Downtown Management Board & Downtown Development Authority Regular Meeting

Wednesday, December 10th, 2025

301 Washington Ave. Bay City, MI 48708 Room 317 8:00 AM

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

DMB	DDA
✓ Jeff Hildebrant	(Excused) John Neeb
✓ Magen Samyn	(Excused) Jesse Kendall
✓ Scott Nemode	✓ Paul Wiese
✓ Howie Diefenbach	✓ Chris Girard
✓ Avram Golden	(Absent) Nick Schwall
✓ Jennifer Stasser	(Online) Daniel Dimitroff
✓ Cassidy Bouchard	(Excused) Sheila Turbett
✓ Tricia Coonan	✓ Jean Ann DeShano
(Online) Alex Weiss	✓ Terry Moultane
(Online) Sara Dimitroff	

Also in attendance: Shelby Munsey, City of Bay City Event Coordinator. Dana Muscot, City of Bay City Manager. Kellie Rupp, DMB/DDA Staff. Sara Parker, Bay Area Chamber of Commerce

2. Approval of the Agenda

a. DDA Approval of the Agenda: no approval as there was not a quorum for the DDA.
b. DMB Approval of the Agenda: J. Hildebrant motioned to add the DMB special assessment approval to the agenda. S. Nemode / M. Samyn

3. Review and Approval of Minutes

a. DDA Approval of the October 2025/November 2025 minutes: no approval as there was not a quorum for the DDA.
b. DMB Approval of the October 2025/November 2025 minutes: M. Samyn / S. Nemode
c. DDA receive financials: no approval as there was not a quorum for the DDA.
d. DMB receive financials: S. Nemode / Cassidy Bouchard

4. Public Input

5. Director & Committee Reports

a. Rupp Report
b. Events Committee Report
c. Parking Committee Report
d. Marketing Committee Report
e. Beautification Committee Report
f. Michigan Main Street

6. Action Items

a. A letter of support for Michigan Main Street was approved by the DMB following a motion from S. Nemode and support from M. Samyn. The DDA took no action due to lack of quorum.
b. The DMB accepted a resignation with regret following a motion from S. Nemode and support from C. Bouchard for Magen Samyn.
c. J. Hildebrant noted that the current strategic plan is out of date and proposed forming a committee to develop a 2026 to 2029 strategic plan. S. Nemode and P. Wiese volunteered to serve on the committee.
d. The DMB special assessment plan was presented. A motion to add 614 Center Ave. to the Downtown Management Board district was made by S. Nemode and supported by J. Stasser. The motion passed unanimously.

7. City District Updates

City Manager Dana Muscott mentioned that they have the electric crews out looking at the light posts. A street banner/pole mount flag display does need to be applied for.

Terry Moultane stated that his office is currently working on the new zoning ordinance and should be completed by Spring 2026.

Shelby Munsey stated that she is working on a most concise event application process and that she would like to start setting up meetings with people looking to apply.

8. Roundtable

H. Diefenbach noted that he will be hosting a “Festivus” event at Americana Co. on December 19th from 5:00 - 8:00 PM.

P. Wiese asked how do we go about unshoveled sidewalks in the downtown area. They can be added to See Click Fix on baycitymi.gov website.

K. Rupp asked if there was someway to give the parking ambassadors a holiday bonus. J. Hildebrant motioned to approve a $500 check to both Emily Carson and Renee Frank. Support from T. Coonan, all in favor.

9. Adjournment - 8:45 AM.

a.) Rupp Report

- The in-office audit portion was completed on schedule, and draft reports will be available soon.
- I met with Jeff Staudacher, Madison Roberts, and Kirsten Wellintz from the library to discuss the Bay City Optimists taking over the Young People's Summer Series in 2026. The DMB will continue to provide the space, while the Optimists will coordinate with the schools for free lunches and manage all entertainment. The events will coincide with the Wednesdays in the Park concerts at the Wenonah Park Pavilion.
- I also met with Nicole Luczak from the United Way, who is planning a 0–3 daycare on the first floor of their building at 909 Washington Avenue. As part of the Leadership Bay County Class of 2026 project, the playground in Wenonah Park will be expanded to provide accessible outdoor space for the daycare children. The park's proximity makes it perfect for daily use within walking distance.
- A fillable holiday shopping guide was sent to downtown merchants, allowing them to add their own photos and items to promote. The guide is available on the Downtown Bay City Facebook page and the website.
- I completed my online orientation for the Institute of Organizational Management (IOM) training, which I will attend January 4th - 8th. This program is offered through the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and provides professional development for nonprofit and association leaders, focusing on leadership, management, and organizational best practices. I am very excited for this opportunity!
- Finally, a social media milestone to celebrate: when I began in January 2020, we had 22,000 Facebook followers. We have now grown to over 32,000 followers!

b.) Events Committee Report

Next Events Meeting: December 16th, 9:00 AM, DMB Office

In Attendance: Kellie Rupp, Tara Knipp (First Look Bridal), Kathy LaLonde (Little House), Tricia Coonan, Jeff Hildebrant, Jen Stasser, Gabe Windt (Area 13 Tattoo), Traelynne DuRussel

Treats & Treasures (October 25)
Around 250 kids came through for Treats & Treasures, and merchant feedback was positive overall. There was discussion about coordinating event timing with Midland Street next year so both districts aren't hosting their activities at the same time.

Thriller Thursday: Downtown Halloween Block Party (October 30)
The event had a really strong turnout for its first year, with some attendees traveling over an hour and a half to be here. There were concerns about the timing of the street closure; some businesses felt the early closure negatively affected them, so shifting it to 4:00 PM or later may be better. Additional signage or an event map would also be helpful next year, Tavern 101, for example, had a psychic in the back room, but many people didn't know because there wasn't visible signage.

Upcoming Events & Recaps

Santa's Arrival November 28, 7:00 PM
The event was a great success. The live stream has already been viewed over 20,000 times, including by people watching from our sister city, Ansbach. On-site attendance appeared to be around 2,500 in the park.

Sundays in the City November 30; December 7, 14, 21
The first Sunday went well, though it tends to be a slower day due to Thanksgiving weekend. The Sweet Adelines are caroling in the stores, and free carriage rides will take place from 12-3 PM starting in front of Wenonah Park.

Pink Friday November 21
This was our first year participating in Pink Friday with 22 businesses taking part. Shoppers who spent over $100 were invited to the office to pick up an exclusive pink bag; nine people stopped in to get one. Next year, the pickup location might work better if it's inside a downtown store that's easier for shoppers to get to.

First Thursdays December 4
The December First Thursday event is the final one of the year.

December Meeting Goal
The focus of December's meeting will be to plan the themes for all First Thursdays in 2026.

c.) Parking Committee Report

Next Parking Meeting: January 6th, 2026

The 2026 parking passes have been ordered, communication about passholders will be going out soon with a link and a QR code to fill out a googled form. The goal is to have everyone submit their information through a Google form, which will automatically populate a spreadsheet with everything we need. This also allows people to complete it on their phones/computers when they have all their information handy.

I'm also hoping this helps reduce walk-in traffic. I don't love the idea of issuing tickets right around Christmas (and some time off might be enjoyed by both myself & the chamber), but I still want the parking ambassadors to be able to get some hours. If possible, maybe they could focus on delivering passes during those two weeks instead of ticketing

The parking report is available on the next page.

d.) Marketing Committee Report

Next Marketing Meeting: January 8th

Social Media Metrics and Goals

Facebook

- 2025 Content Views: 4.2 million
    - 2026 Goal: 4.5 million (5% increase)
- 2025 Content Interactions: 52,000 (down about 1,600 from 2024)
    - 2026 Goal: 55,000 interactions
- 2025 Followers Gained: 2,580
    - 2026 Goal: Gain 2,000 followers

Instagram

- 2025 Views: 313,900
    - 2026 Goal: 500,000 views
- 2025 Content Interactions: 7,100
    - 2026 Goal: 10,000 interactions
- 2025 Followers Gained: 821
    - 2026 Goal: Gain 1,000 followers

Other Marketing Goals

- Increase Instagram followers and engagement, particularly targeting younger audiences who use Instagram more than Facebook.
- Create a handheld map for visitors
- Clean up and update the website
- Complete branding and trademark the logo
- Ensure consistent messaging and content throughout the year

- Create more engaging content with clear calls to action
- Improve search engine optimization (SEO)
- Produce one video per month
- Run quarterly shopping guides, timed for the holidays, spring open house, sidewalk days, and fall open house
- Promote and enhance First Thursdays events
- Reboot the Best Day Downtown promotion

e.) Beautification Committee Report

Next Beautification Meeting: December 18th

In Attendance: Jeff Hildebrant, Alex Weiss, John Neeb, Jesse Kendall, Magen Samyn, Sara Parker

Snow Removal: Kellie contacted C.R. Howell and they are inline to do snow removal for 2025/2026.

Holiday Decorations: A big thank you to Rhonda and her team at Do-All, who have started putting up the wreaths downtown. The garland will follow soon after. Begick's has removed the fall decorations from the planters the week of November 10 and will refill them with winter greenery the week of November 17.

Dart Update: Jeff received an architectural drawing of the dart and will work on having it sealed by a licensed architect to move the project forward.

Wayfinding Signs: The downtown map has been updated, and the old signs have been removed. The new replacement signs have been installed at all four locations!