



2023 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.

Mission/Vision Statements

The Auburn Hills Downtown Development Authority strives to create a vibrant, inclusive, and economically viable downtown district by embracing and engaging residents, businesses, and institutions.

Downtown Auburn Hills is a multi-faceted business and entertainment district that offers a unique experience to residents and visitors alike. Our connection to nature through our park system, year-round events and activities, and our diverse business mix of excellent restaurants, specialty retail, and entertainment venues create a strong, vibrant, and high-quality downtown that serves the needs of the community.

2023 Summary

- The DDA served as the primary sponsor for several downtown events. With an outstanding line-up, the Friday Night Concert Series continued to draw large crowds. The DDA also once again sponsored our summer movies in the park series, Reels by the Riverside. Events continue to feature family-friendly entertainment and make great additions to the downtown programming. The DDA also sponsored the second annual Feed Your Soul event in August. The DDA's flagship event, SeptemBEERfest, was held on September 22 in Riverside Park and was successful, raising over \$10,000 in proceeds for Neighborhood House. Spooktacular was back in the fall, and we welcomed over 700 families to the downtown. Lastly, the DDA contributed to the Annual Tree Lighting Ceremony. This sponsorship included both staffing hours toward event planning and execution, as well as two food trucks, which brought a unique element to Auburn Road. All in all, 2023 was a great year for events and we are eager to set the stage for more to come.
- The Bunny Bash was a new event held at The DEN in the spring that featured Pictures with the Easter Bunny and other goodies. We are excited to bring this event will be back in 2024.
- In celebration on the City's 40th Birthday, the DDA hosted an 80's concert at Riverside Park and was also a sponsor of the Ruby Anniversary Celebration.
- In an effort to continue to market the downtown, we will continue the billboards that showcase the downtown as a destination. We will continue to host annual merchant meetings to bring businesses together. This meeting helps to keep our members informed of community meetings, events, concerns and opportunities to best position downtown Auburn Hills for long-term success.

Future Outlook

Efforts in 2024 will be focused on ways to promote downtown branding, a way-finding campaign, a new art piece, a new public square, special events and recruitment opportunities for our restaurant and retail spaces.

As a Partner level Member with Main Street Oakland County, we will continue to utilize their services, grant opportunities and training. With greater promotion, merchant engagement and cross promotion, and Board Member involvement, downtown events and businesses will continue to grow well into the future.

The work that the DDA has completed in 2023 is a direct result of the Board's dedication to furthering its mission and vision. The DDA will continue to work closely with the Tax Increment Finance Authority (TIFA) on initiatives and projects that directly benefit the downtown.

2023 DDA Board of Directors

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