

## **ORDINANCE NO. 23-248**

**AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING AND APPROVING A GRANT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$900,000.00 TO THE GREATER SANDUSKY PARTNERSHIP FOR THE PURPOSE OF FURTHERING COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PROVIDING SERVICES TO THE CITY; AND DECLARING THAT THIS ORDINANCE SHALL TAKE EFFECT UNDER SUSPENSION OF THE RULES AS CONTAINED IN AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 13 OF THE CITY CHARTER.**

**WHEREAS**, the Greater Sandusky Partnership (“GSP”), is a regional economic development organization created from the consolidation of existing local organizations including the Erie County Economic Development Corporation (ECEDC), the Erie County Chamber of Commerce (ECCOC) and Destination Sandusky; and

**WHEREAS**, the mission of the Greater Sandusky Partnership is to enhance the quality of life and economic vibrancy of the Sandusky region, while positioning the region as the greatest destination on the Great Lakes for residents, employees, and visitors; and

**WHEREAS**, GSP’s work will promote the City specifically through its Destination Sandusky affiliate, with priorities including direct special event programming, comprehensive City branding and marketing, merchant coordination and placemaking, and GSP will partner with the City in order to build a pipeline of housing, drive regional economic development, and advocate and plan to position Sandusky and the surrounding region for increased local, state and federal investment in key areas including infrastructure, transportation, planning, and development, all in accordance with the Proposal and Agreement; and

**WHEREAS**, to support GSP’s efforts and the Agreement, the City desires to expend \$300,000.00 for three (3) years, for a total amount of \$900,000.00 to GSP and will be paid with Capital Projects (Programming & Issue 8 E.D.) Funds and General (Community Development & Marketing) Funds; and

**WHEREAS**, the City has determined that this project and the fulfillment generally of this Grant Agreement are in the vital and best interests of the City and for the health and safety and welfare of its residents, and are necessary to improve the economic and general welfare of people of the City; and

**WHEREAS**, this Ordinance should be passed in accordance with Section 13 of the City Charter in order to approve the Grant Agreement and continue the cooperation and services between the City and GSP; and

**WHEREAS**, in that it is deemed necessary in order to provide for the immediate preservation of the public peace, property, health, and safety of the City of Sandusky, Ohio, and its citizens, and to provide for the efficient daily operation of Municipal Departments, including the Department of Community Development, of the City of Sandusky, Ohio, and, NOW, THEREFORE,

**BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF SANDUSKY, OHIO, THAT:**

Section 1. This City Commission authorizes and directs the City Manager to enter into a Grant Agreement with the Greater Sandusky Partnership for financial

**PAGE 2 - ORDINANCE NO. 23-248**

assistance for the purpose of furthering economic development and providing services to the City, substantially in the same form as Exhibit "1", a copy of which is attached to this Ordinance and is specifically incorporated as if fully rewritten herein, together with such revisions or additions as are approved by the Law Director as not being adverse to the City and as being consistent with carrying out the terms of this Ordinance.

Section 2. This City Commission authorizes and approves the grant funding to the Greater Sandusky Partnership in an amount **not to exceed** Nine Hundred Thousand and 00/100 Dollars (\$900,000.00) from the City's Capital Projects Fund and General Funds of the City of Sandusky pursuant to and in accordance with the terms of the Grant Agreement and Proposal.

Section 3. If any section, phrase, sentence, or portion of this Ordinance is for any reason held invalid or unconstitutional by any Court of competent jurisdiction, such portion shall be deemed a separate, distinct, and independent provision, and such holding shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions thereof.

Section 4. This City Commission finds and determines that all formal actions of this City Commission concerning and relating to the passage of this Ordinance were taken in an open meeting of this City Commission and that all deliberations of this City's Commission and any of its committees that resulted in those formal actions were in meetings open to the public, in compliance with all legal requirements.

Section 5. That for the reasons set forth in the preamble hereto, this Ordinance shall take effect under suspension of the rules as contained in and in accordance with Section 13 of the City Charter after its adoption and due authentication by the President and the Clerk of The City Commission.



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RICHARD R. BRADY  
PRESIDENT OF THE CITY COMMISSION



ATTEST:

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CATHLEEN A. MYERS  
CLERK OF THE CITY COMMISSION

Passed: December 11, 2023 (effective after 30 days)

## GRANT AGREEMENT

THIS GRANT AGREEMENT (the "**Agreement**") is made and entered into this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2023 (the "**Effective Date**"), by and between the CITY OF SANDUSKY, OHIO, an Ohio municipal corporation, and the Greater Sandusky Partnership, an Ohio not-for-profit corporation (the "**Corporation**"). The City and the Corporation are collectively referred to herein as the "**Parties**".

### WITNESSETH:

WHEREAS, in accordance with Section 13 of Article VIII of the Ohio Constitution and pursuant to Ordinance No. [\_\_\_\_], passed by the City Commission of the City of Sandusky, Ohio (the "**City Commission**") on December 11, 2023, a copy of which is attached hereto as **Exhibit A** and incorporated herein by reference (the "**Approval**"), the City determined that it is in the best interest of the citizens of the City to grant funds to financially support the Corporation's implementation of Destination Sandusky, Housing Production, Sandusky Advocacy, and Regional Development with ECEDC (the "**Project**") as described more specifically in the Project Proposal attached hereto as Exhibit B and is incorporated as if fully rewritten herein; and,

WHEREAS, said Approval was rendered in order to encourage economic development and employment within the City; and,

WHEREAS, the Corporation is a community-based, non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation that supports the economic development of the City of Sandusky and Erie County; and,

WHEREAS, in accordance with Section 13 of Article VIII of the Ohio Constitution, it is a public interest and a proper public purpose for the City, in order to create jobs, employment opportunities, and to improve the economic welfare of the people of the state of Ohio, to make or guarantee loans or provide moneys for the acquisition, construction, enlargement, improvement, or equipment of property, structures, equipment, and facilities within the State of Ohio that are used for industry and commerce; and,

WHEREAS, the City desires to assist the Project and encourage economic development and employment, and therefore has agreed to provide, in the manner further described in Section 1 hereof, an economic incentive grant to the Corporation for offsetting a portion of the costs of the Project; and,

WHEREAS, the prohibition of the City's loaning of credit under Section 6 of Article VIII of the Ohio Constitution does not extend to non-profit corporations that fulfill public functions; to wit: Greater Sandusky Partnership is a duly registered non-profit corporation doing business in Ohio, and the City deems the implementation of Destination Sandusky, Housing Production, Sandusky Advocacy, and Regional Development with ECEDC to be a public function, all in accordance with *State ex rel. Pugh v. Sayre*, 90 Ohio St. 215, 107 N.E. 512 (1914) (Article VIII, Section 6 does not prohibit donation of non-tax moneys to nonprofit corporations that fulfilled public functions) and *Leaverton v. Kerns*, 104 Ohio St. 550, 136 N.E. 217 (1922) (public funds may be given to a private, non-profit organization serving public purposes); and,

WHEREAS, the Corporation acknowledges the City's commitment to provide financial assistance through this Grant and has agreed to enter into this Agreement, which sets forth the Corporation's obligations concerning the use of the Grant's proceeds; and,

WHEREAS, the City has determined this Project and the fulfillment generally of this Agreement are in the vital and best interests of the City and the health, safety, and welfare of its residents, and are necessary to improve the economic and general welfare of people of the City.

NOW THEREFORE, the Parties covenant, agree and obligate themselves as follows:

Section 1. Terms of the Grant. The City shall grant to the Corporation funds in the amount of Nine Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$900,000.00) (the "**Grant**") for use by the Corporation exclusively to pay for the Project and in accordance with the disbursement schedule in Section 1, below. This Grant will not increase if the Corporation chooses to make additional improvements not contemplated in the Project Proposal, attached hereto as Exhibit B and is incorporated as if fully rewritten herein. . The disbursement schedule shall be as follows:

- (1) \$300,000 due to the Corporation by December 31, 2024
- (2) \$300,000 due to the Corporation by December 31, 2025
- (3) \$300,000 due to the Corporation by December 31, 2026.

Section 2. Use of Funds. The Corporation will use the Grant to pay for the Project, as further described in Exhibit B. The Corporation shall use the Grant solely in connection with eligible expenses incurred under the Project. By accepting the Grant herein provided, the Corporation agrees to meet the terms of this Agreement.

Section 3. City's Obligation to Make Payments Not Debt. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary herein, the obligations of the City pursuant to this Agreement are not a general obligation debt or bonded indebtedness, or a pledge of the general credit or taxes levied by the City, and the Corporation has no right to have excises or taxes levied by the City, the State or any other political subdivision of the State for the performance of any obligations of the City herein. Consistent with Section 13 of Article VIII of the Ohio Constitution, any payments required to be made by the City pursuant to this Agreement are to be payable solely from the City's non-tax revenues. Furthermore, the obligation of the City to make the payments pursuant to this Agreement are in accordance with the City Commission's approval and subject to certification by the Director of Finance of the City as to the availability of such non-tax revenues.

Section 4. Events of Default. At any time during the Term of this Agreement, and solely at the discretion of the City, should the City determine the Corporation is not in compliance with the terms of the Grant set forth herein, then the City shall provide Notice of Default to the Corporation pursuant to Section 5 demanding strict compliance therewith. If the Corporation fails to take necessary action during the notice period herein to regain and remain in strict compliance, then the City can immediately seek any legal or equitable remedy to which it is entitled including the repayment of any Grant amount or cancellation of this Agreement.

Section 5. Notice of Default. Pursuant to Section 4, should the City determine that the

Corporation is not in strict compliance with the terms of the Grant, then the City shall provide written notice to the Corporation, addressed to and sent via the notice provisions of Section 7(a) below (the “**Notice of Default**”). The Notice of Default shall state clearly the reason(s) for which the City determines the Corporation to be out of compliance. The Corporation shall have ten (10) days from the date it received the Notice of Default to cure or otherwise take the necessary corrective action to regain, and remain in, strict compliance with the terms of the Grant under this Agreement.

Section 6. Indemnification of the City. The Corporation shall indemnify, defend, and hold harmless the City from and against all claims, losses, liabilities, damages, costs, and expenses, including reasonable attorneys’ fees, costs and expenses, arising from the City’s remittance of funds under the Grant.

Section 7. Miscellaneous.

(a) Notices. Except as otherwise specifically set forth in this Agreement, all notices, demands, requests, consents or approvals given, required or permitted to be given hereunder shall be in writing and shall be deemed sufficiently given if actually received or if hand-delivered or sent by a recognized, overnight delivery service or by certified mail, postage prepaid and return receipt requested, addressed to the other party at the address set forth in this Agreement or any addendum to this Agreement, or to such other address as the recipient shall have previously notified the sender of in writing, and shall be deemed received upon actual receipt, unless sent by certified mail, in which event such notice is deemed to have been received when the return receipt is signed or refused. For purposes of this agreement, Notices shall be addressed to:

(i) If to the City:

City of Sandusky, Ohio  
240 Columbus Avenue  
Sandusky, Ohio 44870  
Attention: Director of Community Development

City of Sandusky, Ohio  
240 Columbus Avenue  
Sandusky, Ohio 44870  
Attention: City Manager

(ii) If to the Corporation:

Greater Sandusky Partnership

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The Parties, by notice given hereunder, may designate any further or different addresses to which subsequent notices, certificates, requests or other communications are to be

sent.

(b) Extent of Provisions: Personal Liability. All rights, remedies, representations, warranties, covenants, agreements and obligations of the City under this Agreement are effective to the extent authorized and permitted by applicable law. No representation, warranty, covenant, agreement, obligation, or stipulation contained in this Agreement is to be deemed to constitute a representation, warranty, covenant, agreement, obligation or stipulation of any present or future director, member, officer, agent or employee of the City. No official executing or approving the City's participation in this Agreement is liable personally under this Agreement or subject to any personal liability or accountability by reason of the issuance thereof.

(c) Successors. This Agreement is neither binding upon nor inures to the benefit of the Corporation's successors and assigns unless with the prior written consent of the City.

(d) Assignment or Transfer. This Agreement is not to be assigned or transferred without the express written consent of the City.

(e) Amendments. This Agreement may only be amended by a written instrument executed by both Parties.

(f) Authority to Sign. The Corporation and City both represent that this Agreement has been approved by formal action of the duly authorized representatives of both Parties.

(g) Executed Counterparts. This Agreement may be executed in several counterparts, each of which is to be regarded as an original and all of which constitutes but one and the same agreement. It shall not be necessary in proving this Agreement to produce or account for more than one of those counterparts.

(h) Severability. In case any section or provision of this Agreement, or any covenant, agreement, obligation or action, or part thereof, made, assumed, entered into or taken, or any application thereof, is held to be illegal or invalid for any reason:

(i) that illegality or invalidity does not affect the remainder hereof or thereof, any other section or provision hereof, or any other covenant, agreement, obligation or action, or part thereof, made, assumed, entered into, or taken, all of which are to be construed and enforced as if the illegal or invalid portion were not contained herein or therein;

(ii) the illegality or invalidity of any application hereof or thereof does not affect any legal and valid application hereof or thereof; and

(iii) each section, provision, covenant, agreement, obligation or action, or part thereof is deemed to be effective, operative, made, assumed, entered into or taken in the manner and to the fullest extent permitted by law.

(i) Captions. The captions and headings in this Agreement are for convenience only and in no way define, limit or describe the scope or intent of any provisions or sections of the

Agreement.

(j) Governing Law and Choice of Forum. This Agreement is to be governed by and constructed in accordance with the laws of the State of Ohio or applicable federal law. All claims, counterclaims, disputes, and other matters in question between the City, its agents and employees, and the Corporation, its employees and agents, arising out of or relating to this Agreement or its breach will be decided in a court of competent jurisdiction within Erie County, Ohio.

(k) Further Assurances. The Corporation shall, upon request of the City, duly execute and deliver to the City such further instruments, and do and cause to be done such further acts, as may be necessary or proper in the opinion of the City to carry out the provisions and purposes of this Agreement.

EXHIBIT "1"

[Signature Page to Follow]

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the City and the Corporation have caused this Agreement to be executed in their respective names by their duly authorized representatives, all as of the Effective Date.

Greater Sandusky Partnership

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
[\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_]

CITY OF SANDUSKY, OHIO

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
John Orzech, City Manager

Approved as to Form:

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Stewart Hastings, Law Director



## **FISCAL OFFICER'S CERTIFICATE**

The undersigned, Finance Director of the City of Sandusky, hereby certifies that the moneys required to meet the obligations of the City during the year 2023 under the foregoing Grant have been lawfully appropriated by the City Commission of the City for such purposes and are in the treasury of the City or in the process of collection to the credit of an appropriate fund, free from any previous encumbrances. This Certificate is given in compliance with Ohio Revised Code Sections 5705.41 and 5705.44.

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Michelle Reeder, Finance Director

Dated: [\_\_\_\_], 2023

EXHIBIT "1"

**EXHIBIT A**

Ordinance Approving Economic Development Grant Agreement

[See Attached.]

EXHIBIT "1"

**EXHIBIT B**

**Greater Sandusky Partnership Proposal**

**[See Attached].**

EXHIBIT "1"



## **Greater Sandusky Partnership Proposal to City of Sandusky**

### **The Greater Sandusky Partnership**

The Greater Sandusky Partnership (GSP) is a regional economic development organization created from the consolidation of existing local organizations including the Erie County Economic Development Corporation (ECEDC), the Erie County Chamber of Commerce (ECCOC) and Destination Sandusky.

The mission of the Greater Sandusky Partnership is to enhance the quality of life and economic vibrancy of the Sandusky region, while positioning the region as the greatest destination on the Great Lakes for residents, employees, and visitors.

The City of Sandusky is already a significant partner to the Greater Sandusky Partnership, as evidenced by its 2022 commitments to ECEDC and GSP totaling \$150,000.

GSP is proposing a three-year contract for services with the City of Sandusky from 2024-2026. This partnership would build on existing City of Sandusky investments in GSP by ensuring that the core city within the region is well-represented in the creation and implementation of a vision for improving the economy and quality of life in the Sandusky region.

GSP's work will promote the city of Sandusky specifically through its Destination Sandusky affiliate, with priorities including direct special event programming, comprehensive city branding and marketing, merchant coordination and placemaking.

In addition to Destination Sandusky, GSP will partner with the city in order to build a pipeline of housing, drive regional economic development, and advocate and plan to position Sandusky and the surrounding region for increased local, state and federal investment in key areas including infrastructure, transportation, planning, and development. In order to measure the impact of its work, GSP will work with the city and other partners to set a baseline for performance metrics in 2024 that can be measured against moving forward. This baseline will create an understanding of where the community is so it can get to where it needs to be.

Individually these programs all make a strong impact. Collectively, they will transform our region as part of a comprehensive vision for improving quality of life and enhancing economic vibrancy that is implemented and resourced in an aligned and sustainable way.

### **Proposed Areas of Focus:**

#### **I. Destination Sandusky**

While much of GSP's work will be regional in nature, Destination Sandusky is designed to be a Sandusky-specific program that partners with the city on special event management, marketing, placemaking and merchant service management. This is important, as there has been no nonprofit partner dedicated to

programming, marketing and placemaking in Sandusky since the recent shutdown of Sandusky Mainstreet and the earlier decision of the Sandusky Chamber of Commerce to become the Erie County Chamber of Commerce. Destination Sandusky will be that partner, allowing the city to continue its focus on providing important city services and community development, while partnering with Destination Sandusky to promote and program in a manner that will leverage city investment with additional private investment.

- o **Special Event and Programming Management:** The City of Sandusky has made critical investments in creating vibrant public places since the passage of Issue 8, most notably at the Jackson Street Pier. The city also created a programming fund to bring that space to life via free to the public special events that build community, support existing small businesses, and attract major private investment. Partnering with Destination Sandusky to enhance programming will:
  - Continue the momentum created by the Party at the Pier series and provide additional free community programming.
  - Create additional resources for events and placemaking with a goal of ramping up hundreds of events annually, an identified best practice in creating an active and vibrant community. Programming enriches the community culturally, increases visitorship, supports local businesses, and attracts increased investment. Destination Sandusky will achieve this ambitious goal by producing programming in addition to promoting and partnering on events produced by others. Of the financial commitment requested by GSP, at least 1/3 will go directly into providing programming with the goal of leveraging the city's commitment to attract additional private funding for programming that will increase the overall amount of programming in the community.
  - Partner with the city to promote and leverage special events and opportunities. Sandusky has strategically taken advantage of opportunities including but not limited to its own 2018 bicentennial and hosting the governor's state of the state address in 2017. Destination Sandusky will be a strong partner to the city on similar upcoming events such as the 2024 solar eclipse and the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Tommy Boy in 2025.
  - Develop new programming and promotion specifically designed to make Sandusky a year-round destination for residents, visitors and employers and specifically increase sales for existing businesses while providing the traffic necessary for new businesses to open successfully in Sandusky.

#### **Special Event Metrics for Success:**

1. By year 3 of agreement, leverage the city's investment in programming by attracting an equal amount of private investment in programming on an annual basis.
2. Track number of special events, with a goal of achieving over 100 active programming events each year (either directly produced or supported by Destination Sandusky).
3. Survey local businesses with a goal of demonstrating impact of event programming by setting a baseline in 2024 with a goal of increasing impact by 20 percent in 2025 and 2026.

- **Brand and Marketing:** Over the last several months, DS developed a brand encompassing the unique assets and authenticity of Sandusky, with City staff contributing throughout the process. Together, we hope to align around a community brand that accurately reflects Sandusky's current strengths as well as its future potential. Destination Sandusky will help tell Sandusky's authentic story, communicate its unique assets, and showcase its diverse and vibrant community in a way that builds community amongst existing residents and attracts new residents, visitors, and investment. Over the next year, we will work in coordination with City staff to bring this brand to life. DS, in collaboration with the City of Sandusky, will:
  - Create content including social media, merchandise, photography, videos, and publications that showcase local champions, build Sandusky pride, and attract investment.
  - Focus on growing Sandusky's market share of the over 11 million regional visitors to Shores & Islands Ohio. One specific opportunity includes leveraging the city's marketing partnership with Cedar Point & Cedar Point Center to educate their customers on all Sandusky offers.
  - Market Sandusky as a year-round destination for culture, entertainment, and recreation to over 250,000 regional residents.
  - Grow and nurture media relationships to increase positive media exposure for Sandusky.
  - Support local business by updating downtown maps, creating retail guides, rack cards, and visitor information material.
  - Invigorate the public realm with banners and other placemaking activities designed to create a sense of "place" in Sandusky that enriches the lives of locals while attracting an increased number of visitors.

#### **Branding and Marketing Metrics for Success:**

1. Survey businesses and stakeholders annually, setting a baseline in 2024 with a goal of increasing foot traffic downtown by at least 10 percent annually in 2025 and 2026.
2. Develop and track sales of "Sandusky" merchandise as a tool for building community and marketing Sandusky.
3. Track positive media stories on Sandusky, setting a baseline in 2024 and increasing positive stories in local and regional media by 10 percent annually.
4. Grow Social Media Engagement and Followers by 10 percent annually.
5. Develop a system for measuring the positive impact on perceptions of Sandusky as a place to live, work, and visit.

- **Merchant Services and Retail:** Downtown Sandusky will reach a new level when its businesses and stakeholders are rowing in the same direction. Through regular communication and coordinated efforts, we will inform the business community, rally around important development opportunities, and attract new merchants and office tenants to Sandusky. Destination Sandusky will:
  - Host monthly merchant meetings and monthly merchant communications that build a bridge and grow deeper roots to our small business community. Meetings and communications will share updates, promote upcoming events, address challenges, and identify new projects and ideas. These efforts will inform our entrepreneurs and build community while creating a more coordinated approach to hours of operation, marketing, programming and beautification. One

example could involve merchants planning to be open before and after shows at the revitalized Sandusky State Theatre.

- Partner with Greater Sandusky Partnership's business development and entrepreneurial services staff to develop an inventory of available office and retail space while also building a pipeline of potential office and first floor tenants to drive additional economic activity in Sandusky.
- Showcase Sandusky's entrepreneurs and community with social media, public relations and other content designed to increase engagement and activity in the city.

#### **Merchant Services and Retail Metrics for Success:**

1. Monitor Inventory of vacant retail spaces in Downtown Sandusky, setting a baseline of vacant inventory and occupancy rates in 2024, create a new retail initiative in partnership with the city to support existing and new retail and raising occupancy rates by at least 10 percent each year.
2. Create inventory of vacant or under-utilized buildings in Downtown Sandusky with a goal of driving the revitalization of at least 3 buildings over the 3-year contract.
3. Survey existing businesses and support an improved sales environment of existing businesses or the expansion of existing businesses with a goal of at least five business expansions over the life of the contract.

- **Placemaking:** Placemaking is a multifaceted approach to urban planning, design, and development that focuses on creating and enhancing public spaces to improve the overall quality of life in a community. It involves transforming ordinary spaces into vibrant, inviting, and people-centric places that foster social interaction, community engagement, and a sense of identity. In 2017, Sandusky created a public art program that led to increased public art and also created a stronger culture of public art and placemaking in Sandusky. Partners like the Lange Trust and Shores & Islands Ohio have made additional investments in public art and placemaking that are making Sandusky a better place for locals while attracting visitors and investment. As placemaking becomes a more important part of the downtown experience, exposing people to fun and whimsical experiences in the public realm creates a stronger sense of identity, safety, and vibrancy. Destination Sandusky will work in coordination and collaboration with the City to take placemaking efforts to the next level with goals including:
  - Creating placemaking opportunities that elevate Sandusky's brand and mission of being a family friendly, inclusive, year-round attraction. Potential placemaking options include outdoor games, functional and decorative seating (i.e. Adirondack chairs and bistro tables), pop up public art, lighting installations, small-scale programming, photo opportunities, seasonal décor, and more.
  - Work with City staff to identify beautification opportunities and appropriate funding models to keep the city attractive and well-maintained year-round.
  - Leverage existing resources and attract new resources into a coordinated plan for placemaking, public art and programming that takes existing activities to scale. Start with partners such as Shores & Islands Ohio, the Lange Trust and the city's Public Art & Cultural Commission to identify whether joint funding of planned priorities can take existing efforts to scale while continuing to fund and support organic projects implemented by local artists and stakeholders.

### **Placemaking Metrics for Success:**

1. Create at least three placemaking or public art projects in Sandusky.
2. Survey stakeholders to create a baseline in 2024 and set goal of tracking impact on foot traffic, and social media engagement made possible by enhanced placemaking in Sandusky.

## **II. Housing Production**

The Firelands Forward (now a program of GSP) Regional Housing Study identified a severe shortage of housing in Sandusky and the surrounding three-county region. Over 2,000 units of housing are needed immediately, with current housing occupancy levels dangerously close to one hundred percent. While the housing shortage is a national challenge, local solutions will be required that involve the identification of appropriate sites, creating housing-friendly local zoning, developing appropriate local tax and gap financing incentives, attracting civic and philanthropic investment, and building a pipeline of housing developers and builders to meet local demand.

Developing solutions to the Sandusky region's housing needs will require collaboration between the public, private, and civic sectors. Partnering to address the housing challenge will be one of the most important initiatives of the GSP, with a focus on developing a diversified pipeline of affordable and market rate housing solutions including rehabilitation, adaptive reuse, single family, new neighborhoods/subdivisions, and multi-family projects. Any solution must develop a diverse portfolio of unit types designed for single occupants, families, and seniors of all income levels.

GSP will convene stakeholders in late 2023 and early 2024 to develop an implementation blueprint for the Regional Housing Study. This will include identifying local, state and federal resources for all housing types as well as learning from best practices being established in real time by other local communities.

- Identifying sites, buildings and lots within Sandusky that are currently suitable for housing, and identifying sites that could become available for housing with infrastructure investment or a change in ownership. Once identified, work with site owners and developers to bring lots to market quickly and efficiently.
- Developing a housing infill program designed specifically to bring new units to market in Sandusky and similarly situated communities in partnership with the city and County Land Bank and utilizing potential state incentives and developing appropriate local incentives to overcome financial obstacles to housing production.
- Working closely with the city and other partners to identify best practices and educate the community on local policy and zoning solutions that can help eliminate barriers to housing production while also maintaining neighborhood character. Existing examples include zoning for accessory dwelling units and identifying corridors and other sites that are appropriate for the construction of multi-family housing.
- Building a pipeline of development partners and builders with an emphasis on identifying partners with a specific niche and expertise in the development of affordable housing, modular housing, infill housing, mixed use development and other project types designed specifically to meet the needs of Sandusky and the surrounding region.



- Identify, advocate for and raise resources specifically designed to close financing gaps that are currently preventing housing production of both affordable and market rate housing in the city.
- Define metrics and goals for housing production of all types and track the implementation of the Regional Housing Plan providing the data necessary to determine if current local action is sufficient or if more or different tactics are necessary to meet the needs of the community.

#### **Housing Metrics for Success:**

1. Develop Inventory of Sites (publicly and privately owned) within Sandusky that are candidates for new construction infill housing.
2. Create baseline of existing housing activity in 2024 and monitor new housing starts and rehabilitations with a goal of increasing unit production and rehabilitation by 10% each year.
3. Build a pipeline of housing development partners to develop new market rate, affordable, multi-family and single-family housing in Sandusky with a goal of supporting the construction with a goal of bringing at least five new housing developers into the market.
4. Identify new resources to support housing development (public and private), and advocate for maintaining existing resources and creating new resources for housing at the local, state, and federal level.

### **III. Advocacy & Planning**

Advocacy will be an important component of GSP's work. GSP will partner with the City of Sandusky in advancing an agenda locally as well as at the state and federal level that further strengthens our position as the greatest destination on the Great Lakes. Our voice will be stronger by working together to support a shared vision that includes protecting Lake Erie, creating a stronger connection to Columbus, attracting increased capital investment in necessary infrastructure, and ensuring that Sandusky and GSP's shared priorities are also the priorities of local, state and federal partners.

An example of a potential priority for local advocacy would be galvanizing support for public transportation, a critical resource for the region that is operated by the City of Sandusky. GSP will work directly with the city to educate the public and key stakeholders on the importance of transit to workforce development with a goal of identifying new resources that will help make the service more sustainable and comprehensive. GSP will prioritize working with the business community, the city, and other critical stakeholders to develop a more equitable funding system for public transportation in the region that meets the region's needs for this critical service.

State and federal examples of advocacy would involve conducting a process to identify local priorities and matching those priorities with potential state and federal funding opportunities. GSP will work closely with the city to identify and secure funding for shared priorities.

GSP will also play a role in conceptual planning for critical regional development and infrastructure priorities. GSP will raise resources and conduct conceptual planning for key priorities including but not limited to leveraging the impending Route 6 project, the redevelopment of the Boeckling Ferry Terminal in Downtown Sandusky, the expansion of the Sandusky Bay Pathway, and creating a more seamless connection from Columbus to Sandusky. GSP will provide planning, advocacy, and resource development

services specifically for these and other priorities identified in partnership with the City of Sandusky, with a goal of identifying opportunities and needs via coordinated planning efforts and then developing and attracting the resources necessary to implement those priorities.

#### **Advocacy & Planning Metrics:**

1. Develop goals for public and private investment in priority projects, setting a baseline based on past success in securing resources and look to increase resources by 20 percent.
2. Identify shared policy goals at local, state, and federal level and track success of achieving those goals over life of contract.
3. Specifically prioritize advocating for an improved regional partnership for public transportation that better distributes the costs of managing a strong regional public transportation system and continues to provide this critical service.
4. Create a conceptual plan for the redevelopment of Route 6 and the expansion of the Sandusky Bay Pathway and begin working toward implementation.

#### **IV. Regional Economic Development**

Erie County Economic Development Corporation (ECEDC) is now an affiliate program of the Greater Sandusky Partnership. The City of Sandusky has long supported and partnered with ECEDC to provide economic development services. ECEDC's new affiliation with GSP provides an opportunity to continue and expand current services in a way that is more aligned with GSP's additional work in place-based development and district management, housing, planning and advocacy, and more. Existing programs that will be continued and expanded under the terms of GSP's partnership with the city include:

- Business Retention, Expansion, and Attraction (BREA): GSP will continue to provide business retention and expansion services that make regular contact with existing Sandusky employers and connect those employers to available resources for expansion via Team NEO and JobsOhio. In addition, GSP will identify key sites and market those sites for major attraction projects while continuing coordination with available Team NEO and JobsOhio resources. This work will benefit Sandusky as GSP coordinates specifically with Sandusky businesses and markets Sandusky sites but also as larger sites within the region are brought to market with major investments that will grow the regional economy and employ Sandusky residents. Examples of key regional sites include the opportunity to bring excess land at NASA Armstrong to market for economic development, as well as continuing to work on the redevelopment of KBI that will attract significant investment and job creation to the region.
- RISE/Entrepreneurship/Retail and Office: GSP seeks to continue the work of RISE (Regional Incubator for Sustainability & Entrepreneurship) in supporting and building a pipeline of entrepreneurs in our region. Additionally, GSP seeks to expand this work by building out an initiative specifically focused on connecting these and other entrepreneurs directly to a well-maintained inventory of available office and retail space in Sandusky. GSP seeks to partner with the city and other stakeholders to develop an initiative specifically around creating a stronger retail and office market and will accomplish this through activities of RISE, BREA, Destination

Sandusky, and other programs that when aligned will connect business owners directly to opportunities to find success in a vibrant place.

- Minority Business Empowerment Team (MBET): GSP seeks not only to connect entrepreneurs to economic opportunity, but also to ensure that the pipeline of entrepreneurs is representative of Sandusky. MBET is a program that seeks to build a network and offer supportive services to minority business enterprises that breaks down barriers and opportunities that have prevented them from fairly competing in the past. GSP will continue to support the MBET collaboration and identify resources to scale this work and opportunities for minority businesses to thrive in Sandusky.

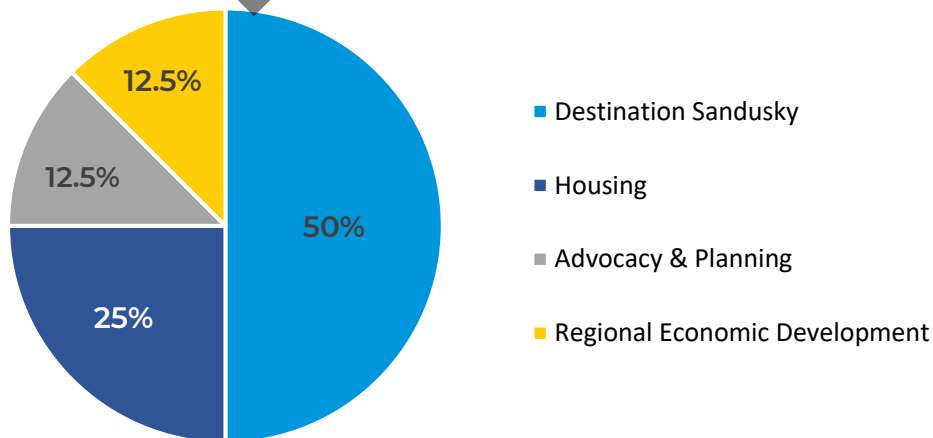
#### Regional Economic Development Metrics:

1. Capital Investment: support capital investment projects by private businesses generating an average of at least \$10 million annually in investment in Sandusky.
2. Job Creation: Support creation of an average of at least 30 jobs annually within Sandusky.
3. Entrepreneurial and Minority Business Support: directly support via technical assistance and connection to resources over 150 small businesses, entrepreneurs and/or minority businesses either located in Sandusky or owned by Sandusky-based entrepreneurs.

#### Summary and Next Steps

In Summary, the Greater Sandusky Partnership formally requests a 3-year contract for services from the City of Sandusky starting in January of 2024 at \$300,000 annually. This request would be all inclusive and GSP would not seek additional city resources for itself or any of its affiliate programs during this period. Furthermore, the Greater Sandusky Partnership pledges that at least 50% of the total contract will go into direct programming including special events, project and program implementation, and planning & advocacy efforts.

GSP is proposing that service priorities are defined based on the below estimates:



**50% - Destination Sandusky:**

Special Event Production & Management, Sandusky Branding & Marketing, Placemaking Project Management, Merchant Attraction & Coordination

**25% - Housing:**

Build Pipeline of Sites, Development Partners, and Resources in order to increase number of units of affordable & market rate housing, including rehabilitation, adaptive reuse, & new construction.

**12.5% - Advocacy & Planning:**

Advocate for increased local, state and federal resources for shared city and GSP priorities. Plan, raise resources and advocate for high impact, regionally significant projects.

**12.5% - Regional Economic Development:**

Continue and expand programs for business attraction, retention, and expansion. Create a strong network of entrepreneurs and build a pipeline of potential retail and office tenants for Sandusky. Expand the work of the Minority Business Empowerment Team.

The Greater Sandusky Partnership is grateful for the City of Sandusky's consideration of this proposal and looks forward to working with staff and presenting to Sandusky City Commissioners in order to answer any questions. We look forward to building out and implementing a shared vision for Sandusky and the surrounding region that further positions our community as America's Best Coastal Small Town and the Greatest Destination on the Great Lakes.