

# City of Bessemer Downtown Development Authority

## 2022 Annual Report

The City of Bessemer's Downtown Development Authority (DDA) is comprised of nine members who meet monthly on the 2nd Wednesday at 6:00 pm in the council chambers at City Hall at 411 S Sophie or remotely. A typical meeting consists of review of the previous meetings minutes, public hearings, discussion of articles for training, a review of the financial, any new or old business, any communications, and reports from staff regarding development or any programs the City is involved, and finally a call to the public and member's comments. DDA members include: Dave Osier, Dan Whitburn, Cheryl Leskoviansky, Adam Zak (council representative), Dan Whitburn, Stephanie Matonich, Kady Meinke, Harry Swanson, and one vacancy. The commission spent a significant part of the year brainstorming ideas and learning more about the DDA. Each meeting started with a discussion of relevant articles to learn more various topics. Each member received training on the roles and responsibilities of DDA members including the open meetings act.

April 14th, 2022

Staff presented the Act 57 report. They approved PopUp Shop funding for Melissa Anderson in starting Mel's Cuts. Harry Swanson joined the Authority. The board approved façade funding for Cole and Deanna Harju. They also accepted a quote to replace the furnace in the DDA owned building, 403 S Sophie St. The board also approved the purchase of street signs with black lettering on a white background for the highway.

May 11th, 2022

Samantha Dorr was recommended as new staff member and the board was shown a contract between the City and DDA. The contract was accepted. Staff was authorized to purchase new street signs and poles up to \$5,000. The board approved the Rules of Order. Discussion was had about planting next to highway instead of concrete.

May 26th, 2022 – Special Meeting

Board authorized the purchase of tree grates at half price, with the other half being funded by the USDA.

June 9th, 2022

Staff gave a presentation of the history and powers of DDAs. The board discussed potential future projects. Osier was nominated for Chair, and he signed the contract between the City and DDA. A formal outline of the Façade Assistance program was accepted. Flowers had been started by volunteers.

August 16th, 2022

Board sent a "thank you" letter to volunteers who planted flowers. Staff was directed to market the Façade Assistance program by sending out fliers. Board was updated on Optimize Main Street Program and potential applicants. Board discussed putting a welcome sign on motorized trail, no action was taken at that time.

September 6th, 2022

The Box Fitness and Advocate Counseling were selected to apply for the Optimize Main Street Program funded by the MEDC. A presentation was given by Steve Hamilton with GRTA about putting a sign on the motorized trail. The board liked the idea and discussed including it in the next Plan. Board looked at cameras for Ethnic Commons but tabled it until more research could be done. Board discussed the Gamble's Building downtown and how to address it. The board decided to pursue a new Downtown Development plan.

October 12th, 2022

Staff told board that the west pathway between Ethnic Commons and the motorized trail is complete. They authorized staff to purchase the Alibi 8MP IP Mini Fixed Bullet Camera and supplies for up to \$500 and use the standard service on IPCamLive to stream the footage. The lot on Sophie and Sellar St that is owned by the City with an issue with part of the land not included in the legal description was discussed. Osier said he would meet with Bucknell to discuss what he wants to do with the land while staff looks into the having the legal description corrected. Staff gave an update on planning for trees downtown. Staff is to compile results from previous survey to get a starting place for creating a downtown vision. There was a public comment from a citizen who wants to bring a recreation facility with a pool to the City. The board expressed an interest in having that in the community.

November 9th, 2022

Chad Bucknell gave a brief presentation of what he could build on the lots on Sellar St. Chad was asked to bring in a sketch to the next meeting, saying that work would begin next summer if allowed. Board selected Mark Malmberg's building for the camera at Ethnic Commons. Staff is to get agreement in place. Board discussed high pH and low drainage in box outs for trees downtown as well as looking at shrubs as well as trees. Board talked about planning downtown and contracting with a consultant to create plan. Board asked staff to reach out to similar communities to hear about their experience working with consultant and pricing.

December 14th, 2022

Cheryl Leskoviansky resigned from the board. The board explored options for City owned land on Sophie and Sellar St and was informed that in order to sell, it will need to go through a quiet title action that could cost upwards of \$10,000. The DDA approved the contract with General Insurance Agency for a camera at the Ethnic Commons Park. The board also decided to move forward with a Request for Proposals for a new Downtown Development and Tax Increment Financing Plan. The meeting schedule for 2023 was accepted.