

Agenda

Downtown Economic Growth Authority

Board of Directors



City of Kalamazoo

Monday, June 15, 2026

3:00 PM

City Hall Community Room – 241 West South Street

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 May 11, 2026. (**Action: Motion to approve**)

D. REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS

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

E. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

1. Student Creator Program (**Action: Authorize a contribution of up to \$3,000 to Discover Kalamazoo to support implementation of the Kalamazoo Student Content Creator Program pilot during the Fall 2026 semester.**)
2. Website Services Provider and Brand Implementation (**Action: Authorize Kzoom to complete the DowntownKalamazoo.org website refresh associated with the Downtown Kalamazoo brand rollout and provide website hosting and maintenance services through December 31, 2026 in an amount not to exceed \$5,340. Authorize the Board Chair to execute all documents necessary to transition website services from Maestro to Kzoom and implement the approved services.**)
3. Pedestrian Wayfinding Kiosk Updates (**Action: Authorize an investment of up to \$11,200 for the update of five existing pedestrian wayfinding kiosks utilizing the proposed Downtown Kalamazoo/Streets for All map design, as recommended by the Placemaking Committee.**)

F. PUBLIC COMMENTS**G. DIRECTOR COMMENTS****H. ADJOURNMENT**

Board of Directors Regular Meeting Minutes

May 11, 2026, 3 p.m. | City Hall, 241 W. South Street

PRESENT: Curt Aardema, Mayor David Anderson, Harvin Sandhu, Trisha Kidd, Clarence Lloyd, Rick Searing, Cheng Kidd Sun, Connor Sampson

STAFF: Meghan Behymer (Downtown Coordinator),
Bobby Boyd (Economic Development Supervisor) virtual,
Jessica Wood (DEGA Legal Counsel) virtual

OTHER: Sergeant Fidel Mireles (Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety), Chief David Boysen (Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety), Cody Aho (Integrated Services of Kalamazoo)

A. CALL TO ORDER

DIRECTOR AARDEMA CALLED THE MEETING TO ORDER AT 3:02 P.M.

PRESENT: Curt Aardema, Mayor David Anderson, Harvin Sandhu, Trisha Kidd, Clarence Lloyd, Rick Searing, Cheng Kidd Sun, Connor Sampson

EXCUSED ABSENCE: None

UNEXCUSED ABSENCE: Stanley Steppes

MAY 11, 2026, ATTENDANCE, INCLUDING EXCUSED AND UNEXCUSED ABSENCES, IS RECORDED.

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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

DIRECTOR SUN MOTIONED TO ADOPT THE MAY 11, 2026, DOWNTOWN ECONOMIC GROWTH AUTHORITY AGENDA. DIRECTOR SANDHU SECONDED. NO OBJECTIONS. MOTION CARRIED.

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MAYOR ANDERSON MOTIONED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM APRIL 20, 2026, DOWNTOWN ECONOMIC GROWTH AUTHORITY MEETING. DIRECTOR SUN SECONDED. NO OBJECTIONS. MOTION CARRIED.

D. REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS

1. Financial Report – March 2026 (Meghan Behymer, Downtown Coordinator)

Behymer reviewed the March 2026 financial report: In March, the Downtown Economic Growth Authority (DEGA) received no revenue. 2026 year-to-date revenues total \$59,210. In March, DEGA expenditures totaled \$229,619. Key expense categories included: Professional and Contractual Services (\$59,974) for Ambassador Program Block by Block Contract (\$35,500) and Bigbelly Waste and Recycling January through March (\$24,474); Solid Waste Disposal (\$1,686); Legal Services (\$3,266); Administrative Fees (\$46,875) for Q1 City of Kalamazoo Service Agreement; Promotion and Advertising (\$10,444) for Branded banners (\$7,730.60), Winter in the Zoo Ice Sculpture (\$2,500) and branded table throw (\$213.22); Community Promotion (\$55,000) for Beats on Bates (\$50,000) and In the Zoo event sponsorship (\$5,000); Notes Payable – Principle (\$45,806) for Mavcon; and Notes Payable – Interest (\$6,568) for Mavcon. 2026 year-to-date expenditures total \$279,145.

DIRECTOR SUN MOTIONED TO ACCEPT THE MARCH 2026 DOWNTOWN ECONOMIC GROWTH AUTHORITY FINANCIAL REPORT. DIRECTOR KIDD SECONDED. NO OBJECTIONS. MOTION CARRIED.

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2. Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety – Downtown Kalamazoo (Sergeant Fidel Mireles II)

Behymer and Director Aardema introduced Sergeant Mireles to discuss Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety (KDPS) operations and their work downtown. Questions emerged in previous meetings regarding how downtown incidents are reported, where concerns ultimately flow, and how the Downtown Ambassador Program and KDPS intersect operationally.

Sergeant Mireles introduced himself as the Sergeant for the Community Service Team (CST). He explained that downtown falls within zone 1, the City's centralized district, which includes downtown core, adjacent surrounding areas and portions extending toward Bronson and nearby facilities. Zone 1 staffing includes one Sergeant, two Patrol Officers, one Beat Officer, and one Community Police Officer (CPO Brewer).

The Beat Officer serves as the primary officer specifically assigned to the downtown district. Their responsibilities include foot patrol, business interactions, addressing recurring complaints, crime trend response, and community engagement. The areas the Beat Officer heavily focuses on are Kalamazoo Mall, Bronson Park, festival site, parking structures, hotels, Ministry and Mission facilities, Kalamazoo Transportation Center (KTC) and other high traffic service locations. Beat Officers are expected to maintain a visible presence Monday through Friday, on foot patrol especially when there are special events. When needed there is a second Beat Officer and they often use bikes patrols to improve mobility and visibility.

Directors Lloyd and Searing entered the meeting.

The Community Service Team and Co-Responder program focuses specifically on behavioral health calls, mental health crises, unhoused populations, resource coordination, and extended service interactions. The team is comprised of Sergeant Mireles, three officers, and Co-Responder social workers available Monday to Friday 9:00am to midnight. These calls often require more time than standard policing responses typically for 20–45-minute crisis conversations, resource navigation, voluntary treatment discussions, and transportation coordination. The CST allows patrol officers to remain available for criminal enforcement and emergency response. Chief Boysen entered the meeting briefly and noted that Kalamazoo is among a limited number of Michigan pilot agencies utilizing a Co-Responder model pairing social workers with police officers.

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Downtown Ambassadors currently contact KDPS dispatch directly and follow up concerns are routed to CST. They also attend weekly coordination meetings with CST, ISK, CPED, KTC, Ministry partners, and Mission representatives. Sergeant Mireles stressed that communication remains one of the most important factors in improving outcomes. He encouraged committee members and stakeholders to share concerns early before small issues escalate.

Considerable discussion focused on impacts from recent Ministry with Community policy changes limiting loitering. There have been more reports of unhoused individuals elsewhere downtown, more individuals congregating on Kalamazoo Mall, increased use of building entrances and alleyways, growth in informal encampments. Ambassadors observed sleeping in doorways, increased activity in Bronson Park, greater biohazard cleanup, and more abandoned property. KDPS acknowledges observing these changes and has increased directed patrols in response. The group discussed how displacement often shifts activity geographically rather than resolving underlying causes.

A recurring theme centered on balancing enforcement with supportive intervention. Sergeant Mireles repeatedly emphasized that resource provision occurs before enforcement whenever possible.

Examples requiring eventual enforcement are trespassing, open drug use, repeated littering, property destruction, and aggressive conduct. Discussion acknowledged that many interactions involve repeat individuals. Board members questioned consequences when behaviors repeatedly disrupt businesses and downtown activity. Sergeant Mireles noted that accountability remains difficult but necessary. He explained that trespassing citations are typically misdemeanors, and enforcement outcomes are largely determined through courts as fines or community service. He also conveyed that some individuals openly state incarceration is preferable due to meals, shelter, and predictability.

Mayor Anderson raised questions about whether a “by name list” approach used in other communities might help to track repeat individuals, coordinate interventions, better understand patterns, and target service strategies. Sergeant Mireles noted that informal recognition already occurs, weekly meetings frequently discuss recurring individuals, and approximately 20-25 individuals account for significant downtown interactions. The group suggested future discussions may revisit whether more formal tracking methods are appropriate.

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Group members raised concerns regarding employees walking to vehicles after work, women feeling unsafe, panhandling, repeat disturbances, and customer interactions. Mireles strongly encouraged immediate reporting, calling dispatch as incidents occur, and avoiding delayed reports to redirect resources appropriately. The Ambassadors often provide safety escorts during operating hours.

Director Lloyd asked why downtown experiences differ from other communities. Discussion centered on concentration of service organizations, accessibility of food and shelter resources, geographic clustering of services, and difficulty motivating long term change. Sergeant Mireles emphasized personal accountability as a central factor. Examples were shared of individuals successfully exiting homelessness after deciding to pursue housing and support systems. Many services already exist but participation remains voluntary.

Director Sun questioned whether additional social workers or outreach workers would help. Suggestions included partnership with universities, graduate social work placements, expanded street outreach models, and more direct field-based engagement. Sergeant Mireles indicated stronger street outreach capacity among existing organizations would be beneficial. He expressed interest in more boots on the ground support, outreach workers following up directly after police interactions, and greater field presence rather than office-based services.

Clarification was provided regarding the proper reporting channels. Dispatch should be used for active incidents, emergencies, immediate concerns, safety threats, ongoing disturbances, and anonymous reporting. CST email is actively monitored by multiple team members and should be used for encampment concerns, follow up issues, trends, and non-urgent patterns.

Sergeant Mireles shared that CST de-escalation training sessions are available for downtown businesses, customer-facing staff, election workers, and City staff. Training topics include mental health crisis interactions, customer conflict management, and verbal de-escalation strategies.

Board members expressed appreciation for KDPS staff and the discussion. Future engagement opportunities were discussed including business focused information sessions, continued Board attendance, and additional

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communication and training. Officer Brower was identified as the downtown point of contact moving forward.

3. Downtown Report – May 2026 (Meghan Behymer, Downtown Coordinator)

Behymer reviewed the Downtown Report and gave updates including the Park.Shop.Win incentive program which is currently offering \$100 weekly Downtown Dollars through September. The plan is to expand promotion through social media campaigns, business posters/handouts, email communications, and potential media coverage to increase awareness and participation.

Director Lloyd and Behymer shared updates from the Business Recruitment and Retention Committee meeting where they reviewed 2026 priorities informed by recent stakeholder feedback and town hall discussions. The key focus areas identified are vacant storefront campaign strategy, business engagement, incentives, and construction support strategy. The plan is to develop campaigns to attract businesses into empty spaces and explore tools such as QR codes and use community input on desired uses.

To provoke business engagement the plan is to strengthen DDA's role as a liaison and communication channel for downtown businesses and create more structured engagement and outreach opportunities. Discussion centered around incentives supporting recruitment and retention.

Director Lloyd and Behymer explained the whitebox incentives are identified as a potentially valuable attraction and retention tool. Director Lloyd explained how learning from the past "dig downtown" campaign during construction could be useful in this upcoming construction season. There was interest in creating support strategies and funding mechanisms to help businesses during upcoming construction disruptions. Potential collaboration with external funding partners was also discussed.

Behymer gave an update on the Downtown Dollars program reporting total sales of approximately \$3,625 with roughly \$1,000 redeemed across 12 downtown businesses in April. She also shared that there is an upcoming Downtown Town Hall meeting scheduled for July 14 at 2:00. The Ambassador reports continue to be reviewed by the Placemaking Committee before Board review.

Director Searing and Behymer gave updates from the Placemaking Committee formerly Clean and Green Committee, which has recently implemented new

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governance and membership. Landscape Forms will be meeting with Committee members to conduct a mall walk through to determine final placement for the 2 outdoor furniture donations. Other mall improvement projects that are underway include landscape improvements such as new mulch installation, concrete and tree planter enhancements, and plantings to be completed by May 15. Other projects include irrigation repairs are progressing after prolonged inactivity, and major irrigation breaks. The Board discussed future Placemaking investments and project priorities for next year's budget planning.

Behymer's indicated the Portland Loo site project has been delayed due to unexpected underground utility issues. Board members expressed concern regarding project timelines and downtown appearance ahead of major summer events.

The Wayfinding Study RFP has been officially published with proposals due June 4. Placemaking Committee will guide the process. The focus is on long-term pedestrian wayfinding improvements during ongoing construction periods.

Streets for All project bids opened May 1. The project manager is being finalized. Corridor business meetings are expected to be early to mid-June with construction anticipated after July 4.

Director Kidd detailed that the Events and Marketing Committee convened successfully with strong attendance. Current initiatives include development of a strategic communication strategy around construction, coordination with marketing partners and the City who is conducting a planned audit of collaterals, and the Committee is planning a retreat. Additional work is needed around the brand rollout initiatives, Big Belly sponsorship program, and event support planning.

Behymer and Director Aardema briefed the group on the Executive Committee's focus on parking and the new governance structure.

Behymer gave an update on the Downtown Project Coordinator position that closed with 53 applicants. Top candidates are currently being interviewed. Finalists are likely to return for in-person interviews. The goal is to extend the offer by late May or early June and to have the position filled quickly.

E. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

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1. Committee Membership Recommendation

Director Sandhu questioned whether it was appropriate to abstain due to Heather Holmer being his tenant, but the group determined it was unnecessary.

MAYOR ANDERSON MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE HEATHER HOLMER FOR A ONE YEAR TERM ON THE BUSINESS RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION COMMITTEE. DIRECTOR LLOYD SECONDED. MOTION APPROVED.

2. Arcadia Creek Festival Place Season

Behymer explained the motion as allocation of operational support and infrastructure funding designated to Kim Guess for primary day-of contact for event organizers during 3 festivals over 5 days. This support role will be the keyholder, follow the special event process, have identified City contacts, and be responsible for utility operation.

DIRECTOR SUN MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE AN ALLOCATON OF UP TO \$3,000 TO SUPPORT 2026 EVENT OPERATIONS AND INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS AT ARCADIA CREEK FESTIVAL PLACE, INCLUDING EVENT OPERATIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES AND SEASONAL IRRIGATION OPERATIONS, WITH THE EVENT OPERATIONAL SUPPORT COMPONENT COMING FORWARD AT THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE EVENTS AND MARKETING COMMITTEE. SUPPORTED BY DIRECTOR SEARING. NO OBJECTIONS. MOTION APPROVED.

3. Downtown Kalamazoo Parking

Behymer explained upcoming changes to the downtown parking system based on feedback. The planned changes include:

- First 30 minutes free at all paid on-street spaces
- Increased time limits to 3 hours maximum
- Enforcement ending at 5:00pm systemwide
- Exploration of expanded 5-hour and 10-hour parking areas to accommodate employees and long-term business clients

The signage, kiosk, and enforcement should be updated simultaneously.

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Ramp improvements that were discussed include security options, quarterly parking data reporting, customer service concerns, and identified technology and gate issues. Director Aardema noted improvements were responsive to business concerns and represented progress toward a more workable system.

F. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

G. DIRECTOR COMMENTS

Director Lloyd raised concerns about the accumulated trash in the Creek and the low water level and added the need for better proactive planning and maintenance. He also discussed the importance of anticipating project impacts, encouraging a service minded organizational culture, and developing measurable success indicators.

Director Sun stated the need for long term planning considerations around Event Center integration, Social District expansion, Public Safety and Ambassador strategies, and creating connections between downtown and the WMU stadiums as an entertainment district.

Director Searing expressed concerns regarding encampments near downtown areas ahead of upcoming festivals and events.

Mayor Anderson shared how a comparable community in North Carolina is successfully addressing the unsheltered homeless problem. The program combines enforcement, ordinance adjustments, and connections to services.

H. ADJOURNMENT

**DIRECTOR LLOYD MOTIONED TO ADJOURN, SUPPORTED BY DIRECTOR SEARING.
MOTION APPROVED WITH NO ONE OPPOSED.**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:50 P.M.

**Downtown Economic Growth Authority
April 2026 Financial Summary**

In April, the Downtown Economic Growth Authority (DEGA) received \$1,083,440 in total revenue. Key revenue categories included: **Taxes (\$1,081,940)** and **Private Contributions and Sponsorships (\$1,500)** from the Arts Council of Greater Kalamazoo in support of Beats on Bates. 2026 year-to-date revenues total \$1,142,650.

In April, DEGA expenditures totaled \$67,731. Key expense categories included: **Professional and Contractual Services (\$50,158)** for Ambassador Program Block by Block Contract (\$35,500), Bigbelly Waste and Recycling (\$8,158), and Earley & Associates concrete pour for Bigbelly pads (\$6,500); **Solid Waste Disposal (\$550)**; **Repairs and Maintenance Services (\$966)** for Portland Loo pipe repair; **Consulting Services and Fees (\$5,906)** for A5 Group Inc. services; **Legal Services (\$1,403)**; and **Community Promotion (\$8,748)** for Beats on Bates marketing (\$6,500), Chili Cook-Off sponsorship (\$1,000) and holiday lighting grant (\$1,248). 2026 year-to-date expenditures total \$346,877.

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
Big Belly Solar	Bigbelly Waste & Recycling	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 2026 – Dec. 2026

Downtown Economic Growth Authority
Statement of Activity
4/30/2026

Total Available Cash 1,283,491

	<u>2026 Budget</u>	<u>April</u>	<u>2026 YTD Actuals</u>
Revenues			
Taxes	1,126,558	1,081,940	1,081,940
Other Revenue			-
Private Contributions and Sponsorships		1,500	1,500
Contributions from COK	59,210		59,210
Contributions from Solid Waste Fund	32,000		-
Contributions from Grants			-
Total Revenues	<u><u>1,217,768</u></u>	<u><u>1,083,440</u></u>	<u><u>1,142,650</u></u>
Expenses			
Operating Supplies			-
Professional And Contractual Services	544,000	50,158	145,632
Solid Waste Disposal	8,500	550	2,236
Communication And Network Services	600		-
Repairs And Maintenance Services	24,000	966	966
Consulting Services And Fees	27,166	5,906	14,831
Audit Fees	13,400		-
Legal Services	30,000	1,403	4,669
Memberships And Subscriptions	2,500		-
Professional Development	7,000		-
Payroll	80,000		-
Administrative Fees	187,500		46,875
Promotion And Advertising	65,000		15,546
Contribution To General Fund	30,000		-
Contribution To DDA	52,374		-
Community Promotion	165,000	8,748	63,748
Notes Payable - Principle	92,667		45,806
Notes Payable Interest	41,266		6,568
Total Expenses	<u><u>1,370,973</u></u>	<u><u>67,731</u></u>	<u><u>346,877</u></u>
Revenues Less Expenses	<u><u>(153,205)</u></u>	<u><u>1,015,709</u></u>	<u><u>795,773</u></u>

Notes:

	<u>Agreement Amount</u>	<u>Payments Made*</u>	<u>Balance</u>
Long Term Debt:			
Mavcon Agreement	483,000	90,934	392,066
City of Kalamazoo	1,060,000	-	1,060,000

**Will include all payments to show decreasing balance*

	<u>April</u>	<u>2026 YTD Actuals</u>
Professional And Contractual Services:		
Recycling Services - BIG BELLY SOLAR LLC	14,658	39,132
Ambassador Services - BLOCK BY BLOCK	35,500	106,500
TOTAL	<u><u>50,158</u></u>	<u><u>145,632</u></u>

	<u>April</u>	<u>2026 YTD Actuals</u>
Community Promotion:		
Beats on Bates Events - Sponsorship	6,500	56,500
Chili Cook Off – SOUTHWEST MI FIRST	1,000	1,000
Winter In the Zoo		5,000
Holiday Lighting Grant	1,248	1,248
TOTAL	<u><u>8,748</u></u>	<u><u>63,748</u></u>



MEMORANDUM

TO: Downtown Economic Growth Authority Board of Directors

FROM: Events and Marketing Committee

DATE: June 15, 2026

SUBJECT: Recommendation to Authorize Funding for the Student Content Creator Program Pilot

BACKGROUND

Over the past several months, the Kalamazoo Marketing Coalition has been exploring the development of a collaborative student-driven content creator program designed to showcase Kalamazoo through authentic student perspectives. The concept has evolved through ongoing conversations between Coalition members, including Discover Kalamazoo, the City of Kalamazoo, Greenleaf Hospitality Group, Southwest Michigan First, and local higher education institutions.

The proposed program would recruit students from Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo College, and Kalamazoo Valley Community College to create short-form social media content highlighting downtown businesses, community events and festivals, arts and culture experiences, food and beverage establishments, entertainment opportunities, and everyday life in Kalamazoo.

Discover Kalamazoo has agreed to serve as the organizational home for the pilot program, providing coordination, supervision, and administrative support. Students will receive training on content strategy, brand guidelines, and community storytelling while creating content that showcases attractions, businesses, events, and experiences throughout Kalamazoo.

In collaboration with the Coalition, staff would help establish content guidelines, promotional priorities, and brand standards for participating students. The program would be structured to promote downtown businesses, events, festivals, attractions, and experiences while ensuring participating organizations maintain appropriate oversight of content featuring their programs, initiatives, and brand assets. Students would be encouraged to create authentic content reflecting their experiences in Kalamazoo, while Discover Kalamazoo would retain the ability to review, approve, edit, decline, or share content as approved by participants of the pilot program.

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

The proposed pilot aligns strongly with the DEGA Strategic Plan, particularly the Vibrant & Visible strategic pillar.



Specifically, the program would support efforts to strengthen the Downtown Kalamazoo brand through authentic storytelling; expand awareness of downtown among younger audiences; increase visibility of downtown businesses, events, and experiences; generate a larger volume of organic and relatable social media content; foster stronger relationships between downtown Kalamazoo and local colleges and universities; and support talent attraction and retention efforts by highlighting the quality of life available in Kalamazoo.

The program also complements the Downtown Kalamazoo brand rollout by creating a mechanism to generate consistent, authentic content that reflects the community's identity, destinations, and experiences through the perspective of local students.

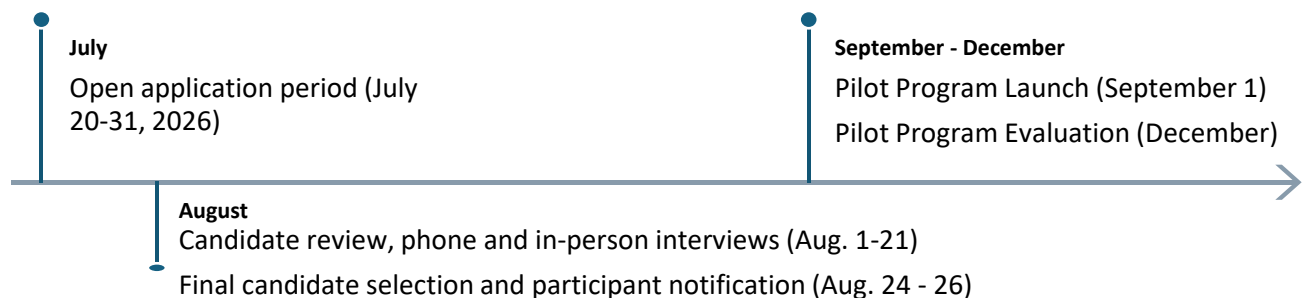
PILOT PROGRAM APPROACH

Coalition partners are planning a pilot launch during the Fall 2026 semester. This timing presents several advantages, including the arrival of new and returning students, a robust calendar of downtown events and activities, and the opportunity to test participation levels and program effectiveness before considering future expansion.

Through the pilot, participating students would create content focused on themes such as: downtown businesses and experiences; food and beverage destinations; arts, culture, and community events; recreation and entertainment opportunities; and everyday student life.

The pilot structure allows participating organizations to evaluate student engagement, content production capacity, audience reach, partnership coordination, and long-term program sustainability before making larger commitments.

PILOT IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE





The pilot structure provides an opportunity to evaluate student participation, content quality, audience engagement, partnership coordination, and overall program effectiveness prior to considering future funding or expansion.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Preliminary discussions among coalition partners have identified potential financial participation from Discover Kalamazoo, Greenleaf Hospitality Group, DEGA, and other community partners.

The proposed DEGA contribution of up to \$3,000 would support student staffing costs associated with content creation focused on downtown businesses, events, and experiences during the Fall 2026 semester.

Funding is available within the Events & Marketing budget.

At the conclusion of the pilot, participating organizations will evaluate outcomes and determine whether ongoing program support should be considered for future years.

EVENTS & MARKETING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

At its June 2026 meeting, the Events & Marketing Committee reviewed the proposed Kalamazoo Student Content Creator Program and recommended that the DEGA Board authorize a contribution of up to \$3,000 toward implementation of the Fall 2026 pilot.

The Committee believes the program represents a cost-effective opportunity to expand Downtown Kalamazoo's visibility among younger audiences, support the organization's marketing goals, strengthen connections between downtown and local higher education institutions, and amplify authentic stories about the people, places, and experiences that make Downtown Kalamazoo unique.

RECOMMENDATION

Motion: Authorize a contribution of up to \$3,000 to Discover Kalamazoo to support implementation of the Kalamazoo Student Content Creator Program pilot during the Fall 2026 semester.



MEMORANDUM

TO: Downtown Economic Growth Authority Board of Directors

FROM: Events and Marketing Committee

DATE: June 15, 2026

SUBJECT: Website Services Provider Selection and Brand Implementation

BACKGROUND

As part of the Downtown Kalamazoo brand rollout, staff was directed to evaluate options for implementing the new brand standards on DowntownKalamazoo.org and to assess long-term website hosting and maintenance needs.

The Board previously authorized up to \$2,000 to continue services with Maestro through June 2026 while staff completed this evaluation and developed a recommendation.

During the review process, staff received proposals from Maestro, Kzoom, a5 Branding, and Element Web Co. and evaluated each against a substantially similar scope of work. Following discussions between staff, Committee leadership, and Maestro, all parties agreed that transitioning website services would be in the best interest of the organization moving forward. Maestro has committed to assisting with the transition process and recommended Kzoom as a qualified local provider.

Since the initial committee review, staff has continued discussions with Kzoom regarding website implementation, hosting, and ongoing maintenance needs. Based on those discussions, Kzoom provided an updated proposal that combines website branding implementation, hosting, maintenance, troubleshooting, and support services into a single service package. The revised proposal also reflects only those services anticipated through December 31, 2026, allowing future website service needs to be evaluated through the 2027 budget process.

PROPOSED SERVICES

Under the proposed agreement, Kzoom would provide:

- Implementation of the Downtown Kalamazoo brand standards on website
- Ongoing website content and graphic updates
- Website plugin and software updates
- Technical troubleshooting and support
- Website security monitoring and restoration services
- Premium website hosting services



This approach establishes a single provider responsible for website implementation, hosting, maintenance, and support while creating a streamlined transition from the current provider.

Staff will continue working with Kzoom on implementation of the website structure and brand standards; however, we will retain full ownership and control of all website content. Day-to-day content management, updates, and posting responsibilities will be handled internally by the organization's new Development Project Coordinator, with Kzoom serving solely as the technical hosting, maintenance, and support provider once the website has been updated. This approach ensures that organizational messaging, business information, event content, and other website materials remain under our direct control while providing professional technical support and website maintenance as needed. Any access to website information is subject to standard professional service obligations, and we maintain ownership of all website content, data, accounts, and digital assets.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Kzoom has provided pricing for implementation and website services through December 31, 2026. The proposal includes:

Service	Cost
Website Refresh / Brand Implementation and Maintenance/Support	\$5,100
Website Hosting (July–December 2026)	\$240
Total Cost Through December 31, 2026	\$5,340

The Authority currently budgets \$4,000 annually for website hosting and maintenance. The previously authorized Maestro contract extension through June 2026 supports a smooth transition between providers and is not included in the above costs.

Any website hosting and maintenance services beyond December 31, 2026, will be considered as part of the 2027 budget development process.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

The Events & Marketing Committee recommends selecting Kzoom as the website services provider for DowntownKalamazoo.org.

This recommendation supports implementation of the Downtown Kalamazoo brand standards; establishes a single provider responsible for website hosting, maintenance, and support;



provides predictable service costs through the remainder of 2026; allows for a smooth transition with Maestro's assistance; and positions the organization with a local partner capable of supporting future website needs.

Motion: *Authorize Kzoom to complete the DowntownKalamazoo.org website refresh associated with the Downtown Kalamazoo brand rollout and provide website hosting and maintenance services through December 31, 2026 in an amount not to exceed \$5,340. Authorize the Board Chair to execute all documents necessary to transition website services from Maestro to Kzoom and implement the approved services.*



Kzoom
 536 E Michigan Ave
 Kalamazoo, MI 49007-5822 USA
 +12693306565
 dan@kzoom.com
 www.kzoom.com

Estimate

ADDRESS

City of Kalamazoo
 c/o Meghan Behymer
 530 North Rose Street
 Kalamazoo, MI 49007

ESTIMATE # 1827

DATE 06/11/2026

DESCRIPTION	QTY	RATE	AMOUNT
Estimate for Web Design & Maintenance			
Web Maintenance P2 Monthly updates to existing pages July-Dec 2026 Includes all graphic (adding the new branding to all pages) and text updates Includes Monthly plugin updates across site to ensure functionality Includes on call trouble-shooting - this includes site security and restoration if anything breaks. We will address the issue and secure the site functions with immediacy.	6	850.00	5,100.00
Web Hosting Premium Hosting through WP Engine Features include the highest level of site security, high level of data storage on site, and premium page load speed, as well as top tier customer service.	6	40.00	240.00
			Subtotal: 5,340.00
Website Diagnose and fix ARIA and other issues on site Kzoom will need to login to diagnose the problems from the inside before giving a specific estimate. We anticipate the range of time needed to be between 6-18 hours of time, or \$540-\$1620 (@\$90/hr). The primary factor is if custom coding is needed to rewrite the issues on pages.	0	0.00	0.00
TOTAL			\$5,340.00



MEMORANDUM

TO: Downtown Economic Growth Authority Board of Directors

FROM: Placemaking Committee

DATE: June 15, 2026

SUBJECT: Pedestrian Wayfinding Kiosk Updates

BACKGROUND

Downtown Kalamazoo currently has eight pedestrian-level wayfinding kiosks located throughout the downtown district. These kiosks serve as an important visitor navigation tool by providing maps, destinations, and orientation information for residents and visitors exploring downtown.

The existing kiosks are located at:

- South Burdick (east side of block)
- South Street (south side of block outside Epic Center Ramp)
- Kalamazoo Mall (east side of first block, by Cherri's Chocol'art)
- Kalamazoo Mall (east side of first block, outside ROCA)
- Kalamazoo Mall (west side of second block, outside Aroma Labs)
- Rose Street (Radisson Ramp entrance/exit)
- East Michigan Avenue (Post Office)
- Portage Street (Kalamazoo Mall entrance/exit)



Updating downtown wayfinding has been identified as a need by downtown businesses, particularly as the community prepares for several years of construction activity associated with the Streets for All initiative. Existing kiosk maps and branding no longer reflect current downtown destinations, visitor needs, or upcoming navigation challenges associated with construction.

As part of the City's Streets for All business support efforts, GÜD Marketing has developed a draft pedestrian wayfinding map intended to help residents and visitors navigate downtown throughout the construction period. The proposed kiosk updates present an opportunity to leverage this work through a co-branded approach that aligns with the Downtown Kalamazoo brand while also incorporating construction-related navigation and access information.

FIND YOUR NEXT ADVENTURE IN DOWNTOWN KALAMAZOO

PARDON OUR DUST!

We're working to upgrade our downtown roads and underground infrastructure to better serve Kalamazoo residents and visitors alike!

Learn more about what's next for downtown.

STREETS FOR ALL

KEY

▶▶▶ Main Streets	▶▶▶ One-Way Street
— Side Streets	 Parks
▲ Construction	 Parking Garages <i>First 90-minutes free</i>

P Parking Garages	🍷 Drinks
🍴 Restaurants	🎵 Live Music
🎭 Theaters	🎪 Event Venues
🖼️ Art Galleries	☕ Coffee
📖 Libraries	🛍️ Shopping

The proposed improvements support the Streetwise & Connected strategic pillar by improving pedestrian navigation, strengthening downtown identity, and helping residents and visitors confidently access downtown businesses and destinations during construction.

WAYFINDING STUDY COORDINATION

The DEGA is currently undertaking a Downtown Wayfinding Study and Implementation Plan. Consultant proposals have been received and are under review. The intent of this effort is to evaluate downtown wayfinding comprehensively and develop a phased implementation strategy that aligns, to the greatest extent possible, with the Streets for All project and other downtown initiatives.

The recommendation before the Board is not intended to replace or pre-determine the outcomes of that study. Rather, it represents a targeted investment in existing pedestrian



wayfinding infrastructure that addresses an immediate need identified by downtown businesses and supports visitor navigation during the upcoming construction period.

Any future recommendations resulting from the Downtown Wayfinding Study and Implementation Plan will be evaluated independently and may include additional pedestrian wayfinding enhancements, modifications, relocations, or phased implementation strategies throughout the downtown district. Staff and the Placemaking Committee believe this investment provides immediate value while maintaining flexibility for future implementation recommendations that may emerge through the comprehensive planning process.

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS

Staff solicited pricing for updating existing pedestrian wayfinding kiosks to incorporate the new map design and refreshed branding elements.

The scope of work includes:

- Downtown sign panel replacement (aluminum)
- Upper sign panel vinyl replacement (front and back)
- Lower sign panel vinyl replacement
- Frame updates and installation utilizing updated brand colors

One vendor has provided a quote of \$2,240 per kiosk for the above scope of work.

Following review and prioritization, the Placemaking Committee recommends updating the following five kiosk locations:

- South Street (south side of block outside Epic Center Parking Ramp)
- Kalamazoo Mall (east side of first block, outside Cherri's Chocol'art)
- Kalamazoo Mall (east side of first block, outside ROCA)
- Kalamazoo Mall (west side of second block, outside Aroma Labs)
- Portage Street (Kalamazoo Mall entrance/exit)

These locations were identified as the highest-priority installations due to their visibility, pedestrian activity levels, and importance as key entry and orientation points within downtown. A draft mock-up of the proposed map design is attached for Board review.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The cost to update the five prioritized kiosks is \$11,200.



NEXT STEPS

Upon authorization, staff will proceed with final design development and installation of the five prioritized kiosks.

Staff will continue evaluating options for the remaining three kiosk locations, including potential removal of underutilized units in coordination with the Downtown Ambassador Team and City staff. Additional funding opportunities may also be explored to support future updates to the remaining kiosks should they be retained within the wayfinding system.

Recommendations emerging from the Downtown Wayfinding Study and Implementation Plan will be brought forward separately for Board consideration and will help inform future pedestrian wayfinding investments throughout the downtown district.

RECOMMENDATION

Authorize an investment of up to \$11,200 for the update of five existing pedestrian wayfinding kiosks utilizing the proposed Downtown Kalamazoo/Streets for All map design, as recommended by the Placemaking Committee.