

**Manistee Downtown Development Authority**  
**2020 Strategic Planning Session**  
**January 8, 2020**

**With Assistance from Michigan State University Extension**

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On January 8, the Manistee DDA board and Executive Director gathered at the Manistee City Hall to prepare for the year ahead. As a part of the strategic planning process, Michigan State University Extension facilitated exercises to consider the past, present and future actions of the Manistee DDA. The responses from those exercises are below.

The resulting 2020 “strategic plan” is a simple, one-page document that the board can refer to throughout the year that answers the question “what actions does the Manistee DDA need to take in the next 12-18 months to move the needed to move the DDA forward”.

## **1. Thinking back over the last few years, what opportunities for improvement exist?**

- Ebb and flow of responsibilities between staff and board
- Organizational structure and support for the position
- Expectations for the director-
  - Checks, meetings?
  - Feeling behind/not aware
- Board support of the Director
- “Shadow Board” – Exec. Committee
- Main Street legacy issues
  - Committee Structure
- Committees – unrelated and outside of staff
- Committees operate with a lack of board education
  - Long lists
  - What role does staff have?
- Inefficient board meetings- in relation to legacy committee structure
- Fundamentals- Events? Fundraising? Marketing? Bricks & Mortar
- Board tendency to “get in the weeds”
- Committee roles, staff support (or not), direction from DDA
- City Council direction to the DDA (lack of input from council)
  - Events? Bricks & Mortar
- Public Relations with the community about the DDA
  - Positive news/involvement
- Being more visible- attending events, “community partner”
- Demonstrate the Value of the DDA/“the heart and soul of our community”
- Strengthen the function of the DDA
- Dysfunction in the DDA
  - Turnover of directors
  - Management by the board (micro-managing)
- Empowering the director
- “Minutia” on agenda- what can the director do?
- Longer tenure of director
- Guard against burn-out or overload of the director

## **2. If the next 12-18 months are wildly successful, what have we accomplished?**

- Building relationships with businesses/community
  - ◊ Engagement
- Demonstrate DDA is moving forward & impacting Manistee positively
- Board growth
- Continuing to deal with conflict in a healthy way as a board
- Allow DDA director to be successful/independent
- Better community partner
- 2 Anchor projects completed (opposite ends)
- 2 new members
- New ideas/input
- More TIF collected
- More successful small business owners (3-5)
- Help DDA be more informed & efficient
- Accountability
- Highly functional partners, getting things done, etc.
- Rebuilding trust

## **3. In what ways will you contribute to the success and momentum of these actions?**

Kyle

- Recruit potential board members
- Meet with council members and chamber board members & collaborative efforts
- Support Executive Director

Thad

- TIF Agreement- Advocate with council members
- Board Members- review apps & make recommendation to council on 2/4
- Collaborative efforts- schedule meetings with DDA, CVB, COC, County, City
- Budget process- CFO as resource for DDA ED

Barry

- I will work with Caitlyn to help her develop her first DDA budget
- I will try to identify potential board members

Caitlyn

- Develop budget process- meet with committee chairs, meet with Tom (interim) on last year's process, provide board with adjusted budget

- WSCC parking- meet with Crystal for updates & negotiations
- TIF- physical locations, attend public hearing
- New board members- binder, tour with partners

#### Valarie

- Work with Caitlyn on budgeting process
- List day to day responsibilities of DDA, give to Caitlyn
- Contact accountant to detail expenditures from prior year

#### Karen

- Meet with city staff & city council for TIF (be available for questions at meeting. Promote approval of TIF- talk with city council members
- Agreements- provide outlines of “other” agreements established by DDA to build templates
- Participate in work sessions- help to support & bring new members to board
- Increase collaboration- Ongoing promotion of DDA & practicing with a collaborative manner and building trusting relationships with current and potential partners