

Agenda

Downtown Economic Growth Authority

Board of Directors



City of Kalamazoo

Monday, February 16, 2026

3:00 PM

Main Conference Room at Community Planning and Economic Development

A. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

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 January 12, 2026 (**Action: Motion to approve**)

D. REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS

1. Financial Report - December 2025 (**Action: Motion to accept the December 2025 Downtown Economic Growth Authority financial statement**)
2. Downtown Report - February 2026

E. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

1. 2026 Holiday Lighting (**Action: Motion to approve \$30,000 to the City of Kalamazoo to support 2026 holiday lighting**)
2. Downtown Projects Coordinator Job Description (**Action: Motion to approve the Downtown Projects Coordinator job description, affirming the Board's alignment on the focus and responsibilities of the position, and authorize submission to City of Kalamazoo Human Resources for review. Any material changes to scope or duties will return to the Board for approval.**)
3. Recommendation of DEGA Board Member Nomination to Mayor and City Commission (**Action: Motion to approve the nomination of Harvin Sandhu and Connor Sampson for appointment to the Downtown Economic Growth Authority Board and forward the recommendation to the Mayor and City Commission**)

F. PUBLIC COMMENTS

G. DIRECTOR COMMENTS

H. ADJOURNMENT

Board of Directors Regular Meeting Minutes

January 12, 2026, 3 p.m. | City Hall, 241 W. South Street

PRESENT: Curt Aardema, Mayor David Anderson, Trisha Kidd, Clarence Lloyd, Rick Searing, Jessica Thompson, Cheng Kidd Sun, John Harris, Ben Schulman

STAFF: Meghan Behymer (Downtown Coordinator), Maria Smith (Community Investment Administrative Assistant), Jessica Wood (Attorney), Bobby Boyd (Economic Development Supervisor)

A. CALL TO ORDER

DIRECTOR AARDEMA CALLED THE MEETING TO ORDER AT 3:06 P.M.

PRESENT: Curt Aardema, Mayor David Anderson, Trisha Kidd, Clarence Lloyd, Rick Searing, Jessica Thompson, Cheng Kidd Sun

EXCUSED ABSENCE: Jeff Breneman, Stanley Steppes

UNEXCUSED ABSENCE: None

THE JANUARY 12, 2026, ATTENDANCE, INCLUDING EXCUSED AND UNEXCUSED ABSENCES, IS RECORDED.

B. ADOPTION OF FORMAL AGENDA

DIRECTOR THOMPSON MOTIONED TO ADOPT THE JANUARY 12, 2026, DOWNTOWN ECONOMIC GROWTH AUTHORITY AGENDA AS AMENDED. DIRECTOR AARDEMA SECONDED. NO OBJECTIONS. MOTION CARRIED.

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

DIRECTOR LLOYD MOTIONED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE DECEMBER 15, 2025, DOWNTOWN ECONOMIC GROWTH AUTHORITY MEETING. DIRECTOR SEARING SECONDED. NO OBJECTIONS. MOTION CARRIED.

Director Thompson entered the meeting at 3:07pm.

D. REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS

a. Downtown Branding Presentation (a5 Branding & Digital)

Downtown Coordinator Meghan Behymer introduced Ben Schulman and John Harris with A5 to speak about the rollout of the newly approved Downtown Brand. She noted that there is an approved budget of \$65,000 for marketing and

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brand execution. Schulman gave an overview of the Downtown branding rollout schedule highlighting that there are 2 phases: now through March 2026, and April 2026 through year end. Schulman detailed the brand collateral, budget, schedule, and next steps.

Jessica Wood entered the meeting at 3:16pm.

The Board discussion included details of the brand launch party; physical location, limiting invitations to Board members, business leaders, plus City and County leaders. Aardema introduced the idea of being intentional about purchasing supplies from local City vendors, preferably creating a policy for using downtown businesses.

The Board discussed how parking changes should be communicated during construction and that the brand should echo the City's message to the public.

The Board emphasized the importance of hardscapes and utilizing the signage to catch people's attention and periodic reveals that build excitement for what's to come. Examples for potential spots for this concept are construction fencing, murals, windows of vacant storefronts, and utilizing non-downtown locations for promotion such as the airport and WMU campus.

Mayor Anderson joined the meeting at 3:38pm.

b. Financial Report – November 2025

Behymer reviewed the November 2025 financial report: In November, the Downtown Economic Growth Authority (DEGA) received no revenue, leaving the year-to-date revenues to \$928,887. November expenses totaled \$69,917. Key expense categories included: Operating Supplies (\$152) for Portland Loo supplies; Professional and Contractual Services (\$56,658) for Bigbelly (\$8,158) and October Ambassador Services (\$48,500); Solid Waste (\$565); Consulting Services and Fees (\$9,676.25) for a5 Branding & Digital agreement; Legal Services (\$2,714); and Promotion and Advertising (\$151) for Business Recruitment Marketing printing. 2025 year-to-date expenses total \$640,177.

Mayor Anderson requested the budget page be added into the financial report even when there aren't expenditures. Behymer agreed to include it moving forward.

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DIRECTOR LLOYD MOTIONED TO ACCEPT THE NOVEMBER 2025 DOWNTOWN ECONOMIC GROWTH AUTHORITY FINANCIAL REPORT. DIRECTOR THOMPSON SECONDED. NO OBJECTIONS. MOTION CARRIED.

c. Imagine Kalamazoo 2035

Behymer provided an update on the Imagine Kalamazoo 2035 citywide planning process. She detailed the strategic vision framework and draft.

The board gave suggestions for looking at other cities to gain insight into what they're doing, that is working, creating a downtown neighborhood association, and implementation of the feedback from the community survey.

The board suggested having meetings with City leadership and would like to be present at other neighborhood meetings, submit input directly and align key goals and plans.

d. Downtown Report

Behymer gave updates about Downtown including the upcoming Downtown Townhall meeting, parking kiosk and signage changes, Kalamazoo Avenue construction, first quarter Consumers Energy gas project, and the installation of a second Portland Loo.

Behymer provided an Events and Marketing Committee report highlighting that the applicants for quarter one has been reviewed and the awardees will be contacted. The second quarter application deadline is January 15 and reminders have been sent. She reminded the Board that the Downtown brand rollout is coming this month.

Behymer's other updates include the Clean and Green Committee, which will meet in February and follow up on the approved Food Packaging Institute MOU and finalize the contract. Business Recruitment and Retention committee will meet at the end of January about a retail consultation opportunity. Executive Committee has a focus on their vacancy and support staff performance review process.

Behymer explained that Festival Place is undergoing testing and environmental analysis initially and will be conducting contractor bidding, preparing for demolition in late February, and fundraising for other phases. She explained the festival site's construction fencing will be utilized to highlight and celebrate

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previous events. Behymer mentioned there is an outstanding MOU for Rose Street Plaza and Farmers Alley construction. The Brownfield Redevelopment Authority public hearing is Thursday related to the Peregrine Peninsula Loft project.

Behymer's reviewed the Ambassador Program report, noting this month focuses were snow removal, Portland Loo repair, and graffiti. The Board is concerned and would like priority put on investigating the graffiti. Director Lloyd suggested an easy way, like texting to give feedback on the Ambassadors.

E. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

a. Downtown Authorities Debt Overview (Jessica Wood, legal counsel)

Director Aardema gave a background summary of what led to the MavCon agreement. He explained that it stems from lingering disagreements on some of the payments and incentives for a block of blighted buildings on Michigan Avenue Downtown that were redeveloped by the firm MavCon.

Wood discussed the financial collaboration between Downtown Tomorrow Inc., City Foundation, Kalamazoo Community Foundation, the City, DEA, DEGA, MavCon, Metropolitan Center LLC, Development Financial Inc., and others related to this agreement. The parties came together to agree to settle the debt.

Behymer explained the MavCon payment schedule. The board discussed the possibilities of paying the debt off sooner and adding a special tax assessment formula.

b. 2025 Budget Amendment

Behymer introduced a 2025 budget amendment related to increased revenue from the Peregrine-Huff Foundation grant and expenditure from the newly introduced Downtown Holiday Lighting Grant Program. Behymer explained that about half of the funds were awarded for the Holiday Lighting Grant program and she will be reviewing the program with Peregrine-Huff for future ideas.

DIRECTOR SUN MOTIONED TO APPROVE THE DOWNTOWN ECONOMIC GROWTH AUTHORITY 2025 BUDGET AMENDMENT. DIRECTOR SEARING SECONDED. NO OBJECTIONS. MOTION CARRIED.

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F. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

G. DIRECTOR COMMENTS

None.

H. ADJOURNMENT

I.

DIRECTOR SUN MOTIONED TO ADJOURN, SUPPORTED BY DIRECTOR LLOYD. MOTION APPROVED WITH NONE OPPOSED.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:53 P.M.

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

In December, the Downtown Economic Growth Authority (DEGA) received a total of \$97,000 revenue from the **City of Kalamazoo’s Solid Waste Fund (\$32,000)** and **Contributions from Grants (\$65,000)** for holiday lighting (\$15,000) and Irving S. Gilmore Foundation Ambassador Program Contribution (\$50,000).

2025 year-to-date revenues total \$1,025,887.

There is a nominal budget to actual variance in 2025 revenue, with DEGA receiving just \$1,413 short of its budgeted revenue.

December expenses totaled \$232,695. Key expense categories included: **Operating Supplies (\$141)** for Portland Loo supplies; **Professional and Contractual Services (\$105,158)** for Bigbelly (\$8,158) and November-December Ambassador Services (\$97,000); **Solid Waste (\$1,130)**; **Consulting Services and Fees (\$7,175)** for a5 Branding & Digital agreement; **Legal Services (\$2,967)**; **Administrative Fees (\$31,250)** for Q4 City Service Agreement; **Contribution to General Fund (\$25,000)** for the holiday lighting contribution to the City of Kalamazoo; Community Promotion (\$7,500) for 2025 Event and Marketing Sponsorships for Chili Cook Off and Black Arts Festival; **Notes Payable – Principle (\$45,129)** for the Mavcon agreement; and **Notes Payable – Interest (\$7,245)** for the Mavcon agreement.

2025 year-to-date expenses total \$872,872.

DEGA expended \$43,980 less than budgeted in 2025.

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
Block by Block	Ambassador Program Agreement	October 2025 – Sept. 2028
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

Downtown Economic Growth Authority
Statement of Activity
12/31/2025

Total Available Cash 550,258

	2025 Budget	December	2025 YTD Actuals	Budget to Actual Variance
Revenues				
Taxes	883,600		874,337	(9,263)
Other Revenue			-	-
Private Contributions and Sponsorships	21,700		1,700	(20,000)
Contributions from COK	40,000		40,000	-
Contributions from Solid Waste Fund	32,000	32,000	32,000	-
Contributions from Grants	50,000	65,000	65,000	15,000
Transfers			-	-
Charges For Services			-	-
Interest And Rentals	-		12,850	12,850
Total Revenues	1,027,300	97,000	1,025,887	(1,413)
Expenses				
Operating Supplies	2,004	141	591	1,413
Professional And Contractual Services	502,448	105,158	479,767	22,681
Solid Waste Disposal	7,500	1,130	6,564	936
Communication And Network Services	576		-	576
Repairs And Maintenance Services	2,000		455	1,545
Consulting Services And Fees	55,150	7,175	62,680	(7,530)
Audit Fees	13,800		12,800	1,000
Legal Services	30,000	2,967	17,662	12,338
Memberships And Subscriptions	3,000		2,538	462
Professional Development	13,000		7,290	5,710
Administrative Fees	125,000	31,250	125,000	-
Promotion And Advertising	10,000		151	9,849
Contribution To General Fund	20,000	25,000	25,000	(5,000)
Community Promotion	114,850	7,500	80,000	34,850
Notes Payable - Principle	52,400	45,129	45,129	7,271
Notes Payable Interest		7,245	7,245	(7,245)
Total Expenses	951,728	232,695	872,872	43,980
Revenues Less Expenses	75,572	(135,695)	153,015	77,443

Notes:

	Agreement Amount	Payments Made	Balance
Long Term Debt:			
Mavcon Agreement	483,000	45,129	437,871
City of Kalamazoo	1,060,000	-	1,060,000

	December	2025 YTD Actuals
Professional And Contractual Services:		
Recycling Services - BIG BELLY SOLAR LLC	8,158	80,984
Ambassador Services - BLOCK BY BLOCK	97,000	399,484
TOTAL	105,158	480,467

	December	2025 YTD Actuals
Community Promotion:		
Skeletour Spooktacular		-
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
Chili Cook Off – SOUTHWEST MI FIRST	2,500	2,500
Sounds of the Zoo		5,000
2025 Black Arts Festival	5,000	5,000
TOTAL	7,500	80,000

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		

DOWNTOWN REPORT

Downtown Kalamazoo Brand Officially Launches

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

Downtown Kalamazoo's new brand officially launched on February 10 with a special event at The Xperience, where more than 50 community partners, business owners, board members, and stakeholders gathered to celebrate this exciting new chapter for our city center.

The event marked the culmination of months of collaboration and community input, all focused on articulating the energy, creativity, and connection that define downtown today.

The refreshed look is already visible throughout the district – with new banners lining the Kalamazoo Mall, posters installed on every Bigbelly waste and recycling unit, window decals available for downtown businesses and property owners, a newly wrapped Ambassador truck, and fully updated social media platforms carrying the message forward.

This isn't simply a logo rollout. It's a shared expression of who we are and where we're headed: creative, connected, and proudly Downtown Kalamazoo. ■

Photos: Downtown stakeholders showcase the Downtown Kalamazoo brand at the launch event on February 10, the Ambassador truck was boldly wrapped with new branding by Sign Center, and new banners (designed by a5 Branding & Digital and produced by KalBlue) adorn downtown light poles.



BUILT FOR BUSINESS

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

2026 PILLAR PROGRESS

Built for Business

Business Retention and Expansion Program

Not started

Business Database & Engagement Tracking

Not started

Downtown Dollars

In January 2026, Downtown Dollars sales totaled \$555. At the same time, \$1,185 was redeemed at 17 businesses downtown.

Month	# of Businesses that Redeemed DT\$ (% of total)	Total Sold	Total Spent
January	17 (36%)	\$555	\$1,185
2026 TOTAL	17 (36%)	\$555	\$1,185

2025 Overview

- \$31,555 Downtown Dollars sold (+4.5% vs. 2024)
- \$20,010 redeemed at merchants (-4.5% vs. 2024)
- 47 active participating merchants
- Four new merchants
 - Kalamazoo Fashion House
 - Kalamazoo Book Arts Center
 - HopCat
 - The Grazing Table Kalamazoo

Program Life Stats

\$542K
SOLD

\$376K
SPENT

\$111K
IN CIRCULATION

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

COMMITTEE REPORT

Business Recruitment & Retention

- Considerations of a retail consultancy proposal to provide technical expertise to downtown retailers

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.

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**

April 28, 2026 @ 2 p.m.

180 East Water Street
Kalamazoo, Mich. 49007

CLEAN, SAFE AND WELCOMING

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

2026 PILLAR PROGRESS

Clean, Safe & Welcoming

Bigbelly Sponsorship Program

Not started

Downtown Maintenance Procedures

In progress

In February, a new Downtown Operations & Maintenance Monthly Meeting is launching to strengthen coordination across City departments on downtown issues, projects, and long-term needs.

This recurring meeting will provide a structured forum to surface operational challenges, align timelines, track infrastructure and maintenance concerns, and coordinate communication with downtown businesses and partners.



Bigbelly Waste & Recycling Program

In early February, all 50+ Bigbelly waste and recycling units were updated with new, downtown Kalamazoo branded ad panels that link to the Downtown Kalamazoo website.

COMMITTEE REPORT

Clean & Green

Foodservice Packaging Institute MOU finalization in process



Ambassador Program

In January, Downtown Kalamazoo Ambassadors focused heavily on winter operations, dedicating 222 hours to snow removal to keep sidewalks safe and accessible. The team collected 3,950 pounds of trash, 1,525 pounds of recycling, and 925 pounds of litter, while also removing graffiti and addressing 30 biohazard incidents. Ambassadors provided 32 hospitality assists and coordinated outreach related to abandoned property and unsheltered individuals, helping maintain a clean, safe, and welcoming downtown environment.

➤➤➤ **Full January 2026 Report on following pages**

Program led by: Meghan Behymer (Downtown Coordinator)

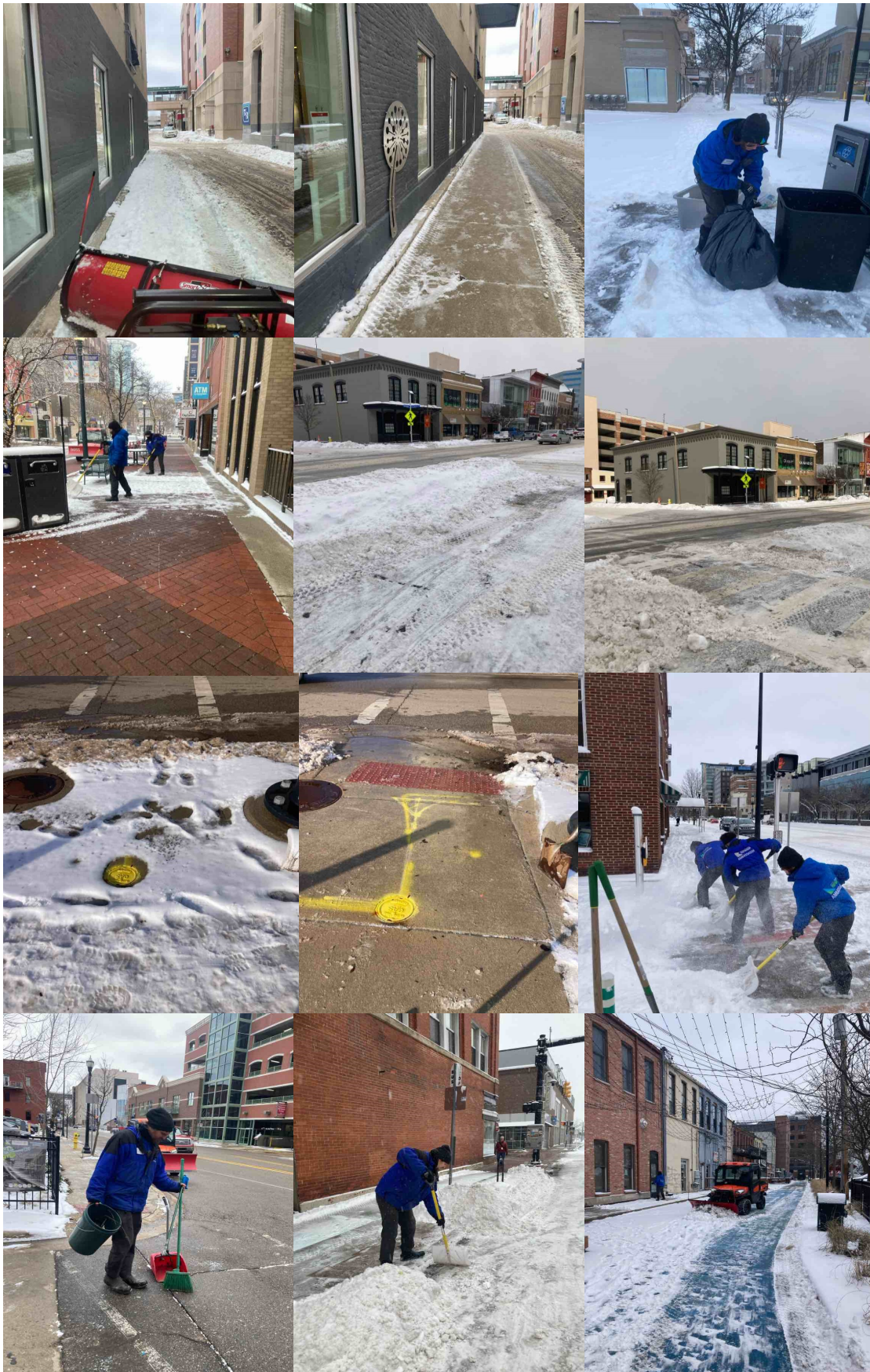


DOWNTOWN KALAMAZOO

AMBASSADOR PROGRAM JANUARY 2026 REPORT



AROUND TOWN IN JANUARY

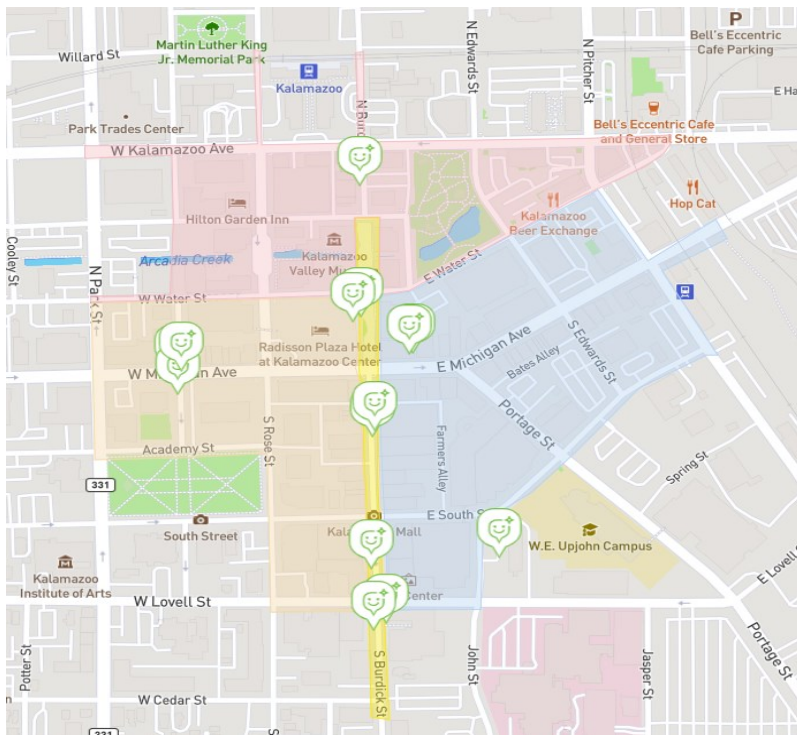


JANUARY 2026 HIGHLIGHTS



Abandoned Property

Even with a lower amount of Unhoused/Transient persons in the district during the cold weather we still encounter quite a lot of Abandoned Property throughout the district. Many times the same areas are targeted for persons to shelter. This is a topic we are sharing information about with the Community Service Team at Kalamazoo Department of Safety to see if they can make contact with anyone who may need services.







January 2026 Stats By Zone


	East	Kalamazoo Mall	North	West	Total
CLEANING					
Abandoned Property	5	6	1	4	16
Area Cleaned	10	7	6	12	35
Biohazardous Material	8	20	1	1	30
Restroom Cleaned/Stocked	18				18
Graffiti - Removed		1			1
Lawn Care (hours)					0
Leaf Removal (hours)	11	5		5	21
Power Washing (hours)					0
Snow Removal (hours)	99	36	13	74	222
Litter (lbs)	370	310	115	130	925
Trash (lbs)	1700	1175	400	675	3950
Recycling (lbs)	550	525	125	325	1525
Flower Watering (gallons)					0
Weed Abatement (block faces)					0
Special Project (hours)	1	1	1		3
HOSPITALITY					
Business Contact		4			4
Hospitality Assistance	11	14	3	4	32
SAFETY					
Observed Visible Alcohol/Drug Use	2	5	1		8
Interaction With Alcohol/Drug Use	2	1			3
Needles Found	4				4
Panhandling - Aggressive					0
Panhandling - Passive					0
Public Defecation/Urination					0
Safety Escorts					0
OUTREACH					
Transient	32	32	4	5	73
Unhoused/Sleeping	14	8	4	2	28
Unsheltered Relocation	2			1	3

KDP Zone Map


KDP Zones

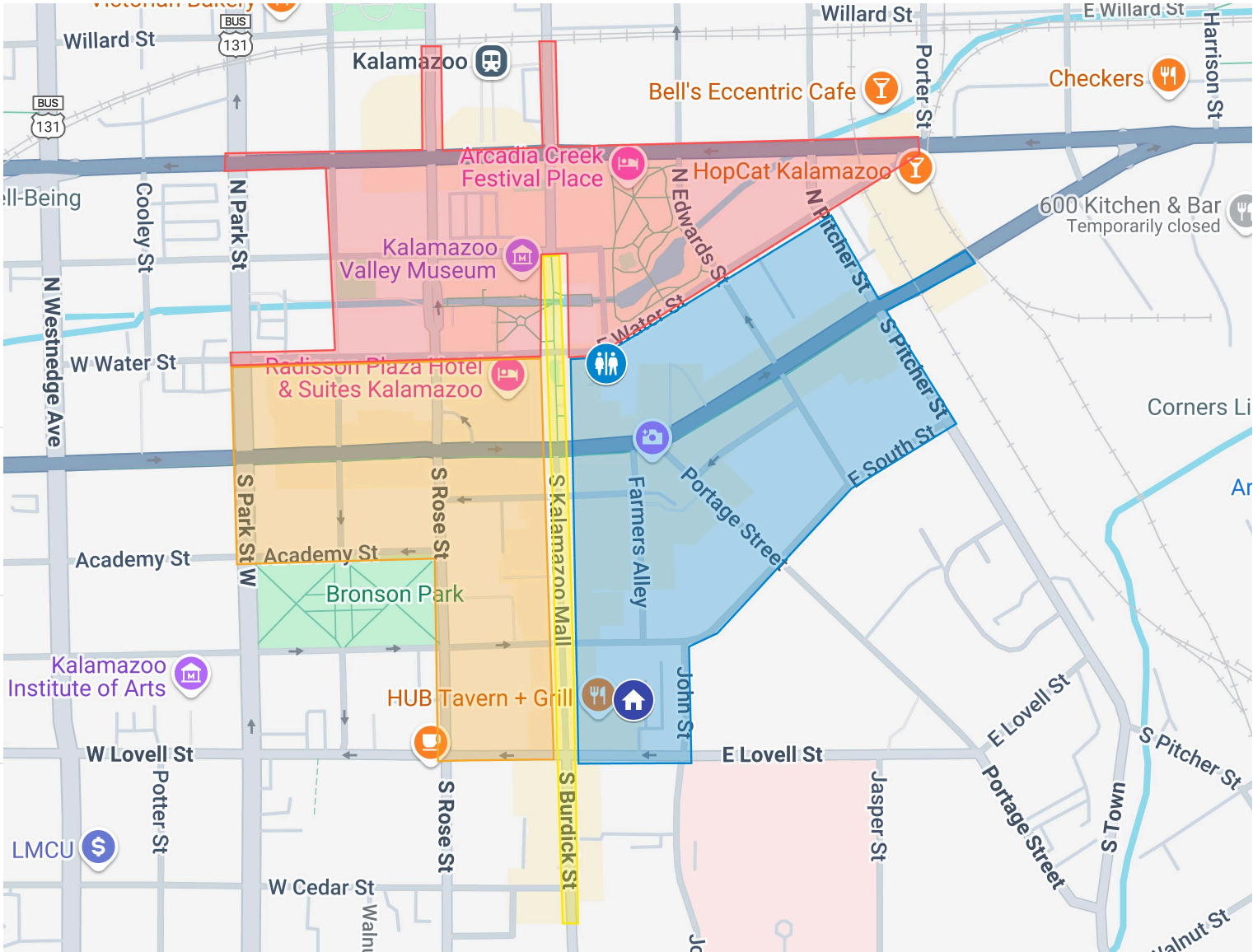
-  Kalamazoo Mall
-  North
-  West
-  East

Restroom

-  Portland Loo

Operations Center

-  Operations Center



2026 STATISTICS

	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Total
CLEANING													
Abandoned Property	16												16
Area Cleaned	35												35
Biohazardous Material	30												30
Restroom Cleaned/Stocked	18												18
Graffiti - Removed	1												1
Lawn Care (hours)	0												0
Leaf Removal (hours)	21												21
Power Washing (hours)	0												0
Snow Removal (hours)	222												222
Litter (lbs)	925												925
Trash (lbs)	3950												3950
Recycling (lbs)	1525												1525
Flower Watering (gallons)	0												0
Weed Abatement (block faces)	0												0
Special Project (hours)	3												3
HOSPITALITY													
Business Contact	4												4
Hospitality Assistance	32												32
SAFETY													
Observed Visible Alcohol/Drug Use	8												8
Interaction With Alcohol/Drug Use	3												3
Needles Found	4												4
Panhandling - Aggressive	0												0
Panhandling - Passive	0												0
Public Defecation/Urination	0												0
Safety Escorts	0												0
OUTREACH													
Transient	73												73
Unhoused/Sleeping	28												28
Unsheltered Relocation	3												3

PLACE WITH PURPOSE

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

2026 PILLAR PROGRESS

Place with Purpose

Downtown Design Guidelines

In progress

- Landscape Forms discussion continue on South Kalamazoo Mall existing and future site furnishings

Identify Placemaking Projects to Pursue

Not started

Social District Expansion

Not started



Portland Loo

To address the need for additional public restrooms downtown, the Kalamazoo City Commission approved the purchase of a Portland Loo in 2025. The Loo was delivered to the City late last year, permits are all completed, and it is ready to be installed next to the existing unit once the weather improves. Installation requires underground utility and concrete work, and this needs to be done in warmer temperatures.

AD-HOC COMMITTEE REPORT

Bates Alley Parklet Policy

Discussed current state of Bates Alley parklets/decks and options for future direction. Seeking input from legal counsel to inform final recommended strategy to come before the board.



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 a fall 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.

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. The \$16 million project includes a \$4.6 million Phase I investment, with \$6 million in pending grants. Currently, soil samples, asbestos testing of structures, and environmental analysis is being conducted to prepare for demolition to occur this spring. Michigan Department of Environment Great Lakes and Energy (EGLE) permits have been filed for the demolition of the bridge.

STREETWISE AND CONNECTED

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

2026 PILLAR PROGRESS

Streetwise & Connected

Wayfinding Study

In progress

- Early drafts of Wayfinding Study RFP in development.

Wayfinding Implementation Plan

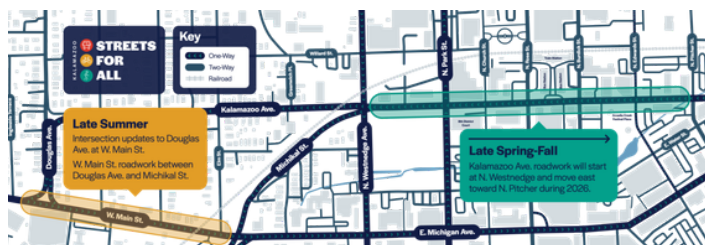
Not started

Kalamazoo Streets for All

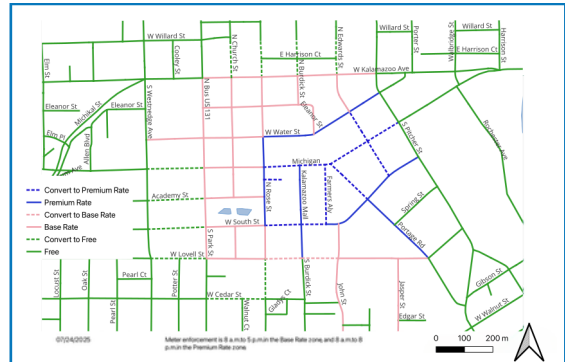
Kalamazoo Streets For All is a lane conversion project that will transform downtown Kalamazoo into a welcoming, inclusive and vibrant destination that offers safe travel for all modes of transportation.

- Kalamazoo Avenue roadwork will start at N. Westnedge and move east toward N. Pitcher late spring through fall.
- West Main roadwork between Douglas and Michikal will commence in late Summer.

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 **April 1** 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.

Project led by: Christina Anderson (City Planner, Deputy Director of Community Planning and Economic Development) and Rob Bacigalupi (Mission North),

VIBRANT AND VISIBLE

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

2026 PILLAR PROGRESS

Vibrant & Visible

Downtown Brand Rollout

In progress

The downtown brand was publicly launched and integrated in the downtown hardscape in February.



Downtown Strategic Communication Plan

Not started

NEWS UPDATE

- [Wheel the World](#) puts Kalamazoo on the map for [accessible travel](#)
- [See progress at the Kalamazoo Event Center construction site](#)
- [Alley Cat](#), Kalamazoo's newest downtown bar, opens in time for [biggest bar night of the year](#)

COMMITTEE REPORT

Events & Marketing

- Discussed submitted Q2 event sponsorship applications; reviewing and submitting completed rubrics for March 2026 committee vote
- Finalized downtown brand launch details

Kalamazoo Restaurant Week

Kalamazoo Restaurant Week returns February 20–28, serving up local flavor across the entire county. With 27 participating establishments, including more than a dozen downtown, diners can enjoy \$10 features and \$35 multi-course meals.

It's a winter celebration of creativity, hospitality, and the chefs who make Kalamazoo bold, vibrant, and delicious.

kalamazoorestaurantweek.com



STRONG AND SUSTAINABLE

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

2026 PILLAR PROGRESS

Strong & Sustainable

Hire Downtown Support Position

In progress

- Priority focus in Q1 to increase overall capacity to support DDA/DEGA initiatives and efforts.
- Draft job description developed and advanced to board for review and approval at February 2026 board meeting

2027+ Operational Model

Not started

Annual Stakeholder Survey

Not started

DDA Development Plan

Not started

COMMITTEE REPORT

Executive & Finance

- Reviewed February Board Agenda and Content.
- Interviewed candidates to fill upcoming board member vacancies; advanced recommendations to full board for approval
- Reviewed draft job description for Downtown Support position



OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

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February 10, 2026

Curtis Aardema, Chair of the DEGA/DDA
DEGA/DDA Board of Directors

Dear Mr. Aardema,

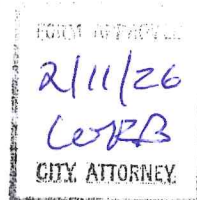
We are presenting this request to support the City of Kalamazoo's Downtown holiday lighting and décor for the 2026 season, specifically lighting and décor for the Kalamazoo Mall, Michigan Avenue, and South Street. For decades, Downtown Kalamazoo has served as the community's central meeting place for authentic family and community experiences during the holiday season. Developed to bring the community together and support the economic growth of Downtown Kalamazoo, these events and décor have a longstanding history of creating traditions and engaging families in free holiday activities, while also connecting local businesses with the community and visitors.

Often, the first signs of the holiday programming occur with the installation of lights and décor in Bronson Park and throughout Downtown Kalamazoo. The Downtown area is brought to life with thousands of lights which decorate several streets. The white lights that decorate the Kalamazoo Mall trees will remain year-round, requiring replacement and maintenance each season. For the 2026 holiday season, additional lights will be installed on Michigan Ave and South Street. These lights are located on the Holly Jolly Trolley route and add to the trolley experience for riders, as well as those traveling from Bronson Park to the Kalamazoo Mall and Santa's Workshop. The City of Kalamazoo's Parks and Recreation Department will coordinate and lead the Bronson Park lighting and décor, as well as the Downtown holiday lighting on the Mall, Michigan Ave, and South Street.

The City of Kalamazoo will continue to support the traditional holiday events and programming, such as Bronson Park Tree Lighting Ceremony, Santa's Workshop, Holly Jolly Trolley, Marketing and Signage for events, and retail holiday support for local businesses. To support these efforts, we are committing up to \$19,740 of funds from the City of Kalamazoo, have submitted a grant request for \$80,000 from the Irving S. Gilmore Foundation, and will be soliciting \$25,000 in sponsorships through a contract with Kalamazoo Experiential Learning Center (KELC). **The City of Kalamazoo is requesting \$30,000 in funding from the DDA/DEGA to support the Downtown (Michigan Ave and South Street) and Kalamazoo Mall portion of holiday lighting for 2026.** Questions should be addressed to Shannon Tenney at tenneys@kalamazoocity.org. We deeply appreciate the DDA/DEGA's thoughtful consideration of this request.

Sincerely,


Malcolm Hankins
City Manager



Downtown Projects Coordinator

Community Planning & Economic Development Department (CPED) City of Kalamazoo

General Summary

Under the direction of the Downtown Coordinator, the Downtown Projects Coordinator provides marketing, communications, and project support for downtown initiatives administered by the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) and Downtown Economic Growth Authority (DEGA).

This position is responsible for managing downtown marketing and communications, supporting implementation of downtown programs and projects, and serving as the primary staff support for the Events and Marketing Committee. The role supports day-to-day execution of DEGA/DDA priorities, maintains downtown's digital presence and brand consistency, and assists with coordination across projects, committees, vendors, and stakeholders. This position supports only those initiatives and responsibilities that fall within the statutory scope and authority of the DDA and DEGA.

Essential Duties & Responsibilities

Marketing, Communications & Digital Management

- Manage and maintain Downtown Kalamazoo digital platforms, including the downtown website, social media accounts, and email newsletters.
- Create, schedule, and update digital content related to downtown events, programs, construction updates, and business promotions.
- Implement downtown branding standards across marketing materials, digital platforms, and public-facing projects.
- Maintain a downtown content calendar aligned with DEGA/DDA initiatives, events, and communications priorities.
- Manage the downtown inbox and respond to general inquiries related to downtown programs and communications, routing requests as appropriate.
- Coordinate with vendors, consultants, and City staff to support approved marketing and communications efforts.

Programs & Project Support

- Support execution of downtown programs and projects at the direction of the Downtown Coordinator, including but not limited to:
 - Downtown Ambassador Program communications and coordination

- Waste and recycling initiatives
- Business support and engagement programs
- Wayfinding and placemaking projects
- Event sponsorship administration
- Track project timelines, tasks, and deliverables and provide regular status updates.
- Assist with coordination between City departments, contractors, consultants, and downtown stakeholders related to DEGA/DDA initiatives.

Events & Marketing Committee Support

- Serve as the primary staff support for the Events and Marketing Committee.
- Assist with preparation of agendas, meeting materials, and supporting documentation.
- Track committee action items and follow-up tasks.
- Support implementation of committee-directed marketing and sponsorship initiatives in coordination with the Downtown Coordinator.

Administrative, Data & Reporting Support

- Assist with preparation and coordination of materials for board and committee meetings as assigned.
- Support routine administrative functions related to downtown programs, including purchase order coordination, invoice processing, and record keeping.
- Assist with data collection and reporting for downtown programs, including foot-traffic metrics, sponsorship reporting, and grant-related documentation.
- Support preparation of summaries, dashboards, and reports for internal tracking, board updates, and public communications.
- Maintain organized files and records related to DEGA/DDA initiatives.

Required Knowledge, Skills & Abilities

- Knowledge of standard office practices and administrative procedures.
- Strong written communication skills and ability to prepare clear, concise materials.
- Ability to manage multiple tasks, prioritize work, and meet deadlines in a collaborative environment.
- Proficiency with common office software and digital tools, including word processing, spreadsheets, email, content management systems, and social media platforms.
- Ability to interact professionally with City staff, board members, vendors, consultants, and the public.
- Ability to work independently while following established procedures and direction.

Preferred Qualifications

- Experience supporting marketing, communications, or digital content in a municipal, nonprofit, or organizational setting.
- Experience with social media management, website content updates, and email marketing tools.
- Experience supporting public programs, committees, or events.
- Experience working with or supporting boards, authorities, or public agencies.

Supervision

This position works under the general supervision of the Downtown Coordinator and does not exercise supervisory authority.

Position Scope

This position supports only programs, initiatives, and responsibilities within the scope and authority of the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) and Downtown Economic Growth Authority (DEGA). Duties outside of DEGA/DDA responsibilities are not assigned to this position.



Advisory Boards and Commissions Appointee Nomination Report

City of Kalamazoo

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the City Commission approve the following appointment to the Downtown Economic Growth Authority:

Partial Term Appointment

- Connor Sampson for a partial term expiring on March 31, 2028

Full Term Appointment

- Harvin Sandhu for a full term expiring on March 31, 2030

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THIS POSITION

At least 5 members of the 9-person board must have an interest in property located in the downtown district. At least one of the members must be a resident of the downtown district.

SELECTION PROCESS

The DDA/DEGA Executive Committee held two interviews to gauge interest of candidates and select those whose professional expertise and lives experience help to diversify the board makeup

Applicants Considered

- Connor Sampson
- Harvin Sandhu

Interview Process and Final Recommendation

- Connor Sampson
- Harvin Sandhu

NOMINEE QUALIFICATIONS

Dual Board Memberships

- Connor Sampson is not a member of any other City boards, commissions or committees.
- Harvin Sandhu is not a member of any other City boards, commissions or committees.

Residency

- Connor Sampson resides in Portage, Michigan and is an employee of Treystar, a downtown Kalamazoo based developer and property management business
- Harvin Sandhu resides in and owns/manages properties in downtown Kalamazoo.

Term Limits

- This would be Connor Sampson's first partial term on the DEGA board. He would be eligible for reappointment for a first full term at the conclusion of this term.
- This would be Harvin Sandhu's first term on the DEGA board. He would be eligible for reappointment for a second full term at the conclusion of this term.

Training, Experience, Education And Skills

Here's a concise and professional description suitable for inclusion in the nominating report:

- Connor Sampson currently works for Treystar, a Southwest Michigan-based developer and manager of retail and office properties, focusing on Office Leasing and Development.
- Harvin Sandhu has founded and run multiple small businesses in Kalamazoo since 2015, with increased focus on growing and redeveloping downtown Kalamazoo through opening businesses, developing housing and investing in the downtown community.

Contribution To Diversity

- Connor Sampson is a white male in the 25 to 34 age bracket.
- Harvin Sandhu is an Asian male in the 25 to 34 age bracket.

NOMINATION RATIONALE

We are nominating this individual for a board seat because of the unique skills, diverse experiences, and valuable perspectives they bring to the table. Their backgrounds, expertise, and passion for community engagement will provide fresh insights and strengthen the board's ability to make informed, impactful decisions. We believe their contributions will help further our mission and support the continued growth and vibrancy of downtown.

CITY CLERK'S CERTIFICATION

The nominee's qualifications regarding dual board memberships, residency, and term limits have been reviewed and verified by the City Clerk's Office.

Scott A. Borling, City Clerk