Downtown Management Board & Downtown Development Authority Regular Meeting

Wednesday, February 11th, 2026

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

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

DMB	DDA
Jeff Hildebrant ✓	John Neeb ✓
Scott Nemode **ex.**	Jesse Kendall ✓
Howie Diefenbach ✓	Paul Wiese ✓
Avram Golden ✓	Chris Girard ✓
Jennifer Stasser ✓	Nick Schwall ✓
Cassidy Bouchard ✓	Daniel Dimitroff ✓
Tricia Coonan **ex.**	Sheila Turbett ✓
Alex Weiss **ex.**	Jean Ann DeShano ✓
Sara Dimitroff ✓	Terry Moultane ✓

Also in attendance: Dana Muscott, Sara Parker, Magen Samyn, Kellie Rupp, Laura Kubit

2. Approval of the Agenda

   a. DDA Approval of the Agenda: C. Girard / J. DeShano
   b. DMB Approval of the Agenda: C. Bouchard / J. Stasser

3. Review and Approval of Minutes

a. DDA Approval of the January 2026 minutes: C. Girard / J. DeShano
b. DMB Approval of the January 2026 minutes: C. Bouchard / S. Nemode
c. DDA receives financials: J. DeShano / C. Girard
d. DMB receive financials: ____/____

4. Public Input

L. Kubit shared that she has a standing meeting the second Wednesday of the month when the DDA/DMB so she will be attending our meetings for as much as she is able.

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 Report

6. Action Items

a. DMB Executive Committee Election
    i. Chairman Jeff Hildebrant called for nominations for the office of Vice Chair of the Downtown Management Board. Jeff Hildebrant nominated Scott Nemode. The nomination was supported by Jennifer Stasser. The Chair called three times for additional nominations. Hearing none, nominations were closed. A vote was taken and Scott Nemode was unanimously elected Vice Chair.
    ii. Chairman Jeff Hildebrant then called for nominations for the office of Treasurer of the Downtown Management Board. Jeff Hildebrant nominated Jennifer Stasser. The nomination was supported by Scott Nemode. The Chair called three times for additional nominations. Hearing none, nominations were closed. A vote was taken and Jennifer Stasser was unanimously elected Treasurer.
    iii. Scott Nemode made a motion to add Jennifer Stasser as an authorized signer on the Downtown Management Board account at 1st State Bank. The motion was supported by A. Golden. A vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.
b. Add Sara Parker to DDA Bank Account at 1st State Bank
    i. Jean Ann Deshano made a motion to add Sara Parker as an authorized signer on the Downtown Development Authority account at 1st State Bank. the motion was supported by P. Wiese. A vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.
c. DDA Accounts Payable

7. City District Updates
8. Roundtable
9. Adjournment

a.) Rupp Report

- Earlier this month I met with Nolan Mizner at Bay Arenac ISD about bringing on a work based learning student to work in the office with me. I think it would be a great opportunity to have a student go around downtown taking photos and creating social media content for us. We also talked about having them assist merchants with Canva, helping them understand how, when, and what to post on social media, and offering support with video content. I would also love for this student to create TikToks specifically for Downtown. I'm heading back on the 21st for a meet and greet with some of the students.
- On January 24 from 11:00 AM to 2:00 PM, eight restaurants participated in the cook off: BarqueBC, Beaver's Pub, Drift, Gatsby's, Lucky Bunny, Old City Hall, Tavern 101, and Riverfront Grille. The event went really well, with 172 ballots turned in. BarqueBC won the cook off with 91 of the 172 votes. All ticket sales will be collected and redistributed back to the participating restaurants. That same day, Freeze Fest took place at Drift and featured 12 breweries offering samples, along with a cornhole tournament, live painting, live music, fire dancers, and other activities. Even Mulligan's, which did not participate in the cook off, reported being extremely busy. Kathy LaLonde from Little House shared that she did over $1,000 in sales. Overall, it was a strong day for many downtown businesses despite the cold temperatures.
- The Hot Chocolate Hop took place on Saturday, February 7 at 11 downtown businesses. From the feedback I have received so far, it sounds like there was a great turnout. That

same day was the Galentine's Crawl at the downtown and uptown boutiques, organized by Ferne, which also brought people out shopping.

- Our public hearing for the special assessment is scheduled for Tuesday, February 17 at 1:00 PM in Room 306 at City Hall. After that, it will go before the commission on March 2 and again on March 16. Sara shared that the commission must approve both the plan and the assessment roll, and those approvals happen at separate meetings.
- I am currently working with FP Horak to create a new handheld downtown map.
- Wednesdays in the Park sponsorships opened on February 2. The total sponsorship goal for the 2026 season is $62,000. On Friday, February 13, I will have a table at the Eye Opener to help secure additional sponsors.
- I also spoke with Jeff Poirier, who will be coordinating Fridays at the Falls this summer, taking place every Friday night in July and August. Kaitlyn from Ocean Jasper will be booking the free health and wellness instructors. I have added both Fridays at the Falls and the Health and Wellness series as sponsorship opportunities to the form. The Health and Wellness sessions will take place every Saturday and Sunday morning throughout June, July, and August.

b.) Events Committee Report

Next Events Meeting: February 17th, 9:00 AM, DMB Office

In Attendance: Tricia Coonan, Jennifer Stasser, Cassidy Bouchard, Alex Weiss, Jeff Hildebrant, Kellie Rupp

Downtown Chili Cook-Off
January 24, 11:00 AM to 2:00 PM. Eight restaurants participated including BarqueBC, Beaver's Pub, Drift, Gatsby's, Lucky Bunny, Old City Hall, Tavern 101, and Riverfront Grille. The event went very well with 172 ballots turned in by attendees. BarqueBC won the cook off, receiving 91 of the 172 votes. All ticket sales will be collected and redistributed back to the participating restaurants.

Freeze Fest took place the same day at Drift and featured 12 breweries offering samples along with a cornhole tournament, live painting, live music, fire dancers, and other activities. Mulligan's, which did not participate in the cook off, reported being extremely busy throughout the day. Kathy LaLonde from Little House shared that she did over $1,000 in sales. Overall, it was a good day for many downtown businesses despite the chilly temperatures.

Hot Chocolate Hop
February 7, 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM. The event will include 11 participating businesses.

Summer 2026 Programming
The Young People's Summer Series will include 12 events and will again be organized by the Bay City Noon Optimists.

Friday at the Falls will include nine shows at Waterfall Park, taking place every Friday in July and August. Jeff Poirer has been contacted and will coordinate the series again this year.

Free Health and Wellness Classes will include 26 total classes held every Saturday and Sunday morning in Wenonah Park, with the exception of the Fourth of July weekend. Kaitlyn MacGregor from Ocean Jasper will organize these classes again this year.

The Bay Area Farmers Market will be moving to the Pere Marquette Parking Plaza at the corner of Adams and 5th. The market will also switch to Thursdays and run from June 4 through October 1, from 2:00 to 7:00 PM.

Wednesdays in the Park sponsorship opportunities have been sent out on February 2. New sponsorship options have been added, including Health and Wellness and Friday at the Falls sponsors. For Pass the Bucket volunteers, we are working with Ashley Earle from Ashley's Nails on Midland Street to serve as volunteer coordinator, with a meeting scheduled for February 16 to discuss details.

c.) Parking Committee Report

Next Parking Meeting: March 3rd, 2026

d.) Marketing Committee Report

Next Marketing Meeting: March 4th

In Attendance: Jeff Hildebrant, Alex Weiss, Kellie Rupp

	January 2025	January 2026
Facebook Content Interactions	4,400	2,400
Facebook Followers	30,433	32,549
Facebook Post Reach	97,700	260,500
Facebook Video Watch Time	7d 4h	2h 34m
Instagram Followers	8,765	9,227
Newsletter Open Rate	38%	35%%
Constant Contact Subscribers	9879	9,730

1. New Map Needs

- Collect any vector files from the previous brochure.
- Obtain vector files for the updated map PDF.
- Review any new photos to be used and notes on desired placement.
- Gather a Word file with all updated locations, if available.

2. Wednesdays in the Park

- Discuss how to announce the lineup.
- Confirmed promotional plans:
    - Radio ads
    - Live broadcast with Connoisseur Media

e.) Beautification Committee Report

Next Beautification Meeting: February 26th

In Attendance: Jeff Hildebrant, Alex Weiss, John Neeb, Sara Parker, Jean Ann DeShano

1. United Way Day of Caring
    a. The United Way Day of Caring will be held on April 24th across town. Every year The DDA/DMB submits for a project. In years past we have done window cleaning, alley cleanup, and curb painting. This year I talked with Wanda at Bay Landscaping to see if she would be willing to recommend a plant that we could have in the shallow planters along the Washington/6th parking lot. We could source the plants from Bay Landscaping and have volunteers plant them. Submissions for projects are due February 13th.
2. Dart Update
    a. Jeff is having the sculpture artist and architect meet to discuss a plan to move forward.
3. Downtown Bay City Sign
    a. The committee discussed the future of the sign, noting that it has been struck by vehicles twice within the past year. Options included repairing the existing sign, redesigning it, or removing it entirely. There was consensus that a sign at the foot of the bridge is important and that it should remain in some form. Kellie will reach out to the ISD welding department, which has assisted in the past, to see if they are able to repair the “Downtown Bay City” lettering and sail elements. It was also noted that the rocks could potentially be removed and replaced with plantings, as the rocks currently make the lettering difficult to see.

f.) Michigan Main Street Report

- The MI Main Street Committee has been continuing to meet with their MEDC advisor, Leigh Young, once a month to discuss their progress and the next steps in their application. At their January meeting they discussed the completion of the MI Main Street Communication Plan as well as the completion of the business portion of the Building and Business Inventory.
- Going forward the next steps they will be making progress on include the completion of the building portion of the Building and Business Inventory, beginning to implement the communication plan, securing sponsorship pledges, and establishing the four MI Main Street committees. The four committees will be based on the four points of MI Main Street and will include the Economic Vitality Committee, the Design Committee, the Organization Committee, and the Promotion Committee. The Economic Vitality Committee will be focusing on supporting and expanding existing business in the Main Street District as well as attracting new business to fill unused commercial space and supporting housing options. The Design Committee will be focusing on improving the physical appearance of the Main Street District through quality maintenance practices, historic building rehabilitation and adaptive use, and design review processes. The Organization Committee will be focusing on fundraising, recruiting volunteers, fostering collaboration between stakeholders, and developing work plans to guide the MI Main Street project. The Promotion Committee will be focusing on marketing the District, social media campaigns, street festivals, and special events. If you are interested in being a part of any of these committees please reach out to Sara Parker or Lily West.