



CITY OF AUBURN HILLS CITY COUNCIL AGENDA

MEETING DATE: MAY 6, 2019

AGENDA ITEM NO. .

“Not Yet Approved”

CITY OF AUBURN HILLS JOINT MEETING OF THE DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY AND THE TAX INCREMENT FINANCE AUTHORITY

April 15, 2019

DDA: Chairman Young, Vice Chairman Travnikar, Jernigan, Spurlin, Rasmussen, Glinecki
TIFA: Chairman Hassett, Vice Chairman Kneffel, Secretary Goodhall, Roberts, Klemanski, Dolly
STAFF: Brandon Skopek, Director of Authorities; Torri Mathes, Media Communications Specialist; Sarah Lawrence, Graphic Designer; Thomas Tanghe, City Manager; Donald Grice, Assistant City Manager
GUESTS: None

LOCATION: Room 1, Auburn Hills University Center, 3350 Auburn Road, Auburn Hills, MI 48326

1. Welcome and introduction by Brandon Skopek, Director of Authorities

Mr. Skopek thanked everyone for attending the joint meeting this evening to collaborate and brainstorm on goals and objectives of downtown Auburn Hills. He stated that staff will be presenting on current marketing trends, Auburn Hills user behavior, and information on the audience we are marketing to.

Mr. Skopek provided an updated on current project and initiatives of the Downtown Development Authority and the Tax Increment Finance Authority, as well as downtown developments.

Mr. Skopek introduced the Media Communications Specialist, Torri Mathes.

2. Marketing presentation by Torri Mathes, Media Communications Specialist

Ms. Mathes gave a presentation on marketing tools, current marketing trends, Auburn Hills user behavior, and information on the audience we are marketing to. Below is a brief overview of the presentation. The full presentation is attached.

- a) Marketing overview**
 - a. Event and Experiential Marketing
- b) 2019 Trends**
 - a. Integrated online, social, and mobile marketing
 - b. Social stories overtake the newsfeed
 - c. The growth of micro-influencers
 - d. Audiences made part of brand stories
 - e. True personalization
 - f. QR codes
- c) Auburn Hills User Behavior**
 - a. Hyett Palma Report
 - b. Leakage and Surplus Report
 - c. Social presence
- d) Auburn Hills Residents**
 - a. Who are our residents?
 - i. Bright Young Professionals
 - ii. Rustbelt Traditions

iii. Young and Restless

3. Questions, comments, and brainstorming session

Mr. Skopek asked those present what attracts them to other downtowns and why.

Ms. Roberts stated that destination restaurants attract her to other downtowns. She stated that she believes downtown Auburn Hills needs more destination places to attract people from outside the area.

Mr. Rasmussen concurred.

Mr. Klemanski spoke about the different amenities of downtown Rochester and how their downtown has a variety of destination establishments.

Mr. Skopek asked those present to elaborate on what types of destination restaurants they would like to see.

Ms. Roberts stated she would like to see a nice sit-down establishment.

Ms. Mathes asked what type of environment is being sought.

Mr. Rasmussen stated he would like to see a restaurant with a great interior design that creates an experience when you enter the establishment.

Board members discussed examples of restaurants with a great aesthetic and experience.

Ms. Lawrence asked those present what their favorite downtown is and why.

Board members provided feedback on their favorite downtowns. They discussed establishments, public art, public spaces, and streetscapes.

Ms. Roberts stated she would like the parking space next to the DEN transform into a greenspace to add more public uses.

Mr. Rasmussen agreed that a greenspace would fit in well in this area with its close proximity to the DEN and being centralized in downtown.

Ms. Roberts stated that she believes downtown needs to have constant events to attract people on a more frequent basis. She provided examples of downtown Rochester events.

Mr. Kneffel stated that Rochester does events very well and that if downtown Auburn Hills wants to compete, we need to have well planned events.

Ms. Mathes asked for specific examples of events those present would like to see in downtown Auburn Hills.

Mr. Kneffel stated he would like to eventually see a ladies night out event once downtown is built out with additional establishments and retailers.

Ms. Mathes asked for feedback from those present on what they believe the niche is for downtown Auburn Hills.

Mr. Travnikar stated that there will be a better understanding of our core demographic downtown once the residential developments are completed.

Mr. Rasmussen discussed the difficulty with opening a retailer downtown based upon the competition from bigger box stores and online retailers. He suggested working toward creating experiences to draw people in to stores rather than just selling products.

Mr. Spurlin suggested coordinating with state and regional bike and canoe/kayak races to bring them through downtown and playing off our existing downtown assets.

Board members discussed different launch points for canoe and kayak users along the Clinton River.

Mr. Grice stated the City has a contract with an individual that will keep the Clinton River clear of debris within City limits to make the river easier to navigate.

Mr. Tanghe discussed the City's intention to create a kayak and canoe launch point at the corner of Auburn Road and Opdyke Road. A design and grant application was submitted last year to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources for the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund grant program; however, the grant was not awarded.

Board members discussed different pop-up events that could incorporate the Clinton River.

Ms. Mathes stated that based upon the conversation, it sounds as though those present believe Auburn Hills serves as a "bridge city" where we partner with other surrounding communities and that Auburn Hills serves as the meeting spot. She asked those present how we can play off this concept.

Mr. Spurlin stated that one of the largest assets of downtown is the trail network. He stated that this network continues to be improved upon and connects to many downtowns. He believes we need to utilize this asset more frequently to serve as both a starting point and an ending point for visitors.

Mr. Kneffel stated we need to work to retain those that meet in downtown Auburn Hills.

Mr. Skopek stated that the goal is to retain patrons in the downtown; however, we need to first work on attracting the patrons to downtown through our existing assets and events.

Mr. Rasmussen suggested programming additional events at the new amphitheater to include other uses in addition to live music.

Staff discussed the different uses that could be held at the amphitheater.

Mr. Skopek discussed the goal for staff is to have events programmed frequently throughout 2020 in order to attract and retain patrons downtown.

Mr. Gliniecki discussed scheduling events during the weekdays in order to capitalize on the daytime population.

Ms. Roberts discussed the need for fall events.

Mr. Skopek discussed the "Septemberfest" event that staff is planning for this upcoming season. He added that staff's goal is to make this an annual event moving forward to build upon.

Mr. Kneffel stated that any event needs to be effectively planned in order to build a reputation for downtown Auburn Hills. He added that we need to make a great first impression in order to compete with downtown Rochester events.

Mr. Tanghe stated that Rochester's DDA has a large funding source and a large staff to assist with event planning. He agreed that events need to be executed effectively to build a good reputation, but he wanted to remind those present that there is not a dedicated DDA staff for Auburn Hills like other communities and many City events are handled in a collaborative effort between City departments.

Mr. Goodhall asked if staff has reached out to Avondale Schools about additional programming at the amphitheater.

Mr. Grice stated that there is some interest on behalf of Avondale Schools for use of the amphitheater and staff will follow-up with them once the amphitheater is open.

Mr. Tanghe stated that many of the developments underway this year will add to the population downtown and generate additional foot traffic in the years to come. This year will be dedicated to planning for the 2020 event season to ensure we have programmed events throughout the year.

4. Conclusion

Mr. Skopek thanked everyone for attending the joint meeting this evening to collaborate and brainstorm on goals and objectives of downtown Auburn Hills. Staff will compile their notes from the meeting and report back to the Boards.

Ms. Jernigan thanked staff for scheduling a joint meeting between the DDA and TIFA Boards.

The meeting adjourned at 7:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brandon Skopek
Director of Authorities