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*COURTESY RENDERING*

## **Bazzani Building constructing sustainable housing in Belknap neighborhood**

BY [SYDNEY SMITH](#) Friday, January 10, 2020 12:32pm

GRAND RAPIDS — **Bazzani Building Co.** has started construction on a new housing project in the city's Belknap Lookout neighborhood that will run entirely on renewable energy.

The Grand Rapids-based company expects to finish the Bradford Station project this fall. It includes 23 one-bedroom apartments and one ground-floor retail space.

The three-story, 16,500-square-foot building on the northwest corner of Lafayette Avenue and Bradford Street will have no natural gas service, with all utilities to the building

supplied through rooftop solar panels or renewable energy from elsewhere, said Peter Skornia, president and partner at Bazzani Building.

With **Grand Valley State University** developing in the neighborhood, as well as other higher density projects, Bazzani Building saw a need for more housing, Skornia said.

“There have been some other developments that have gone in that are increasing the density there, but there’s still a need for it,” he told *MiBiz*. “We’re just north of the hospital, and Grand Valley has really expanded in that neighborhood.”

The location is ideal for a sustainable building project, with its access to public transit and walkable neighborhood, said Ellyn Olney, partner at Bazzani Building. She added that the firm has been producing LEED-certified developments for years, and is taking that a step further with a net zero-capable building.

Olney anticipates similar developments in the future.

“I think largely construction companies have gotten much better at how we build, in terms of our environmental impact,” she said. “It’s important to be looking at the community sustainability aspects of what we’re building, and how that impacts the existing community.”

Bazzani Building put together a developer/ownership group for the project, which includes the current landowner, Skornia said. The architect on the project is Ada-based **Dixon Architecture**.

Developers across West Michigan are increasingly interested in deploying solar panels in their projects as the cost of the systems comes down, leading to a quicker return on investment especially when other federal incentives are layered in, as *MiBiz* recently [reported](#).

In some cases, ROI on solar installations has decreased from as much as 30 years to as little as four to six years, according to Mike Troupos, an energy engineer at Grand Rapids-based **Foresight Management**.

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