

**SUMMARY REPORT TO CITY MANAGER  
for City Council meeting of October 24, 2016**

**SUBJECT:** Receive Streetscape Redevelopment Plan Recommendation from  
Downtown Development Authority

**INITIATED BY:** Selina Tisdale, Director of Community Affairs

**RESOLUTION SUMMARY:** This resolution approves the Downtown Midland Streetscape Redevelopment Plan recommendation from Downtown Development Authority and sets a public hearing for the transfer of funds for the engineering design phase of the project.

**ITEMS ATTACHED:**

1. Letter of Transmittal

2. E-CityHall Reports (3)

Survey 1 ("How do you interact with downtown Midland): <http://bit.ly/streetscape1>

Survey 2 ("What designs do you want to see in downtown Midland): <http://bit.ly/streetscape2>

Survey 3 ("View and share input on updated streetscape designs): <http://bit.ly/streetscape3>

3. Citizen Correspondence

4. DLZ Main St. Streetscape Study, Signal Warrant Analysis & Four-Way Stop Safety

Research

5. Resolution

**CITY COUNCIL ACTION:**

1. 3/5 vote required to approve resolution



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October 19, 2016

Jon Lynch, City Manager  
City of Midland

Dear Mr. Lynch:

This year the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) has pursued a plan for the redevelopment of the downtown Midland streetscape.

This process kicked off in February when a Streetscape Committee appointed by the DDA was formalized and included nine members of the community representing downtown businesses, property owners, developers and DDA board members. The Streetscape committee issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) to identify an appropriate design firm for this project. SmithGroupJJR of Ann Arbor was hired in May and an extensive public input process to develop the proposed streetscape design took place during the months of June through August.

The draft design places an emphasis on pedestrians in the downtown while still taking into account the need for vehicular traffic in the district. The design features three blocks of festival streets providing greater sidewalk width to accommodate outdoor dining and retail, pedestrians and landscaping. The design also recommends removal of the signalized intersections of Ashman, McDonald and Rodd to favor the slowing of vehicular traffic through the district and allowing for pedestrian right-of-way at the intersections.

One hundred fifty parallel and angled parking spaces will be preserved on Main Street, adding to the more than 1,000 parking opportunities provided throughout the downtown district.

All of this supported and funded through foundation support and DDA funding, providing no further burden to the city budget nor added taxes for downtown properties and the community at large.

### **Why Streetscape? Why Now?**

The current Main Street streetscape was completed in 1991. It has been 23 years since Main Street has been repaved and sidewalks have been replaced. Main Street, east of the Poseyville Bridge was rebuilt in 2010 and Main Street west of Jerome Street has just been rebuilt. It's time for Main Street in the core business district to also be rebuilt. There are many concerns with this aged infrastructure including safety concerns with heaving sidewalk pavers, electrical deficiencies and crumbling curb lines and cross walks.

In addition, the uses of downtown Midland have changed over the past 23 years. Restaurants want more access to outdoor dining space, visitors want to be able to gather and enjoy unstructured downtown spaces and event planners want to utilize the downtown district because it is the place where people gather.

Property owners and businesses in the district have expressed strong interest and support in this project. As the group most impacted by a streetscape renovation, the downtown businesses and property owners understand the benefits of a walkable downtown district that encourages visitors to slow down, stay awhile and discover new retail, restaurant and entertainment opportunities in

a unique and contemporary downtown district. They realize the benefits of an investment like this positions downtown Midland for future investment, growth and success.

### **Development of a New Downtown Midland Streetscape Design**

Public input during the design phase has been key to developing a streetscape design that not only meets the short-term and long-term planning of the DDA but also designs a downtown district that meets the desires of the community and provides flexibility to adapt to changes well into the future.

Between June and August, SmithGroupJJR and the DDA hosted three rounds of public input opportunities which included a public workshop, a drop-in session, on-line input opportunity and meetings with stakeholders.

In total, more than 800 contacts have been made through face-to-face conversations and online feedback providing valuable insights into the community's desires for a redeveloped downtown.

Input received directed the new streetscape design to be more pedestrian friendly, providing comfortable outdoor gathering space for dining, shopping and events, integrating unique lighting, landscaping and furniture features into the design and incorporating more elements for biking and walking.

The DDA's planning consultant, SmithGroupJJR, considered all this input and developed a preliminary draft design for downtown Midland's Main Street portion of this project and presented it to the Streetscape Committee in late August.

### **Design Recommendations**

Taking the public input received, the Streetscape Committee spent time reviewing the proposed SmithGroupJJR streetscape design and made the following recommendations to the DDA Board at their September 14 board meeting.

- Support of the overall design concept as a pedestrian-focused streetscape design for downtown Midland with key elements including:
  - **Traffic Management for Main Street**  
Use of four-way stops along Main Street at Ashman, McDonald and Rodd to slow traffic and prioritize pedestrian right-of-way at cross streets;
  - **Use of the Main Street Right-of-Way, Festival Streets**  
Adopting three blocks of curbsless festival streets on Main Street that allow for increased sidewalk space, seamless parking-to-sidewalk transition and flexible spaces to orchestrate festivals and events;
  - **Key Design Elements for Main Street**  
Integrating key design elements into Main Street that balance on-street parking, flexible sidewalk space for events and activities, and planter beds to highlight the floral displays that the community values. Specific design elements include colored concrete sidewalks to provide visual interest while being a smooth, easy to maintain surface (not pavers), tree and flower planter placement to encourage walkable space, rain gardens which provide landscape interest while improving the water quality of the runoff that is destined for the river, comfortable street furnishings, new lighting to update the look and innovations in lighting technology.

- Support secondary elements of the Streetscape recommendation including:
  - **Traffic Management for Downtown**  
Transitioning Ashman and Rodd from one-way to two-way streets is beneficial to the economic health of the downtown, would provide easier navigation for visitors and helps create a more pedestrian-friendly district. Interest from the Center City Corridor to change the one-way street pattern beginning at the Circle has also been expressed. This recommendation should be looked at from a broader community interest and integrated as part of that larger plan;
  - **Bike Lanes on McDonald**  
Biking has been identified as an area of interest for the downtown and its design. The proposed bike track on McDonald Street is supported and should be integrated into the downtown design upon further study and review of linkages with other potential street changes on Rodd, Ashman, Buttles and Indian and the affects these projects might have on the bike lane patterns for the city;
  - **Snowmelt System**  
At the request of the downtown businesses, the feature of a snowmelt system should continue to be evaluated and considered for potential inclusion in the streetscape construction. Funding mechanisms for initial construction of a snowmelt system and ongoing operations and maintenance of said system would need to be identified.

### **Four-Way Stop Intersections Trial**

As part of this recommendation the transition from signalized intersections to four-way stop intersections has generated some community interest over the safety of this measure and unfamiliarity with how pedestrians and four-way stops interact. To help assess this recommendation, a four-way stop trial will commence in early November. Performance metrics will be established to gauge vehicular and pedestrian interactions with the intersections and an E-CityHall opportunity will be provided to let citizens share their qualitative experiences.

Results of this trial will be reported back to Midland City Council after 60 days of operation. The engineering design phase can continue simultaneous to the trial period as the two tasks will not intersect until later in the engineering design phase.

### **COSTS**

The total cost of the recommended design in \$8.7 million.

Work	Estimated Cost	Anticipated Funding
Base Streetscape construction - sidewalks, pavement, curbcut, curb & gutter, signage, crosswalks, street areas, planters, trees, decorative lighting, construction administration and contingencies, etc.	\$7.2 million	Preliminary Commitment \$7M -- Foundations
Public Engagement/Draft Design	\$150,000	DDA Reserves
Engineering Design Work	\$600,000	DDA Reserves
City Construction Management	\$250,000	Engineering Priorities
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$8.2 million</b>	
Amenities	\$500,000	Community Match
Heated Sidewalks / Snowmelt System	\$1.2 million	Unidentified

Local foundations are generously considering providing \$7 million in funding for the streetscape project. The DDA has committed to \$1 million of their reserve fund balance to the draft design and engineering design phases of this project. A matching grant community contribution will be considered in an amount of \$500,000 to help fund the specialty elements of the streetscape design.

The City and downtown Midland are not in a position to fund the necessary infrastructure improvements and desired amenities that will enhance the downtown district. The DDA has saved significant fund balance over the years with a plan to leveraging it with foundational support to make significant investment in the downtown district. That opportunity has now been presented. We are extremely fortunate and grateful to have the support of local foundations who want to give this gift to our community.

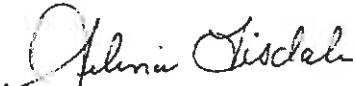
With the generous support of local foundations, this streetscape redevelopment can be accomplished without issuing bonds, added tax burden or assessments on downtown properties. This is truly a gift envied by most communities.

### **Next Steps**

With the final design recommendation in hand, the DDA requests that Midland City Council consider approving the project and transitioning to the engineering design phase. Tonight's resolution gives approval of the project and sets a public hearing for November 14, 2016 to consider allocating funding from the DDA Fund Balance toward the costs of design engineering for the downtown streetscape. It is anticipated that construction of the new downtown streetscape will begin in Spring 2017.

The DDA is pleased with the hard work of the Streetscape Committee and the community's response and input throughout this process. We feel confident the design being recommended for approval is one that represents a dynamic downtown district where residents and visitors will want to live, work and play.

Respectfully,

  
Selina Crosby Tisdale  
City of Midland  
Director of Community Affairs



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**BY COUNCILMAN**

WHEREAS, the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) has identified development of a new downtown streetscape redevelopment plan as the priority for their 2016 plan of work; and

WHEREAS, the Downtown Development Authority hired the Ann Arbor firm SmithGroupJJR to conduct a public input process and design a streetscape for downtown Midland representing the input received from community members; and

WHEREAS, through three rounds of public input opportunities that included workshops, drop-in sessions, on-line opportunities for feedback and stakeholder focus groups, more than 800 points of contact were made by community members expressing their views on the downtown streetscape design; and

WHEREAS, both the DDA Streetscape Committee and DDA Board have given unanimous recommendation that the design as presented by SmithGroupJJR be approved and that the engineering design phase of the project commence; now therefore

RESOLVED, that Midland City Council hereby approves the Downtown Midland Streetscape Redevelopment Plan recommendation from Downtown Development Authority and sets a public hearing for Monday, November 14, 2016 to consider the transfer of funds from DDA Fund Balance to fund the engineering design phase of the project.

YEAS:

NAYS:

ABSENT:

I, Selina Tisdale, City Clerk, City of Midland, Counties of Bay and Midland, State of Michigan, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of a resolution adopted by a        yea vote of all the Councilmen present at a regular meeting of the City Council held Monday, October 24, 2016.

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Selina Tisdale, City Clerk