

City of Gladstone

Downtown Development Authority (DDA)

2021 Informational Meeting #1



Background: The City of Gladstone Downtown Development Authority (DDA) was established in 1992 to enhance the quality of life for the City of Gladstone residents and to develop a positive image of Downtown Gladstone and the DDA District for businesses, residents, and visitors.

An Amendment to the Development and Tax Increment Financing Plan of the City of Gladstone Downtown Development Authority was approved last year. The Plan was adopted by the DDA on July 21, 2020, was recommended for approval by the Development Area Citizens Council on September 1, 2020, and approved by the City Commission of the City of Gladstone on September 14, 2020. The process lasting over a year was guided by legal counsel to insure compliance with all regulations of Public Act 57 of 2018.

Public Act 57 of 2018: Until Public Act 57 was adopted, all Downtown Development Authorities were governed by Public Act 197 of 1975. Public act 57, which became law on January 1, 2019, has many changes which now steer DDA activities.

Starting in January 2019, all DDA's must hold two informational meetings which must invite the affected taxing jurisdictions and notices must be mailed prior to the meetings. The meetings may be held in conjunction with other public meetings.

As required by Act 57, the members of the Downtown Development Authority Board are listed on the website as well as many other reporting requirements including Development and Tax Increment Financing Plan and budget information.

This report summarizes some of the activities that took place since the December 15, 2020 Informational Meeting #2 presentation at the Downtown Development Authority Board Meeting on that day.

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2021 COVID - 19 Operations



After June

2021 has been a transformational year

This year the January, February and March Board Meetings were held by Zoom. As we continued to monitor the latest guidelines from the State, it became possible to meet in person beginning in April. However, those meetings were held in City Hall Chambers where the COVID-19 distancing guidelines could be managed. In addition, all participants were required to wear masks upon entering City Hall and filled out required COVID-19 questionnaires to keep on file at City Hall.

In addition to the Board Meetings, Zoom and / or phone conferencing was used as needed for Committee and other required meetings. By the end of June, the meeting structure returned to normal practices

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Christmas Celebration and Home Decorating Contest

The traditional Old Fashioned Christmas Format was changed Due to COVID-19 restrictions. Instead of the burn barrels, wagon rides, and Downtown shopping, the DDA opted for a Vehicle parade on Delta Avenue that allowed families to stop by the Christmas Tree and allow the kids to talk with Santa.



On the left, you can see Santa by The City of Gladstone Fire Truck waiting to talk to the young folks. The City Public Safety Department had a presence and Insured an orderly flow of traffic.

The vehicles were lined up on Delta Avenue for blocks as everyone was excited to be getting outside and feeling the spirit of the season.

The Christmas Celebration Coordinator and members of the DDA Board handed out Saykly's chocolates and maps to the Homes involved in the Decorating Contest.

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Christmas Celebration and Home Decorating Contest



The Home Decorating Contest was started last year and this year's contest showed great improvement in the number and quality of the decorations. Pictured above is the First Place Winner, Ms. Sara Harris at 1305 Superior. The prizes awarded to the top six winners ranged from \$500 for First Place, \$300 for Second Place, \$200 for Third Place and Gift Certificates from Gladstone Businesses for 4th through 6th Place.

In addition, the top twenty homes received a \$50 rebate on their Electric Bill courtesy of WPPI, the City's Electric Provider. There were over 25 entrants in the 2020 contest, far surpassing the prior year. The DDA Board members and City Staffs evaluated the entrants and unique signs were placed at each location to assist the public in identifying the homes.



North 15th Street Project

In the last Informational Meeting, the completion of the 9th Street Project was discussed in detail and, barring any new costs from the grass plantings not taking hold, it was a great success below budget and on time. During the 4th of July weekend, many bikes were seen using the new bike lanes and the appearance of this important street is greatly improved. The DDA is a primary funding source for this project over the next 15 years.

Another major road project that is being scheduled for this year is North 15th Street. This road is in need of complete renovation with culvert replacement to alleviate water issues for residents along this street.

The City DPW Department approached the DDA Board and requested funding assistance from the DDA for this project.

Part of the project area lies within the DDA District, and after conferring with legal counsel, this project is a legitimate use of DDA funds and was approved by the Board. This is yet another example of the DDA's focus on significant projects in the City.



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Façade Program

Earlier in this report the difficulties posed by the COVID-19 Pandemic were discussed. The DDA has always promoted the Façade Program as a way to improve business locations visible to the public and to give new business owners moving into a new location an incentive to improve their property. The DDA realizes that having a very good looking downtown will encourage other potential businesses to locate in Gladstone.

Although the DDA budgeted funds for the Façade program last year, with the severe impact COVID-19 had on many businesses, there were no new Façade requests submitted last year. Recognizing the possible rebound in business activity in 2021, the DDA Board budgeted additional funds in the 2021-2022 fiscal year budget for this program.

One of the hardest hit business sectors due to COVID were restaurants. They were either required to fully close, or were restricted in the number of diners they could serve based on capacity of the restaurant.



The first Façade of 2021 was approved by the DDA Board earlier this year. The Dew Drop Family Restaurant submitted a request which would provide outdoor dining between their building entrance and Brampton Bike and Ski. Outdoor dining is being strongly encouraged by the State and many communities have a thriving outside dining business.

Shown above is the start of the project which will allow for a relaxed and comfortable outside experience. The picture on the left shows the completed project.

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Miscellaneous Activities

In July, a ribbon cutting was held at the new North Bluff Disc Golf Course next to the Ski Hill. This property was formerly a solid waste site, and the City worked to help make this happen. Shown to the right is City Manager Eric Buckman helping to cut the ribbon.



Although not part of the DDA District, we mention the event since these are some of the great venues that draw visitors to Gladstone. The day after the ribbon cutting, a disc golf tournament was held that drew many participants from outside the area. These are people who travel to Gladstone and ultimately will dine in our downtown restaurants, stop for ice cream, fuel their vehicle, shop in our stores, and require overnight lodging. Like the MISH Waterfront Marathon and the 4th of July festivities, anything that draws visitors to the area has a positive economic impact which can be directed to downtown.



Another event downtown this year was a K-9 Police Dog training full day session which brought in Police K-9 units from Michigan and Wisconsin.



Part of the event was hosted by D&D Dog Dynamics on Delta Avenue, and they hosted lunch catered by downtown Gladstone restaurants.

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Gladstone Farmers Market

The Gladstone Farmers Market opened the 2021 season on May 3rd. Shown on the right is the very first sale of the year - a great loaf of banana bread.

The Farmers Market operates through October and runs every Monday from 3:00 PM until 6:00 PM rain or shine!

The DDA Market Committee revamped the application and policy documents and promptly mailed to all known and potential Market Vendors.

Thanks to WPPI, we now have a fresh supply of Market Cloth Bags. These can be reused and help promote the Market.



Pictured on the left is Market Manager Samantha Grzybowski. This year we have a dedicated table for the Manager to help in answering any questions about the Market.

In addition, she has reinstated SNAP Program sales to the Market to encourage the purchase and consumption of healthy fruits, vegetables and breads.

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Downtown Gladstone Businesses

The Informational Meetings are also used to highlight various downtown businesses.

Water's Edge Chiropractic moved from its old location on Delta Avenue to the Rialto Center. Picture on the right is the stunning new waiting room for this Practice.

The old office location was sold and a new business has now started operating at that location. This is another example of growth in the downtown district.



Two new entrepreneurs purchased the old Fas Tax Building on Delta Avenue and are now offering bookkeeping, Payroll, accounting and tax Services.

They are now operating and we are working to set up a Ribbon Cutting event.

The DDA has also been discussing the Façade Program with them and they are interested in various outside Improvements to their facility.

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Downtown Gladstone Businesses



Another new business opened at the corner of 9th Street and 4th Avenue. AutoMasters opened their doors several months ago and provides a wide range of auto repairs including Exhaust, Brakes and routine tune-ups.

They have also been contacted by the DDA to assist in setting up a ribbon cutting Ceremony at their very visible location at the end of the 9th Street renovation.

The DDA Coordinator does a radio spot monthly after the DDA Board meetings to discuss all of the new and exciting things like this going on downtown.

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Property Sales

There have been several buildings that have sold on Delta Avenue. We have already mentioned the Waters Edge practice sale.

An accounting firm on Delta Avenue was recently sold and will become a new Senior Day Care Facility.



The building at 1016 Delta also sold this spring. The new owners are planning a food service related business.

The good news is that there is interest in buildings in the downtown district and the new owners bring a variety of businesses downtown.

Community Development continues to receive many inquiries about available properties downtown.

Questions and / or comments can be directed to:

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