

**Downtown Development Authority Meeting**  
**2026**

**Friday, January 16,**

**Meeting Minutes**

**12:01 PM: Call to Order.**

**Roll Call**

**Present:** Prime, Fred; Shermeyer, Pam; Jones, Charlotte; Felton, Patricia; Sugg, Dan; Kantor, Bruce; Greene, Mike; Colson, Austin.

**Absent:** Green, Alex

Patricia Felton and Fred Prime arrive late. No motion is made to excuse absences.

**12:02 PM: Approval of Agenda**

Mike Greene moves to approve the Agenda. Bruce Kantor seconds. Motion passes unanimously.

**12:02 PM: Approval of Meeting Minutes**

Bruce Kantor makes a motion to approve the meeting minutes from the November meeting. Dan Sugg seconds. Motion passes unanimously.

**12:02 PM: Consent Agenda**

Mike Greene makes a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Bruce Kantor seconds. Motion passes unanimously.

**12:04 PM: Public Comment**

Lauren Beras updates the Board as to the planning process for the 2026 Lathrup Village Music Festival. LVMF Planners have already begun reaching out to acts and sponsors, and have collected over \$18,000 in donations so far. The goal is for the LVMF to be entirely self-sustaining, so that they won't have to rely on the DDA for sponsorships in the future. Three acts have already been secured, pending the Board's approval today. The LVMF is also taking a lesson learned from last year with the

planning of the event, which Lauren will explain when the board is ready to approve the contracts.

**12:07 PM: Old Business**

None.

**12:07 PM: New Business**

2026 DDA Meeting Dates:

DDA Director Austin Colson presents the proposal for 2026 Meeting Dates, with no change from last year's schedule. DDA Staff attempted to figure a new best possible date for board members in 2025, but those efforts failed to find any resolution. Staff believe maintaining the same schedule works best for everyone. The board votes, with Charlotte Jones making the motion and Dan Sugg seconding. The motion passes unanimously.

DDA Annual Report:

By state law, a report is filed for each board and commission in a community at the end of a calendar year, ensuring a report of all activities and programs. The DDA had two new members join- Alex Green IV and Tracey Williams. There were 10 community events with over 100 volunteers, over 1000 volunteer hours and saw over 1,800 attendants at the various events. This was also the first year since the pandemic that the DDA was able to keep their staff throughout the entire year. DDA Staff have maintained the Tri-City Partnership between Southfield, Lathrup and Oak Park to benefit Lathrup businesses. Lathrup Village also has a new Chamber of Commerce of their own, with over 40 businesses registered. The DDA conducted various streetscaping events, including the addition of 3 new HAWK Signals along Southfield Road, with the newest addition south of I-696 awaiting energization. The DDA's 5-year capital improvement project has been completed a year early, after a \$1,288,899 investment.

The DDA sponsored the third annual Lathrup Village Music Festival, which saw over 1,500 participants not including the bands or vendors.

The DDA partnered with the St. Baldrick's Foundation for Cancer Research, raising over \$1,500 for the organization. St. Baldrick's is one of the world's largest donors into cancer research, sponsoring research

centers in over 26 counties, and DDA staff are discussing having a second shave-a-thon event for the organization. News on that will come when plans are made.

The DDA has made contact with Project DIAMoND at Oakland County to better assist local businesses in attaining 3D printers and other methods of small-scale manufacturing. Project DIAMoND hosts a monthly open house the first Wednesday of each month in Auburn Hills, and have invited the DDA Board to come out in February if they want to learn more about small-scale manufacturing and how it can better assist local businesses.

Food Truck Friday will continue going into 2026 in coordination with Parks and Recreation.

The DDA hosted its second annual Winter Festival, which was highly requested by residents and was very well received. For the first time, the city was able to do the tree lighting outside, as well.

The report will be uploaded online for all to access in due time.

Austin also mentions that Dan Sugg is attending his final meeting with the board after 8 years of work on the DDA. He is a representative of the Michigan First Credit Union and will be stepping away, paving the way for another staff member of Michigan First.

The board takes a moment to acknowledge Dan for his service to the community.

#### DDA Mid-Year Budget Amendments:

DDA Staff and the Board of Directors work together to establish realistic revenue projections and adopt a budget aligned with expected operational and programmatic needs. This budget aligns with the city's budget year, which is July 1 to June 31. This being the halfway point in the year, it is time for the Board to review the budget as it stands and make amendments as needed, if necessary. Budget amendments are limited to no more than twice per year. This report lists proposed amendments that have been reviewed and discussed by staff on current year activity and projected trends for the remainder of the fiscal year. These amendments adjust both revenue and expenditures to reflect updated activity, finalized grant awards and known project costs while maintaining a balanced budget. Staff will have final budget recommendations at the June meeting.

Total revenues increased by \$93,800, which is primarily attributed to recognition of grant revenue, including a DTE Foundation and Michigan

Department of Natural Resources Tree Grant, as well as a small business tax reimbursement from the State of Michigan, adjustments to the Tax Increment Financing revenue related to reclassifications based on Oakland County settlement information, and alignment of the music festival main street revenues with actual and expected receipts. Total Expenditures are increased by approximately \$98,350.

Key expenditure adjustments include an increase in streetscaping expenditures, including those related to snow removal and lawn maintenance. Minor adjustments to the auditing services due to allocation changes. Alignment of line items such as tax tribunal returns, repairs, maintenance, capital expenditures, grant programs with known obligations and project timelines.

The amended budget remains balanced with revenue equaling expenditures. The ending fund balance remains stable and sufficient to support ongoing operations for future DDA initiatives.

Pam Shermeyer asks for clarity in how snow clearing and lawn maintenance were defined in the budget. Mike Greene cites that at the end of the fiscal year, it will all be placed under one classification during the review. This being a mid-year review, it was left separate for the sake of clarity, since both snow removal and lawn care contracts were with the same company.

Charlotte Jones moves to approve the Mid-Year FY25-26 budget amendment. Seconded by Dan Sugg and passed unanimously.

#### Lathrup Village Music Festival Performance Agreement – Boddum Line Band

DDA Director Colson and LVMF Director Lauren Beras present together the contracts for the first three acts of the LVMF.

The Boddum Line Band has been a staple of the LVMF and have played every year at the show. They always play right before the headliner each year, and the band are all Lathrup Village residents. The contract is for \$1,000 with a \$500 deposit, and the rest of the money being paid at the end of their set. No further discussion is had on this contract.

Fred Prime makes a motion to approve the contract as is. Bruce Kantor seconds the motion. It is passed unanimously.

#### Lathrup Village Music Festival Performance Agreement – Cast Iron Cornbread

Another band that has attended all three iterations of the show, Cast Iron Cornbread is a crowd favorite and are starting to become a house band for the festival. They have a \$1,200 contract with a \$600 deposit, much like Boddum Line's contract. No further discussion is had.

Mike Greene makes a motion to approve the contract. Fred Prime seconds. The motion passes unanimously.

#### Lathrup Village Music Festival Performance Agreement – Thornetta Davis

Thornetta Davis's contract has a bit more nuance to deliberate. She is able to play for the main date of September 12<sup>th</sup> but will not be able to make the rain date of September 13<sup>th</sup>. Because of this, Lauren Beras has adjusted the show as follows:

If she cannot make the rain date, then one of two things will occur: Thornetta Davis will either push her contract to the 2027 LVMF, or will work with one Lathrup Village event within the 12 months between Music Festivals. There will not be a replacement show on Sunday, September 13<sup>th</sup>, and the show will end at 8 PM, whereas the Saturday show will end at 10 PM. This change only occurs if the rain date is used, however.

Discussion is had between the board, and everyone is in agreement that the plan as it stands works well. All Board members agree that this is a good direction, and securing Thornetta Davis is key to the LVMF, in their opinion.

Dan Sugg makes a motion to approve Thornetta Davis's contract. Seconded by Bruce Kantor and passed unanimously.

#### Update on the DDA-Owned Parcel at 27907 California Dr.

Discussion over the "Triangle Parcel" north of City Hall. An applicant was offered options to buy or even do a rent-to-own option for the property, so she may construct a greenhouse for small-scale gardening. However, she turned down all offers without a counter offer, leaving DDA Staff without another option. Staff has come to the Board to determine their next steps regarding the property. An alternative option is to put out a Request for Proposal to a realtor for them to try and sell the lot for the city.

After deliberation and discussion about it possibly being used for the site of a new expanded Community Garden if all else fails. The Board directs staff to have 90 days to figure out an alternative for the lot with the applicant. If that does not work, then a new Request for Qualification can be put out after a meeting with the DDA Board.

## **12:45 PM: DDA Director Report**

DDA Director Colson presents:

Upcoming DDA Events:

Holy Burger: Grand Opening Celebration: Thursday, January 22, 2026, 1:00 PM (26780 Southfield Road, Lathrup Village) Join City officials, staff, and community members as we welcome Holy Burger, the newest restaurant in Lathrup Village. The grand opening will include a brief ceremonial welcome and an opportunity to meet the owners and staff while showing support for this new addition to the local business district.

Live2Lead 2026: Choices That Matter: Friday, January 30, 2026, 9AM–2PM (Southfield, Lawrence Technological University) Join leaders from across the region for a dynamic half-day simulcast event designed to elevate personal and professional growth. Live2Lead 2026 features world-class leadership experts sharing time-tested principles, actionable strategies, and personal development techniques to help attendees create meaningful change. This high-impact, four-hour experience equips participants with renewed focus, practical tools, and a clear action plan to accelerate their leadership journey in the year ahead.

The Magic of Customer Service – With a Twist!: Tuesday, February 24, 2026, 10:00– 11:30 AM (Southfield Public Library Auditorium, 26300 Evergreen Road, Southfield) 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.

Business/Property Updates

26780 Southfield Road (Holy Burger) – All required approvals, including the Certificate of Occupancy and business license, have been issued, and the business is now open.

26600 Southfield Road (Holbrook Auto Parts) – Final approvals have been granted, including the Certificate of Occupancy and business license, and the business is now open. Wall sign and refacing of existing non-conforming muniment sign to be installed shortly. Infrastructure

Meeting with local sign companies to inquire about pricing for two new monument welcoming signs along Southfield Road to be added to City's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).

#### Miscellaneous

**Recast Leaders Program Application:** DDA staff submitted an application and completed an interview with Recast City for participation in the Recast Leaders program, a competitive initiative selecting six Southeast Michigan communities. In partnership with the Michigan Municipal League, the program provides no-cost technical assistance over a 10-month period to help communities develop an actionable economic development strategy focused on revitalizing main street districts, filling vacant storefronts, and supporting small-scale manufacturing and local entrepreneurs. Staff will keep the Board informed as selection decisions are announced.

**GM on Main Street Grant – Traffic Safety Improvements:** DDA staff is developing a grant proposal for 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, including Southfield Road at 11 Mile Road, where crash data indicates a higher severity of injuries, as well as traffic movements associated with I-696, the 11 Mile Service Drive, and cross traffic coming from Lathrup Boulevard. The proposed improvements are intended to reduce conflicts, improve driver awareness, and enhance pedestrian safety.

The Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) has provided verbal confirmation that the City's Redevelopment Ready Community (RRC) certification has been successfully recertified. In recognition of DDA staff efforts, the MEDC also awarded the City a \$28,000 technical assistance grant to support costs associated with updating the City's Comprehensive Plan.

#### **1:08 PM: Adjournment**

Fred Prime makes a motion to adjourn the meeting. Bruce Kantor seconds. Meeting is adjourned.