

Downtown Development Authority Meeting
2026

Friday, February 20,

Meeting Minutes

12:04 PM: Call to Order.

Pamela Shermyer	Present
Tracey Williams	Present
Bruce Kantor	Present
Alex Green IV	Present
Patricia Felton	Absent
Mike Greene	Present

No Motion to Excuse absences are made. DDA Director Austin Colson announces the resignation of former DDA Board Chair Fred Prime, and adds that due to holiday scheduling in February, the Lathrup Village City Council did not meet on its normal meeting date, so approval of new board members did not take place. Additionally, Charlotte Jones' term is up, but she has asked to extend her term, which will need to be approved by City Council at their next meeting.

12:05 PM: Approval of Agenda

Motion to Approve Agenda made by Mike Green, seconded by Bruce Kantor; Motion Passes Unanimously.

12:05 PM: Approval of Meeting Minutes

Motion to Approve Minutes of January 2026 Meeting made by Bruce Kantor, seconded by Alex Green; Motions Passes Unanimously.

12:05 PM: Consent Agenda

Motion to Approve the Consent Agenda made by Bruce Kantor, seconded by Mike Greene.

12:06 PM: Public Comment

No Public Comment made.

12:06 PM: Old Business

LVMF Planning Update: Lauren Beras provides updates regarding the Lathrup Village Music Festival planning process. As of meeting date, the LVMF has over \$27,000 in sponsorships. B&B Collision has been added as a sponsor for the festival. Holbrook Auto as also announced their intent to sponsor the Music Festival. LVCoC President Mark Watts has connected Lauren with a local car dealership for a sponsorship opportunity but that meeting has not happened yet, so next meeting there will be an update to that.

Regarding artists: Wayne Gerard, a Lathrup Resident and artist, has agreed to return to the LVMF for a set. Brenden Linsley was suggested by Thornetta Davis and has agreed to perform in the LVMF. There are four returning bands from last year and four new bands for this years' event.

Halfway to the Music is back at Dog and Pony Brewing, March 13th in Oak Park. Admission is free.

Family Fun Zone Update: Parks and Recreation committee has agreed to take over the planning and execution of the zone. Southfield Public Library is going to have a booth in the FFZ to do crafts with the kids.

The LVCoC has been very helpful in promoting the event, hosting artists for their Live in Lathrup Podcast. The CoC is also assisting in restoring the Lathrup Village Community Foundation 501©3 and will partner with the LVMF in order to secure private-entity grants for special events like the LVMF. The LVCF with also work closely to bring community events to the city and local businesses.

Pam Shermeyer asks if there is any added work needed to join an existing 501©3, and DDA Director Colson adds context: The LVDDA worked during the summer of 2025 to start their own 501©3, but the amount of reporting and auditing necessary was deemed to be too excessive of a workload for staff. Conversations with local attorneys and area DDA's that had their own 501©3 already, and the consensus was that it was in the DDA's best interest to partner with an already existing 501©3 that had a similar goal to consolidate reporting documents and keep costs low.

The DDA wanted its own registered 501©3 because there are private entity grants that only go to charitable/tax-exempt organizations exclusively and municipalities/governments go not qualify. Partnering with

the LVCF gives both the Music Festival and the DDA access to these grants and furthers projects in the future, like Parks Restoration and enhancing the Music Festival, as well as Business Support Grants. DDA staff is mindful of any and all conflicts of interest regarding a partnership like this, and pledges to keep the DDA Board aware of such.

Tracey Williams adds on, as she was one of the points of contact to the 501©3 discussion in 2025 for DDA Staff, and reiterates that the workload for operating a registered 501©3 would be too much for staff to handle, especially with day-to-day activities to still handle. She believes it is in the cities and the DDA's best interests to partner with an already existing organization, but believes that- in the future, when resources become more readily available- that the DDA registers as a 501©3 themselves.

12:18 PM: New Business

Southfield Road Hanging Baskets Order: DDA Director Colson Presents – DDA Staff reached out to five local nurseries in order to retrieve quotes for the hanging flower baskets within the DDA District. There were two follow ups sent over a three-week period, but vendors were not very responsive, as the DDA only received 2 quotes: one from last year's vendor, and one from English Garden's.

Joe Kutchey and Sons contract is for \$1,895 dollars. English Garden's contract is for \$26,416. Pam Shermeyer recognizes that English Garden's is a more expensive retailer, but she believes that this is clearly a math error, and that thinks the charge is more like \$9.80 per 4" pot, not \$98 per 4" pot. Bruce adds that maybe they thought they were providing the containers too. DDA Director Colson adds that the price provided did not include soil or fertilizer, while Kutchey and Son's contract does include them.

Bruce Kantor makes a motion to approve Joe Kutchey and Son's contract for \$1,895. Mike Greene seconds the motion. It is passed unanimously.

LVMF Performance Agreement – Wayne Gerard: Lauren and Austin presents the contract – Since the DDA has oversight on the finances for the music festival, the Board is asked to approve the contract for a \$750 deposit. Mike Greene makes motion to approve, Bruce Kantor Seconds. The motion passes unanimously.

LVMF Performance Agreement – Brendon Linsley: Much like the prior contract, the DDA Board is asked to approve a deposit for Brendon Linsley's contract for \$1,200, being a \$600 deposit. Alex Green makes a motion to approve, Bruce Kantor seconds.

Staffing Cost Allocation – Parks and Recreation: Context: In late summer 2025, Parks and Recreation asked the City Council to have someone on staff full time to handle parks and recreation responsibilities for the city. City Council denied the request due to budgetary constraints. Bruce Kantor brought up the idea of adding hours to DDA Project Coordinator Tom Kennedy, who is currently part time. These 4.5 extra hours will be dedicated to working on parks and recreation projects and initiatives, and looking for more funding through grants and programs. Bruce adds context, and says that this is to give P&R a point of contact to set up and organize events, handle money and scheduling. Bruce makes a motion, Alex seconds. The motion passes unanimously.

12:33 PM: DDA Director Report

DDA Director Colson presents –

Build Ready: Black Business Resilience – Thursday, February 12th 6-8:00 PM Southfield Public Library (26300 Evergreen Rd., Southfield, MI 48076)
o Hosted by Oakland Thrive-join founders, business operators, and ecosystem leaders for an engaging panel discussion focused on building resilient, sustainable Blackowned businesses. The program will explore practical strategies for navigating economic shifts, accessing capital, scaling responsibly, and recovering from setbacks. Panelists will share real-world insights on leadership, infrastructure, mindset, and community support, along with tools and resources to help businesses remain prepared in uncertain times. Doors open at 5:30 PM.

The Magic of Customer Service – With a Twist! – Tuesday, February 24th 10–11:30 AM (Southfield Public Library Auditorium, 26300 Evergreen Road, Southfield)
o The Tri-Cities Business Support Team will host an engaging customer service workshop featuring Anthony Grupido, blending magic, humor, and practical insight to reimagine how businesses approach customer service. Participants will learn strategies to turn everyday interactions into positive service moments, strengthen customer engagement through a resilient mindset, and use unexpected experiences to create lasting impressions.

International Placemaking Week – June 24-26 (Detroit: Venue TBD) o Hosted by Project for Public Spaces in partnership with the Downtown Detroit Partnership. Detroit has been selected as the host city for the 5th International Placemaking Week. This global gathering brings together placemakers, community leaders, planners, and practitioners from around the world to share strategies and best practices for creating vibrant, people-centered public spaces. The three-day event will feature plenary sessions, breakout discussions, mobile workshops, networking receptions, and site visits to public spaces throughout Downtown Detroit and across the city. The event further highlights Detroit as a national leader in creative placemaking and community-driven redevelopment.

Business and Property Update

28919 Southfield Road (Dairy Fairies) – The applicant received site plan approval from the Planning Commission at its February 17th meeting for a change of use, contingent upon obtaining a variance from the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) related to the offstreet parking requirements established in the Zoning Ordinance. The requested parking variance is scheduled for consideration by the ZBA at its February 23rd meeting.

27700 Southfield Road (Former School Building) – The applicant is awaiting a financing decision from MSHDA and has requested a twelve (12) month extension of the site plan approval granted on April 15, 2025. The Planning Commission recommended approval of the extension at their February meeting, which will be considered by City Council at its February 23rd meeting for final approval.

Infrastructure

Capital Improvement Plan (CIP): The FY26-31 CIP was presented to the Planning Commission at its February 17th meeting. The Commission is expected to make a motion at its March meeting to recommend the plan to City Council for final approval.

Monument Welcome Signs: The DDA has requested inclusion of a project in the City's Capital Improvement Plan for the installation of two (2) new monument welcome signs along Southfield Road to enhance corridor identity and strengthen visual entry points into the district's north and south gateways.

Wayfinding Signage: The DDA has also requested inclusion of a wayfinding signage project to direct visitors to free public parking located

in the northeast section of the DDA district along Southfield Road, improving accessibility and awareness of available parking resources.

Misc.

GM on Main Street Grant – Traffic Safety Improvements: DDA staff has submitted a grant application to the GM on Main Street Grant Program to fund enhanced roadway striping and pavement markings aimed at improving traffic flow and safety within the DDA district. The proposal focuses on high-conflict intersections associated with I696, the 11 Mile Service Drive, and cross traffic from Lathrup Boulevard. The proposed improvements are intended to reduce vehicle conflicts, improve driver awareness, and enhance pedestrian safety. Main Street America has indicated that grant recipients are expected to be notified by late April.

Recast Leaders Program: Lathrup Village has been selected as one of six Southeast Michigan communities to participate in the Recast Leaders program. Administered by Recast City in partnership with the Michigan Municipal League, this competitive initiative provides no-cost technical assistance over a 10-month period to support development of actionable economic development strategies focused on revitalizing our main street corridor, activating vacant storefronts, and supporting small-scale makerspaces and local entrepreneurs. A kickoff meeting with the program director and participating communities is scheduled for Tuesday, February 24th. Staff will continue to keep the Board informed as the program progresses.

MEDC Redevelopment Services Team Visit & RRC Recognition: Staff from the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) will be onsite Monday from 2:30–4:30 PM for a Redevelopment Services Team consultation and tour of three to six priority development sites within the City. The visit will focus on discussing future transformation opportunities, identifying potential barriers, and reviewing best practices associated with Lathrup Village’s Redevelopment Ready Community (RRC) certification. Planned discussion sites include the future readaptation of the former school building, DDA owned triangular parcel, vacant commercial lot north of Lincoln Drive, and the long-term vision for transitioning the Office District along 12 Mile Road into a mixed-use district. MEDC staff will also attend the City Council meeting that evening to formally recognize Lathrup Village for regaining its RRC certification. All DDA members are welcome and encouraged to attend.

Fraud Prevention Workshop – Chase Bank & LV Police Department: Representatives from Chase Bank, in coordination with the Police Department, will host an educational workshop on common and emerging fraud schemes on April 29th at 10:00 AM in the Community Room at City Hall. The session is designed to help residents and business owners identify scams, recognize warning signs, and better protect their personal and financial information.

DDA Director Colson adds at the end of the meeting the Planning Commission is going to begin reviewing ordinance changes over the coming months to appease business and property owner complaints that have been increasing lately. Since these changes include signage, staff believes the DDA board should have some input in the discussion, so staff requests the DDA board review the ordinance at their leisure and provide their feedback on behalf of the business/property owners. This does illicit a discussion but no consensus is reached as the discussion is too preliminary.

After a meeting attendee asks about a second public comment section, because he had something to add, Bruce acknowledged that there should be a Board Member Comments section to the meeting. The Board adds a brief public comment section to let him speak. He asks about the Urban Nursery idea and wants to know if that had gone anywhere so far.

1:20 PM: Adjournment

Mike Greene makes a motion to adjourn the meeting. Bruce Kantor seconds. Meeting is adjourned.