

**NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT
HIGHLAND TOWNSHIP,
OAKLAND COUNTY, MICHIGAN**

JUNE 13-14, 2006

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INTRODUCTION

On June 13-14, 2006, Robert Donohue, Jr., Coordinator of Main Street Oakland County (MSOC), and Nicholas P. Kalogeresis, AICP, Program Officer of the National Trust Main Street Center (NTMSC), conducted a needs assessment visit for the Highland Township (MI) Downtown Development Authority. The needs assessment is an evaluative service designed to determine downtown revitalization issues and the technical assistance needs for the Highland Township Main Street program. As part of the on-site service, the needs assessment team reviewed DDA projects and accomplishments and met with local staff, DDA officers, township leaders and downtown stakeholders to identify downtown revitalization issues, long-term goals, and opportunities for action. The MSOC coordinator and the NTMSC staff will use the findings of this needs assessment to design a tailored technical assistance schedule for Highland Township. The following report summarizes the observations and recommendations based on the facts and information gathered during the on-site visit.

The needs assessment report should be distributed as appropriate to downtown stakeholders, including property and business owners, the Highland Township board, other corporations and organizations, and local residents. Relevant sections should be distributed to each of the Main Street committees, other volunteers, and to all assessment visit interviewees as deemed appropriate. It is strongly recommended that all Highland Township DDA board members and Main Street committee volunteers read the report, discuss the recommendations, and develop or adjust their annual and long-term work plans accordingly. Finally, it is important to note that MSOC and NTMSC assistance does not end with this report. It is strongly recommended that the Highland Township DDA/Main Street program contact MSOC and the NTMSC regarding questions to this assessment and advice towards implementing the report's recommendations.

The observations and recommendations presented in this memorandum report are based on the conditions and circumstances that existed at the time of the on-site visit and are not meant to be an exhaustive list of all downtown revitalization issues and suggested courses of action for downtown Highland Township. Additional recommendations and downtown revitalization strategies will be developed with the community during technical services deliveries in the year ahead including the resource team visit later in the year.

OBSERVATIONS

The following observations were made by the MSOC needs assessment team during its on-site visit of Highland Township. These observations were not meant to be an exhaustive list of all existing downtown revitalization issues.

- **Hamlet Setting.** As mentioned in the recent report, *A Sense of Place for Highland Station: Defining a Context Sensitive Design Solution for Milford Road*, Highland Station can be characterized as a “hamlet-like cluster of shops and homes” within a “pastoral setting”, which is quite unique than most of the other traditional commercial districts of Main Street Oakland County's participating communities. Unlike these other communities, Highland Station has a mixture of historic commercial and residential buildings that are mostly constructed in wood clapboard rather than masonry. Only the commercial buildings, which there are relatively few, were built to the sidewalk in a typical downtown pedestrian-oriented fashion. It is the residential buildings and other structures, such as the historically and architecturally significant Highland Methodist Church, with their wide setbacks that give Highland Station its predominant semi-rural feel and character. It is this character that Highland Township residents desire to maintain and enhance, especially in light of the Milford Road context issues. The challenge for Highland Township, as well, as Main Street Oakland County is create and implement downtown revitalization initiatives that seek to manage change and encourage economic improvement while preserving Highland Station's sense of place.

- **Downtown Vision and Master Planning.** In relation to the above observation, achieving balance between economic improvement and maintaining a sense of place requires critical thinking on part of the community to determine how this can be accomplished. For most communities, the development and adoption of a master plan can help to set policy and lay out the direction for what initiatives and actions must be implemented to realize the long-term vision for a revitalized downtown district. While planning activities have taken place in the recent past, such as the completion of the *2002 Micro-Area Analysis* and the *2004 TIF Plan*, there is a strong need for developing a more comprehensive master plan that addresses urban design, preservation and development issues in Highland Station, including the Milford Road corridor. The *Micro-Area Analysis* and the *2004 TIF Plan* reports do not provide the necessary guidance and recommendations to adequately address the issues mentioned previously, which are important to revitalizing the downtown district and balancing development with the community's character.

- **Organization Fundamentals.** In many respects, the Highland Township DDA has been operating as a fully functioning Main Street program for some time. Over the course of the past year, the DDA Executive Director has worked diligently and effectively with the board of directors to establish the Main Street committee structure, recruit volunteers, and develop initial committee work plans. This has been an excellent effort on part of the board and staff, which leaves the DDA, is well positioned to receive MSOC technical services and engage the community at large in its work in the year going forward. Though many of the organization fundamental are in place, the DDA board will need to look at refining its internal operations, such as developing a complete set of corporate by-laws and adopting a formal work planning process, so that it can complete its transition from an "old DDA" to a highly effective "Main Street" organization.

- **Preservation Ethic.** Even without a local historic preservation ordinance, it appears upon observation that the Highland Station community has had strong historic preservation ethic, as evidenced by the work in preserving and several historic resources including the Highland Methodist Church and the Smith House/Gas Station. Certainly, the community's awareness of its historic resources should serve the DDA in any future efforts to list the downtown in the National Register of Historic Places, if it is eligible, or to adopt a historic preservation ordinance, which is the most effective method to preserve those resources. Furthermore, the Highland Township DDA community has a number of organizations, such as the Historical Society and the Huron Valley Council for the Arts in which to promote historic preservation and the downtown's cultural importance.

- **Fledgling promotion program.** The Highland Station DDA has already organized and produced an outdoor concert series in order to generate additional pedestrian traffic in the downtown district. It is also planning to hold an old-fashioned square dance event. These promotion activities have the potential for becoming signature events that could define Highland Station as a place to attend and experience quality, family oriented activities. This fledging line-up of activities can serve as a foundation for creating additional special events and promotions that bring people and visitors alike to downtown on a regular basis.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Critical to Highland Township's downtown revitalization effort is the time and patience required to integrate and adapt the Main Street Approach within its current operating structure. Integrating the Main Street Approach will require the DDA itself to transition from a staff-driven organization to one that is volunteer-led, with active committees, strong community-wide partnerships, and a dedicated and hard-working board of directors. Certainly, the Highland Township DDA has made much progress in the last year and the core organization fundamentals, such as its board, staff, and Main Street committees are in place, but ongoing transition issues include fully implementing a committee work planning process, ensuring all Main Street

board members actively participate in board and committee level activities, and recruiting volunteers and raising additional financial resources from a broader segment of the community. Addressing these issues is key for building a strong DDA-based Main Street program for the long-term.

The following recommendations are provided to assist Highland Township DDA leadership implement specific action steps needed to firmly establish and operate its Main Street program in the next six to twelve months, to position the organization to receive MSOC technical assistance services in the year ahead, and to complete the transition to fully-functioning DDA-based Main Street program.

GENERAL ORGANIZATION

The following recommendations focus on the general operations of the Highland Township DDA including the board of directors, the Main Street committees, staff, and other internal operating procedures.

Recommendation #1: Revise Highland Township DDA corporate by-laws.

As mentioned previously, the Highland Township DDA's by-laws are somewhat inadequate to meet the needs of managing the operations of a DDA-based Main Street program. Going forward in the year ahead, the Highland Township DDA board of directors should take time to revise its current set of corporate by-laws to include more complete and detailed information on issues related to the efficient governance and internal operations of the organization. Therefore, by-law revisions should include new articles or chapters on the roles and responsibilities of the board of directors and its officers; the duties of the DDA and other staff; the purpose and function of Main Street committees; managing DDA finances; developing committee work plans; conflict of interest provisions for board members and committee chairs; and a DDA statement of purpose, and vision and mission statements. Perhaps, a subcommittee of the DDA board or the Organization Committee can be assigned the task of developing a new set of by-laws. A sample set of corporate by-laws is included as an attachment to the report and contact MSOC or the NTMSC for additional assistance.

Recommendation #2: Attend upcoming Main Street Oakland County technical training workshops.

It is critically important for the long-term success of the Main Street effort in Highland Township that DDA board leaders understand the best practices in implementing the Main Street Approach at the local level. In the year ahead, Highland Township DDA board members and committee volunteers should commit to attending Main Street Oakland County technical service trainings, including the upcoming work planning and visioning sessions scheduled for late summer. These sessions will be critical for the board and Main Street volunteers to understand how to use detailed work plans effectively in organizing Main Street committee activities as well as for volunteer recruitment and budget development purposes. Other technical services to be delivered in the coming year include a resource team consultation and other workshops scheduled for late summer and early fall of 2006. A full calendar of the technical service trainings for the year ahead is represented in this report.

Recommendation #3: Develop and adopt a downtown vision statement.

Most Main Street organizations are not ready to create a compelling vision statement for their downtown commercial district until they have one or two years of experience implementing revitalization projects across the Main Street Four-Point Approach. However, given the relative number of years the DDA has been in operation, and the apparent community consensus regarding downtown's future that already exists, perhaps the DDA board should give consideration to developing a vision statement in the coming year.

In basic terms, a vision statement is a summary of the community's consensus regarding a future desired state for its downtown district. More specifically, a vision statement should describe what downtown Highland Township would look like in physical terms, such as its downtown streetscape and overall building appearance; what types of businesses and economic uses it will have, and what social and promotion activities will be taking place. The statement is usually written within the context of a ten-year timeframe.

Furthermore, the vision statement should also be considered the starting point in guiding all future activities in annual strategic planning, goal and objective setting, and yearly committee work planning.

Ideally, a vision statement could be developed through formal or informal community forums or through more substantial, lengthy “vision-building” exercises that may include a downtown master planning process. In Highland Township’s case, the latter may seem more appropriate since there is a strong need to develop a complete master plan for the downtown district. Ultimately, it will be up to the DDA board to determine the more appropriate course of action to take in developing the vision statement given local resources and preferences. At the least, the Highland Township DDA should consider inviting the community to a facilitated well-publicized “town meeting” to discuss where they see their downtown district in the future and what roles they would like the DDA to take in achieving a future, revitalized downtown district. Information taken from the meeting can then be used to craft the statement, possibly incorporating specific words and language from participants. The Highland Township DDA should request additional assistance from MSOC in developing the vision statement.

Recommendation #4: Consider creating separate treasurer and secretary positions.

The Highland Township board of directors should consider establishing separate officer positions for secretary and treasurer, rather than having one board member responsible for two separate administrative and management functions. In other words, this will also allow the workload related to these positions to be distributed more efficiently between two members of the board. Establishing separate treasurer and secretary positions should also be written within a new “board officer” section of the revised corporate by-laws. With these new positions, the DDA could also create an executive board of officers that could be charged with managing routine administrative and other Main Street committee issues between the regular meetings of the board of directors.

Recommendation #5: Introduce committee line-item budgets within overall DDA budget.

In the year ahead, as the Highland Township DDA moves forward with developing work plans and undertaking specific projects and activities, each Main Street committee will need to have separate line items within the overall DDA budget. Ideally, the committee line items should correspond directly to actual individual project costs as determined through detailed committee work plans. Developing committee budgets through the committee work planning will be discussed during work planning training offered by Main Street Oakland County.

Recommendation #6: Reformat strategic planning session as a yearly goal setting/organization retreat session.

In the past year, the Highland Township DDA undertook a strategic planning session to determine major areas of priority activities for the organization to concentrate its efforts and resources on in the year ahead. This is an excellent activity and the DDA should use the session as an opportunity to not only determine priorities but to reaffirm and revise both the vision and mission statements, discuss possible committee work plan projects, and to establish formal yearly goal statements for each of the Main Street committees. Essentially, this session should be a strategic planning retreat with the purpose of determining the actual work plans goals for the Main Street committees. If not permitted already, the DDA board should consider allowing members of the public to participate as a way to receive formal feedback from the community on ongoing DDA initiatives and ideas for future activities.

BOARD DEVELOPMENT

Within the Main Street context, the DDA board of directors will transition to becoming a working board, meaning that each board member is always accountable for specific responsibilities and volunteer tasks. In that regard, the following recommendations focus on encouraging effective board member involvement and participation in the program. In addition, these recommendations can be implemented within the next six to twelve months.

Recommendation #7: Developing formal or informal board member job descriptions.

In the year ahead, board members, board officers and committee chairs should consider developing simple job descriptions that include information on board meeting attendance and committee participation requirements, roles and responsibilities, and the minimum volunteer hours to commit to the organization, committee participation requirements. Job descriptions for committee chairs are just as important since they act as directors and managers for their committees. The board and the organization committee can work together on developing them.

Recommendation #8: Conduct new board member orientation.

Once a year, the DDA board and the Organization Committee should develop and produce a formal training and orientation session for new board members. The session should take place on an annual basis, be one-hour in length, and cover topics regarding board member responsibilities, as outlined within the job descriptions, and the respective roles of DDA staff and the volunteer committees. Time should also be devoted to explaining the Main Street Four Point Approach and Principles to downtown revitalization, the corporate by-laws, committee work plans and on-going projects, and the relationship to Main Street Oakland County and the National Trust Main Street Center.

DESIGN COMMITTEE

The following are general Main Street committee recommendations that should be considered and implemented the year ahead.

Recommendation #9: Finish building inventory.

The Design Committee should work cooperatively with the Economic Restructuring Committee to complete a thorough inventory of all buildings within the Highland Township DDA district. Ensure that the inventory includes data and information on building condition, current building photo, gross and net square footage, leasing rates, insurance, and property taxes. Historic photographs, newspaper articles, and any archival information should also be included in the inventory, perhaps within a file for each downtown building or structure. Given the relative size of the DDA district, completing and maintaining the inventory should be straightforward but both the Design and Economic Restructuring committees should consider assigning one volunteer the responsibility of updating contact information and the building improvement sections of the inventory. The inventory should also be placed within the DDA website as a working database that could be accessed by the public. Both committees should keep in mind that the more thorough and detailed the building inventory is, the more useful it will be in creating downtown design guidelines and completing the district's nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

Recommendation #10: Determine downtown Highland's eligibility in the National Register of Historic Places.

In the year ahead, the Design Committee should explore whether downtown Highland Township, including the adjacent residential areas, are eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. With the Highland Methodist Church already listed in the National Register, the remainder of the downtown area might have enough historic resources with high integrity to allow downtown Highland Township to be eligible for listing as a district. However, eligibility can only be confirmed by the Michigan State Historic Preservation Office (MSHPO). The National Register of Historic Places, which is the nation's official list of historic and cultural resources worthy of preservation, is maintained by the State Historic Preservation Office and the National Park Service, U.S. Department of Interior. The National Register does not place restrictions on the use and appearance of building but it does make some historic commercial properties eligible to receive the Federal Historic Preservation Tax Credit and other incentives. Since this should be an important work plan initiative, the Design Committee should contact Main Street Oakland County and the Michigan SHPO for additional assistance. Main Street Oakland County can conduct an initial survey and assessment of buildings for the National Register.

Recommendation #11: Develop facade grant program.

A small facade grant program, capitalized on an annual basis at \$10,000.00 to \$20,000.00, can help to encourage various building rehabilitation and improvement projects within the Highland Township downtown district. By far the most common form of Main Street building improvement incentive, facade grant programs require far less time to establish and administer, and is more effective in achieving visual results sooner than low-interest loan programs. Without an incentive program in place, private-sector building improvements most likely will take longer to occur. Both the Design and Economic Restructuring committees should explore how a local facade grant programs can be funded. Generally, grant amounts should range from \$500.00 to \$2,500.00, or even higher, and be awarded on a matching basis. Before grants can be disbursed, design proposals for facade improvements should be subject to design committee review and approval first before disbursement. The adoption of downtown guidelines will be needed to make appropriate decisions regarding facade rehabilitation and restoration.

Recommendation #12: Establish a Milford Road Context Sensitive Design subcommittee or task force.

The Highland Township DDA board of directors should consider forming an ad-hoc, stand-alone task force or special committee that can devote its time and resources on advocating for context-sensitive design improvements to Milford Road. Members of the task force could include DDA board members, Design and Economic Restructuring committee volunteers, Township officials, Main Street Oakland County, and other interested community residents, and should have its own chairperson to guide and manage committee operations. The task force could become a permanent part of the DDA operating structure until the Milford Road improvement issue has been resolved. The principal reason for establishing a separate Milford Road task force is to allow the DDA board and the Main Street committees the concentrate time on energy on implementing first year work plan activities, and recruiting additional volunteers and securing other financial resources to build a strong, long-term Main Street program.

ORGANIZATION COMMITTEE

Recommendation #13: Develop a new Highland Township DDA/Main Street program logo.

While the Highland Township DDA does have visually appealing logo, which still could be used in corporate communications and marketing materials, the DDA board should consider developing a graphic identity more symbolic and representational of the downtown district’s history and architecture. Furthermore, the logo should be simple and straightforward in design. In developing a new logo, try to find a local graphic designer who can work with the Main Street board of directors and the committees on determining the best overall design.



Most Main Street corporate logos include a graphic image of some downtown architectural or historical feature. St. Charles, Illinois and Ardmore, Oklahoma are two such examples.

Recommendation #14: Transition newsletter and other public relation activities to the Organization Committee.

During the on-site visit, it was unclear if the Organization Committee had any formal role in developing the corporate newsletter. Typically, for most Main Street communities, the Organization Committee has the general responsibility for promoting the DDA itself including its successes and accomplishments, current and ongoing activities, and the people and volunteers involved with the organization and the Main Street committees. In turn, such public relations activities usually include the development and production of a regular newsletter and corporate website, other printed materials such as an annual report and



general information brochure, and various outreach activities such as conducting ongoing speaking engagements and public forums. The Promotions Committee, however, organizes and produces downtown special events and festivals to promote the downtown district in general, not the Highland DDA organization. Among all the Main Street committees, the Organization Committee alone has the best vantage point to know what the other committees are undertaking and accomplishing. Therefore, in the year ahead, the Organization Committee should assume responsibility for developing the newsletter and implementing other public relations activities. The newsletter content should be created by DDA staff and Organization Committee volunteers, and thought should be given to having the newsletter designed and formatted by a professional graphic designer. Along with the website, the corporate newsletter is a critical communication vehicle that will help in volunteer recruitment and engaging the community in the work of the organization. The tendency to have the DDA Executive Director/Main Street Manager take care of the newsletter, website, meeting minutes and other organizational project tasks can lead to burnout. Volunteers should be sought for most of those tasks.

Recommendation #15: Conduct basic volunteer recruitment activities.

At the time of the on-site visit, the Highland Township DDA appeared to have an adequate number of volunteers participating in the Main Street committees and it started to conduct some “passive” volunteer recruitment activities including the development of a web-based volunteer sign up sheet. This is a good start and the DDA board and the Organization Committee in particular should start positioning itself in the year ahead to conduct more “active” recruitment activities so that each committee will have more volunteers on hand to implement actual work plan projects. Initial volunteer development activities that could be undertaken in the next six to twelve months include:

- **Volunteer database.** Since a volunteer application form has already been developed, the Organization Committee should create and maintain a master volunteer database. A volunteer from the Organization Committee should maintain this database if possible. The database should include information such as the volunteer’s name, address, phone, fax or email address, projects or events the volunteer is working on, who recruited the volunteer, general availability or interest of the volunteer, and a running total of the hours donated to the organization.
- **Volunteer orientation.** In the year ahead, the Organization Committee should conduct a one-hour orientation session for new volunteers which should be an overview of the Main Street Four-Point Approach, the DDA operating structure, roles of the committees and the board, and current Main Street activities. Specific volunteer assignments or “hot jobs” needing to be filled in the coming month should be discussed during the session as well as other long-term volunteer opportunities. Volunteers interested in being placed should fill out a volunteer intake form.
- **Volunteer job descriptions.** As the Main Street committees complete their first action work plans, each committee chairperson should be encouraged to develop simple job descriptions for various work plan projects. The descriptions should describe the specific kind of work to be completed, the time requirements, the project supervisor, budget, project deadline and who the volunteer(s) will work with to complete it. These descriptions do not have to be elaborate but they can help in creating confidence in both the committee chair and the potential volunteer that the volunteer can meet the requirements for the position. A master job description file should be developed by the Organization Committee and used during recruitment efforts to match volunteers to opportunities.

YEAR 2006-2007 TECHNICAL SERVICE SCHEDULE

- **Oakland County Heritage Conference IX; September 20, 2006; Glen Oaks, Farmington.** The conference brings together individuals from various backgrounds, who deal with the built and natural environment, to discuss ways to improve their communities. The conference attracts nearly 200 local and

regional governmental staff, elected officials, planners, developers, landscape architects, architects, realtors, consultants, developers and business owners, as well as environmentalists, historians, preservationists and concerned citizens

- **Resource Team; October 3-6, 2006.** This resource team is the most important technical service to be offered to the Highland Township Main Street in its first year. A team of four to five downtown revitalization professionals will be assembled to assist DDA leaders and community stakeholders devise strategies to implement its future work plan and to make best use of the DDA's financial and human resources for revitalizing the downtown area. Over the course of three days, the team will examine information about the community and downtown, study plans, meet and interview key members of the community, discuss ideas, and finally, suggest a set of strategies for local action.
- **Program Manager/Executive Director Orientation/Training; November 15, 2006; Pontiac.** General training and orientation session regarding program manager roles and responsibilities within the Main Street program.
- **Market Analysis Workshop; November 16-17, 2006; Pontiac.** Training workshop on conducting and completing a comprehensive downtown retail market analysis. Advanced techniques in applying the results of the market analysis to business development activities and other Main Street activities. Required training for Main Street managers and economic restructuring committees.
- **Main Street/Board and Volunteer Training 201; January/February 2007.** Board and volunteer orientation is a general training session in Main Street downtown management including extensive session in organization, design, promotions and economic restructuring.
- **Annual Program Evaluation; May/June 2007.** A two-day service designed to evaluate the progress of the Marshall DDA in implementing in its Main Street program.

ONGOING SERVICES (TO BE DELIVERED BY MAIN STREET OAKLAND COUNTY)

- Architectural/Design Assistance/Historic Preservation Training
- Market Analysis Workshop
- On-Site Business Development Consulting
- On-Site Board and Committee Training
- Program Manager Meetings
- Other Topic-Specific Training Workshops

HIGHLAND TOWNSHIP TECHNICAL SERVICE NEEDS (YEAR TWO AND BEYOND)

- Retail Market Analysis Training
- Downtown Urban Design Plan and Design Guidelines Development
- National Register Nomination Assistance
- Promotions and Marketing Assistance

CONCLUSION

The Highland Township Downtown Development Authority is entering an important phase in the coming year. With its recent designation as a Main Street Oakland County community, it can now look forward to receiving specialized technical assistance towards implementing a formal Main Street program and building its capacity as a downtown revitalization organization. By developing its management capacity with the Main Street program, the Highland Township DDA can expect to achieve more far-reaching revitalization goals. One observation that bodes well for the Highland Township DDA and its future are the positive ways in which it has approached change and challenges in recent years. There is no question that it will approach the development of its Main Street program in very much the same way. The Highland community contains a vast talent pool of citizens who can play important roles in the DDA's ongoing Main Street revitalization efforts. Tapping that resource may be a challenge but should lead to likely positive results.

BACKGROUND

Highland Township, Oakland County, Michigan, is one of 12 communities participating in Main Street Oakland County, a downtown revitalization program offered by the Oakland County Planning and Economic Development Services Division. The following sections provide background information regarding the Main Street Oakland County program (MSOC), the National Trust Main Street Center (NTMSC), and Highland Township Downtown Development Authority, the organization designated to receive MSOC and NTMSC technical services in Highland Township.

MAIN STREET OAKLAND COUNTY

In February 2000, the Oakland County Department of Planning and Economic Development Services established Main Street Oakland County as a program to help local communities revitalize their traditional commercial districts. Main Street Oakland County's mission is to assist towns and cities through the delivery of technical services and local implementation of the comprehensive Main Street Four-Point Approach, and to maximize the economic potential of traditional commercial districts while preserving their unique heritage and sense of place. In addition to its mission, Main Street Oakland County seeks to achieve several objectives:



- Empower Oakland County communities to establish and maintain successful, comprehensive, ongoing revitalization programs;
- Build a greater awareness of the importance of revitalizing traditional commercial districts;
- To provide technical assistance and training resources;
- Facilitate networking and communication about downtown revitalization among Oakland County communities; and,
- Offer advice and recommendations regarding project-specific financing when needed.

To guide its work, including its delivery of technical services and its relationship to participating communities, Main Street Oakland County will also seek:

- To encourage the adoption of local downtown economic development strategies that support Oakland County's overall Planning and Economic Development Services objectives;
- To promote commercial district revitalization as integral to the local comprehensive planning process.
- To encourage good downtown development practices that utilize smart growth methods; and
- To support the use of existing Oakland County programs and resources in conjunction with supplemental professional services.

Communities participating in MSOC were selected through a competitive application process. All MSOC communities receive a set of intensive technical assistance services designed to help them build their local Main Street programs as well as to address specific downtown revitalization issues. The NTMSC and MSOC will deliver these services over a period of three years, after which the level of technical assistance provided

will be reduced. However, ongoing technical services will be offered by MSOC to help communities with specific organization, design, and business and real estate development issues.

THE NATIONAL TRUST MAIN STREET CENTER

The NTMSC is a program of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Created by a Congressional charter in 1949, the National Trust is a leading advocate of historic preservation in the United States. The preservation movement involves more than saving historic buildings. The Trust addresses economic growth, urban revitalization, and the creation of new jobs through the rehabilitation of historic buildings and structures. Established by the National Trust in 1980, the NTMSC has worked in 43 states and Puerto Rico.



Through these efforts, 206,000 net new jobs have been created, \$15.2 billion has been reinvested in Main Street commercial districts, 52,000 new businesses have been created, 79,000 buildings have been rehabilitated, and 1,633 communities have built strong organizations to revitalize their commercial districts. The NTMSC also sponsors the National Main Street Network, a professional membership program for organizations interested in commercial district revitalization. It produces publications, newsletters, and special reports on revitalization and preservation issues and serves as a clearinghouse for information on community redevelopment issues. The NTMSC accomplishes its mission through the Main Street Four-Point Approach™.

THE MAIN STREET FOUR-POINT APPROACH™

The Main Street Four-Point Approach™ is a comprehensive strategy that provides merchants, commercial property owners, and community residents with tools and information to establish approach consists of four points:

- **Design** takes advantage of the visual opportunities inherent in downtown Highland Township by directing attention to all of its physical elements: public and private buildings, storefronts, signs, public spaces, landscaping, merchandising, displays, and promotional materials. Its aim is to stress the importance of design quality in all of these areas, to educate people about design quality, and to expedite commercial district improvements.
- **Promotion** takes many forms, but aims to create a positive image of downtown Highland Township in order to rekindle neighborhood pride. Promotion seeks to improve retail sales events and festivals and to foster an image that attracts investors, developers, and new businesses.
- **Economic Restructuring** strengthens downtown Highland Township's existing economic assets while diversifying its economic base. This is accomplished by retaining and expanding existing businesses to provide a balanced commercial mix, by converting unused or underutilized space into productive property, and by sharpening the competitiveness and merchandising skills of neighborhood business people.
- **Organization** establishes consensus and cooperation by building partnerships among the various groups that have a stake in downtown Highland Township. This will allow the Main Street revitalization program to provide effective, ongoing management and advocacy of the commercial district. Diverse groups from the public and private sectors (City of Highland Township, local bankers, merchants, property owners, community leaders, and others) must work together toward a successful program.

THE EIGHT PRINCIPLES OF MAIN STREET

While the Main Street approach provides the format for successful revitalization, implementation of the methodology is based on eight principles that pertain to all areas of the revitalization effort.

- **Comprehensive.** Business district revitalization is a complex process and cannot be accomplished by a single project. For successful long-term revitalization, a comprehensive approach must be used.
- **Incremental.** Small projects and simple activities lead to a more sophisticated understanding of the revitalization process and help to develop skills so that complex problems can be addressed and ambitious projects undertaken.
- **Self-help.** Local leaders must have the desire and the will to make the project successful. Main Street Oakland County, the NTMSC, and the City of Highland Township will provide direction, ideas, and training, but continued and long-term success depends upon the involvement and commitment of the community.
- **Public/Private Partnership.** Both the public and private sectors have a vital interest in the economic health and physical viability of downtown. Each sector has a role to play, and each must understand the other's strengths and limitations so that an effective partnership can be forged.
- **Identifying and Capitalizing on Existing Assets.** Business districts must capitalize on the assets that make them unique. Every district has unique qualities — like distinctive buildings and human scale that give people a sense of belonging. These local assets must serve as the foundation for all aspects of the revitalization program.
- **Quality.** Quality must be emphasized in every aspect of the revitalization program. This applies equally to each element of the program, from storefront design to promotional campaigns to educational programs.
- **Change.** Changes in attitude and practice are necessary to improve current economic conditions. Public support for change will build as the program grows.
- **Implementation-oriented.** Activity creates confidence in the program and ever-greater levels of participation. Frequent, visible changes are a reminder that the revitalization effort is under way. Small projects at the beginning of the program pave the way for larger activities as the revitalization effort matures.

METHODOLOGY

The needs assessment team used two primary tools to determine the technical assistance needs of the Highland Township Downtown Development Authority. One tool was the community's Main Street Oakland County application. Completed by the staff of the Highland Township DDA, Highland Township, and other members of community, the application documented past downtown revitalization efforts, current Highland Township DDA program activities, levels of committee and volunteer participation, fund-raising and downtown promotional and marketing efforts, available incentive programs, reinvestment statistics, and other downtown economic information. In addition, prior to the on-site visit, other miscellaneous information including downtown plans, market analyses, and business development materials were sent to the assessment team for advance review.

The second tool was the use of on-site interviews and focus group sessions. During the on-site visit, the assessment team interviewed, individually and in groups, Highland Township DDA board members and

volunteers, Township leaders, downtown merchants and property owners, residents, other key stakeholders, and representatives of community organizations. The purpose of the interviews was to assess current attitudes and opinions about previous revitalization projects, current progress in meeting overall revitalization goals, anticipated projects and programs, issues and obstacles facing the Highland Township DDA revitalization agenda, and the current existing level of human and financial resources devoted to the downtown revitalization effort.

ATTACHMENTS

- I. MAIN STREET COMMITTEES: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**
- II. SAMPLE CORPORATE BY-LAWS**
- III. SAMPLE MAIN STREET MANAGER PERFORMANCE PLAN.**

ATTACHMENT I. ROLES OF THE MAIN STREET COMMITTEES

ORGANIZATION COMMITTEE

Overall Goal

Establish and maintain a strong main street revitalization effort that utilizes a growing number of participants in the implementation of committee activities and funding for sustained, long-term operations.

Typical Roles and Activities:

- **Fundraising.** To broaden/diversify the funding base for long-term program operations
 - Annual pledge drive/donor program
 - Membership programs-seeks to broaden the stakeholder participation and ownership
 - Fundraising events-not more than two per year
 - Sponsorships-g geared toward promotion activities
 - Grant writing-better for specific projects rather than operating
 - Product sales-good for short-term, not long-term

- **Volunteer recruitment and development.** To conduct ongoing volunteer recruitment and retention for maximum community involvement and future leadership.
 - *Volunteer recruitment*
 - Volunteer orientation sessions
 - volunteer database
 - *Volunteer retention*
 - Undertake annual volunteer evaluations
 - Recognition/awards programs
 - “Volunteer achievement certificates

- **Public Relations.** To raise awareness and community support for the Main Street program
 - *Media*
 - Media packets, press releases, advertisements, newspaper column, inserts, radio shows
 - *Materials*
 - Newsletters, information brochure, work plan summary, signs for rehab projects
 - *Presentations*
 - Speakers bureau

- **Other Activities If Not Done by Board**
 - *Staff management*
 - Hiring: search, recruitment and negotiation of final offer
 - Evaluation: annual performance review
 - *Financial oversight*
 - Bookkeeping for financial transactions
 - Budgeting for the program

ECONOMIC RESTRUCTURING COMMITTEE

Overall Goal

Diversify and strengthen downtown economic base through business and real estate development.

Typical Roles and Activities

- Learning about the district's economic condition and identifying opportunities for future market growth
- Undertaking business development: retaining and strengthening current businesses; recruiting new ones
- Real estate development-finding new economic uses
- Developing appropriate financial incentives
- Monitoring the district's economic performance

Typical First Year Work Plan

- Establish committee w/ 5 to 10 volunteers, write committee job descriptions, start meeting monthly
- Attend state or regional training!
- Initial data gathering
- Complete business and building inventory
- Establish appropriate incentives for business development and design improvement (w/design committee)
- Start market analysis
- Start ER library

DESIGN COMMITTEE

Overall Goal

To encourage the physical improvement of the downtown/commercial district through private and public design/historic preservation activities

Typical roles

- Design assistance
- Design education
- Public improvements
- Design review/ordinances

Typical First Year Work Plan

- Establish committee w/ 5 to 10 volunteers, write committee job descriptions, start meeting monthly
- Attend state and regional training!
- Building inventory (with ER committee)
- Start rehab library and design guidelines
- Visit with all property owners
- Initiate design assistance
- Develop design incentives program (with ER committee)

PROMOTION COMMITTEE

Overall Goal

To undertake a variety of promotional and marketing activities that will build a positive image for the commercial district as well as attract visitors, consumers, and new investors.

Typical roles

- Developing special events and festivals
- Creating retail promotions that are price and merchandise oriented

- Undertaking various marketing activities including image advertising and other print materials

Typical First-Year Work Plan

- Establish committee with 5 to 10 volunteers, write committee job descriptions, start monthly meetings
- Attend training opportunities
- Organize promotions calendar
- Seek sponsorships and event volunteers
- Create and undertake new promotions
- Evaluate activities and calendar at end of year.

ATTACHMENT II. SAMPLE CORPORATE BY-LAWS.

FERNDALE DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY FERNDALE, MICHIGAN BY-LAWS

Adopted by the Ferndale DDA: June 11, 2002
Adopted by the City of Ferndale:

Article I: Purpose

Mission Statement:

The mission of the Ferndale Downtown Development Authority is to create a vibrant urban downtown district in Ferndale by promoting economic growth and preventing or correcting deterioration through the implementation of economic restructuring, design, promotions and organizational plans developed by the Ferndale DDA Board of Directors on behalf of the business owners, property owners, residents and volunteers within Downtown Ferndale.

A. Also, the purpose of the Ferndale Downtown Development Authority is to act in accordance with Act 197 of the Public Acts of 1975, as such statute may from time to time be amended; including particularly to correct and prevent deterioration in the downtown district; to encourage historical preservation; to create and implement development plans in the district; to promote the economic growth of the district; and to encourage the expansion of commercial enterprises in the downtown district. The Ferndale DDA supplies the funding and the public and private sector leadership to provide for the future success and viability of the Ferndale DDA district.

B. The Ferndale DDA shall have the powers to:

1. Prepare an analysis of economic changes taking place in the downtown district;
2. Study and analyze the impact of metropolitan growth upon the downtown district.
3. Plan and propose the construction, the renovation, repair, remodeling, rehabilitation, restoration, preservation, or reconstruction of a public facility, an existing building, or a multiple-family dwelling unit which may be necessary or appropriate to the execution of a plan, which in the opinion of the Board, aids in the economic growth of the downtown district;
4. Develop long-range plans, in cooperation with the agency which is chiefly responsible for planning in the municipality, designed to halt the deterioration of the property values in the downtown district and to promote the economic growth of the downtown district, and take such steps as may be necessary to persuade property owners to implement the plans to the fullest extent possible;
5. Implement any plan of development in the downtown district necessary to achieve the purposes of Act 197, in accordance with the powers of the Authority as granted by Act 197;
6. Make and enter into contracts necessary or incidental to the exercise of its powers and the performance of its duties;
7. Acquire by purchase or otherwise, on terms and conditions and in a manner the Authority deems proper, or own, convey, or otherwise dispose of, or lease as lesser or lessee, land and other property, real or personal, or rights or interest therein, which the Authority determines is reasonably necessary to achieve the purposes of this act, and to grant or acquire licenses, easements and options with respect thereto;

8. Improve land and construct, reconstruct, rehabilitate, restore and preserve, equip, improve, maintain, repair, and operate any building, including multiple-family dwellings and any necessary or desirable appurtenances thereto, within the downtown district for the use, in whole or in part, of any public or private person or corporation, or a combination thereof;
9. Fix, charge and collect fees, rents, and charges for the use of any building or property under its control or any part thereof, or facility therein, and pledge the fees, rents, and charges of the payment of revenue bonds issued by the Authority;
10. Lease any building or property under its control, or any part thereof;
11. Accept grants and donations of property, labor or other things of value from a public or private source;
12. Acquire and construct public facilities;
13. Prepare its own budget for approval by the City;
14. Utilize Tax Increment Financing (TIF) or other revenue measures throughout the DDA District or portions thereof as authorized under Act 197 or Public Act 120 of 1961.

C. Goals:

1. Improve communication and processes between city and businesses;
2. Increase awareness of Downtown Ferndale;
3. Create a business base that will support and compliment one another;
4. Increase foot traffic and business sales in Downtown Ferndale;
5. Improve the physical and visual appearance of Downtown Ferndale;
6. Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the operating board, staff and volunteers;
7. To nurture community pride in and support of Downtown Ferndale;
8. To promote Downtown Ferndale through marketing, public relations and communications strategies;
9. To establish a coordinated effort among various organizations and agencies to support the revitalization of Downtown Ferndale;
10. To promote economic growth and increase property values in Downtown Ferndale and to eliminate the causes of deterioration;
11. To enhance the image of Downtown Ferndale;
12. To expand and diversify the retail mix in Downtown Ferndale
13. To strengthen residential development and renovation;
14. To maintain and increase private sector investment and expansion;

15. To encourage business excellence and quality in merchandise, services and building appearance;
 16. To create a business district that is unique, diverse, friendly, comfortable, active, urban, cutting edge, accessible, creative, and cultural;
- D. Goals will be achieved through long term commitment to the Main Street Oakland County Program and the National Main Street 4-Point Approach, including:
1. Design
 2. Economic Restructuring
 3. Promotions
 4. Organization

Article II: Offices

Section I – Offices:

The Ferndale DDA may have such offices as the Ferndale DDA Board of Directors may determine or the affairs of the Authority may require from time to time.

Article III: Board of Directors

Section I – General Powers:

The affairs of the Ferndale DDA shall be managed by its Board of Directors

Section II – Number, Tenure, and Qualifications:

The Ferndale DDA Board of Directors shall consist of not less than 8 and not more than 12 voting members, including the Chief Executive Officer of the City of Ferndale, and not more than 3 Ex-Officio non-voting members. The voting members shall be appointed for a term of four years, except that of the members first appointed and shall include an equal number of Board of Directors appointed for one year, an equal number for two years, an equal number for three years, and an equal number for four years. At least a majority of the members shall be persons having an interest in property located in Downtown Ferndale. At least one of the members shall be a resident of Downtown Ferndale, if the district has one hundred or more persons residing within it. A member shall hold office until the member's successor is appointed and assumes the office. Thereafter, each member shall serve for a term of four years.

The Ex-Officio members shall include the executive director by virtue of office of the Chamber of Commerce, Woodward Avenue Action Association and School Board. The Ex-Officio members may appoint a representative of their organization to attend Ferndale DDA Board of Director meetings.

Section III – Selection of Board Members:

The Chief Executive Officer of the City of Ferndale, with the consent of the City Council, shall appoint the voting members of the Board. Subsequent voting Board members shall be appointed in the same manner as the original appointments at the expiration of each member's term of office.

The Chief Executive Office of the City of Ferndale may ask for the assistance or advice of the Ferndale DDA Board of Directors on selecting voting Board Members for appointment. The Ferndale DDA Board of Directors may then assist the Chief Executive Officer of the City of Ferndale in determining the best candidates for positions on the Ferndale DDA Board of Directors through a thorough recruitment selection process that considers the needs of the Ferndale DDA Board of Directors, needs of the Ferndale DDA and review of applicants. A person so appointed by the Chief Executive Officer of the City of Ferndale shall be

declared a voting member of the Ferndale DDA Board of Directors upon taking the oath of office.

The Ferndale DDA Board of Directors shall approve Ex-Officio representative members of the Board after considering the recommendations of the Ex-Officio member.

Section IV – Expiration of Term; Continuation in Offices; Reappointment; Filling Vacancies:

Board Members whose term of office has expired shall continue to hold office until his successor has been appointed. If a vacancy is created by the death, resignation, or removal of a member, a successor shall be appointed by the Chief Executive Officer of the Municipality.

Section V – Removal:

Pursuant to notice and after having been given an opportunity to be heard, a member of the board may be removed for cause by the governing body, removal of a member subject to review by the circuit.

Section VI – Disclosure of Interests:

A Board Member who has a direct interest in any matter before the Ferndale DDA Board of Directors shall disclose his interest prior to the Ferndale DDA Board of Directors taking any action with respect to the matter, which disclosure shall become a part of the record of the Ferndale DDA Board of Directors' official proceedings.

Section VII – Annual Meeting:

An annual meeting of the Ferndale DDA Board of Directors shall be held in the month of January each year, beginning with the year 2000, for the purpose of strategic planning, assessment of yearly goals and accomplishments, and for the transaction of such other business as may come before the meeting. A bi-annual meeting of the Ferndale DDA Board of Directors shall be held in the month January, beginning with the year 2002, for the election of officers. If the election of officers shall not be held on the day designated herein for any annual meeting or any adjournment thereof, the Ferndale DDA Board of Directors shall cause the election to be held at a regular or special meeting of the Ferndale DDA Board of Directors within 90 days of the annual meeting. Nominations for the Offices of the Ferndale DDA Board of Directors shall be recommended in December of the previous year.

Section VIII – Regular Meetings:

Regular meetings of the Ferndale DDA Board of Directors shall be held at such time and place, as the board shall from time to time determine. Regular meetings shall be held, at a minimum, once per month, unless the Ferndale DDA Board of Directors determines otherwise. The Chairperson shall determine the specific time and day of each month that regular meetings shall be held based on the availability of Board members.

Section IX – Special Meetings:

Special meetings of the Ferndale DDA Board of Directors may be called by or at the request of City Council, the Board Chairperson or any Board Member. The person or persons authorized to call special meetings of the Ferndale DDA Board of Directors may fix any place within the City of Ferndale as the place for holding any special meeting of the Ferndale DDA Board of Directors called by them.

Section X – Notice of Meetings:

Except as otherwise provided by law, all meetings shall be preceded by public notice in accordance with Public Act 267 of the Public Acts of 1976, as amended.

Section XI – Quorum and Voting:

A majority of the members of the Ferndale DDA Board of Directors then in office shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. In the event that effective membership is reduced because of Disclosure of Interest (Article III, Section 6), a majority of the remaining members of the Ferndale DDA Board of Directors eligible to vote shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

The vote of majority members present at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall constitute the action of the Ferndale DDA Board of Directors unless the vote of the larger number is required by statute or elsewhere in these rules.

Section XII – Public Meetings:

The meetings of the Board shall be public.

Section XIII – Compensation of Members:

Members of the Ferndale DDA Board of Directors shall serve without compensation, but shall be reimbursed for actual and necessary expenses subject to authorization by a vote of two-thirds of the majority of the Board members then eligible to vote.

Section XIV – Minutes of all Meetings:

The minutes of any meeting of the Ferndale DDA Board of Directors will be mailed to all members of the Ferndale DDA Board of Directors for their review prior to the next regularly scheduled meeting. Minutes of the proceedings of regular or special meetings shall be prepared at the request of and provided to any member of the Ferndale DDA Board of Directors or the City Council. Minutes of closed meetings shall be maintained in conformity with and shall be subject to the provisions of the Open Meetings Act, Act 267 of the Public Acts of 1976, as amended.

Article IV: Officers and the Executive Board

Section I – Officers:

The officers of the Ferndale DDA Board of Directors shall be a Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer.

Section II – Election and Term of Office:

Officers of the Ferndale DDA Board of Directors shall be elected bi-annually by the Board at the regular bi-annual meeting of the Ferndale DDA Board of Directors. If the election of officers shall not be held at such meeting, such election shall be held within 90 days of such meeting. Each officer shall hold office until his successor shall have been duly elected and shall have qualified. The same person in the same office may serve a maximum of two consecutive terms. A term of office is two years. No member shall hold more than one office at a time. An officer must be a current Board member.

Section III – Removal:

After notice and having been given an opportunity to be heard, the Ferndale DDA Board of Directors may remove any officer elected or appointed by the Ferndale DDA Board of Directors whenever it judges that it is in the best interest of the Ferndale Board of Directors.

Section IV – Vacancies:

A vacancy in office because of death, resignation, removal, disqualification or otherwise, may be filled by the Ferndale DDA Board of Directors for the unexpired portion of the term.

Section V – Chairperson:

The Chairperson shall preside at all meetings of the Ferndale DDA Board of Directors and shall discharge the duties of the presiding officer. To qualify as a candidate for Chairperson in an election, the Board member must have served one full year on the Ferndale DDA Board of Directors to be eligible.

Section VI – Vice-Chairperson:

In the absence of the Chairperson or in the event of his inability or refusal to act, the Vice-Chairperson shall perform the duties of the Chairperson, and when so acting, shall have all the powers of and be subject to all the restrictions upon the Chairperson. Any Vice-Chairperson shall perform such other duties as from time to

time may be assigned to him by the Chairperson or by the Ferndale DDA Board of Directors. To qualify as a candidate for Vice-Chairperson in an election, the Board member must have served one full year on the Ferndale DDA Board of Directors to be eligible.

Section VII – Secretary

The Secretary shall record, review and present to the Ferndale DDA Board of Directors for approval all Ferndale DDA Board of Directors meeting minutes, committee minutes and correspondence.

Section VIII – Treasurer

The Treasurer shall review and present to the Ferndale DDA Board of Directors for approval all Ferndale DDA fund and expense reports created by the Executive Director of the Ferndale DDA and the Finance Director of the City of Ferndale. In the absence of the Executive Director of the Ferndale DDA or Finance Director of the City of Ferndale, the Treasurer will be responsible for all tracking of all funds, expenses and revenues.

Section IX – Executive Board Members:

The Executive Board shall be made up of the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Treasurer and Executive Director.

Section X—Executive Board Powers:

The responsibilities of the Executive Board shall be to advise the Executive Director on the finances, personnel and administration of the Ferndale DDA. The Executive Board shall finalize the annual budget to be approved by the Ferndale DDA Board of Directors and then presented to City Council for approval.

Article V: Employment of Personnel:

The Ferndale DDA Board of Directors may employ personnel as deemed necessary by the Ferndale DDA Board of Directors. Such personnel may include, but not limited to an Executive Director, treasurer, secretary, legal counsel, ambassador and maintenance staff.

Section I—The Executive Director Role:

The Executive Director shall report directly to the Chairperson of the Ferndale DDA Board of Directors. The Executive Director shall supervise all other staff of the Ferndale DDA.

Section II—Employment Contract & Hiring

The Executive Director shall sign a written contract of employment signed and approved by the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of the Ferndale DDA Board of Directors. The Executive Director shall present all other staff hiring selections to the Ferndale DDA Board of Directors for approval. Employment agreements shall be signed by the staff, Executive Director and Chairperson of the Board for all staff recommended by the Executive Director.

Article VI: Standing Committees

Section I – Standing Committees:

Standing committees of the Ferndale DDA Board of Directors shall be the design committee, economic restructuring committee, promotions committee and the organizational committee.

Section II – Standing Committee Structure:

No fewer than three committee members and no more than eight committee members shall serve on each committee. No more than four Ferndale DDA Board of Directors shall serve on one committee. The DDA Executive Director shall act as a permanent consultant to each committee without needing to be in attendance at all meetings. The committees shall include outside consultants, residents of the city and

business people of the DDA district appointed by vote of the Ferndale DDA Board of Directors deemed necessary.

Section III – Term of Office:

Each member of the standing committee shall continue as such until the next annual meeting of the members of the Ferndale DDA Board of Directors and until his successor is appointed, unless the committee shall be sooner terminated, or unless such member be removed from such committee, or unless such member shall cease to qualify as a member thereof.

Section IV – Chairperson:

One member of each committee shall be appointed Chairperson by the Ferndale DDA Board of Directors and does not have to be a DDA Board Member.

Section V – Quorum:

Unless otherwise provided in the resolution of the Ferndale DDA Board of Directors designating a committee, a majority of the whole committee shall constitute a quorum, and the acts of the majority of the members present at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the committee.

Section VI – Power of Committees:

Standing committees shall determine and schedule their meeting times, dates (minimum of monthly) and locations; consult with outside sources; interface with other city-appointed Boards and Commissions for an exchange of ideas that would then be presented to the Ferndale DDA Board of Directors prior to any action of the Ferndale DDA Board of Directors.

The committees could interface by inviting member(s) of such boards and commissions to a committee meeting, members(s) of the committee attending said Board's meeting, telephone consultation, and written correspondence; make recommendations to the Ferndale DDA Board of Directors for approval; act on decisions made by the Ferndale DDA Board of Directors as delegated by said Board of Directors that are within the authority and means of Ferndale DDA Board of Directors. Standing committees do not have the authority to take action without the approval of the Ferndale DDA Board of Directors; make decisions without the approval of the Ferndale DDA Board of Directors; act on proposed plans without approval of the Ferndale DDA Board of Directors; make recommendations between committees without Ferndale DDA Board of Directors approval; and enter into contracts or purchase agreements.

Section VII – Duties:

The duties of the committees are to notify the DDA Executive Director and Chairperson of all meeting times, dates and locations; keep written minutes of each meeting to be filed with the Ferndale DDA; keep the DDA Executive Director informed of the events of each meeting by means of the Chairperson if unable to attend; fulfill charges of and answer to the Ferndale DDA Board of Directors; present monthly committee reports at Ferndale DDA Board of Directors meetings; act in the best interest of the Ferndale DDA at all times.

Article VII: Advisory Committees

Section I - Committees of Members:

The Ferndale DDA Board of Directors, by resolution adopted by a majority of the members present at any meeting, may designate and appoint one or more committees to advise the Ferndale DDA Board of Directors, except as otherwise provided in such resolution. The members of such committee may be Board Members, outside consultants or community leaders as authorized by the Ferndale DDA Board of Directors and appointed whenever it is deemed in the best interest of the Ferndale DDA. The Ferndale DDA Board of Directors if deemed in the best interest of the Ferndale DDA may remove any member of an advisory committee.

Section II – Term of Office:

Each member of a committee shall continue as such until the next annual meeting of the members of the Ferndale DDA Board of Directors and until his successor is appointed, unless the committee shall be sooner terminated, or unless such member be removed from such committee, or unless such member shall cease to qualify as a member thereof.

Section III – Chairperson:

The Ferndale DDA Board of Directors shall appoint one member of each committee the chairperson of the advisory committee.

Section IV – Quorum:

Unless otherwise provided in the resolution of the Ferndale DDA Board of Directors designating a committee, a majority of the whole committee shall constitute a quorum, and the acts of the majority of the members present at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the committee.

Article VIII: Contracts, Checks, Deposits and Funds

Section I – Contracts:

The Board may authorize the chairperson, executive director, agents or agents of the Ferndale DDA, to enter into any contract or execute and deliver any instrument in the name of and on the behalf of the authority, and such authorization may be general or confined to specific instances.

Section II – Checks, Drafts, etc.:

All orders for the payment of money, notes or other evidences of indebtedness shall be signed by the executive director and forwarded on to the Finance Department of the City of Ferndale for the issuance of payment. If for any reason the Ferndale DDA establishes a bank account outside of the City of Ferndale's bank account, then all checks, drafts, and orders for payment of money, notes or other evidences of indebtedness shall be co-signed by two persons of the Executive Board.

Section III – Deposits:

All funds of the Ferndale DDA shall immediately be deposited into the appropriate fund or account to the credit of the Ferndale DDA in such banks, trust companies or other depositories as the Ferndale DDA Board of Directors may select.

Section IV – Gifts:

The Board of Directors may accept on behalf of the Ferndale DDA any contribution, gift, bequest, or devise for the general purposes or for any special purpose of the Ferndale DDA. The Executive Director shall inform the City of Ferndale of the receipt of such gifts. The identity of the donor need not be reported should the donor wish to remain anonymous.

Section V – Budget:

The committees of the Ferndale DDA shall submit proposed objectives and goals to the Ferndale DDA Board of Directors in December for the development of an annual budget. The Ferndale DDA Board of Directors shall set goals and objectives annually in January to develop and approve a budget for the fiscal year beginning the first day of July. The Ferndale DDA Board of Directors shall submit an annual budget to the City of Ferndale Finance Department by the end of January for inclusion in the annual budget presentation to City Council held prior to April 1 of each year for City approval.

Article IX: Books and Records

The Ferndale DDA shall keep correct and complete books and records of account, and shall also keep minutes of the proceedings of its members, Ferndale DDA Board of Directors, and committees having any of the powers of the Ferndale DDA Board of Directors, and shall keep at the principal office a record giving the names and addresses of the members entitled to vote. All books and records of the Authority shall be open to the public at all times.

The Executive Director shall provide the Treasurer, Ferndale DDA Board of Directors and City of Ferndale with regular financial reports of the activities of the revenues received and expenditures made by the Ferndale DDA.

All bank accounts maintained by the Ferndale DDA shall incorporate the words “Ferndale Downtown Development Authority” in the title of such accounts. Upon the creation of any new accounts, the Authority shall so advise the City of Ferndale.

Article X: Calendar Year

The calendar year of the corporation shall begin on the first day of July and end the last day of June each year.

Article XI: Amendments to Rules

These rules may be altered, amended, or repealed and new rules may be adopted by a majority of the members appointed and serving if written notice is given of intention to alter, amend, or repeal or to adopt new rules at such meeting. The full nature of the rule change shall be included in the notice. Adoption of rule changes shall require affirmative votes by five members of the Ferndale DDA Board of Directors. Changes in these rules are subject to approval by the City Council.

Article XII: Political Campaign Activity

The Ferndale DDA shall not expend funds of the Ferndale DDA or otherwise contribute to the advocacy of any political candidate or ballot question.

Article XIII: Parliamentary Authority

The rules contained in the current edition of Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern the Ferndale DDA Board of Directors in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws and any special rules of order the DDA Board of Directors may adopt.