



2022 Downtown Development Authority Board

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2022 Annual Synopsis

This annual synopsis of the projects and activities of the Downtown Development Authority is prepared to satisfy the reporting requirements of the Tax Increment Financing Act, Public Act 57 of 2018.

As the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) was formed in 2019, there are no revenues that have been accumulated for five or more years at this point to address as to when they will be expended. With 2022 tax increment capture, the DDA has now collected revenues for four years. There are no investments by the DDA to report for 2022.

Serving as the Director of the Comstock Center Downtown Development Authority (DDA) since establishment of the DDA and officially since 2022, the Community Development Director's responsibilities work toward implementation of the Downtown Development Plan adopted by the Township Board in 2019 and the Comstock Center Place Plan for Prosperity and Redevelopment and the newly crafted Economic Development, Marketing & Branding Strategy.

Two members of the DDA resigned in 2022. The Township Board adopted a Resolution formalizing the number of members on the DDA Board at 8. As it is a large board, to be more efficient, the DDA has committees work on specific tasks. The four committees are Beautification, Economic Development, Marketing & Outreach, Events and Executive. The Executive Committee, among other tasks, serves as the sounding board for initiatives the Director may undertake or encourage the DDA to pursue toward making Comstock Center a more vital area for investors, businesses and the residents.

Projects and Activities of the DDA

The Downtown Development Plan spans 30 years. The year 2022 was the fourth of this 30-year plan. First steps toward improving the overall appearance of and reminding the community that Comstock Center matters and is worth revitalizing got underway in 2020 as the *Beautify Comstock Center* initiative. In 2022, significant work was done creating four welcoming gateways with signs and plantings. These projects make progress toward the Downtown Development Plan which calls for improvement of the streetscape in Comstock center.

- ❖ 2022 was the third year that banners have hung on poles in Comstock Center. Thirty of the banners are seasonally themed and swapped out for fall, winter and spring/summer.
- ❖ An interim Beautification Plan – being referred to as the *Beautify Comstock Center* initiative identifies immediate and short-term projects working toward improving the appearance of the area. A more formal Beautification Plan will come in future years as revenues allow for significant projects to be considered.
- ❖ Landscape Forms has participated in the *Beautify Comstock Center* initiative. Thirty planters were donated. They are placed around Comstock Center each June. This year, the planters were professionally filled by River Street Flowerland. Soil was donated by Michigan Grower Products.
- ❖ The DDA put out to bid and awarded a contract to CD Lawn & Maintenance to build four gateways per plans created in 2021. The gateway designs share common landscaping treatments. Attractive signs welcome people to the area. Two of the gateways are in Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) right of way of Michigan Avenue/M-96; one is on private property and one is on Township land. The Director secured the necessary easement and permits.
- ❖ Grants awarded in 2021 from the Irving S. Gilmore Foundation (\$10,000), the Consumers Energy Foundation (\$10,000), and the Harold and Grace Upjohn Foundation (\$5,000) paid for the gateway signs.
- ❖ The DDA put out to bid and awarded a contract to CD Lawn & Maintenance to place/remove the planters and to maintain the planters and the four gateways during the growing season. Next year, a three-year contract will be put out to bid. The Board will also explore bringing the watering inhouse with the purchase of the necessary equipment and hiring of a staff person or sharing staff with the parks department.
- ❖ The DDA participated in the National Night Out Event in August at Merrill Park arranging for live music by Comstock residents and handing out water and ice cream to attendees.