

City of St. Joseph
Downtown Development Authority

2018 – 2019 Fiscal Year Synopsis
of Events and Promotional
Campaigns



Reviewed and Approved
October 3, 2019

History of Downtown Development Authority (DDA)

On October 11, 1976 the City Commission adopted an ordinance creating the DDA and designating its boundaries. The DDA boundaries were expanded in 1981 and again in 2013.

Downtown Development Authority Board Membership

List of members with term expiration dates.

Chair Mary Goff (Nov. 2020)

Mayor Michael Garey

Stephanie Grill (Nov. 2019)

Debra Sailor (Nov. 2020)

Diane Wollenslegel (Nov. 2021)

Vice Chair Philip Kalamaros (Nov. 2022)

Mayor Pro-Tem Laura Goos

Paul Jancha (resident) (Nov. 2022)

Mary Schaut (Nov. 2020)

Robert Montgomery (Nov. 2021)

Downtown Development Authority Staff

Long time DDA Director Susan Solon retired in August 2018. Community Development Director Kristen Gundersen was named the Acting DDA Director.

Training Opportunities

Under the direction of Acting DDA Director Gundersen, the Board became members of the Michigan Downtown Association. Ms. Gundersen attended the annual conference during October in Frankenmuth along with two one day workshops in East Lansing and Petoskey sponsored by the Michigan Downtown Association.

Downtown Plan Steering Committee

In early 2018, the City of St. Joseph began the process for creating a Downtown Master Plan. Chair Mary Goff and Board member Stephanie Grill both agreed to sit on the Steering Committee. In September 2018, the City of St. Joseph entered into a contract with Houseal Lavigne Associates to complete the Downtown Master Plan. It is anticipated the document will be completed in late 2019. Many members of the DDA Board have attended different workshops and meetings to provide input into the document.

Twin Cities Harbor Study 2018

Several members of the DDA Board attended workshops and meetings associated with the Benton Harbor-St. Joseph and St. Joseph Charter Township Harbor Study. This plan is being completed by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Office of the Great Lakes, The Harbor Conservancy, and Michigan Sea Grant.

Tax Increment Revenues

During fiscal year 2018-2019 the City of St. Joseph Downtown Development Authority did not collect any tax increment revenues and has not since at least 2000. All funding comes from the assessed 1.977 mills from properties within the DDA boundaries.

2018 – 2019 Fiscal Year Budget

The 2018-2019 fiscal year saw an income of \$52,832 and expenditure of \$52,774. Monies received were from the assessed 1.977 mills and interest. The largest expenditures were attributed to one part-time staff person responsible for the cleaning of the district; the cardboard recycling program; and seasonal decorations and plantings.

The DDA entered into the following contracts:

1. St. Joseph Today - \$5,000 annually for promotion of downtown during winter/off-season months.

Financial Reserves

At the end of fiscal year 2018-2019, the DDA had \$43,066 on hand. It is believed that monies will be used to help with future projects associated with the Downtown Master Plan.

2018 – 2019 Activities/Projects

Winter holiday decorations consisting of fresh greens were purchased by the DDA and installed by the Public Works Parks Division in November 2018.

Flowers were purchased by the DDA and planted by the Public Works Parks Division in Spring 2019.

An outside contractor was hired to repair the decorative planter boxes along Broad Street. This project was completed in Spring 2019.

The DDA Board reviewed and approved updated Bylaws February 7, 2019.

An informational brochure “City of St. Joseph Downtown Development Authority 2019 Business and Property Owner Information” was created and distributed in Fall 2018.

Recommendations were made to the City Commission regarding changes to on-street parking regulations with the DDA boundaries in the Spring 2019.

During several meetings, discussions regarding improper use of the cardboard recycling containers took place with City staff increasing enforcement when needed.

City staff also reported on activities associated with the Sidewalk Amenities Policy which allows placement of tables, chairs, planters, sandwich boards and other items on the sidewalk under certain conditions.

Verbal reports from the St. Joseph Today Executive Director were received during scheduled meetings.