CITY OF WIXOM
49045 PONTIAC TRAIL
SPECIAL DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY MEETING
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2025

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Buck of the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) at 7:30 a.m.

PRESENT: Jessica Buck (Chairperson), Carissa Osburn (Vice Chairperson) [7:34 a.m.], Patrick Beagle (Mayor), Mark Garmo, Darby Hoppenstedt, Russ Meredith, and Vanessa Willett
ABSENT: Leslie Payment (Excused)
OTHERS: Laura Cloutier (DDA Executive Director), Steve Brown (City Manager), Drew Benson (Assistant City Manager) and Nancy Fisher (Recording Secretary)

Determination of a Quorum:
A quorum of the Downtown Development Authority was present for this meeting.

Agenda:
No additions or changes were made to the agenda.

MOTION and second by Mayor Beagle and Boardmember Willett to approve the December 11, 2025 Downtown Development Authority (DDA) meeting agenda as published.

VOTE: **MOTION CARRIED**

Reading of Mission and Vision Statement:
Boardmember Willett read the Mission and Vision Statement.

Public Comments:
There were no comments made by the public.

Approval of the October 28, 2025 and November 18, 2025 Downtown Development Authority (DDA) Meeting Minutes:
MOTION and seconded by Boardmembers Willett and Meredith to approve the October 28, 2025 Downtown Development Authority (DDA) Meeting Minutes.
VOTE: **MOTION CARRIED**

MOTION and seconded by Boardmembers Garmo and Meredith to approve the November 18, 2025 Downtown Development Authority (DDA) Meeting Minutes.
VOTE: **MOTION CARRIED**

Correspondence:
There was no correspondence to be reviewed.

Executor Director's Report:
There were no comments made by the public.

Unfinished Business:
There was no unfinished business listed on the agenda for this meeting.

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New Business:

1. **Recommendation to Approve a Professional Services Agreement with Spalding DeDecker Associates, Inc. for Civic Center Loop Phase II Design Services for a Not-to-Exceed Cost of $67,700**.

Mr. Benson noted that funds were budgeted for the second phase of the loop which includes the Parks and Recreation plans to expand it by a quarter mile along with installing amenities. He noted that there was also a discussion regarding the barn and that it was put out for bid. They received a total of 5 proposals and evaluated them on 3 core points. They used a specific set of criteria in addition to cost. They then interviewed 4 of the 5 firms and ultimately recommended retaining Spalding DeDecker Associates who was mid-point on cost. However, they are uniquely qualified. Spalding DeDecker will partner with JDS Historical who does have experience with barns. The City has worked with Spalding DeDecker, primarily on road projects and they are a good fit. All the information is included in the Boardmembers' meeting packets.

Boardmember Willett noted that she has worked with Spalding DeDecker and that they are a good company. She noticed that $400,000 is slated for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds but that the total project will exceed that amount. It will cover 3 main items not meeting the $475,000 for the design and then the pricing comes after that. Is $300,000 budgeted for the barn? Mr. Benson said that it is not budgeted and at this point is just a general scope of what they are thinking. Boardmember Willett said that she would like to see some options not in the $300,000 range since she does not believe the barn will be used that much. She referenced the fact that the City's community center facilities do not have a strong rental history. She believes that the barn trend is becoming exhausted.

Mr. Benson noted that ultimately the City is hiring Spalding DeDecker for the design process. The City wants to have a steering committee composed of DDA members and the DDA will guide the decision making process. Boardmember Willett noted that they will do a full utility markup on everything which will play a role for the whole project.

City Manager Brown said that he was pretty clear that the $300,000 is not a firm number. It is more informational. Boardmember Willett said that she assumes that they will get direction on what sections to clump together although maybe not in what order; e.g., she referenced the play structure. Executive Director Cloutier said that the plan is to update the key features and what to add as opposed to replacing it. Mr. Benson noted that the recommendations will come from the steering committee. Amenities will be in Phase 1 and expansion will occur during Phase 2. Those are the most feasible parts of this. There will be planning sets. Boardmember Willett confirmed that the DDA has 90 percent of the design.

Boardmember Meredith noted that there is a public restroom at the Civic Center in the police station which is closer than the proposed one in the public commons. Why are we doing that when we already have one? Boardmember Willett agreed. City Manager Brown noted that the City asked the bidders to price for everything.

Executive Director Cloutier said that they will do an assessment with the steering committee along with a wish list of items and then narrow that down. Just because it is in the proposal does not mean it will come to fruition. Boardmember Willett asked about the splash pad or water. Is that the fountain? She thinks that is something to do. Executive Director Cloutier said no.

Chairperson Buck said that they tried to put the barn out to bid a couple years ago. Is this what Spalding DeDecker is going to do with a subcontractor? Mr. Benson said that the work scope is fundamentally different. The previous barn bid was more qualitative and open ended. The current one is more prescriptive

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and involves architectural drawings and input from the steering committee. City Manager Brown noted that they had to first evaluate it structurally. Mayor Beagle said that he does not think that City Council would approve $100,000 on that bond.

Boardmember Hoppenstedt asked about the timeline for the steering committee. Mr. Benson said that if it gets approved today and it goes to City Council, that group would be assembled in late January/early February. They will kick it off with Spalding DeDecker in January. City Manager Brown added that stakeholder engagement would occur in March/April 2026.

MOTION and second by Mayor Beagle and Boardmember Meredith to approve a Professional Services Agreement with Spalding DeDecker Associates, Inc. for Civic Center Loop Phase II Design Services for a Not-to-Exceed Cost of $67,700.

VOTE: MOTION CARRIED

2. **Recommendation to Approve a Budget Amendment to Allocate $30,000 from DDA Fund Balance Account #248-000-692.000 to the Downtown Enhancement Account #248-729-956.006 for a Total Budget of $50,000 in Fiscal Year 2025/2026**.

Executive Director Cloutier noted that when they did the budget session this past year they decreased the funds for the downtown enhancement account from $55,000 to $25,000. She does not specifically remember why. They now do not have enough money since it was spent for public art including a mural and providing junction cups to businesses. The Holiday Tree Lighting bill comes out of that account as well. They are asking for a $30,000 budget amendment to properly fund this line item. It was an oversight on her part and she apologizes. However, it is necessary for the lights, spring and summer flowers in the alley and maintenance of the alleys.

Boardmember Willett asked if the flowers come out of this account. Executive Director Cloutier specified that it is flowers for the alley, not the hanging baskets. The cost for the lights is $16,200 which leaves only $11,000 for alley maintenance, the cups and for the summer.

Mr. Benson noted that they should have brought a budget amendment for Gilley's alley. Historically they did not spend all $55,000 which is why it was brought down to $20,000. Boardmember Willett asked for the maintenance cost for the alley. She assumes it will be updated for this year and it will be different for next year. Executive Director Cloutier said that it is not just for the alley.

Mayor Beagle said since it is $13,500 for Gilley's alley, why are they asking for $30,000? Executive Director Cloutier noted that it will afford her $11,000 extra. Mayor Beagle asked why they are not just requesting $15,000 then. Mr. Benson said that even $13,500 will not cover everything. He noted that $22,190 has been charged to that account.

Executive Director Cloutier noted that the cups for all four businesses are $2,500 each time for 1,000 cups. Maintenance of the raised beds along the sidewalks are part of that ($2,700) and Gilley's alley was $13,500. All the supplies and fixtures for the alley flowers come from that account. They need to cover the lights. City Manager Brown asked if there will be additional cup orders. Executive Director Cloutier said that there are usually two cup orders per season. She generally does one in May. She did one right before the block party.

Boardmember Willett believes that if we are spending $5,000 a year on cups we need to be advertising them more. Chairperson Buck noted that then we will need more cups.

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Boardmember Osburn asked whether the flowerbeds are contracted out. Executive Director Cloutier said that it was done through Parks & Recreation. They added maintenance, weeding and fall mums. Mr. Benson said that all the City's routine landscaping is contracted out. If that gets rebid it will be included in the routine scope of work. City Manager Brown noted that it will be a larger contract overall.

Mr. Benson said that the bare minimum this account should be funded is $40,000. However, that limits anything else during the fiscal year including for the routine enhancements they might do. That is why he recommends the historical funding figure of $50,000. Last year the DDA came in under budget by a little over $39,000. This budget amendment would not put them in a bad fiscal position. Mayor Beagle noted that they budgeted $20,000 yet they have $40,000 to pay. That does not make sense to him.

Chairperson Buck asked how much the annual lighting is. Executive Director Cloutier said it is $16,200. Boardmember Willett said that is because we did not have the art. They may have thought the art would have other funding. Mayor Beagle said that the lighting is $16,000 and the cups are $5,000 so we are already over budget. City Manager Brown said that $45,000 would be the lowest he would recommend going. Executive Director Cloutier said that last year they spent $42,000 out of that budget. Boardmember Willett said that the Boardmembers should get better details of what each line item includes.

Chairperson Buck asked whether $11,000 will be sufficient. Boardmember Willett said that it has to be. City Manager Brown noted that these expenses were all things that were previously supported. Mr. Benson noted that they have added amenities which require contracted labor.

MOTION and second by Boardmembers Willett and Osburn to recommend approval of a budget amendment to allocate $30,000 from DDA Fund Balance Account #248-000-692.000 to the Downtown Enhancement Account #248-729-956.006 for a Total Budget of $50,000 in Fiscal Year 2025/2026.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Yays:	Buck, Osburn, Garmo, Hoppenstedt, Meredith, Willett	
Nays:	Beagle	
Absent:	Payment	
Vote Count:	6-1	**MOTION CARRIED**

INFORMATION:

1. Committee Reports.

Boardmember Hoppenstedt noted that the volunteer appreciation event will take place on Thursday, January 22, 2026 from 6-8 p.m. at the Wixom Bar. It is for anyone who has anything to do with the committees. Awards will be given.

2. Downtown Business News/Events

(a) 2025: December 5th. City of Wixom Tree Lighting Festival
(b) 2025: December 10th. Candy Cane Lane.

Chairperson Buck noted that the Candy Cane Lane event was held last night and that the attendees expressed appreciation. She thanked Boardmember Osburn for the use of her business facilities.

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(c) 2026: January 7th – February 25th. Wednesdays in Wixom

It was noted that there will be an online volunteer signup form and they have a billboard going up next week.

(d) 2026: February 1-28th. Food Fight on Main – Cocktail Battle.
(e) 2026: May 2nd, 10th. Annual Derby Day. 10K, 5K, 1-Mile Fun Run.

Executive Director Cloutier noted that City Council approved the Derby Day contract.

Public Comments:
There were no comments made by the public.

Staff Comments:
City Manager Brown noted that on December 16th they will be swearing in two new Councilmembers whose terms will begin effective January 1st. Councilmembers Rzeznik and Sharpe are leaving. Chairperson Buck noted that one of the new Councilmembers is on the Library Board.

Mr. Benson noted that they had previously discussed bollards back in July and that the DDA Boardmembers preferred metal ones. After months of negotiation, the City realized this cannot be done and instead they will use plastic ones because they are flexible and due to the reduced cost (the metal ones are $40,000 while the plastic ones are $15,000). City Manager Brown noted that there were also discussions around their color. He will provide updates if it moves before City Council. Boardmember Meredith noted that the County said to use plastic bollards instead of metal since the metal ones could damage vehicles. Mr. Benson stated that there were discussions around securing engineering approval and that there are also liability issues. Chairperson Buck confirmed that City Council has to approve the plastic bollards.

Mr. Benson noted that they are slowly moving forward on the sign project. There are 65 signs as part of the package. However, it will be completed before the end of this fiscal year with the Civic Center and the facilities done first. At the last meeting they asked for authorization for a grant for the chambers around the sidewalk and pedestrian islands. SEMCOG will fund the pedestrian refuges but not the chambers. They still need to determine where that leaves them but he will provide an update. That will not occur until Fiscal Year 2026/2027. The contract for the flowers was approved by City Council this week.

Boardmember Comments:
In terms of the West on Commons, Executive Director Cloutier reported that the environmental assessment is slowly getting there. Before it goes to the Federal government, there will be a public hearing. She just received the information from the Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD). Asti will be doing the work. Mr. Benson noted that the plans for this should arrive today. He is disappointed in how lengthy the environmental process has been but noted that the City should be able to bid it out this winter. The City is communicating that there is a sense of urgency around this. Executive Director Cloutier said that they can bid it out before the acceptance of the environmental assessment but the contract cannot be awarded before the environmental assessment is completed. Boardmember Willett asked whether those documents will be online for the Boardmembers to see. Mr. Benson said that they will be.

Executive Director Cloutier wished everyone happy holidays and thanked everyone for everything that they do.

Boardmember Hoppenstedt thanked the Executive Director for leading the food drive. Mayor Beagle noted that it was very busy. Boardmember Willett said that almost 8,000 lbs. of food was distributed. Executive Director Cloutier noted that between the most recent food drive and the previous one the grand total was

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1,603 items and that the businesses had a great time. Mayor Beagle thanked Boardmembers Garmo and Payment.

Chairperson Buck thanked everyone and wished them happy holidays. She also thanked Boardmember Osburn for the use of her business for registering kids during the Candy Cane Lane event. She noted that all the events are getting bigger and better and that volunteers are the lifeblood of these events.

ADJOURNMENT:
This meeting of the Downtown Development Authority was motioned and adjourned at 8:17 a.m.

Nancy Fisher
Recording Secretary

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