Jan. 15, after several meetings with automakers, Foxx and Rosekind were able to announce a commitment by automakers to explore ways to share information and data that the U.S. government hopes will help the industry and regulators spot safety problems in the earliest possible stages.

Foxx was flanked on that day by executives from 18 automakers who agreed to explore new ways for the industry to share data to improve automotive safety.

“Perhaps years from now we will look back at this moment, at a time when there may have been some skepticism about the safety of the automotive industry in general, the industry stepped up and made a hard pivot with us towards a more proactive culture,” Foxx said when he spoke in Detroit.

This involves having airlines and pilots and maintenance crews report their own mistakes or concerns to FAA, so that they can fix a problem before it becomes an accident.

“This data can help identify patterns and trends that could possibly lead to a problem. But having this information enables the industry to take action before there is a problem,” FAA administrator Michael Huerta said in January.

“We have not had a commercial passenger fatality since Colgan Airlines in 2009. That is seven years. That is unprecedented,” Hickey said. “And it’s largely due to the fact that the community comes together, brings the data together.”

Hickey said the safety principles the automakers committed to are modeled after the FAA’s Aviation Safety Information Analysis and Sharing Program and the FAA’s Safety Management System.

The FAA’s data-sharing model

The FAA’s safety analysis system is designed to help regulators, airlines and manufacturers spot trends and



JOHN RAOUX/AP

National Highway Traffic Safety Administrator Mark Rosekind.

safety problems by giving the industry access to about 185 data sources across government and industry, including voluntarily provided safety data.

The final form of the FAA’s safety management system, under development for several years, was announced on Jan. 7. It requires airlines to examine and share data gathered from everyday operations, isolate trends that may be precursors to incidents or accidents, and take steps to fix the issues that are uncovered.

This involves having airlines and pilots and maintenance crews report their own mistakes or concerns to FAA, so that they can fix a problem before it becomes an accident.

“This data can help identify patterns and trends that could possibly lead to a problem. But having this information enables the industry to take action before there is a problem,” FAA administrator Michael Huerta said in January.

Common FAA, NHTSA vision

Perhaps the first sign that NHTSA would lean on the aviation industry for ideas was the selection of Rosekind, a former member of the National Transportation Safety Board, as administrator in December.

Rosekind served on the NTSB from 2010 to 2014. He was the on-scene board member for seven major transportation accidents and participated in almost 50 accident board meetings.

Mark Reuss, General Motors’ executive vice president of product development, said in January that Rosekind has brought a “whole new fresh look” to NHTSA.

Automotive regulation, Foxx and Rosekind say, has been reactive. All too often the industry and regulators are trying to figure out what went wrong rather than preventing something from going wrong.

In recent months, Foxx, Rosekind and Huerta have all talked about the “proactive safety culture” concept and a goal of zero accidents or safety defects.

“A proactive safety culture means embracing the idea that customers will demand, should expect, and definitely deserve zero safety defects,” Rosekind said during an industry conference in Detroit in January.

One year to make a difference

One of the biggest challenges facing Foxx and Rosekind is a shortage of time.

Foxx and Rosekind were appointed to their positions by President Barack Obama, who has less than one year left in his final term in office. A Democratic president might leave the two men in place but a Republican president would likely make a change.

“When I first met Secretary Foxx, (he said) ‘Mark, we’re never going to get it all done in two years, but we’ve got to put markers down so that the path gets set,’” Rosekind said in January. “For us, it’s about getting those markers deep, so that we make sure the transformation is in place, and I don’t care who’s next, they can’t pull them out.”

Hickey said it took years for the FAA to change its relationship with the aviation industry. In the 1990s, airports and airlines used to have a far more antagonistic relationship in the past. If an FAA investigator showed up at an airport, officials would fear that any infraction found would lead to a fine. Now, Hickey says, the FAA would rather issue warnings so the problems can be fixed quickly rather than immediately issuing a fine.

The result: Over a 10-year period from 1998 to 2008 the Commercial Aviation Safety Team reduced the risk of fatalities in U.S. commercial aviation by 83%.

“It took us years to overcome the barriers,” Hickey said. “We now have an open honest relationship with the airlines where they can find that something is going wrong and they submit that data and they do not face an immediate penalty.”

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REINVENTING: CAREER, COMPANY, COMMUNITY



JOSH LINKNER

Can innovation save 1.3 million lives a year?

Rightfully so, the world community reacts in outrage when terrorists take the lives of innocent citizens.

Millions walk in solidarity to stomp out breast cancer, while entire communities take to the streets in protest over deadly violence. But we seem to just accept the 1.3 million deaths — and 50 million injuries — related to auto accidents.

We attack these other global issues with urgency and outrage, driven to eradicate these insidious problems. Yet we seem to think of auto-related deaths and injuries as simply a part of life.

Samir Salman will have none of it. As the CEO of Continental Corporation’s NAFTA division, Salman and his team are on a mission: to put an end to auto deaths and accidents once and for all. It turns out that nearly 90% of car accidents are caused by human error. So the Continental team is working tirelessly to bring autonomous driving to the mainstream, hoping to put a massive dent in the global problem of car crashes.

I had the opportunity to go for a ride in a self-driving car prototype with Salman. Admittedly, I was a bit nervous as we raced down a crowded highway at 70 m.p.h. with no hands on the wheel, but after a while I was able to fully grasp the possibilities. In addition to saving lives, automated driving could reduce rush hour traffic by 50% or more. It can reduce fuel consumption, increase productivity, and save millions of hours per year for drivers.

According to Salman, the technology will be fully ready by 2025, but the tech isn’t the biggest hurdle. Regulatory challenges, security, and driver acceptance are all on the minds of his team as they race toward a cure. These are hard problems and require enormous tenacity, grit, and resiliency to solve.

Will Continental enjoy commercial success by pioneering fully autonomous driving? Sure. But that’s not what fires up a team for long hours. The money will come as a byproduct of pursuing a higher calling — to save lives and make the world a better place.

As a leader, you may wonder why your team lacks motivation. Perhaps your crew is all too quick to punch out at 5 p.m. sharp and isn’t demonstrating the drive you’d like to see. Instead of blaming the team, try looking in the mirror. Great leaders inspire action by working toward a mission far greater than healthy gross margins.

Zoom out from your quarterly financial targets, and refocus on greater meaning and purpose. How can your work change the world? How can you make history?

Chase money and you’ll seldom find it. Pursue greatness, and the economic rewards will follow. Focus on the biggest possible impact to unlock innovation and enjoy sustainable success.

Salman is fueled to save 1.3 million lives. What fuels you?

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