



# 2019 Downtown Development Authority Annual Report

## Introduction

In 1975, the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) Act was enacted, and then updated and recodified in 2018, to be a catalyst in the development of a community's downtown district. The DDA provides for a variety of funding options including tax increment financing which utilizes funds for public improvements in the downtown district. The DDA tax increment financing mechanism allows for the capture of incremental growth of local property taxes over a period of time to fund public infrastructure improvements. Funding large-scale projects can lead to new development opportunities in the district and is considered an amenity to the development community. In collaboration with other public and private entities, the DDA Board of Directors strive to ensure the growth and prosperity of Downtown Auburn Hills.

## Public Act 57 of 2018 Reporting Requirements

On January 1, 2019, Public Act 57 of 2018 took effect. PA 57 of 2018 is an Act that provides for the recodification and establishment of certain tax increment financing authorities and establishes new financial reporting and transparency requirements. In accordance with the new requirements established under the Act, the Downtown Development Authority has completed the initial financial reporting and has held two public Informational Meetings. The semi-annual Informational Meetings are meetings for the purpose of informing the public of the goals and direction of the authority, including projects to be undertaken in the coming year. Informational Meetings are not for the purpose of voting on policy, budgets or other operational matters. All authorities must be compliant by June 2020.

## 2019 Summary

In the second quarter of 2019, the Downtown Development Authority awarded a grant to residential developer, Robertson Brothers, for their multi-family residential development in downtown Auburn Hills. This development will feature fourteen townhomes available for sale along the Clinton River, adjacent to Riverside Park. The infill development came with many challenges that made the development more costly to construct; therefore, the Downtown Development Authority offered a grant incentive to assist in off-setting the additional site improvement expenses that made the development cost-prohibitive. Robertson Brothers completed construction of the first of three buildings in the fourth quarter of 2019.



In 2019, the Downtown Development Authority continued to serve as the primary sponsor to the Summer Concert Series held at the Knight Amphitheater in Riverside Park. In addition to the annual sponsorship of the Summer Concert Series, the Downtown Development Authority hosted the City's first annual SeptemBEERfest in downtown Auburn Hills. This charitable Michigan craft beer tasting event featured two blues bands, lawn games, catered BBQ, and a variety of craft beer options for event attendees to enjoy. The

event attracted over 300 people from across the region to downtown Auburn Hills. All proceeds from SeptemBEERfest benefitted the Auburn Hills Community Foundation.

In October 2019, the Downtown Development Authority hosted the first outdoor movie night at the Knight Amphitheater in Riverside Park and presented a showing of “Hocus Pocus” for event attendees. Attendees were offered popcorn and plush Halloween giveaways. In November 2019, the Downtown Development Authority hosted a groundbreaking ceremony for Fountain Circle of Auburn Hills, a \$20 million residential development that will feature 258 residences in seven buildings of various sizes, with a clubhouse, pool, and park areas.

The Downtown Development Authority continues to make great strides in becoming a Select Level community with Main Street Oakland County. By achieving the status of a Select Level Community, downtown Auburn Hills will benefit from special marketing, advertising and publicity opportunities with Oakland County, as well as gain additional technical services to continue to grow and develop the downtown. The Downtown Development Authority created a ten-step benchmark plan to first achieve Associate Level status with Main Street Oakland County and is quickly checking off the tasks to in order to do so.

In the second quarter of 2019, the Downtown Development Authority hosted a Resource Team visit with Main Street Oakland County where regional downtown experts were invited to downtown Auburn Hills to provide their feedback on next steps for the continued growth of downtown Auburn Hills. Following the recommendations made by the Resource Team, the Downtown Development Authority Board of Directors created a Promotions Committee and an Organization Committee. The Promotions Committee will assist with the promotion of downtown Auburn Hills through the creation of new events and print and digital marketing materials, whereas the Organization Committee will assist with outreach and downtown merchant engagement, and the enlistment of volunteers.

## Future Outlook

With an estimated day-time population over 50,000 people within a two-mile radius of Downtown Auburn Hills, it is important to attract those individuals to the community during lunch and after work. As tax increment revenue continues to grow, the Downtown Development Authority will become the event and marketing mechanism for all of downtown Auburn Hills.

In 2020, the Board of Directors will continue to make progress through their ten-step benchmark plan to achieve Associate Level Status with Main Street Oakland County and will look to create additional events to draw people throughout the region to downtown Auburn Hills. With greater promotion, merchant engagement and cross promotion, and Board Member involvement, downtown events and businesses will continue to grow well into the future.

## 2020 DDA Board of Directors

**John Young, Chairman**

**Steven Volk, Vice Chairman**

**Mayor Kevin McDaniel**

**Jean Jernigan**

**Dan Gliniecki**

**Dawn Wise**

**Ryan Rasmussen**

Brandon Skopek, *Executive Director*