

2022 Downtown Development Authority (DDA) Improvements/Projects

What's new?

- Renewed contract with Commercial Grounds Inc. for the bi-weekly maintenance
- The DDA Director attended the Michigan Downtown Association Spring Workshop and Annual Statewide Conference to continue to stay update on best practices and any legislative changes
- Purchased replacement fixtures to repair damaged poles in the downtown, as well as purchased the two Wadsworth and two Columbia light pole assembly kits to meet the requirements of our contract with DTE
- The DDA was gifted 36539 Goddard, after inspection the building was demolished, the DDA contracted with VanAssche Construction
- Contracted with MoneyGreen Lawn Service to install outdoor lights in the trees at the Historical Park
- Contracted with LeClerc to install 50 American Flags on the tall light poles in the downtown from May through November
- Contracted with CoStar proposal for access to information on available Romulus properties for purchase or lease for the four main property types (apartment, office, retail and industrial)
- The DDA was gifted an additional property located at 36539 Goddard, after inspection the structure was deemed unsafe and need to be demolished.

Programs offered

- DDA Façade Program for Downtown businesses
- Military Tribute Banner Program – 35 Veteran or Service Member banners were installed during the months of May and November to honor those that have served or are serving

Business Incubator/The NEST –New Entrepreneur Success Training

- The DDA renovated the east side of the Shook Road building located at 11189 Shook Road. The 1100 square foot space has been converted into four separate suit spaces. The intent is to utilize three of the spaces for co-working space and pop-up shops. The last suit space has been leased to Best Practice Consulting Services. The DDA has contracted with BPCS and is covering the cost for the first round of up to 15 business to provide technical assistance in the following areas:
 - Needs Assessment
 - General Business Consulting
 - Market Research
 - Lending advocacy
 - Managerial and Process Design

Re-Occupancies in the Downtown

- Fortified Plumbing and Drain located at 37140 Goddard Road
- Legacy Learning Center located at 36608 Goddard Road
- Greca Martial Arts Studio located at 36547 Goddard Road

Temporary Uses in the downtown

- Deranged Haunted Attraction located at 35560 Goddard Road. Outdoor haunted attraction from September through October. Attraction consisted of an outdoor walking trail and temporary structure

The Community Senior Garden, adjacent to the Romulus Senior Center, designated the Boy Scout Troop #872 Community Garden

- DDA coordinated the cleanup of the garden planter boxes and supplied all the materials necessary for the repairs. The Boy Scout Troop #872 made the repairs and the Romulus Garden Club and the Cholette Family planted and provided maintenance and watered all summer. Blocks Greenhouse donated all the flowers and vegetable plants

Support of 2 Downtown City Parks; Mary Ann Banks and Romulus Historical Park

- Mulch was provided for these parks
- Porta-Johns for all seasons were provided
- Scheduling of spring and fall clean-up for the parks and streetscape areas
- Covered costs for miscellaneous maintenance.

“Downtown Romulus” Facebook Page was developed in 2013 and is maintained by the DDA.

- We currently have over 3100 friends and followers, 347 more than 2021
- Local programs and events are continually posted on this site.

Advertising

- Renewed the contract with Lambert & Company Public Relations Firm to assist with writing press releases for the different events and activities happening in the downtown. The contract expired in August 2022

Holiday Decorations

- Contracted with LeClerc to lease holiday decorations for the 32 light poles in the core of downtown, the strain pole across Goddard Road, and the decorating of the Christmas tree.
- Contracted with MoneyGreen Lawn Service to install holiday lights on the Kingsley House

Sponsorship

- The DDA sponsored six Sounds in Downtown concerts in the park, the Annual Romulus DDA Pumpkin Festival, and the Romulus Goodfellow Gobble Wobble Turkey Trot
- The DDA sponsored two fall themed contests – Cutest Baby and Cutest Pet, and a Halloween themed contest – Spookiest Yard
- The DDA provided sponsorship for the annual Curling Royale, the Easter Egg Hunt, Patriots in the Park, and the tree lighting ceremony.

2023 Goals

- Upgrade security cameras and add Wi-Fi in the downtown parks. The goal is to install modems in the Shook Road Building and to partner with the 5 Points Church to install a modem in the church. This will allow for an upgrade in security cameras and to be able to view downtown parks from a desktop. The DDA will work with the Technology Services Department to determine the best WI-FI plan for the parks and coordinate with Jeff

Lowrey from Cabling and More to purchase upgraded equipment and install. If FY 22/23 budget allows this would be a task for the spring 2023.

- Revitalize the vacant lot (36539 Goddard) to include lighting, outdoor furniture, games, and plantings. A draft rendering of potential ideas for the space has been designed. The DDA will work with OHM to create the bid documents based on the outcome of the best use of the space. It is the intent of the DDA to create a placemaking space that includes string lights between the buildings additional lighting in the pathway, outdoor furniture, games, an archway sign with planters. Electrical outlets for vendors, food trucks and local bands to plug in to for an open air market. The DDA will seek a placemaking grant to help cover costs, as well as budget funds in the FY 23/24 budget
- Create a scope of work and a cohesive art plan for murals in the downtown. The DDA will partner with the Romulus Arts Council to do a call for artists. The DDA will work with Grant Writer Jill Martin to seek grants and apply. It can be a lengthy process to have a mural completed, design process, prep of the spaces and the weather. The majority of the design planning would need to take place early in the year, so that the approvals are done in order to take advantage of the warmer weather to complete by the fall. The intent is to have the first mural to be completed by fall of 2023
- Match on Main Program, as a RRC Community the DDA qualifies for this program. It is the intent to work with Walter's Bar and Bowling Alley and Artisan Reserve, The director has spoken with each business owner to confirm their interest. One business is chosen per round, if awarded the DDA would receive \$25,000 to act as the fiduciary of the grant, the business owner would need to provide a \$2,500.00 match. Eligible uses of this program are expenses that support technical assistance, interior building renovations, permanent or semi-permanent activation of an outdoor space and other working capital needs such as marketing and inventory expenses. Additional needs identified by the business and support by the local community will also be considered. The DDA is proposing upgrades to the kitchens in each establishment.
- Build on and enhance the Sounds in Downtown free music summer concert series. The DDA will partner with the Recreation/Community Services Department to coordinate events and themes to take place during the summer of 2023. It is the intent to provide plenty of activities throughout the summer months for our residents and visitors to enjoy. The DDA budgets annually \$8,000 in line item Downtown Promotions and Sounds in Downtown for bands and marketing.
- Build on and enhance the holiday decorating in the Historical Park. The DDA will partner with the Recreation/Community Services Department to coordinate events and themes to take place during the tree lighting and train viewing in December 2023. It is the intent to provide plenty of activities throughout the month of December for our residents and visitors to enjoy. The DDA budgets annually \$6,000 in line item Downtown Decoration for holiday lighting.

Romulus DDA Strategic Goals 2023-2027

1. Bring more multi-family housing downtown in the form of Condominiums or Brownstones. Encourage mixed use developments with lofts or condos above retail and multi-unit airline related "Crash Pads".
2. Manage and expand the downtown business mix and help existing business expand while recruiting complimentary new businesses. Solicit new business for the downtown through social media advertising and personal contacts
 - Prepare promotional videos with our cable department detailing the possibilities, to use as a marketing tool.
 - Encourage marketing campaigns with the existing businesses.
 - Refresh the e-coupons / Buy Local campaign.

3. Bring more food and entertainment to downtown within walking distance of new housing.
 - Assist and incentivize food and entertainment proprietors to locate downtown.
 4. Market and communicate regularly about the excitement downtown.
 - project a vibrant and appealing image of the downtown in all of our communications
 5. Expand the downtown parks and make them more child-friendly.
 - Continue acquisition of properties adjacent to Downtown parks.
 6. Promote our heritage and continue with all the “actions”; restoration, revitalization, beautification and the celebration of our new downtown streetscape, green spaces and historic buildings.
 - Through all our forms of communication
 - Work with the Historical commission and the beautification committee to identify areas of interest
 7. Work with Community Services Department to research funding to update and convert the ice rink at Mary Ann Banks Park to an ice rink in winter and a splash park in summer to better utilize this park.
 8. Improve the DDA Farmers Market and Sounds in Downtown to increase attendance.
 9. .Acquire additional replacement banners and holiday decorations for the Downtown area.
 10. Continue to promote Community Art projects in conjunction with the Romulus Arts Council and the Beautification Committee to create a community garden with sculptures and have a mural painted on the brewery building.
 11. Provide Wi-Fi at the downtown parks, this will enhance the services provided for rentals as well as provide the needed service for a better security camera system.
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