CITY OF WIXOM
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
49045 PONTIAC TRAIL
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2024

This meeting of the Wixom Downtown Development Authority came to order at 7:34 a.m. with the following individuals in attendance:

DDA MEMBERS:	Chairperson Jessica Buck; Carissa Osburn, Vice Chairperson; Board Members: Mark Garmo; Kaitie Guzowski; Darby Hoppenstadt; Russ Meredith; Patrick Beagle, Mayor
ABSENT:	Excused: L. Payment; V. Willett
STAFF:	DDA Staff: Laura Cloutier, DDA Executive Director City Staff: Steve Brown, City Manager City Staff: Drew Benson, Assistant City Manager & Director of Economic Development

Determination of Quorum:

Quorum was met.

Reading of Vision and Mission Statement:

Mission Statement: The Mission of the Wixom DDA is to coordinate the efforts of businesses and residents to promote the growth of the downtown area for the community's benefit.

Vision Statement: The Wixom Downtown Development Authority is to provide a friendly, welcoming downtown which will enhance and honor our history while promoting cultural, business and recreational opportunity that attract businesses and residents.

Approval of Agenda:

MOTION by Board Member Meredith and second by Vice Chair Osburn to approve the Meeting Agenda.

VOTE: MOTION CARRIED

All in favor.
None opposed.

Approved 11/19/2024

Public Comments:

No public comments.

Approval of Minutes:

MOTION by Board Member Meredith and second by Vice Chair Osburn to approve the August 27, 2024, DDA Regular Meeting Minutes, as presented.

VOTE: MOTION CARRIED

Correspondence:

None

Executive Director's Report: (Dated September/October 2024) included in the packet.

Executive Director Cloutier highlighted items from her report.

Executive Director Cloutier commented the strategic planning session with POW Strategies was held in late September. She is waiting on the report, and the reason why the October internal strategic planning meeting was postponed to see where we want to focus. It was agreed by the Board Members to schedule the Strategic Planning meeting on November 20, 2024 at 6 p.m.

Executive Director Cloutier indicated the first funding installment from the placemaking grant through the county was received. Assistant City Manager Benson and Executive Director Cloutier met with HRC to discuss federal funding and going through the environmental assessment, currently.

The Block Party was promoted on WHMI of Livingston County Radio; then also picked up on their "Pay Attention to Wixom". West End Commons and the Wixom Bar was approved by City Council to become part of the social district. Their application has gone to the State for approval, which is approximately a four-week process.

Executive Director Cloutier made an appearance on Fox 2 along with La Casita for the Block Party. The Executive Producer at Fox 2 is very excited for the Renton project and the West End Commons.

The Block Party was held on September 21st where the Mega 80's performed. It was a beautiful day and huge success. Over 4,300 people attended. Vendors, businesses, and food vendors had great sales for the day. There was a steady stream of people in attendance all day. The kids loved the activities. The Mega 80s were a huge draw and crowd favorite.

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Downtown Day week was kicked off with a visit from Commissioner Raman, City Staff and Chairperson Buck. MSOC and Executive Director Cloutier set up a tour of downtown for Commissioner Raman to hear about Wixom's successes, future development plans, and to gain a better understanding of our community. We met with business owners who expressed their needs from the County. The tour was finished with lunch at Wixom Station, where additional insight was given regarding downtown Wixom, and the needs of the DDA.

Executive Director Cloutier stated she was asked to sit on a panel for the Michigan Downtown Association regarding Revenue Sharing between DDA's and Municipalities. She will be attending a two-day conference to be held in Ann Arbor, Michigan. The panel discussion is on Friday of the conference.

Executive Director Cloutier commented Dana Walker, Director of Michigan Downtown Associations, asked her to participate in the MDA's podcast to speak about downtown Wixom. Executive Director Cloutier will send the link when it is published.

Old Business:

None

New Business:

1) Michigan Trail's Magazine Ad

For the past three years, the Wixom DDA has bought ad space in the Michigan Trails Magazine. The past two years, the DDA has purchased a full-page ad. By purchasing another full-page ad with Michigan Trail's Magazine, we will also receive a Free Trail Listing Guide on their website with a link to our website and free copies of the magazine to distribute and share.

This magazine reaches thousands of people and promotes downtown Wixom across the State. It is recommended to approve a one full page ad in the Michigan Trail's Magazine for $2,826.25 Marketing and Branding Account #248-729-956.003.

Executive Director Cloutier stated this is the DDA's third or fourth year doing an ad in the magazine. It has been great exposure for downtown Wixom. Approval by the DDA board is needed by the end of the month to receive the 5% discount.

There was a discussion regarding the QR Code on the page to set up a preliminary landing page then goes to the web page. Executive Director Cloutier indicated she was going to contact Guide Studio to create the ad.

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MOTION by Board Member Guzowski and second by Vice Chair Osburn to approve one full page ad in Michigan Trails magazine for $2,826.25, Marketing and Branding Account #248-729-956.003.

VOTE: MOTION CARRIED

All in favor.
None opposed.

2) Contract with Trivium Racing for Timing Services for the Derby Day Races on May 3, 2025.

The 8th Annual Derby Day Race will be held on Saturday, May 3rd, 2025 at Sibley Square Park. We have partnered again this year with Trivium Racing. The DDA has a long-standing relationship with Trivium Racing. The Derby Day Committee is confident in the services that Trivium Racing provides. It is recommended to approve the Trivium Racing Timing Services Contract for the Derby Day Races to be held on May 3, 2025.

Executive Director Cloutier commented this is a very standard contract. The Mayor would sign the contract as well as the City Clerk. She stated Trivium Racing does an excellent job and works very well with us. The rates are the same as last year.

MOTION by Chairperson Buck and second by Board Member Garmo to approve The Trivium Racing Timing Services contract for the Derby Day races to be held on May 3, 2025.

VOTE: MOTION CARRIED

All in favor.
None opposed.

3) Michigan Downtown Association Annual Conference

The Michigan Downtown Association will hold its annual conference on November 7th and 8th, 2024 in Ann Arbor at the Graduate Hotel. This year's theme is, "People, Places, Planning & Preservation – The Power of Strong Michigan Downtowns". Attending the MDA conference is beneficial to attend session Wayfinding, Placemaking, Enhancing Volunteer Participation, Revenue Sharing, and so much more. Attendees can meet and network with DDA Directors, elected officials, DDA Board and Committee members from across the State, and learn best practices from them. The keynote speaker this year is Richard Hess, Principal and Regional Director of Quinn Evans. He will speak about Michigan Central Station and the rebirth of this historic gem in Downtown Detroit. This would be a great opportunity for newer members or those

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that have never attended the MDA Annual Conference to attend either one day or both days. Early bird registration ends on October 26th, 2024. We will discuss this item and please voice if you are interested in attending, so Executive Director Cloutier can register everyone.

Chairperson Buck stated the MDA conference is to be held in Ann Arbor this year. It is two days, November 7th and 8th, 2024. It is a great conference with different topics to choose to attend. Chairperson Buck indicated it is interesting to hear what other cities are doing. She suggested if any board member has not attended, to consider attending.

Board Member Meredith indicated the conference information and topics are very good. It was suggested to have a budget available for parking and gas for the members who attend.

Executive Director Cloutier asked the Board Members if they would like to attend, to contact her.

4) 2025 DDA Board Meeting Dates

The DDA Board meets once per month on the fourth Tuesday, except for July and December or unless otherwise noted, per the DDA By-Laws. The recommended dates for 2025 DDA Regular Month Board Meetings along with Special Meeting Dates are enclosed in the packet. It is recommended for approval of the 2025 DDA Regular Monthly Board Meeting Dates as proposed.

There was a discussion by the Board Members regarding meeting dates and if one or two meetings should be held in the evening. The reason the meetings are held in the morning is because board members go to work after the meetings are held. The evening meetings are difficult because of other activities and commitments. Executive Director Cloutier stated she would speak with the City Clerk for an evening meeting to be held on an available date in the meeting room.

It was suggested to put a meeting synopsis on the DDA website for the public to view.

The 2025 DDA Board Meeting dates will be approved at the November DDA meeting.

5) Light Post Banner Discussion

The City of Wixom and the Wixom DDA recently adopted new branding and logos through a services contract with Guide Studio. This successful process now takes us to implementing the branding and logos that were adopted. One way to implement this is to update and expand the light post banners that are currently placed around the City Civic Center Campus, Sibley Square Park, and along Pontiac Trail. We would like to hold a discussion with the DDA Board to gage interest in expanding the banners to include Wixom Road and Old Wixom Road along with the DDA funding this branding initiative. Assistant City Manager Benson and Executive Director Cloutier will lead the discussion.

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Assistant City Manager Benson stated within the last month, with the help of the GIS consultant, AEW, a mapping exercise was done to insert every single light pole, every hanging basket and every banner mapped with images. Three maps are included in the packet with different colors: blue dots are every pole in the city; green dots are all poles with baskets; yellow dots are poles with banners. The purpose of this discussion item is to show the board members how the banners are not evenly distributed.

Assistant City Manager Benson introduced the idea to talk about expanding, at a minimum, the number of banners to be installed. It is the thought to expand the banners to be installed on every other pole, including Wixom Road and Old Wixom Road, as well.

Currently, Parks and Recreation is taking charge of the banners. The banners last for more than one year; possibly three to five years life span. Executive Director Cloutier indicated Josh and/or Guide Studio could possibly do the design work on the banners.

Board Member Guzowski indicated when going to different downtown areas, banners are eye catching and could be an alternative to the flower basket expense.

Assistant City Manager Benson commented, currently, we pay approximately $1,500 per set of banners; there are four rotations, tentatively. It is anticipated for a total of $10,000 to do all four seasons. The DDA and Parks and Recreation could share in the expense. There would be, potentially, upfront costs with adding the necessary brackets to the different poles. DPW installs the banners, but DPW may not be able to install the new brackets. There was also a discussion about adding electrical outlets or electricity to the bottom of the light posts. Currently, the electricity is at the top of the light posts. The electrical outlets on the light posts would be strategically placed.

The Board Members liked the idea of the additional banners.

6) West End Commons Community Engagement Survey Results

A community engagement survey was conducted from September 16th to October 8th. This survey asked the public to give input on amenities, programming, and overall support for the West End Commons project. Assistant City Manager Benson and Director Cloutier will lead discussion on the results of the community engagement survey.

Executive Director Cloutier stated there was a survey to gauge interest in the West End Commons. The survey was not included in the packet but will be listed on the DDA website.

On the survey, the types of activities were picked (up to two items). 64% chose corn hole and yard games, only. 29% said bocce ball court; and 24% said outdoor ping pong tables. City Council was not in favor of the bocce ball concept because of the maintenance and where to keep

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the equipment. There were comments such as a swimming pool, ice rink, fitness center, pickleball courts. There are different ideas, so having multiple spaces programmed into different ways, more like a paved area as opposed to one specific use would be there to be changed out.

Chairperson Buck stated she went to Chattanooga where there was outdoor ping pong, corn hole, etc., and you would have to drop off your credit card to secure the equipment, although to play was free.

Executive Director Cloutier indicated pop up shops were number one and 60% for activities to draw them to the space; also bike racks and/or repair station; public restrooms, and drinking fountain were at the top.

Assistant City Manager Benson stated for the pop-up shops, theoretically, Cadillac Square in Detroit have 200 square foot boxes and set them up for a certain period. This leaves credence to the idea that we have a bit of an open area that is easily accessible for food trucks, temporary structures, etc.

Assistant City Manager Benson indicated 80% of respondents rated having bathrooms between a 7 and a 10 in terms of being most important. This is still a discussion that needs to be taken in the design process in terms of a permanent installation, temporary or meet in the middle of these two items. There are maintenance fees to be considered. With the available funds, water and sewer taps could be installed to run the infrastructure but not build a bathroom at this point.

Assistant City Manager Benson also indicated people really liked the idea of fire pit seating options; shade and seating.

In terms of the next steps, some decisions on concepts would need to be made, and then taken to the Design Committee, the DDA Board, and City Council. The timeframe process is looking to having this done by the November meeting, and then to City Council in December. After the first of the year, either mid-January or early February, hopefully, to get the RFP out with construction starting during the Spring.

Executive Director Cloutier commented if the Board Members are out in the community and people ask questions about the West End Commons, some of the responses are that we are discriminating against children, which we are not. Children are welcome, but it is more of an adult oriented space because of the location, a busy intersection and it is near the bars/restaurants.

Executive Director Cloutier indicated she had Josh insert on the website at the top where all the tabs are listed, there is now a projects tab, which talks about the West End Commons.

Information:

1) Committee Reports

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A. Design Committee

- West End Commons: will continue to review plans and start thinking about furnishing. Along with research pricing for these items
- Will plan for smaller projects that can be done quickly and make an impact to the downtown district.
- Will re-engage in the public art discussion and plan for future projects.

Executive Director Cloutier commented the West End Commons is a pronounced topic. The banners will now be a topic, as well. The Design Committee is looking for smaller projects to accomplish such as outfitting the alley space between Wixom Bar and the Klebba Building, maybe with café lights, which would not cost a lot of money. Also, re-engage in the public art discussion and the murals.

Mayor Beagle indicated City Manager Brown and himself attended a meeting in Farmington. It was their bicentennial; instead of art, they installed a building wrap outside of the building.

Executive Director Cloutier indicated she put in a request with DPW for the flower basket removal. Landscape Design stopped servicing the flower baskets on October 1st. Executive Director Cloutier stated she put in a high priority request a week later because the Spooktacular event was coming up. The request to DPW did not get fulfilled. Mr. Tim Sikma, DPW, was sent an email with the board members' concerns. City Manager Brown stated mistakes were made, and lessons were learned here. The summer banners were taken down and the fall banners installed. City Manager Brown apologized for their concerns and actions were taken to make sure this doesn't happen again.

Chairperson Buck commented the Design Committee will meet the second Tuesday of November because of the election. The meeting date is posted on the website, if anybody would like to attend.

Assistant City Manager Benson reiterated that the City does have a millage initiative on the November 5th election for replacing curb road millage from 1.3 mils to 2.5 mils. He indicated if anyone had any questions or would like more information, the City does have a web page regarding this topic which includes an informational video and other information. The website does a great job with explanation with links and videos.

City Manager Brown indicated the City have a pavement assessment surface evaluation and rating system. Currently, the City is not where they would like to be on the rating system.

B. Economic Vitality Committee

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- The EV Committee had a strategic planning session prior to POW strategies to generate ideas to help the downtown with development and retainage of businesses. We came up with multiple ideas and will be generating "to do" lists for committee members to work on.

- We have been discussing digital ads on the freeway near Wixom, opportunities for assistance with developments, business startup centers or innovation hub, and workforce development. These ideas require some additional research but have been proves to ensure sustainability within downtown areas like Wixom. We have also been working on several ideas for gift cards/downtown cards and partner with other communities.

A meeting was rescheduled for the following week.

C. Promotions Committee

- Block Party: Held on September 21st and was a success. The day brought us excellent weather along with over 4,300 people in attendance. There was a steady stream of attendees throughout the day to the point where no one wanted to go home. Vendors, businesses, food vendors all had a great day of business. Attendees had a lot of fun. Kids enjoyed the activities in the "kid zone". The entertainment throughout the day was engaging and liked by all. The Mega 80's was a huge draw and always a favorite of the attendees. Block Party 2025 – the 9th year – will be on Saturday, September 20th.

- Spooktacular Treat Hunt: Will be held on October 19th. We have 25 businesses and groups participating, including the Wixom Police Department, Wixom Senior Center, and Michigan Air Line Trail. 180 pumpkins were secured for the Spooktacular Pumpkin Patch. The pumpkins were donated by Ashgrove Marketing. Candy and treats will be given to the businesses to hand out to children. This committee will purchase coffee from Trail's Edge Café and provide free coffee to adult attendees. This is the 3rd year for this event, and it gets bigger and better each year. The businesses are excited to participate, and we have seen a great response to social media posts for this event. Kudos to Board Member Meredith for securing so many businesses to participate.

Chairperson Buck commented the Spooktacular event was amazing. At least 400 children participated with their parents. The event started at noon. The first 180 kids got a pumpkin voucher which was given out by Ashgrove Marketing. 25 businesses participated in this event including the police station, senior center, and Air Line Trail. Last year, there were 18 businesses

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who participated. Everybody got unique candy, treats, to hand out to participants. Coffee was purchased from Trail's Edge, which went well and appreciated by the adults.

Chairperson Buck stated she appreciated all the volunteers and businesses which helped with this event. Feedback is always taken after the events to see what can be improved for the next event.

The next event will be Candy Cane Lane. Board Member Meredith commented he had a couple more businesses interested in the Candy Cane Lane event.

Chairperson Buck commented Executive Director Cloutier sent her some great ideas to be discussed at the next Promotions Committee meeting regarding an adult type of winter event such as chili tasting or burger battle.

D. Organization Committee

- Volunteer Appreciation Event: Will be held on October 24th. Please RSVP through the volunteer local site so we can account for who and how many will be attending. This will allow us to plan accordingly for food.

- Board Member Hoppenstadt has done a great job with the volunteer local site. We really like the platform, but still working out some bugs as we learn more about the features on the site.

- Discussion around volunteers for upcoming events and how many volunteers per event will be needed. This helps Board Member Hoppenstadt build the volunteer local platform for our events.

Vice Chair Osburn commented the Volunteer Appreciation Event will be held at Drafting Table on Thursday, October 24, 2024. Many Board Members indicated they will participate and sign up on the volunteer local app.

2) Downtown Business News/Events

- 2024: November 7th & 8th: MDA Annual Conference
- 2024: December 6th: Tree Lighting Festival
- 2024: December 11th: Candy Cane Lane
- 2025: January 8th – February 26th: Wednesdays in Wixom
- 2025: February: Food Fight on Main Burger Battle
- 2025: May 3rd: Derby Day Races

Public Comments:

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No public comments.

Executive Director's Comments:

Executive Director Cloutier thanked Chairperson Buck for running the Spooktacular event while she was out of town. She also thanked all the businesses who participated, as well as all the volunteers including Board Members Hoppenstadt, Meredith, Willett, and all the high school kids.

Executive Director Cloutier also thanked everyone for committing their time and all their efforts for downtown Wixom.

Assistant City Manager Benson commented the City received the downtown road safety audit report. They are reviewing the report. He anticipates to put the report on the next DDA meeting agenda for discussion and recommendations.

Board Members' Comments:

Chairperson Buck commented the next DDA Board meeting will be held on November 19th and then the strategic planning session will be held on November 20, 2024.

Adjournment:

MOTION by Mayor Beagle, second by Board Member Meredith to adjourn the meeting. This meeting of the Wixom Downtown Development Authority was motioned and adjourned at 8:51 a.m.

Mona Freiburger
Recording Secretary

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