

IMLAY CITY
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
 Informational Meeting
December 9 @ 5:00 PM
INFORMATIONAL MEETING MINUTES

A special meeting of the Downtown Development Authority was held on Monday, December 9, 2024, at the Imlay City Hall, 150 North Main Street, Imlay City MI 48444.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Barga called the meeting to order at 4:58 pm

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. ROLL CALL – Executive DDA Director Malzahn called the roll:

Present: Stu Davis, Justin Shattuck, John Genord, Kim Jorgensen, Chair Walter Barga, Mayor Barbara Yockey (arrived 5:01) Steve Robbins (arrived 5:02 pm), Joi Kempf (arrived 5:05 pm)

Absent: Neil Docherty, Jessica Montoya

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION by Davis, support by Shattuck to approve the agenda as presented.

All in Favor 6 / Nays 0 - **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – none

6. NEW BUSINESS

a. Bi-Annual Information Meeting Material

Director Malzahn presented the informational material packet she created and led the Board and meeting attendees through the 12-page document. Highlights included:

The State of Michigan requires that Downtown Development Authorities hold two “informational meetings” per calendar year. Informational meetings are held for the purpose of informing the public of the goals and direction of the authority, including projects to be undertaken in the coming year. Our DDA by-laws mandate that our informational meetings will be held in July and December in an effort to be aligned with the State requirement.

The current DDA TIF plan you can scan the QR code on the front page and it will take you right to that document on our website icdda.com. Just in case anyone is not familiar with the acronym TIF, it stands for Tax Increment Financing. Imlay City City Commission adopted our TIF plan in 1985, it was updated and re-adopted in 2014 for a 30-year term. It is this plan that determined the base taxable value rate when the plan was created that now allows for the DDA to capture 2.5 mills off the growth in property value of the initial values. That is how the DDA is funded.

If you turn to page 2 you will see a map of the DDA TIF District boundaries highlighted in red, that area is where the DDA captures its funding from.

A comprehensive breakdown of our approved 2024-2025 budget is on page 3. It shows a balanced budget with revenues and expenses totaling \$355,400. According to the monthly financials provided at our regular meetings – actual revenues through November 30th are at 27.40% (with tax bills just being issued so we should see an increase in revenue in Jan and Feb) and actual expenditures are at 43.17% so we are trending right in alignment with the budget.

The three largest areas of expense in the budget are revenue sharing with the city and city service expenses that we fund at roughly 32%, DDA employee's wages and benefits at 29%, and streetscape/beautification at just under 16%. On the revenue side the majority of funding is coming through the TIF tax capture for Imlay City coming in at 73%.

This past April the Board acted regarding Lapeer County Special Voted Mileages. On the bottom of page 3 you see noted that we have confirmed opt-out status, not capturing the Lapeer EMS millage until 2026. We will however begin to capture the Lapeer Public Safety, Senior Services and Veterans special voted millages with the condition of entering into revenue-sharing agreements

with similar entities operating in and around Imlay City, to gift back to them 100% of the actual capture. All three of those millages total around \$40,000.

On page 4 you will find our mission statement and vision statement, which is taken right from the 2014 City approved TIF plan. Our plan is a 30-year plan so we 20 years or so to continue working on it.

I'd like to highlight and read for you an excerpt about the DDA from the TIF plan. It reads: *"The authority was established in 1976, the Imlay City Downtown Development Authority is under the supervision and control of a board consisting of a chief executive officer of the municipality and no less than eight, nor more than twelve members as determined by the governing body of the municipality.*

The function of the authority is to propose, finance and implement public improvements in the downtown development district. The Imlay City Downtown Development Authority is ultimately responsible for the revitalization of the downtown district as it is defined by Imlay City ordinance."

Continuing on page 4 there is a quick recap of stats for 2024, showing that the DDA held 11 regular monthly meetings, and 1 special meeting. We sponsored 8 summer concerts in the park, held 14 Farmers Market Thursdays, and worked with the Chamber of Commerce to bring two events to downtown – Merchant Trick or Treat Party and WinterFest 2024.

The DDA district welcomed five new businesses: Grooming By Miranda, El Ranchito, JG's Used Book Store, Heavenly Sweets, J&J Liquidations. We are eagerly anticipating the re-opening of Third & Main and Vanguard Sports Memorabilia later this month, and Meesch's Ice Cream in the spring.

Not mentioned in the packet is the DDA-owned building at 150 Bancroft Street. While currently unoccupied and listed for sale, the DDA hosted rent-free Collection Connection through March 2024.

Grants are the focus on page 5. The DDA has submitted 6 grant funding applications in 2024 totaling over \$13.2 million. 4 of our submissions have been awarded, totaling \$79,000. Unfortunately, Senator Gary Peters's office was unable to move our grant further at the Federal level, and we are awaiting the outcome of the newest Four County Community Foundations application for \$12 million from the EPA Community Resilience grant. If funded this would bring much-needed financial assistance to those economically challenged, it would also enlarge and enhance the Hispanic Services Center space and service abilities and it would build our new Community Resilience Pavilion in the Farmers Market area.

The DDA administers a Façade Grant program of its own. Since January 1, 2024, the DDA has approved 8 façade grant applications totaling \$14,854 for exterior building improvements and signage. With a new application for a \$5,000 request on your agenda at our Dec Meeting.

Page 6 provides a list of Goals and Direction taken from our TIF plan and shows the areas we focused on in 2024. As you see, 20 out of 26 goals we prioritized last year have been completed, 6 are still active and listed as "work in progress". Our list of projects include:

- Renewed Lease and advertised on billboard located on M-53 (Cedar Street).
- Maintain and upgrade the DDA website as needed.
- Assist the city in becoming a Redevelopment Ready Community (ongoing but we did complete roughly 12 tasks)
- Promoted and managed the Imlay City Façade Grant Program.
- Leased and Advertised Retail Incubation Program @ 150 POP
- Created a new downtown marketing plan and print materials.
- Collaborated with other local organizations including the Chamber of Commerce, Lapeer Development Corporation, Rotary Club, Lapeer County Ed-Tech, & Imlay City Community Schools, Lapeer County DDA's
- Hosted special events that draw people into the community including Farmers Market; Concert in the Park Series, and WinterFest.
- Replace deteriorated directional signage on MDOT roads.
- Replaced the electronic message board sign on Cedar Street.
- Developed the I AM Imlay City Community Storytelling project
- Replaced brick paver areas along Third & Almont Ave.. with additional grinding of raised areas as needed.
- Purchased additional trash receptacles, pet waste disposal systems for parks and downtown areas
- Designed custom bike racks and way-finding kiosk (the creations are still in manufacturing, but I'm told they should be completed soon).
- Re-striped, signed and performed maintenance on municipal parking lot behind King & King.
- Worked with the MEDC to engage assistance programs they offer to expand business recruitment.
- Held round-table meetings with area developers to discuss mutual goals for the city.
- Worked with Wade-Trim Community Planer Kaitlyn Habben to engage community stakeholders and determine needs in the downtown area.
- Created a "Downtown Day" promo video in partnership with the Almont and Lapeer DDA's.

- Continued discussions with CN Railroad for improvements to the viaduct including additional lighting, painting & beautification of the embankments. (This is on-going as we wait for labor costs to come from CN employees to perform the work)
- Researched available Facade Improvement grants (this is on-going as we work to get shovel ready projects approved in advance of our 3.0 grant submission in January).
- Listed property for sale to generate additional revenue for use on blighted building remediation.
- Worked with EGLE for Third Street city-owned properties. We are still in negotiations with city leadership on purchase to help remediate the blighted properties.
- Applied for 2 community placemaking grants for funding of a pavilion structure.
- Worked to re-activate 1 re-development liquor license, and transfer of 1 escrowed resort license.
- Issued RFP too solicit proposals on city owned Third Street properties.
- Hired summer intern to increase social media presence and cross-market the DDA events in Spanish

On page 7 you see excerpts from our TIF Plan and the projects that have been prioritized for 2025. They include:

- Working to assist Planning and Zoning to achieve Redevelopment Ready Community Status
- Engage in MainStreet USA Program
- ReDesign of website page for property listings
- Market Available Facade Grants
- Utilize newly created data sheet
- Apply for RAP 3.0 Funding for Imlay Facade Corp Building Redevelopment Program
- Expanded Constant Contact communications
- Facilitate quarterly stakeholder meetings
- Send out RFP for professional services for marketing services.
- Continue negotiations with CN Rail personnel
- Utilize MEDC RAP 3.0 Real Estate Development Grants
- Work to identify blighted properties that qualify for grant funding under IC Holdings Corp
- Work with City to create a new municipal parking lot on Third Street where the old sign shop is located
- Convert all downtown and municipal lots to LED lamps to maximum utility savings

Pages 8-10 provide you a snapshot of our online presence. Our website (icdda.com) shows we have a reach of 7.3k people with 13.4K views to our site since January 1, 2024. Google gives us the biggest hit in a browser search with 5.1k hits and 4.4k direct visits.

Stats for our DDA Facebook and Instagram pages (Downtown Imlay City, Imlay City Farmers Market) show a combined reach of over 100,000 viewers. This growth I believe was in part by hiring a dedicated marketing intern this past summer as you can see by the data spikes over those months.

Page 11 shows events that are currently being planned for the 2025. Note that some of the dates are still subject to change. But we are working on the Summer Concert Line-up, a 22-week (extended) farmers market season, along with the I AM IMLAY City project reveal, Downtown Day Celebration, Merchant Trick or Treating and WinterFest 2025.

Wrapping up the report is the new Imlay City data marketing sheet that I created. It contains some major demographic facts, highlights our location in proximity to major urban cities, and some fun facts about what makes Imlay City a great place to live, work, and do business.

7. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None heard

8. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS - none

9. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Davis, support by Docherty to adjourn the meeting at 5:20 pm
All in Favor 6 / Nays 0 - **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

Respectfully submitted by: _____

Christine Malzahn, DDA Executive Director

DDA APPROVED: APPROVED 12/9/2024

CITY COMMISSION APPROVED: