

Agenda

Downtown Economic Growth Authority

Board of Directors



City of Kalamazoo

Monday, October 20, 2025

3:00 PM

Main Conference Room at Community Planning and Economic Development

A. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

1. Purpose Statement:

The purpose of this Downtown Development Authority is to halt property value deterioration and promote economic growth within its business district, to increase property value.

The purpose of this Downtown Economic Growth Authority is to correct and prevent deterioration in residential, commercial, and industrial areas, to authorize the acquisition and disposal of interests in real and personal property; to authorize the creation and implementation of development plans and development areas.

The Kalamazoo DDA and DEGA, acting in concert, have set forth the strategic objective of focusing its resources on improving “The First 16 Feet”, a three-dimensional volume of space including buildings ground floor façade, the frontage that exists between the façade and the common space, and the common space that provides access to and through the district.

B. ADOPTION OF FORMAL AGENDA

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Approval of the minutes from the meeting of the Downtown Economic Growth Authority Board on September 15, 2025. (**Action: Motion to approve**)

D. REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS

1. Downtown Branding Update (a5 Branding & Digital)
2. Financial Report - August 2025 (**Action: Motion to accept the August 2025 Downtown Economic Growth Authority financial statement**)

3. Downtown Report

E. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

1. 2026 Downtown Economic Growth Authority Budget (**Action: Motion to approve the Downtown Economic Growth Authority 2026 Budget**)

F. PUBLIC COMMENTS

G. DIRECTOR COMMENTS

H. ADJOURNMENT

Board of Directors Regular Meeting Minutes

September 15, 2025, 3 p.m. | Community Planning & Economic Development, 245 N Rose Street

PRESENT: Curt Aardema, Mayor David Anderson, Jeff Breneman, Trisha Kidd, Clarence Lloyd, Rick Searing

EXCUSED: Jessica Thompson

ABSENT: Stanley Steppes, Kwame Gyimah

STAFF: Meghan Behymer (Downtown Coordinator), Erin Hahn (Community Investment Administrative Assistant), Jessica Wood (Attorney)

OTHER:

A. CALL TO ORDER

DIRECTOR AARDEMA CALLED THE MEETING TO ORDER AT 3:07 P.M.

PRESENT: Curt Aardema, Mayor David Anderson, Jeff Breneman, Trisha Kidd, Clarence Lloyd, Rick Searing

EXCUSED: Jessica Thompson

ABSENT: Stanley Steppes, Kwame Gyimah

THE SEPTEMBER 15, 2025, ATTENDANCE, INCLUDING EXCUSED AND UNEXCUSED ABSENCES, IS RECORDED.

B. ADOPTION OF FORMAL AGENDA

DIRECTOR LLOYD MOTIONED TO ADOPT THE AGENDA. DIRECTOR SEARING SECONDED. NO OBJECTIONS. MOTION CARRIED.

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

DIRECTOR BRENEMAN MOTIONED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE DOWNTOWN ECONOMIC GROWTH AUTHORITY BOARD MEETING ON AUGUST 18, 2025. DIRECTOR LLOYD SECONDED. NO OBJECTIONS. MOTION CARRIED

D. REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS

- 1. Financial Report – July 2025**

Board of Directors Regular Meeting Minutes

September 15, 2025, 3 p.m. | Community Planning & Economic Development, 245 N Rose Street

Meghan Behymer, Downtown Coordinator, presented the July 2025 financial report. In July 2025, the Downtown Economic Growth Authority (DEGA) received \$12,850 in revenue, bringing year-to-date revenues to \$928,887. Monthly expenses totaled \$63,976, driven by the Ambassador Program, audit fees, consulting services, and a sponsorship for the Caribbean Festival. Year-to-date expenses stand at \$373,393.

MAYOR ANDERSON MOTIONED TO ACCEPT THE JULY FINANCIAL REPORT. DIRECTOR SEARING SECONDED. NO OBJECTIONS. MOTION CARRIED.

2. Downtown Report – September 2025

Ms. Behymer presented the September 2025 downtown report, sharing a new format that reinforces the board’s operational framework and aligns the information with its strategic pillars.

Built for Business

In August, efforts to strengthen downtown’s business environment included preparations for the launch of a new business-facing newsletter in September, with future alignment to downtown branding. The Business Recruitment & Retention Committee advanced key initiatives by reviewing the September 2025 Economic Vitality Study presentation, refining a Business Welcome Letter, and finalizing plans for a recruitment marketing piece. Meanwhile, Downtown Dollars saw strong activity, with \$12,255 in major purchases and \$4,220 redeemed across 23 downtown businesses.

Clean, Safe, & Welcoming

Downtown’s cleanliness and safety efforts advanced on several fronts. The new Ambassador Program contract begins October 1, 2025, with adjusted 2026 operating hours for peak and off-peak seasons. The board discussed ensuring sufficient holiday coverage, and Director Aardema confirmed Block by Block’s flexibility to expand hours during special events as needed. The Bigbelly expansion is nearly complete, enhancing waste management as Ambassadors can now separately track trash and recycling with the retirement of older units. The Clean & Green Committee continued reviewing progress on the “Clean, Safe & Welcoming” and “Streetwise & Connected” workplans, while also beginning

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work with City partners to modernize the Mall Maintenance Agreement. Additionally, Ambassadors reported challenges with handbills being placed on public infrastructure, which violates City ordinance.

Place with Purpose

Placemaking initiatives continue to move forward with a focus on both existing and future downtown spaces. The Executive Committee conducted a walkthrough of Bates Alley to assess maintenance needs. Design and construction progress also advanced for the Rose Street Plaza and Farmer's Alley projects. Additionally, the Brush the Block mural festival, held September 2–7, brought vibrant new energy to downtown as seven acclaimed muralists transformed six building facades with large-scale public art.

Streetwise & Connected

Ambassadors are working on mapping public realm assets, including electrical outlets, benches, and tables. They have completed the mapping of all light pole banners and Bigbelly stations. Next to map will be the bike racks, wayfinding signs, and planters.

The board discussed proposed changes to downtown parking, particularly converting free street parking on Michigan Avenue, South Street, and Lovell Street to paid parking. The board recommended pausing the rollout of new paid parking until major downtown changes—such as the event center opening and street conversions—are complete, while supporting updates like replacing aging meters with kiosks and removing meters from low-demand areas.

Clear communication and accountability were emphasized as critical. The board will maintain regular quarterly meetings with city and parking staff to share business input and assess parking needs. The board highlighted the importance of a holistic parking strategy that balances enforcement with visitor experience, prioritizing free 90-minute street parking for retail access, and implementing changes based on real-time demand and future downtown developments. After a thorough discussion, the board agreed that maintaining flexibility in communication with city staff was important. To ensure timely input from the

Board of Directors Regular Meeting Minutes

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board on parking decisions, a motion was proposed to authorize the chair to act on the board's behalf.

DIRECTOR BRENEMAN MOTIONED TO AUTHORIZE THE BOARD CHAIR TO SEND A LETTER ON BEHALF OF THE BOARD IF NEEDED. DIRECTOR LLOYD SECONDED. NO OBJECTIONS. MOTION CARRIED.

Vibrant & Visible

The Events and Marketing Committee reviewed an initial round of design options for the new downtown branding, with a second round of options expected in October. The committee plans to bring a recommendation to the board in November, and Director Kidd requested that the initial design presentation be shared with the full board. Upcoming events include the final Beats on Bates on September 24, the Canadiana Festival on September 20, Sounds of the Zoo from September 22–28, and 269 FEST from September 20–27.

Strong & Sustainable

The Executive Committee reviewed the September board agenda and content, reviewed 2026 draft budgets for DDA and DEGA, and discussed the potential for additional staff to support the work of DDA/DEGA.

Additional Updates

Behymer stated that Cheng Kidd Sun's nomination is up for approval at the City Commission meeting tonight, and if approved, he would join at the October 20 meeting.

3. **Downtown Economic Vitality Study**

Board members discussed moving the Economic Vitality Study to the DDA meeting agenda.

DIRECTOR BRENEMAN MOTIONED TO TABLE THE ECONOMIC VITALITY STUDY PRESENTATION. DIRECTOR LLOYD SECONDED. NO OBJECTIONS. MOTION CARRIED.

E. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

1. **2026 DEGA Budget**

Board of Directors Regular Meeting Minutes

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Behymer stated that there are still some budget items to be worked through before bringing the budget to the board for approval. The budget is expected to be finalized at the October 20 meeting.

2. **Ambassador Program – Q4 2025 Recommendation**

Behymer stated that the Clean & Green Committee requested board approval to allocate a \$39,064 Ambassador Program budget variance to expand services in Q4 2025. The variance resulted from a delayed start of the new Block by Block contract, and applying the funds now would enhance coverage during the busy holiday season while maintaining continuity before the 2026 program scope begins.

MAYOR ANDERSON MOTIONED TO APPROVE THE ALLOCATION OF THE \$39,064 BUDGET VARIANCE TO EXPAND AMBASSADOR PROGRAM SERVICES DURING OCTOBER-DECEMBER 2025 UNDER THE NEW BLOCK BY BLOCK CONTRACT. DIRECTOR BRENEMAN SECONDED. NO OBJECTIONS. MOTION CARRIED.

3. **Michigan Talent Partnership Program – Letter of Support**

Behymer presented a letter to be signed by the Chair on behalf of the board. The letter emphasizes the importance of Arcadia Creek Festival Place as a central downtown venue, driving visitors and supporting local businesses, while noting its need for reinvestment due to aging infrastructure. The project aligns with the DDA/DEGA 2025–2027 Strategic Plan goals of creating a purposeful, welcoming, and economically vibrant downtown, and its timing is considered urgent with upcoming street improvements and the new Event Center.

DIRECTOR SEARING MOTIONED TO AUTHORIZE THE BOARD CHAIR TO SUBMIT A LETTER OF SUPPORT ON BEHALF OF THE DOWNTOWN ECONOMIC GROWTH AUTHORITY FOR THE CITY OF KALAMAZOO’S GRANT APPLICATION TO THE MICHIGAN TALENT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM. DIRECTOR LLOYD SECONDED. NO OBJECTIONS. MOTION CARRIED.

F. **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no public comments.

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G. DIRECTOR COMMENTS

Mayor Anderson updated the board on changes at the Kalamazoo Gospel Ministries regarding occupancy and programming. The mission, which aims to provide more than shelter—including employment support, permanent housing, mental health, and substance use services—has seen many individuals using it only for overnight stays, creating unsafe conditions and limiting program capacity.

Starting October 6, emergency overnight shelter will be capped at 140 beds (80 men, 60 women). Individuals who wish to stay must participate in basic programming with social work staff, including creating and following a personal plan. A lottery determined who retains emergency shelter access, leaving approximately 133 people excluded unless they join programs. Daytime services, such as meals, remain available to all. The mayor noted uncertainty about impacts downtown and downtown ambassadors have been informed.

H. ADJOURNMENT

DIRECTOR LLOYD MOTIONED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT TIME. DIRECTOR SEARING SECONDED. NO OBJECTIONS. MOTION CARRIED.

Downtown Economic Growth Authority
Statement of Activity
8/31/2025

Total Available Cash 805,245

| | <u>2025 Budget</u> | <u>August</u> | <u>2025 YTD Actuals</u> |
|--|--------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|
| Revenues | | | |
| Taxes | 883,600 | | 874,337 |
| Other Revenue | | | - |
| Private Contributions and Sponsorships | 21,700 | | 1,700 |
| Contributions from COK | 40,000 | | 40,000 |
| Contributions from Solid Waste Fund | 32,000 | | - |
| Contributions from Grants | 50,000 | | - |
| Transfers | | | - |
| Charges For Services | | | - |
| Interest And Rentals | - | | 12,850 |
| Total Revenues | <u>1,027,300</u> | <u>-</u> | <u>928,887</u> |
| Expenses | | | |
| Operating Supplies | 2,004 | 187 | 298 |
| Professional And Contractual Services | 502,448 | 60,016 | 254,363 |
| Solid Waste Disposal | 7,500 | | 2,613 |
| Communication And Network Services | 576 | | - |
| Repairs And Maintenance Services | 2,000 | | 455 |
| Consulting Services And Fees | 55,150 | 8,515 | 27,591 |
| Audit Fees | 13,800 | | 12,800 |
| Legal Services | 30,000 | | 9,658 |
| Memberships And Subscriptions | 3,000 | 838 | 2,538 |
| Professional Development | 13,000 | 275 | 5,407 |
| Administrative Fees | 125,000 | | 62,500 |
| Promotion And Advertisting | 10,000 | | - |
| Contribution To General Fund | 20,000 | | - |
| Community Promotion | 114,850 | 2,500 | 67,500 |
| Interest Expense - Notes Payable | 52,400 | | - |
| Total Expenses | <u>951,728</u> | <u>72,330</u> | <u>445,723</u> |
| Revenues Less Expenses | <u>75,572</u> | <u>(72,330)</u> | <u>483,164</u> |

Notes:

Long Term Debt:

| | |
|-------------------|-----------|
| Mavcon Agreement | TBD |
| City of Kalamazoo | 1,060,000 |

Professional And Contractual Services:

| | <u>August</u> | <u>2025 YTD Actuals</u> |
|--|---------------|-------------------------|
| Recycling Services - BIG BELLY SOLAR LLC | 3,575 | 28,600 |
| Ambassador Services - BLOCK BY BLOCK | 56,441 | 225,763 |
| TOTAL | <u>60,016</u> | <u>254,363</u> |

Community Promotion:

| | | |
|---|--------------|---------------|
| Beats on Bates Events - Sponsorship | | 50,000 |
| Bee Joyful - Social Media Marketing & Mgt | | 10,000 |
| Caribbean Festival Sponsorship- Xperience Inc | | 5,000 |
| 2025 Canadiana Fest | 2,500 | 2,500 |
| TOTAL | <u>2,500</u> | <u>67,500</u> |

**Downtown Economic Growth Authority
August 2025 Financial Summary**

In August, the Downtown Economic Growth Authority (DEGA) received no revenue, leaving the year-to-date revenues to \$928,887.

August expenses totaled \$72,330. Key expense categories included: **Professional and Contractual Services (\$60,015.78)** for two months of the Ambassador Program (\$56,440.78) and Bigbelly (\$3,575); **Operating Supplies (\$187.44)** for Portland Loo supplies; **Consulting Services and Fees (\$8,514.5)** for a5 Branding & Digital agreement; **Community Promotion (\$2,500)** for the Canadiana Festival sponsorship; **Memberships and Subscriptions (\$838)** for Michigan Downtown Association Annual Membership (\$650) and Event Calendar Software (\$188); and **Professional Development (\$275)** for Michigan Downtown Association Annual Conference Registration.

Year-to-date expenses total \$445,723.

Contract and Agreement Snapshot (see full table below) includes agreements the DEGA is currently entered into and the contract period.

| Contract and Agreement Snapshot | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Contractor | Contract Description | Contract Period |
| Bee Joyful Shop | Marketing Grant Agreement | March 2025 – September 2025 |
| Big Belly Solar | Bigbelly Units | December 2021 – May 15, 2028 |
| <i>Block by Block</i> | <i>Ambassador Program Agreement</i> | <i>October 2025 – Sept. 2028</i> |
| City of Kalamazoo | Service Agreement | February 2024 – February 2027 |
| City of Kalamazoo | Loan Agreement | Dec. 2024 – Dec. 2035 |
| Guess Who’s Dancing Fitness | Beats on Bates | February 2025 – Dec. 2025 |
| Maestro, LLC | Website Hosting & Maintenance | January 2025 – December 2025 |

OCTOBER 2025 UPDATE

Downtown Kalamazoo

Downtown Kalamazoo: Vibrant & Growing This Month

■ **\$1,485**

Downtown Dollars Spent

■ **125 pounds**

Litter Picked Up

■ **371.5K**

Visits to Downtown



Kalamazoo Candle Company founder Adam McFarlin and family, joined by local and state officials, cut the ribbon during the grand opening of their new downtown space on October 6.

New Spaces, Familiar Faces

Downtown Kalamazoo continues to grow as two local favorites expand their presence and deepen their investment in the community.

Kalamazoo Candle Company has opened its new location in the former V&A Bootery space on the Kalamazoo Mall. The expanded storefront offers an enhanced candle-making and retail experience, complemented by Zero, Kalamazoo's first non-alcoholic bar.

Just around the corner, Copper's Dog House has reopened at 348 S. Kalamazoo Mall, serving up its signature gourmet hot dogs in a refreshed space. Together, these openings mark a season of renewal and reinvestment – proof that small businesses continue to make downtown Kalamazoo Built for Business.

Downtown Business Newsletter Launched

This month's feature story making the Downtown Strategic Plan real.

In September, a new monthly communication tool – Downtown Business Connect – was launched to strengthen engagement with downtown merchants and partners. The newsletter connects business owners with timely updates, resources, and opportunities that support their success and participation in shaping downtown's future.

Looking ahead, the newsletter's design and tone will evolve to align with Downtown Kalamazoo's new brand identity, reinforcing a cohesive and recognizable voice across all communications.

BY THE NUMBERS (SEPT. 2025)

- 👥 142 recipients
- ✉️ 55.1% newsletter open rate
- 🖱️ 11.6% newsletter click-thru rate

Built for Business

Downtown is a launchpad for growth—where businesses are rooted, visible, and thriving.

2025 PILLAR PROGRESS

Built for Business

Recruitment Marketing Piece

In progress

- First round of outreach scheduled for October

Launch Business Newsletter

Completed

- Launched September 22; generally release 1st Tuesday of each month moving forward

Downtown Dollars

In September, Downtown Dollars sales totaled \$285. At the same time, \$1,485 was redeemed at 14 businesses downtown. Year to date, 32 businesses have redeemed Downtown Dollars.

| Month | # of Businesses that Redeemed DT\$ (% of total) | Total Sold | Total Spent |
|-------------------|---|-----------------|-----------------|
| January | 20 (38%) | \$935 | \$1,785 |
| February | 18 (34%) | \$620 | \$850 |
| March | 17 (30%) | \$785 | \$1,190 |
| April | 23 (41%) | \$900 | \$2,740 |
| May | 19 (34%) | \$3,740 | \$1,425 |
| June | 16 (28%) | \$1,450 | \$1,045 |
| July | 13 (23%) | \$580 | \$915 |
| August | 23 (46%) | \$12,255 | \$4,220 |
| September | 14 (28%) | \$285 | \$1,485 |
| 2025 TOTAL | 32 (65%) | \$21,550 | \$15,655 |

Program Life Stats

\$531K
SOLD

\$371K
SPENT

\$139K
IN CIRCULATION

Program led by: Bobby Boyd (Economic Development Supervisor); Meghan Behymer (Downtown Coordinator)

COMMITTEE REPORT

Business Recruitment & Retention

- Reviewed first month metrics of downtown business newsletter.
- Reviewed marketing piece mailing list approach.

Economic Vitality Study

A collaborative research initiative between the City and WMU designed to better understand the economic health of Downtown Kalamazoo. The study aims to evaluate short- and long-term impacts of major downtown infrastructure projects, business activity trends, and the effectiveness of public investments.

Business survey and resident/visitor survey open through October 31.

[Click to take the survey.](#)

Study led by: Center for Transportation and Livability at Western Michigan University – Dr. Jun Oh with City staff Christina Anderson (Planning); Dennis Randolph (Public Services); Meghan Behymer (Downtown Coordinator); and Rebekah Kik (City Manager Liaison)



Southwest Michigan First Chamber
**Downtown Kalamazoo
Business Townhall**
January 2025

180 East Water Street
Kalamazoo, Mich. 49007

Clean, Safe & Welcoming

Downtown is a place you want to be—inviting, well cared for, and safe for everyone.

2025 PILLAR PROGRESS

Clean, Safe & Welcoming

Ambassador Program Agreement

Completed

New Ambassador Program contract started Oct. 1, 2025.

- October - December 2025 hours of operation:
 - Sunday & Monday: 7 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
 - Tuesday - Thursday: 7 a.m. - 7:30 p.m.
 - Friday & Saturday: 7 a.m. - 11 p.m.
- In 2026, Ambassador hours of operations will shift to
 - **Off Peak (Nov. 1 - April 14):** 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
 - **Peak (April 15 - Oct. 31):** Sundays: 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.; Mondays, Tuesdays & Thursdays: 8 a.m. - 6:30 p.m.; Wednesdays, Fridays & Saturdays: 8 a.m. - 10 p.m.

Bigbelly Expansion

Completed

The Bigbelly expansion effort is completed (mostly!) We are still coordinating a handful of site preparations so that we can install five remaining units. Additionally, the replacement unit for the one damaged earlier this year, is expected to arrive in November.

With the expansion in the rearview, we still have some efforts related to Bigbelly underway:

- Integration of waste audit findings into developed signage and messaging by Bigbelly units.
- Disposal of traditional green units

Mall Maintenance Agreement Update

In progress

Staff are collaborating with City partners to modernize the 2009 Mall Maintenance Agreement, updating both the division of responsibilities and cost allocations. A draft scope and cost estimate are prepared. City will continue contributing at the \$59,210 amount in 2026.

COMMITTEE REPORT

Clean & Green

Focused on several elements of the Bigbelly Waste & Recycling Program, including:

- Concrete pad quotes
- Proposal from Foodservice Packaging Institute for communication campaign
- Early conversation on the direction of advertising policy for the Bigbelly units (2026 workplan item)

Ambassador Program

September activity reflected the close of the summer season and preparation for major downtown events.

Ambassadors coordinated the removal of flower planters and provided additional maintenance along the North Kalamazoo Mall ahead of the Event Center groundbreaking. Over 6,300 pounds of trash and 1,500 pounds of recycling were collected, and 21 hospitality assists were provided. The team's attention to detail helped ensure a clean, welcoming environment for residents and visitors during a high-visibility month downtown.

➤➤➤ Full September 2025 Report on following pages

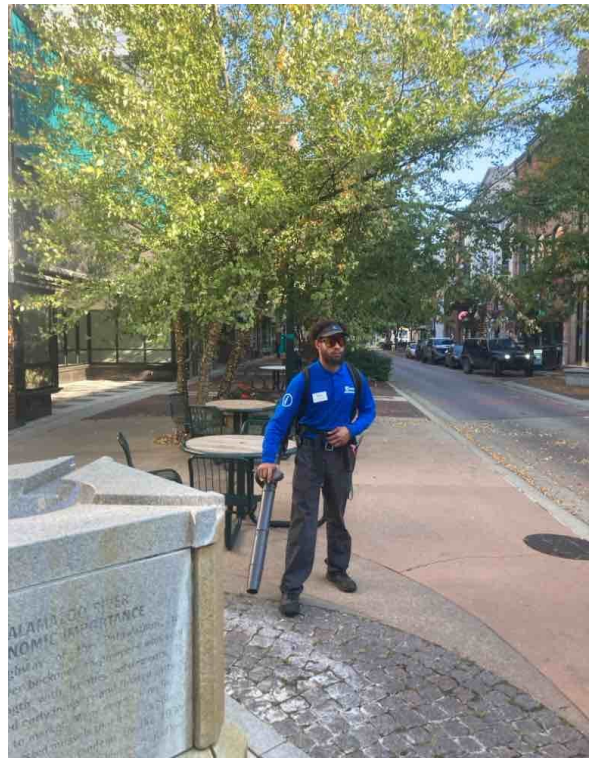
Program led by: Meghan Behymer (Downtown Coordinator)



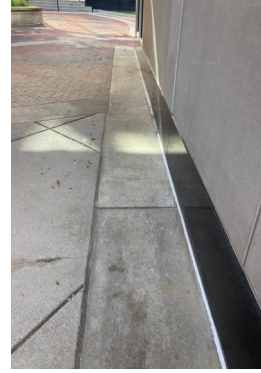
DOWNTOWN KALAMAZOO

AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

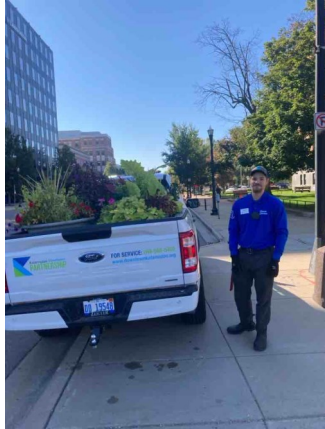
SEPTEMBER 2025 REPORT



AROUND TOWN IN SEPTEMBER



SEPTEMBER 2025 HIGHLIGHTS



Farewell to this seasons Flowers

With fall setting in it was time to say good-bye to our flower planters. We appreciate the help from River Street Flower Land who came out and replanted one of the planters that got hit by a car. We also appreciate the coordination with Kalamazoo In Bloom so that we can have the planters out on Michigan Ave.

Ambassadors used 1674 gallons of water on the planters on Michigan Ave and the Kalamazoo Mall this season.

North Mall Event Prep.

The end of September saw a lot of events taking place. As the community celebrated the re-opening of Burdick's and the ground breaking for the Event Center the North Kalamazoo Mall was the epicenter of the action. In the week leading up to the events the Ambassadors made sure to give the 100 block of the N. Mall plenty of attention with a big push of cleaning and pressure washing taking place on Thursday and again on Friday morning preceding the events. Pulling some weeds, trimming some trees and doing some pressure washing can make a huge difference







September 2025 Stats By Zone


| | East | Kalamazoo Mall | North | West | Total |
|-----------------------------------|------|----------------|-------|------|-------------|
| CLEANING | | | | | |
| Abandoned Property | 59 | 26 | 1 | 16 | 102 |
| Area Cleaned | 3 | 28 | | 2 | 33 |
| Biohazardous Material | 16 | 9 | 1 | 1 | 27 |
| Restroom Cleaned/Stocked | 38 | | | | 38 |
| Graffiti - Removed | 2 | 15 | 1 | | 18 |
| Lawn Care (hours) | | | | | 0 |
| Leaf Removal (hours) | | | | | 0 |
| Power Washing (hours) | 2 | 1 | | | 3 |
| Snow Removal (hours) | | | | | 0 |
| Litter (lbs) | 75 | 25 | 25 | | 125 |
| Trash (lbs) | 2400 | 3150 | 300 | 485 | 6335 |
| Recycling (lbs) | 550 | 625 | 75 | 250 | 1500 |
| Flower Watering (gallons) | 226 | 50 | | 120 | 396 |
| Weed Abatement (block faces) | | | | 1 | 1 |
| Special Project (hours) | 4 | | | | 4 |
| HOSPITALITY | | | | | |
| Business Contact | -- | 1 | -- | -- | 1 |
| Hospitality Assistance | 12 | 2 | 2 | 5 | 21 |
| SAFETY | | | | | |
| Observed Visible Alcohol/Drug Use | 3 | 2 | -- | -- | 5 |
| Interaction With Alcohol/Drug Use | 2 | -- | -- | -- | 2 |
| Needles Found | 1 | -- | -- | -- | 1 |
| Panhandling - Aggressive | -- | -- | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Panhandling - Passive | | | | | 0 |
| Public Defecation/Urination | 1 | -- | -- | -- | 1 |
| Safety Escorts | -- | 1 | -- | -- | 1 |
| OUTREACH | | | | | |
| Transient | 31 | 12 | 5 | 4 | 52 |
| Unhoused/Sleeping | 33 | 12 | 12 | -- | 57 |
| Unsheltered Relocation | | | | | 0 |

KDP Zone Map


KDP Zones

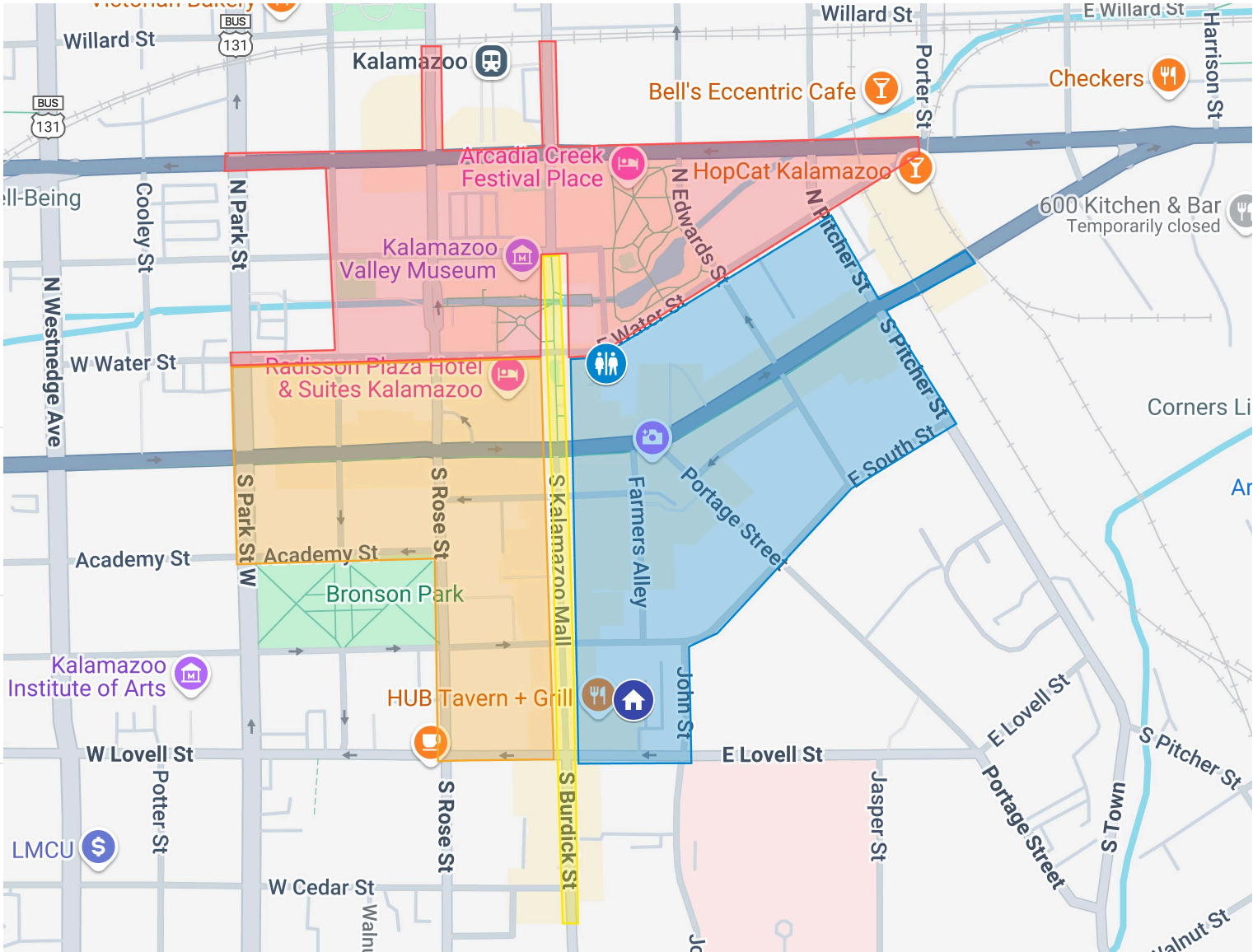
-  Kalamazoo Mall
-  North
-  West
-  East

Restroom

-  Portland Loo

Operations Center

-  Operations Center



2025 STATISTICS

| | January | February | March | April | May | June | July | August | September | October | November | December | Total |
|-----------------------------------|---------|----------|-------|-------|------|-------|-------|--------|-----------|---------|----------|----------|-------|
| CLEANING | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Abandoned Property | 119 | 201 | 301 | 433 | 276 | 215 | 241 | 114 | 102 | | | | 2002 |
| Area Cleaned | 27 | 39 | 105 | 43 | 47 | 38 | 40 | 24 | 33 | | | | 396 |
| Biohazardous Material | 36 | 40 | 42 | 56 | 59 | 28 | 30 | 19 | 27 | | | | 337 |
| Restroom Cleaned/Stocked | 23 | 41 | 50 | 55 | 58 | 56 | 63 | 57 | 38 | | | | 441 |
| Graffiti - Removed | 20 | 31 | 95 | 103 | 53 | 64 | 37 | 51 | 18 | | | | 472 |
| Lawn Care (hours) | | | | | | | | | | | | | 0 |
| Leaf Removal (hours) | 6 | 4 | 10 | | 6 | 3 | 2 | 5 | | | | | 36 |
| Power Washing (hours) | | | | 44 | 51 | | | | 3 | | | | 98 |
| Snow Removal (hours) | 122 | 38 | | | | | | | | | | | 160 |
| Litter (lbs) | | | | 1175 | 575 | 200 | 525 | 350 | 125 | | | | 2950 |
| Trash (lbs) | 6800 | 5775 | 8425 | 10200 | 9225 | 11325 | 11275 | 8400 | 6335 | | | | 77760 |
| Recycling (lbs) | | | | | | | | 575 | 1500 | | | | 2075 |
| Flower Watering (gallons) | | | | | | 794 | | 484 | 396 | | | | 1674 |
| Weed Abatement (block faces) | | | | 11 | 10 | 30 | 9 | 4 | 1 | | | | 65 |
| Special Project (hours) | | 1 | 9 | | 30 | 32 | | | 4 | | | | 76 |
| HOSPITALITY | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Business Contact | 27 | 41 | 16 | 18 | 4 | 7 | 1 | 3 | 1 | | | | 118 |
| Hospitality Assistance | 43 | 25 | 41 | 47 | 33 | 59 | 49 | 30 | 21 | | | | 348 |
| SAFETY | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Observed Visible Alcohol/Drug Use | 11 | 12 | 12 | 41 | 7 | 6 | 7 | 13 | 5 | | | | 114 |
| Interaction With Alcohol/Drug Use | | | 7 | 11 | | 6 | | 9 | 2 | | | | 35 |
| Needles Found | 5 | | | 7 | 8 | | 7 | 2 | 1 | | | | 30 |
| Panhandling - Aggressive | | | | 1 | 1 | | | 0 | 1 | | | | 3 |
| Panhandling - Passive | | 1 | | 1 | 7 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | | | | 12 |
| Public Defecation/Urination | 1 | | | | | 1 | | 0 | 1 | | | | 3 |
| Safety Escorts | 1 | 8 | 1 | 3 | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | | 16 |
| OUTREACH | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Transient | 28 | 24 | 53 | 114 | 144 | 116 | 92 | 53 | 52 | | | | 676 |
| Unhoused/Sleeping | 110 | 94 | 206 | 296 | 157 | 137 | 112 | 84 | 57 | | | | 1253 |
| Unsheltered Relocation | 30 | 9 | 12 | 28 | 4 | 4 | 6 | 7 | 0 | | | | 100 |

Place with Purpose

Downtown is shaped with intention—where every corner, plaza, and park reflects community and connection.

2025 PILLAR PROGRESS

Place with Purpose

Identify Role in Downtown Placemaking

In progress

- Executive Committee met to discuss Bates Alley Maintenance, current and future needs.
- Progress toward designs and construction of Rose St. Plaza and Farmer’s Alley placemaking projects continue.

Begin Downtown Design Guidelines Effort

Not started

- Downtown Coordinator, City staff met with Landscape Forms in early discussion on South Kalamazoo Mall existing and future site furnishings
- Executive Committee met with City staff on Michigan Avenue streetscape elements tied to two-way conversion project

Portland Loo

To address the need for additional public restrooms downtown, the Kalamazoo City Commission approved the purchase of a Portland Loo in early June 2025. The Portland Loo will take approximately 18 weeks to arrive, with full installation taking place 37 weeks after site selection.



DDA/DEGA finalized a letter of recommendation in August for the second Portland Loo, which was sent to City Commissioners and survey participants. The second Loo will be installed next to the existing Loo.



Arcadia Creek Festival Place

Turning Plans into Place

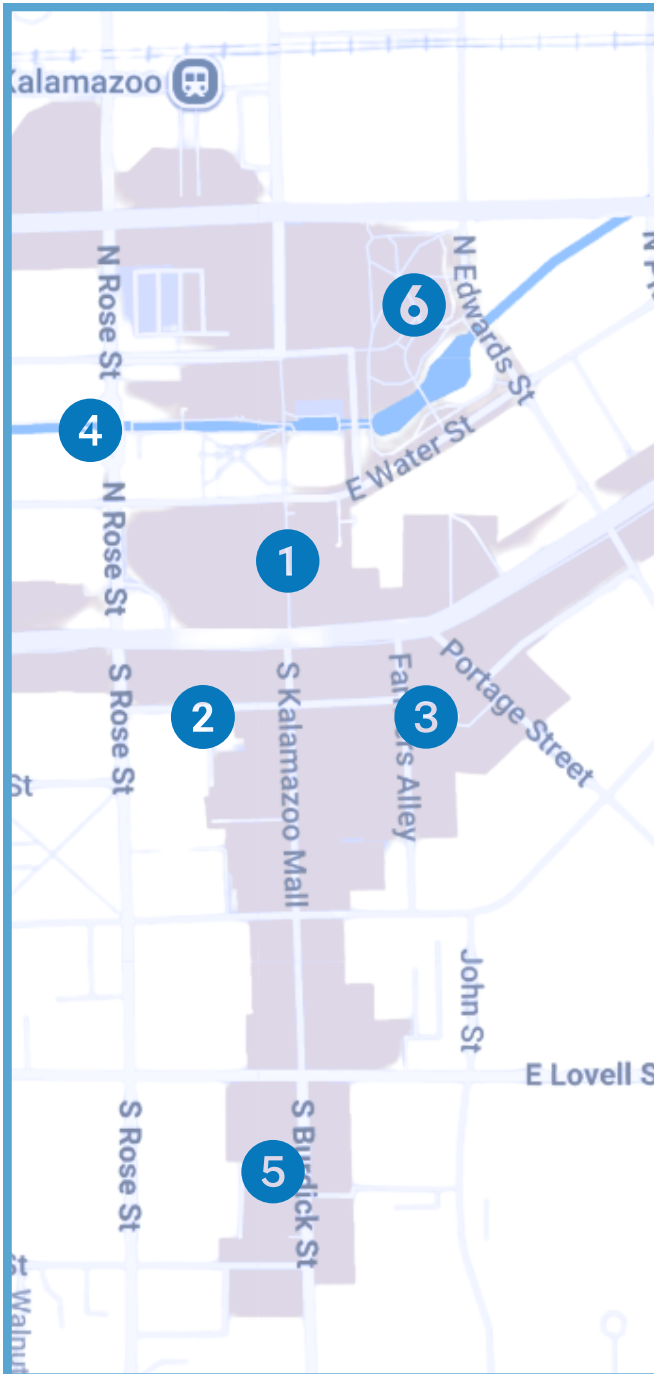
The City of Kalamazoo is advancing the redesign of Arcadia Creek Festival Place – transforming it into a welcoming, flexible space for year-round community life. The preferred plan, shared at the September 30 open house and shown above, envisions a park that supports both quiet reflection and large-scale events with improved accessibility, sustainability, and amenities.

Key features include flexible lawns and plazas, event infrastructure, enhanced walkability, and design for all ages and abilities.

The \$16 million project includes a \$4.6 million Phase I investment, with \$6 million in pending grants. Design and bidding are underway this fall, with construction anticipated to begin in early 2026 (weather dependent).

Downtown Placemaking

Downtown Placemaking seeks to add to the vibrancy with another alley activation, plaza redesigns that act as connectors, and enhancing the experience of the Kalamazoo Mall as a more active and engaging place.



Project led by: Rebekah Kik (Deputy City Manager), Christina Anderson (City Planner, Deputy Director of Community Planning and Economic Development), Patrick McVerry (Parks and Recreation); Dennis Randolph (Public Services), and Meghan Behymer (Downtown Coordinator)

- 1 North Kalamazoo Mall**
Construction project - pending federal grant approval
- 2 Exchange Place**
Mural project - pending property owner approval
- 3 Farmer's Alley**
Project is moving forward with construction documents to improve the concrete plaza, lighting, and landscaping.
- 4 Rose Street Plaza**
Project is moving forward with construction documents to improve the concrete plaza with furniture and landscaping. Coordination currently underway with adjacent property owners to partner on improvements on the public/private areas.
- 5 South Burdick (Lovell to Cedar)**
Currently on hold awaiting budget or grant opportunity.
- 6 Arcadia Creek Festival Place**
ACFP is undergoing a major renovation to improve infrastructure such as electrical and landscaping, supported by \$3.6 million in grants from the MEDC and City Commission, with additional funding being pursued for the \$14M project.

An open house was held Sept. 30 featuring the proposed final design, along with the construction timeline and project phasing.

Streetwise & Connected

Downtown is a place that moves with people—intuitive, walkable, and easy to explore.

2025 PILLAR PROGRESS

Streetwise & Connected

Map Public Realm Assets

In progress

- **Completed:** light pole banners; Bigbelly
- **Assigned:** electrical outlets; benches & tables
- **Not Started:** bike racks/corrals; wayfinding; planters

Identify Fund Opportunities for Wayfinding

Ongoing

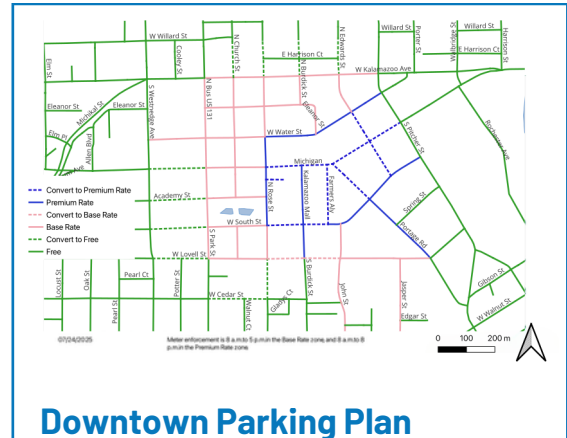
Kalamazoo Streets for All

Kalamazoo Streets For All is a lane conversion project that will transform downtown Kalamazoo into a welcoming, inclusive and vibrant destination that offers safe travel for all modes of transportation.

Updates can be found at: <https://www.kalamazoo.org/Community/Projects/Streets-for-All>



Project led by: Rebekah Kik (Deputy City Manager), Christina Anderson (City Planner, Deputy Director of Community Planning and Economic Development), and James Baker (Director, Public Services) with Consultants from Progressive AE, C2D, and Wightman Engineering



Downtown Parking Plan

The Parking Blueprint is organized into four sections defined by the following shared strategic objectives: (1) expanding parking supply/capacity; (2) managing parking demand; (3) improving/expanding mobility options; and (4) improving parking operations.

As part of the City's broader Parking+ Blueprint, on-street parking changes are rolling out this fall to create a more reliable and flexible system. The changes include replacing outdated meters with kiosks that allow multiple payment options, lowering rates on some blocks, and adding accessible spaces throughout downtown.

Note: the 12 blocks currently proposed to change from free to paid parking are under active reconsideration, and there could be changes to what is currently proposed for these blocks.

Vibrant & Visible

Downtown is unmistakable—distinct in identity, celebrated in stories, and recognized for its energy and edge.

2025 PILLAR PROGRESS

Vibrant & Visible

Downtown Brand Identity

In progress

Second round of design options reviewed by Events & Marketing Committee in October. Expected recommendation to come forth for Board review in November 2025, with implementation to follow.

Events & Marketing Sponsorship Policy

Completed

Events & Marketing Sponsorship Policy and Application approved by DEGA Board at August 2025 meeting. Application form updated and past applicants and recipients notified of updated process. Next deadline is October 15 for Q1 2026 events.

Access sponsorship packet [here](#).

Downtown Banner Program

In progress

- Awaiting final brand identity to begin discussions on potential banner opportunities.
- Thank you to Director Lloyd for spearheading efforts to identify a printing partner.

NEWS UPDATE

- [Kalamazoo hot dog spot reopens at new downtown location](#)
- ["It's about a \\$16M project": Kalamazoo's investment into Arcadia Creek Festival Place](#)
- [Checking in With: Factory Coffee](#)
- [Alley Cat moving into the former Ouzo's space in November](#)

COMMITTEE REPORT

Events & Marketing

- Met with a5 to review Brand Book and round two of designs.



Holiday Events Incoming!

As the days get shorter and the lights get brighter, downtown Kalamazoo is gearing up for a season full of cheer, connection, and community.

- **Maple Hill Holiday Parade & After Parade Activities** | Nov. 22 at 11 a.m.
- **Tree Lighting Ceremony** | Nov. 28 5-7 p.m.
- **Shop Small Saturday** | Nov. 29
- **Santa's Workshop & Holly Jolly Trolley** | Launches Nov. 29
- **Gingerbread Wonderland** | Kicks off Dec. 5
- **Moonlight Madness** | Dec. 12

Strong & Sustainable

Downtown is backed by strong leadership—resilient in structure, bold in vision, and prepared for what’s next.

2025 PILLAR PROGRESS

Strong & Sustainable

Conduct Capacity Audit

In progress

- Executive Committee discussed potential for an additional staff to support the work of DDA/DEGA

DDA Development Plan

Not started

COMMITTEE REPORT

Executive & Finance

- Reviewed October Board Agenda and Content
- Reviewed 2026 draft budgets for DDA and DEGA
- Met with city staff on several topics including Michigan Avenue streetscape elements tied to street conversion; downtown circulator; and downtown parking.

Additional Updates

- **Southwest Michigan First Chamber’s Quarterly Downtown Kalamazoo Business Town Hall.** Held on Tuesday, October 14, downtown stakeholders gathered to hear updates on downtown branding, public safety, Kalamazoo County homelessness and housing framework, Discover Kalamazoo foot traffic data and insights, Arcadia Creek Festival Place and placemaking projects, and a Brush the Block update.
- **International Downtown Association.** Last month, Downtown Coordinator Meghan Behymer attended the International Downtown Association Annual Conference in Washington, D.C., where downtown leaders from across the world shared strategies for creating vibrant, inclusive, and resilient city centers. Key sessions focused on public space design and activation, ambassador program impact measurement, board and staff alignment, and data-driven storytelling. These discussions reinforced the importance of connecting long-term planning with daily operations—something DDA/DEGA is actively advancing through its Downtown Kalamazoo Strategic Plan.

2026 DEGA PROPOSED BUDGET (Updated 10/15/2025)

| Division | Account Description | 2025 Budget | 2026 Projected | % Change | Notes |
|--|------------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|----------------|---|
| Expenditures: | | | | | |
| Public Works (DPW): | | | | | |
| | Operating Supplies | \$ 2,004.00 | \$ - | Removed | |
| | Prof/Contract Services | \$ 502,448.00 | \$ 524,000.00 | 4.3% | Ambassadors: \$426,000; Bigbelly: \$98,000 |
| | Solid Waste Disposal | \$ 7,500.00 | \$ 8,500.00 | 13.3% | BestWay contract |
| | Communications | \$ 576.00 | \$ 600.00 | 4.2% | Staff work cell |
| | Repairs/Maintenance | \$ 2,000.00 | \$ 44,000.00 | 2100.0% | Bigbelly repairs (\$2K); Portland Loo (\$10K); Bates Alley Maintenance (\$12K); Landscaping (\$20K) |
| Total | | \$ 514,528.00 | \$ 577,100.00 | 12.2% | |
| Downtown Development | | | | | |
| | Consulting | \$ 55,150.00 | \$ 27,166.68 | -50.7% | Web Hosting: \$4,000; a5 contract = four months @ \$5791.67/month |
| | Support Staff | \$ - | \$ 80,000.00 | New | Staff support position |
| | Audit Fees | \$ 13,800.00 | \$ 13,400.00 | -2.9% | Annual audit |
| | Prof/Contract Services | \$ - | \$ 75,000.00 | New | Wayfinding plan (\$75K) |
| | Legal Services | \$ 30,000.00 | \$ 30,000.00 | 0.0% | Legal expenses |
| | Memberships | \$ 3,000.00 | \$ 2,500.00 | -16.7% | MDA, IDA memberships |
| | Professional Development | \$ 13,000.00 | \$ 7,000.00 | -46.2% | Conferences & PD |
| | Admin Fees | \$ 125,000.00 | \$ 187,500.00 | 50.0% | City Service Agreement |
| | Promotion & Advertising | \$ 10,000.00 | \$ 65,000.00 | 550.0% | Marketing execution |
| Total | | \$ 249,950.00 | \$ 487,566.68 | 95.1% | |
| Downtown Events | | | | | |
| | Winter Events (GF) | \$ 20,000.00 | \$ 30,000.00 | 50.0% | Holiday lighting, Mall lighting replacement |
| | Event Services | \$ 114,850.00 | \$ 90,000.00 | -21.6% | Beats on Bates: \$50,000; Current Sponsorships: \$40,000 |
| Total | | \$ 134,850.00 | \$ 120,000.00 | -11.0% | |
| Debt Service | | | | | |
| | Principal Payment | \$ - | \$ 92,666.41 | New | City loan |
| | Interest | \$ 52,400.00 | \$ 93,640.63 | 78.7% | Mavcon (\$52,400); City Loan (\$41,240.63) |
| Total | | \$ 52,400.00 | \$ 186,307.04 | 255.5% | |
| Reserves Allocation | | | | | |
| | Reserves | \$ 75,572.00 | \$ - | Removed | |
| Total | | \$ 75,572.00 | \$ - | Removed | |
| Total Expenditures | | \$ 1,027,300.00 | \$ 1,370,973.72 | 33.5% | |
| Revenues: | | | | | |
| | Local Tax Capture (Base Only) | \$ 883,600.00 | \$ 1,126,558.87 | 27.5% | |
| Contributions & Sponsorships: | | | | | |
| Ambassador Support | | | | | |
| | City Solid Waste (Ambassador) | \$ 32,000.00 | \$ 32,000.00 | 0.0% | |
| | Irving S. Gilmore (Ambassador) | \$ 50,000.00 | \$ - | Removed | Grant application for 2026 support submitted (\$50K) |
| | Additional Support (Ambassador) | \$ - | \$ - | Removed | Potential to pursue additional funding |
| Bigbelly Support | | | | | |
| | City General Fund (Bigbelly) | \$ 40,000.00 | \$ - | Removed | One-time contribution in 2025 |
| | Hall Foundation (Bigbelly) | \$ 20,000.00 | \$ - | Removed | One-time contribution in 2025 |
| | Sponsorship/Advertising (Bigbelly) | \$ - | \$ - | Removed | Potential to develop/pursue additional funding to support |
| | Arts Council (Beats on Bates) | \$ 1,700.00 | \$ - | Removed | Potential for support through grant opportunity |
| | Mall Maintenance | \$ - | \$ 59,210.00 | New | \$59,210 is current amount; not reflective of actual expenses |
| Total Revenues: | | \$1,027,300.00 | \$1,217,768.87 | 18.5% | |
| Excess (Deficit) | | \$0.00 | -\$153,204.85 | | |