

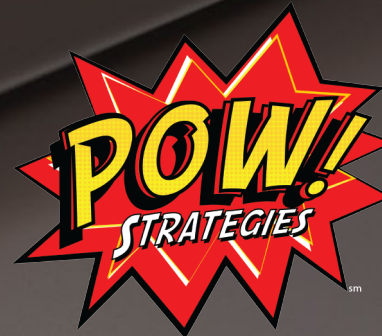


# Strategic Plan

2024 (Updated 2026)

# THE VALUE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING

- **Provides a Roadmap and Direction to Success**
  - Keeps you Focused and Aligns Resources with Goals
- **POW!er Forward - you'll be Proactive - Not Reactive**
  - Makes you more Efficient and Effective
- **Defines your Competitive Advantage**
  - Identifies New Opportunities and Innovations



# DDA ROLE

- Improve the quality of life
- Create a sense of place
- Attract and retain residents, businesses and talent
- Spur private reinvestment
- Increase property value in and around the area

## **The Work a DDA Does or Can Do**

- Infrastructure improvements to streets, sidewalks, lighting, sewer and water
- Design of public gathering places and parks
- Revitalization of vacant and underutilized properties
- Rehabilitation of historic buildings, assets and facades
- Mixed-use and middle-housing infill developments
- Business recruitment and retention programs
- Safety, security and maintenance programs
- Marketing, special events and promotions

# VISION

**Everyone's Downtown** - An enjoyable, dynamic, historic and desirable destination filled with a diverse mix of vibrant and locally-minded businesses, residents and consumers that value heritage, community gathering activities and sustainably maintained, clean, safe and accessible public spaces where everyone is welcome to live, work, and play.

# MISSION

***Ypsilanti Downtown Development Authority fuels development and growth for a vibrant DDA that benefits businesses and residents.***

## **CORE VALUES**

- Locally Rooted, Universally Welcoming (Diverse & Unique)
- Sustainably Radiant (Vitality & Environment)
- Interwoven Spirit (Collaboration & Engagement)
- Living Legacy (Heritage & Preservation)
- Open Doors, Level Ground (Access & Equity)

### **Core Value Statement**

**“By honoring our Living Legacy, we remain Locally Rooted and Universally Welcoming—cultivating an Interwoven Spirit to ensure our community is Sustainably Radiant with Open Doors and Level Ground for all.”**

\*Use these core values to evaluate future needs, goals, deliverables and decision-making.

# 2026 PLANNING SESSION SUMMARY GOALS

**Transform the  
DDA districts  
into a robust hub  
for investment  
and business  
success**

**Create a clean,  
safe, and  
accessible urban  
environment**

**Build a high-  
performing  
board with clear  
processes and  
communication**

**Strengthen the  
connection  
between the  
DDA, residents,  
and local  
institutions**

# 2026 PLANNING SESSION SUMMARY

## Economic Vitality

- Business Support
- Vacancy Mitigation
- Financial Tools
- Targeted Growth

## Physical

- Streetscape Safety
- Capital Projects
- Maintain Operations
- Safety Advocacy

## Organization

- Governance Updates
- Capacity Building
- Continuing Education
- Reporting Consistency

## Social

- Events & Activation
- Youth & Institutional Engagement
- DDA -Community Understanding
- Proactive Collaboration & Outreach

# PLANNING SESSION SUMMARY

- **Business Support:** Launch a "How to Start a Biz" FAQ and continue to provide SBDC/Marketing training for existing owners.
- **Vacancy Mitigation:** Implement "window marketing" and use new ordinances to stimulate the cleanup of vacant properties.
- **Financial Tools:** Secure TIF (Tax Increment Financing) renewals and explore property development grants.
- **Targeted Growth & Activation:** Prioritize the West Cross and Downtown to mirror the growth seen in Depot Town with business self-activation and foot traffic efforts.
- **Streetscape & Safety:** Redesign the River Street gateway and address trip hazards/tree replacements downtown.
- **Capital Projects:** Execute West Cross Streetscape improvements and manage the 2027 Bridge Closure.
- **Operations:** Maintain consistent trash removal and parking lot upkeep (North/South Huron).
- **Safety Advocacy:** Actively advocate for better crime enforcement and address loitering to improve foot traffic comfort.
- **Governance Update:** Review and modernize the 2009 Bylaws and finalize the Board Manual.
- **Capacity Building:** Increase committee membership (aiming for 7 per committee) and implement a board rubric for appointments for the Mayor to utilize.
- **Continuing Education:** Schedule informal "Deep Dive" sessions on zoning, TIF, and private redevelopment.
- **Reporting:** Establish a consistent cadence for committee meeting recaps to ensure total board alignment.
- **Events & Activation:** Sustain the momentum of "First Fridays" and support safe, accessible downtown events.
- **Youth & Institutional Engagement:** Partner with EMU to increase student volunteerism and retain young professionals.
- **District Branding:** Correct community misinformation regarding the DDA's role versus the City's role.
- **Proactive Collaboration & Outreach:** Foster board transparency through informal "coffee meet-ups" and proactive volunteer recruitment strategies.

# 2026 KPIs

Metric	Key Performance Indicator (KPI)
<b>Occupancy</b>	Decrease in vacant storefronts in Downtown and West Cross.
<b>Board Strength</b>	Reach an average of 5-7 members per committee.
<b>Safety</b>	Documented increase in Downtown foot traffic and perception of safety.
<b>Infrastructure</b>	Successful completion of Freighthouse Lot, Ballard Lot, N. Huron Lot, Michigan Ave. center median repairs, and prepare for bridge closures.

# SWOT ANALYSIS (updated 2026)

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats	Key Assets
Serve as the downtown to other communities	Misinformation and communication gaps	New Businesses to Promote	Vacant Property-Owners are MIA/Non-Responsive	MI-HQ
Three districts are walkable to each other	Perception	Marketing to MI-HQ Employees	Loitering/Panhandling on Washington St.	EMU
Willingness to be inclusive	Public transportation doesn't connect districts	Executing TIF Plan	Crime prevents people coming	Diverse population
Riverside Park connecting districts - gives campus feel	Target audience too single-minded	Vacant Property Activation with Owners	Drop in EMU Enrollment <b>Affecting volunteerism</b>	City/DDA relationship
Almost all independent businesses and unique to Ypsi	Lack of daytime population	Partnerships with EMU in West Cross and U of M in Downtown	TIF Renewals	Active businesses
<b>Sense of Community</b>		Water Street lot development	Not Enough Engagement (need capacity & new energy)	Staff
<b>Community Pride</b>		<b>Serve as the downtown to other communities</b>	Growth in Low-Income Populations/Lack of Disposable Income	
Prepared by POW! Strategies, Inc.		<b>Engage and Retain Young Professionals</b>		10

# NEEDS ASSESSMENT (updated 2026)

Physical	Economic	Social	Organizational
Improve parking lots @ Ballard St., Frog Island & Maple St - <b>IN PROCESS.</b>	Safety/Loitering Issues - <b>more youth-related</b>	Resolving Community misinformation (DDA is not the City) <del>between DDA and businesses</del>	Communications strategy
Beautification - <b>Activate storefronts to clean &amp; maintain (new ordinance is stimulating vacant properties, but need to fill gap).</b>  <b>Coordinated approach to improve vacant spaces with window marketing.</b>	<b>Priority</b> - More viable businesses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruitment strategy/market analysis                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Entertainment options</li> <li>Mix of business to build daytime economy</li> <li>Stronger daytime population/office workers</li> </ul> </li> <li>City support of businesses and vice-versa</li> </ul>	Marketing/Social Media - First Fridays Successful Downtown (foot traffic increased); Depot Town Growing (West Cross & Downtown somewhat static) - <b>Need to focus on Downtown &amp; W. Cross</b>	TIF Renewal
Trash Pick-Up/Maintenance/Trash Cans	Fill Vacancies	<b>Stakeholder Buy-In - More Biz Activation - W. Cross &amp; Downtown</b>	Larger Budget Outside of TIF Revenue
Michigan Avenue Boulevard Improvements	Acquire & Redevelop Property - <b>Grants Committee will review more opportunities; debating if DDA should take properties off tax roll</b>	Community Services	<b>Board &amp; Committee Development - rubric for appointments, need more EI members, ACTIVE volunteer outreach - needs to look different in each district, trainings &amp; resources, Team Building; Committee communication</b>
Property developments/upgrades - motivating unmotivated/unfinanced	Business & Property Marketing & Support - <b>continue SBDC trainings, create a How to Start a Biz FAQ, social media training through Destination AA, Tenant Rep Brokers on website, and owner best practices.</b>	<b>Event Support of Activities in Downtown &amp; W. Cross / City Fees may be discouraging new events / DDA Support of Safety for Events</b>	<b>Bylaw Review</b>
Recruitment Strategy Communication	<b>Crime Enforcement lax; advocacy needed</b>		

# NEEDS BY DISTRICT (updated 2026)

Downtown	Depot Town	West Cross
Foot Traffic	Redesigning Gateway along River St.	EMU Engagement
Occupancy of Storefronts	Manage Bridge Closures in 2027	W. Cross Board Representation (future replacements)
Consistency of Business Hours	Plaza Improvements	W. Cross Streetscape Improvements
Washington St. Placemaking (with TIF Renewal)	Riverfront Streetscape	TIF Renewal
Downtown - Safety, Tree Replacements/Trip Hazards (property line issues)		Foot Traffic
Downtown Parking Maintenance		Business Activation
TIF Renewal		
Business Activation		



## DOWNTOWN MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATION SELF-ASSESSMENT

Whether your downtown management organization/DDA/Main Street is in the start-up, growth or sustainability phase, this assessment surveys the organization's strengths and opportunities for organizational growth and effectiveness based upon best practices for downtown management organizations. This will provide a baseline to measure progress in the organization's ability to serve the needs of the downtown district.

### INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING YOUR ASSESSMENT

- Board members, committee chairs, downtown staff and CVT managers should complete this survey by a specified time each year.
- Gather the completed checklists and compile the results. Note where there is alignment, and where responses diverge.
- At your annual downtown strategic planning meeting, share the results and determine priorities for organizational growth for the next year.
- Seek guidance and resources from Main Street Oakland County on how to achieve your organizational goals.

DOWNTOWN MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATION CHECKLIST				
CRITERIA	UNKNOWN	NO/NOT STARTED	IN PROGRESS / MAYBE	YES/ ACHIEVED
<b>DISTRICT ASSESSMENT</b>				
A Business and Building Inventory & Mapping of business types exists for the downtown district.				
A Market Analysis was conducted within the last 3-5 years.				
TIF Plan (if applicable) is current and a minimum of 5 years remaining on plan.				
The Board understands the CVT Master Plan and is incorporated into Downtown Plan.				
The Board understands the Zoning Ordinance & CVT has updated within the last 10 years.				
<b>STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT</b>				
Our organization has buy-in and support from downtown business owners, property owners, residents and other community organizations.				
Organization has buy-in and support from the local municipality.				
Our organization communicates regularly with key stakeholders to gain support, encourage engagement and participation in organization's efforts.				
Organization has identified other community organizations and/or local service providers that exist to support the downtown district and communicates regularly with them.				
Our organization knows where to go for resources and support, when needed.				
Our organization holds two public meetings annually per PA57 (if applicable).				
Board members actively make community contacts on behalf of the organization and provide introductions for the Executive Director.				
Board members look for opportunities to represent and promote the organization within the community.				
The Board ensures that the organization's accomplishments and challenges are communicated to its members and stakeholders.				

# COMMUNITY CHECKLIST

## Common Needs Expressed by Board

- Complete Market Analysis (every 3-5 years)
- Recruitment & Retention Strategy
- Understanding of Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance/incorporated DDA plan
- Understanding of PA57 and Reporting Requirements/Posting
- Comprehension and Use of Main Street Four Point Approach & Committee Structure
- Strong Volunteer Base
- Partners Identified
- 2Mill Levy/PSD/SAD is unknown
- Purchasing Policy, fundraising plan and tracking stats unknown
- Understanding of Government Financing
- Regular Communication with Stakeholders
- Communications & Marketing Strategy
- Design Standards/Guidelines
- Building/Business Inventory & Mapping
- Active Board & Committee Membership
- Feeling Valued as a Board Member
- Board Members Building Connections/Contacts
- Board Members Collectively Support Decisions Made
- Being Prepared for Meetings



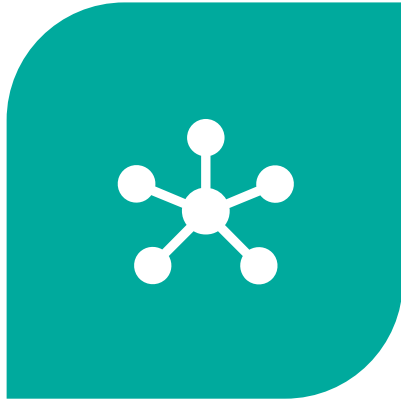
# DASHBOARD METRICS OF SUCCESS



DASHBOARD METRICS OF SUCCESS	DATA SOURCE	COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENT	BENCHMARK	2026 ACHIEVEMENT
EMU Students Visiting All Districts (Explore psi Card & EMU Discount)	track discount usage	Marketing		
Event Cross-population	track increase in visitors during events through Placer.ai	Marketing & Grants Collaboration		
DDA Leading Partnerships	track engagement/attendance with taxing jurisdictions	Operations		
Collaborative Task Force Established & Functioning	Collaborative outcomes	District Vitality		
Business Revenue Increase	survey annually/key events	EI/DV		
Baseline Survey with annual frequency collected	survey	EI		
More Housing	Building Dept. / Real Estate	DV		
Another Major Employer to Support Businesses	Business Occupancy	DV		
# of Businesses Open During the Day Increases	# of Businesses	DV		
Increased Web Metrics	Web Insights	Marketing		
TIF Renewed	Council Approval	Operations		
Increase in Volunteers	track #	EI		
Meeting Attendance of Businesses & Owners	Attendance	EI/DV		
Click Thru & Shares Increase for Emails & Social	Social Media Insights	Marketing		
"Meet the DDA" Social Event	# of Events & Attendees	Marketing		

# KEY STRATEGIES

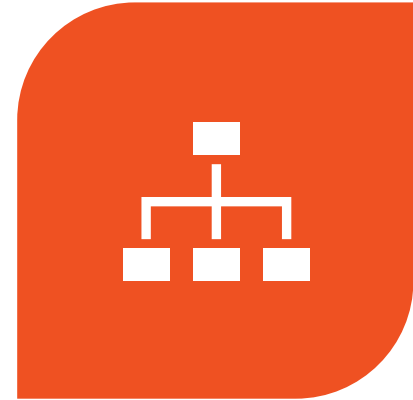
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CONNECTIVITY



BUSINESS VITALITY



ORGANIZATIONAL  
DEPTH

# STRATEGY SUMMARY

## STRATEGY

## OBJECTIVE

### CONNECTIVITY

- Physically improve connections within and between the DDA districts
- Activate collaborations with key partners to provide business services and grow the economy

### BUSINESS VITALITY

- Grow Existing Businesses
- Diversify and grow daytime business and housing market

### ORGANIZATIONAL DEPTH

- Increase understanding of DDA, its role and services
- Sustain & Implement TIF Plans
- Grow DDA Engagement
- Strengthen DDA Board

# PRIORITIES

## PLACEMAKING

- Washington St. Placemaking
- Safety/Crime Prevention Advocacy
- Downtown Parking Lot Improvements
- Gateway - Depot Town
- Bridge Closure
- Downtown Tree Replacements
- West Cross Streetscape Improvements

## BUSINESS RECRUITMENT

- Fill Vacancies & Address Non-Responsive Properties
- Strategically Recruit Viable Businesses
- Consistency of Business Hours

## COMMUNICATIONS

- Business Promotion
- Engage EMU Students/Faculty
- Visitor Attraction/Marketing
- Stakeholder Buy-in
- Build Awareness Through Events
- Resolve Misinformation
- W. Cross Board Representation
- Downtown Foot Traffic

## ORGANIZATION

- TIF Renewal
- Grow Income Beyond TIF



# CONNECTIVITY





# CONNECTIVITY

**Activate collaborations with key partners to provide business services and grow the economy**

Collaborative Task Force Work Plan  
**2026**

Continued Safety Advocacy  
**2026**

Youth Engagement / Loitering Mitigation  
**2026/27**

Event Support  
**2026/27**

## **Collaborative Task Force Projects:**

- Safety Advocacy
- Youth Engagement
- Event Growth
- Identifying Other Common Bonds/Goals
- Identifying & Recruiting Other Partners
- Create Work Plan & Assign Roles

## **Safety Advocacy Opportunities:**

- Provide Regular Council Report on Need
- Security Grant Program
- Build Partnerships with Other Groups, LAITR,
- Meet with Sheriff's Office & Prosecutors, Communication on Downtown Impact



# KEY PARTNERS

Below is a list of potential key partners to collaborate with on multiple levels. The DDA should take time to discuss any other partnerships that will help across all aspects of the organization and strategic plan. **Complete the partner chart.** Consider partners in the district, greater community, county/region, local officials, public entities/non-profits, and media. Assign a Collaboration Task Force person to reach out to those not at the table.

PARTNERS	COLLABORATION OPPORTUNITIES
MI-HQ	Vision Collaboration, Business Marketing & Engagement
EMU	Volunteerism, Event, Business, & Young Professional Engagement
U of M	Business Support & Marketing
City of Ypsilanti	Event Support, Crime Prevention/Enforcement, Vacancy Mitigation, Property Development, Infrastructure, Youth Engagement
County	Business Support, Property Development, Crime Prevention/Enforcement
SPARK	Business Support & Marketing, Young Professional Engagement
SBDC	Business Support
Destination AA	Marketing & Business Support
Financial Institutions - Credit Union in W. Cross	Business Support
Neighborhood Associations/Groups	Communication Awareness, Volunteer Engagement, Youth & Young Professional Engagement, Event Support
Medical Community/Institutions - Michigan Medical	Crime Prevention/Enforcement - Community Health
Religious/Community Organizations	Communication Awareness, Volunteer Engagement, Youth & Young Professional Engagement, Event Support
Student Council	Youth & Young Professional Engagement
Public Schools	Youth & Young Professional Engagement
Library - Youth Programs Downtown	Youth & Young Professional Engagement
Ozone House - Youth Drop-in Center	Youth & Young Professional Engagement
Washtenaw Community Mental Health	Crime Prevention/Enforcement - Community Health



# BUSINESS VITALITY





# RECRUITMENT & RETENTION

## Recruitment Resources & Materials

- **Retention is your best recruitment tool!** A proactive retention and outreach plan to businesses will extend the reach of services and inclusivity, grow existing entrepreneurs into second businesses or expand product offerings.
  - **Complete market analysis by June 2026, and then focus on recruitment strategy.** Update analysis every five years; and strategy every other year.
  - **Prioritize** development sites for mixed-use, workforce housing and those in need of façade improvements or repairs.
  - **Proactively engage property owners** through round table discussions, one-on-one meetings and providing regular communications and resources. Go above and beyond to support a positive relationship.
- How to start a business FAQ/handout
  - List Tenant Rep Brokers on website
  - Create an Owner's Best Practices handout
  - Property Development Grants
  - Property developments / upgrades "toolbox" for motivating unmotivated/unfinanced landlords
  - Implement "window marketing" and use new ordinances to stimulate the cleanup of vacant properties.

## Retention Resources & Trainings

- Destination AA social media training and other marketing
- Continue to promote SBDC training
- Building/Business Improvement Grants
- Tips on Managing Loitering / Crime Watch
- Importance of Consistent Business Hours



# ORGANIZATIONAL DEPTH & REACH

**Increase understanding of DDA, its role and services**

**2026**  
Implement communications and marketing strategy

**2026/27**  
Community Information Campaign clarifying DDA's role versus the City's

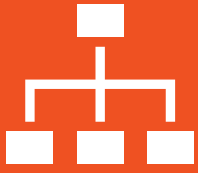
**2026/27**  
Refine brand strategy and initiate campaign

**Sustain and implement TIF Plans**

**2026**  
Renew TIF Plans for Downtown and West Cross

**2026**  
Explore property development grants.

**2027**  
Encourage redevelopment sites to grow TIF



# ORGANIZATIONAL DEPTH & REACH

## Grow DDA & Volunteer engagement

**2026**  
Youth & Institutional Engagement: Partner with EMU student volunteerism

**2026/27**  
Proactive Volunteer Recruitment Strategy

**2027**  
Young Professionals Retention Strategy

## Strengthen Board

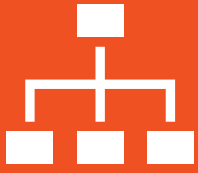
**2026**  
Governance Updates: Bylaws and Board Manual

**2026**  
Capacity Building: committee membership increase and board appointment evaluation

**2026/27**  
Board-Community Outreach

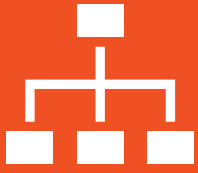
**2026/27**  
Board Continuing Education & Team Building

**2026/27**  
Reporting: committee meeting recaps to Board and committees



# ORGANIZATIONAL DEPTH & REACH

- Focus on implementing the communications and marketing strategy & building out your Volunteer Outreach & Recruitment
  - Volunteer Outreach needs to look different in each district and needs to be a proactive plan (passive recruitment currently)
- Bylaws are outdated (2009). Update this year. Bylaws should then be reviewed every 3 years for any modifications.
- Ideal committee size is 7. This will require recruiting volunteers to fill committees, not just with Board members. Need more EI Committee members in particular.
- Create a Board rubric for appointments (provide to mayor/council). Start preparing for succession.
- TIF Plan Renewal Deadlines – start at least two years prior to deadline:
  - DOWNTOWN - December 31, 2028
  - WEST CROSS - December 31, 2028
  - WATER STREET - December 31, 2028
  - DEPOT TOWN - December 31, 2039



# ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

## PREVIOUS COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

- Grants
- Operations & Finance
- Equitable Investment

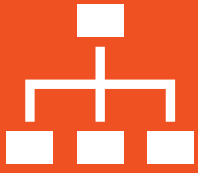
## NEW COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

- Operations (CIP, TIF Plan, Collaborations Task Force, Finance, Policy)
- Grants (Façade Review, Special Events, Grant Recipient Identification)
- Equitable Investment (EI Review & Recommendations on All Projects & Programs) – **Continue to Define Tasks or Potentially Integrate a Member into Each Committee**
- Ad-hoc Committees
  - District Vitality (market analysis, business outreach, property development)
  - Marketing (Communications & Marketing, Volunteer Development, Tourism & Economic Development Marketing)
  - Collaborative Task Force

## COMPARE TO MAIN STREET APPROACH

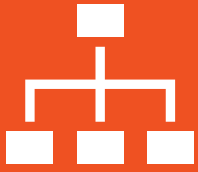
- Promotions (Marketing, Events, Brand, Tourism)
- Design (Infrastructure, Façade Improvements, Maintenance)
- Economic Vitality (Business Recruitment/Retention, Property Development)
- Organization (Fundraising, Grants, Volunteer Mgt., Comms)
- Executive Committee (Policy, Operations, Finance)





# DDA TEAM BUILDING

- Attend Coffee Meet-ups!
- Schedule Activities Together for the Year - NO EXCUSES! (But, be mindful of OMA)
- Visit Each Other's Places (Know/Understand Business & Hold Meetings at Businesses)
- Conduct Property Visits as a Team
- Celebrate Successes - Recognize Board Members & Volunteers
- Attend Events (DDA & Community) Representing the DDA
- Provide DDA Swag to Board Members to Wear Proudly at Events/Activities



# TRAINING & EDUCATION

## **Top Areas of Additional Training/Resources:**

- Outside Resources Available
- City Resources
- Economic Development Tools (ie: construction, private redevelopment, property Development)
- Zoning
- TIF
- Annual Board Orientations
- Market Analysis
- City Master Plan
- PA57 Reporting & Requirements
- Main Street Approach / Board & Committee Responsibilities / Organizational Structure

## **Other Training/Resources**

- Funding Tools & Fundraising / Grant Writing/ Other Government Programs
- Roberts Rules of Order
- DDA Board Bylaws/Policies/Procedures/Strategic Plan
- History of DDA-funded projects
- Marketing
- Politics
- Community Engagement
- Leadership
- Conflict Resolution





# EVENT ANALYSIS

## DDA Run Events

HoliFest - December

Saturdays Downtown (potential) – May – December (Count Below includes this)

Sammie Slam - April

## 2025 DDA Sponsored Events

First Fridays – April – December

Ypsi Pride – June

Juneteenth – June

Fourth of July Parade – July

Rumble of the Bumble – September

Freak Fest – October

Depot Town Holiday Tree Lighting – December

## NEW 2025

Depot Town in the Now

Cruise Nights – weekly (summer)

Ypsi Food Co-op

Ypsi Farmers Market – May-Oct

Ypsi Vegan Fest - August

YDL Halloween - October

Downtown School Supply Stroll – Aug.

Walk with Friends - weekly

## Key Tactics

- Support More Activation in West Cross and Downtown
- Support Cost of Fees to Encourage Third-Party Organizers
- Advocate for Reasonable City Fees
- Invest in Safety Equipment for Events

Fill Event Schedule Gaps!



Jan. - March

April - June

July - Sept.

Oct. - Dec.



# NEXT STEPS

- Implement & Track Strategic Action Plan with Worksheet
- Plan for a Strategic Plan 3-Year Refresh this Fall 2026
- Stay focused on the **Key 3 Strategies!**



# 2024 SUCCESSES



- Façade Improvement on Michigan Ave.
- Planning for depot town plaza improvement
- Hiring the LAITR team
- Relatively smooth events process and holiday lighting
- Changed the employment agreement between the DDA and city regarding the executive director position.
- We made improvements to the beautification of depot town
- Improved lighting downtown
- Painting and restoring the trolley
- Grants
- IGA amendments
- Full time director and new part-time staff in place
- Drinking fountain
- Low hanging fruit - landscaping projects
- Freighthouse plaza design
- Ballard lot RFQ
- Expanded **exploreypsi** giftcard program
- Relationship Building with AA, Spark, MEDC, City on transit, redevelopment and business resources
- RAP Grant Submission for River St. Blvd.
- Purchasing Policy Improved
- Sponsorship Policy Updated
- Lights on Washington St. & Policy for Fixtures
- Restored Signal Tower
- Events Calendar Created
- District Tours
- MI-HQ
- Converting Parking Lot to FREE
- New Businesses





# 2025 SUCCESSES



## Organizational & Governance Improvements

These accomplishments relate to internal structure, planning, and formal approvals.

- Restructured the DDA Committees
- Approved our budget
- Approved TIF Tables, moving on with TIF renewal.
- Updated the Facade and Building Rehab grant for FY 26/27.
- Created a DDA Welcome Packet for businesses to access at any time.

## Funding, Grants, & Financial Support

This includes securing external funding, approving grants, and providing financial support to community initiatives and businesses.

- Extended a one year contract with First Fridays Ypsilanti for \$15,000
- Awarded a rehabilitation grant to 501 W. Cross St.
- Approved \$25,000 in support to launch RxKids in the City of Ypsilanti (December 1, 2025!)
- Approved a Facade Grant for 705 W. Cross St.
- Approved a Building Rehab Grant for 126 W. Michigan
- Created a DDA Security Camera Grant Reimbursement program.
- Received a \$10,000 CTAP Grant to relaunch 2018's Business Owner Portrait Series.
- Secured a match from SPARK East in collaboration of the project.

## Infrastructure, Maintenance, & Capital Projects

Focuses on physical improvements to DDA properties, public spaces, and maintenance contracts.

- Approved engineering, bidding, and construction (scheduled spring 26) for the Ballard Street Lot.
- Approved engineering, bidding, and construction (scheduled spring 26) for the Freighthouse Lot, and Freighthouse Plaza ADA upgrades.
- Maple Street lot resurfacing and restriping in June 2025.
- Approved a landscaping contract renewal with DJs Landscaping
- Approved a contract with the County to take care of the 6 rain gardens in Depot Town
- Converted overgrown landscaping in the N. Adams lot to stone.
- Landscaping overhaul in the West End Link (RAC Plaza)





# 2025 SUCCESSES



## Cleaning, Beautification, & Maintenance Services

Accomplishments related to keeping the district clean, accessible, and decorated.

- Expanded the LAITR SHINE Team district cleanup contract from 15 hours a week to 36 hours a week.
- Meet and greet cleanup event with the DDA Board and SHINE Team.
- Approved a SHINE Team 4 month contract extension that includes Downtown supplemental snow clearing throughout the district for accessibility.
- Put holiday lighting out for bid, improved all holiday decorations. The best decor we have ever had is currently being installed.
- Supported Downtown Halloween Decoration.
- Holiday Storefront competition underway for the season.

## Community Engagement, Marketing, & Partnerships

These involve collaborating with other organizations, launching marketing initiatives, and hosting informational presentations.

- Hosted various presentations at our board including from the Police Chief, Growing Hope, MIHQ, Ypsi Transit Center, Destination Ann Arbor Marketing Team, Ann Arbor Sports Commission, City of Ypsi Sustainability Commission, and Ground Cover News.
- Partnered with Growing Hope for the N. Huron Lot billboard and street banners to promote the new Farmers Market Downtown.
- Launched ExploreYpsi 2025 in partnership with EMU.
- Partnered with Ypsi's Sustainability Commission for a Sustainable Business Practice Workshop for DDA businesses.
- Implemented Marketing and Communications Strategy
- Highlighting the DDA Community Card Program with new partners and general audience.

## Events, Licensing, & District Activation

Focuses on approving special events, creating new district zones, and supporting entertainment/commercial activities.

- Started the first annual Sammie Slam sandwich competition.
- Approved special events sponsorships for Ypsi Pride, Depot Town in the Now, Cruise Nights, Ypsi Food Co-op 50th Anniversary Bash, Juneteenth, Ypsi Farmers Market, Ypsi Vegan Fest, YDL Halloween, YDL Holiday Tree Lighting, Downtown School Supply Stroll, Freak Fest, Walk with Friends, 4th of July Parade.
- Established a Social District in Depot Town (set for council approval December 9, 2025)
- Approved a redevelopment liquor license for 200 W. Michigan, 5 N. Hamilton, and 2 W. Michigan.





# CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

A CIP Plan was completed this year, building on the priorities identified in the Strategic Plan.

FYE	PROJECT	PROJECT AREA	PROJECT PRIORITY	PROJECT ESTIMATE	FUND OPTIONS (Partners & Resources Needed)	STATUS
2025	Parking Lot Improvements (Maple Lot)	Depot Town	High			Complete - Spring 2025
2027	Cross Street Bridge	Depot Town	High			Scheduled 2027 (as of now). Establishing Social District in anticipation (December 2025)
2025-26	Parking Lot Improvements (Freighthouse)	Depot Town	High	\$146,900	General Fund	Construction - Spring 2026
2025-26	Freighthouse Plaza Lighting	Depot Town	High	\$26,000	City	
	Parking Lot Improvements (Frog Island)	Depot Town	High			scheduled for Summer 2026 (city project)
2025-26	Plaza & Safety Improvements (General Park)	Depot Town	Medium	\$20,000	General Fund	ADA improvements construction Spring 2026
2028-29	Freighthouse Plaza Tree Plan	Depot Town	Medium	\$50,000	Unknown	
2028/29	River Street Landscaping	Depot Town	Medium	\$100,000	Unknown	
2026	Riverside Park Improvements (benches, etc.)	Downtown	Medium		City Partnership	no action
Long-range	Riverwalk	Depot Town	Low			no action
	Continued Maintenance to East Cross Street Improvements	Depot Town	Low			ongoing



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2025-26	Downtown Safety/ Crime Prevention Advocacy	Downtown	High			Security Camera Grant created and running spring 2025. Downtown Committee for safety formed in collab with City. SHINE team collaboration ongoing
2025-26	Downtown Drinking Fountain	Downtown	High	\$20,000	Cap. Infr. Projects	
2025-26	N. Huron Lot Repair	Downtown	High	\$98,000	Cap. Infr. Projects	
2028-29	Mi Ave Streetscape & Boulevard Improvements (Adams to Hamilton and Hamilton to Ballard/Congress)	Downtown	High	awaiting estimate for median repair	Cap. Infr Project for repairs	Early discussion - MI Ave median repair for summer 2026
2027	River Street Blvd. Beautification/Gateway Improvements to Coincide with Cross Street Bridge Construction	Downtown	Medium			Delayed, due to funding constraints
2028-29	Tree Replacement	Downtown	Medium	\$150,000	Future	
2028-29	Washington St. Streetscape/East-West Pedestrian Linkages / Activation Plan	Downtown	Medium	\$1,050,000	General Fund/Bond	no action
2026	Riverside Park Improvements (benches, etc.)	Downtown	Medium		City Partnership	no action



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<b>FYE</b>	<b>PROJECT</b>	<b>PROJECT AREA</b>	<b>PROJECT PRIORITY</b>	<b>PROJECT ESTIMATE</b>	<b>FUND OPTIONS (Partners &amp; Resources Needed)</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
2025-26	Ballard St Parking Lot Improvements	West Cross	High	\$150,000	General Fund	Construction is Spring 2026
2028-29	Streetscape Design Improvements (Ballard to N. Huron) West Cross Streetscape Improvement & Amenities	West Cross	High	No estimate	Future	Improved landscaping improvements - planters, trees. Larger overhaul in early discussion
2028-29	Streetscape Design Improvements (Normal to Ballard Streets) West Cross Streetscape Improvement & Amenities	West Cross	High	No estimate	Future	Improved landscaping improvements - planters, trees. Larger overhaul in early discussion
2028-29	On-street Parking & Transportation Improvements (Normal to N. Huron) West Cross Streetscape Improvement	West Cross	High			No action
2028-29	Pedestrian Crossing Improvements (Cross/N. Huron, Cross/Perrin and other) - EMU Placemaking & Pedestrian Connections	West Cross	Medium	\$750,000	General Fund/Bond	no action / Perrin St. Redesign



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2025	Trash Cans & Pick Up Schedule/ Maintenance/ Beautification	All	High			this is in our IGA and beautification is ongoing
	Wayfinding & Gateways	All	Low	No Cost Estimate		no action, early discussions
	Burying Utilities/ Stormwater/ Infrastructure Needs (integrate into above projects)	Integrate into other projects	Universal			pipe dream
	Multi-modal Improvements (Integrate into All Streetscape Improvements)	All	Universal			no action



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