

MICHIGAN DOWNTOWN ASSOCIATION STRATEGIC PRIORITIES ACTION PLAN

1. Hire full time staff including an Executive Director and support staff to administer the association

- **Measured by the attraction and retention of key full time staff over three years to effectively recruit and retain members, develop educational programming, direct advocacy efforts, and serve members as evaluated by the MDA Board of Directors**

| Steps | Resources Required | Contact | Milestone Date |
|--|--|--|-----------------------|
| Conduct competitive study of Executive Director job descriptions, compensation, and employment status (independent contractor vs. employee) with like-sized organizations | Survey of like-sized statewide organizations or similar missions: MML, MACVB | Executive Committee & Jerry | April 2016 |
| Write personnel handbook for staff | Handbook templates Attorney | Executive Committee | March 2016 |
| Write employment agreement for staff | Contract templates Attorney | Executive Committee | March 2016 |
| Write job description for Executive Director and Support Staff | Job description templates | Executive Committee & Jerry | March 2016 |
| Write evaluation process for measuring performance of Executive Director | Evaluation templates Strategic plan Objectives to measure | Executive Committee | March 2016 |
| Raise \$75,000 annually for salary and benefits for staff | Membership and non-dues revenue programs to supply the revenue to cover staff expense | Board of Directors | November 2016 |
| Develop succession plan | | Executive Committee & Board | April 2017 |
| Transition to full time Executive Director and staff | Executive search service Advertising | Executive Committee | December 2017 |

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- 2. Preserve Tax Increment Financing tools and expanding the finance tools available for investing in downtowns**
- **Measured by the preservation of current TIF legislation, opposing and defeating efforts to reduce TIF options for downtowns, and creating new tools for funding downtown economic development**

| Steps | Resources Required | Contact | Milestone Date |
|--|---|----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Partner with other organizations invested in TIF and coordinate messaging with legislators | MEDA, MML, MEDC, CEDAM, MHPN, MSHDA, MTA, Mayors Roundtable, City Managers Assoc. | Jerry | Ongoing |
| Work with contract lobbyist and attorneys to draft or influence current legislation as needed | Contract for lobbying services ad hoc Legislative Committee Membership and non-dues revenue programs to provide revenue to cover expense | Lobbyist & Legislative Committee | Ongoing |
| Update and coordinate a call to action and elevator pitch for members to contact legislators (target largest and most successful DDAs) | Talking points (existing) | Legislative Committee & Lobbyist | February 2016 |
| Recruit and retain chair and vice chair to the Legislative Committee | Committee candidates | Board Members | Ongoing |
| Grow the Legislative Committee with a minimum of five active members | Committee candidates | Board Members | Ongoing |
| Conduct a baseline survey of members do determine education levels on TIF tools | | Legislative Committee & Tiffany | October 2015 |
| Educate membership about TIF tools/tips (target 25% of membership and survey for actual use of tools/tips) through updates at workshops and events and through regular committee reports | Information on Document Center : TIF Basics TIF Legislation DDA Legislation Reference Laws (Brownfield, etc.) Conference features E-newsletter, blog, infographics | Legislative Committee | Ongoing |
| Provide regular legislative updates at all MDA workshops and annual conferences and meetings about current legislation | Legislative Committee Lobbyist Legislators | | Ongoing |

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| | Sponsors | | |
| Catalogue and promote best practices of how TIF works; catalogue abusive TIF projects | Generic practices | Legislative Committee & Board Members | October 2015 |
| Draft a plan to coordinate messaging through all members to manage association messaging | Alert all members Phone calls to key members Large/influential members on the committee | Board Members | October 2015 |
| Update a legislative action alert center to harness grassroots involvement | Templates | Marketing Committee | October 2015 |

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3. Maintain a lobbying presence in Lansing through regular legislator education, dialogue, and interaction with MDA members

- **Measured by the retention of a staff lobbyist or lobbying firm that reports regularly to the MDA board of directors; actively recruits MDA members to testify at committee hearings, meet with legislators and staff; and represents the interests of MDA members with other groups and opinion leaders**

| Steps | Resources Required | Contact | Milestone Date |
|---|---|---|-----------------------|
| Activate the marketing committee to create a media plan for current issues | | Marketing Committee | October 2015 |
| Invite legislators to workshops, events, annual conference | Legislative Directory | Jerry & Tiffany | Ongoing |
| Communicate with capitol press corps to feature MDA in earned media (press releases, op/eds, media advisories) on downtown-related issues | Capitol Press Corps List Media plan | Marketing Committee & Staff & Legislative Committee | November 2015 |
| Secure an annual proclamation pronouncing Downtown Day | Call Governor's Office | Staff and Board | November 2015 |
| Introduce Board Members to Legislative Members | Legislative Directory | Jerry Dettloff & Lobbyist | February 2016 |
| Communicate with Legislators on a regular basis, at least monthly, to make them aware of the MDA | E-newsletter Social Media Annual Report | Marketing Committee | February 2016 |
| Speakers group attends legislative committee (tax, economic development, government affairs) meetings and provides testimony on downtown issues | Committee calendar Enlisted members willing to testify | Legislative Committee | Ongoing |
| Hold an Annual Advocacy Day with 25% membership participation to discuss current issues affecting downtowns and to meet with lawmakers and department heads | Committee Sponsors Budget | Board & Legislative Committee | February 2016 |

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| Create a media toolkit for emerging or crisis issues | Committee | Board Marketing Committee | February 2016 |
| Discuss the importance of federal issues as a strategic priority | | Board | January 2016 |

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- 4. Develop a certificate program to recognize excellence and good practices in downtown management**
- **Measured by the development of accreditation criteria and application process and the identification and recognition of at least 50 individuals as accredited or in the process of being accredited by the MDA**

| Steps | Resources Required | Contact | Milestone Date |
|---|--|--|-----------------------|
| Develop the requirements and a curriculum for certification, modeled after the Georgia program | Georgia requirements Partners | A University & Professional Development Committee | December 2016 |
| Identify partners and courses offered throughout the year | Partners | Professional Development Committee | December 2016 |
| Provide a series of continuing ed programs, including a virtual downtown university | | Professional Development Committee | December 2017 |
| Create a candidate list of practitioners for targeting certification | | Professional Development Committee | December 2017 |

Professional Development Committee:

Bob Donohue -MDA

Jerry Dettloff - MDA

Tiffany Dziurman- Stozicki - MDA

Molly LaLone -Ortonville

Lindsey Wooten - Wayne

Laura Krizov- MSHDA

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- 5. Provide a legislative update on the website to keep members up to date and alert them on public policy affecting downtowns**
- Measured by the posting and promoting of updates at least monthly and kept up to date consistently and diligently every month or as new issues are introduced**

| Steps | Resources Required | Contact | Milestone Date |
|---|--|--|----------------------------------|
| Keep the website updated with new content monthly | Content | Tiffany & Marketing Committee & Legislative Committee | Immediately & Ongoing |
| Use social media to grow audience and increase messaging opportunities | Metrics for social media engagement Talking points (existing) Social media calendar | Tiffany & Marketing Committee | Immediately & Ongoing |
| Use Google analytics to measure engagement on the website including clicks and views | Metrics for engagement | Tiffany & Marketing Committee & Vieth Consulting | Ongoing |
| Activate the Marketing Committee to support the website | Next generation of volunteers | Marketing Committee & Board | December 2015 |
| Use newsletter to increase messaging opportunities and member engagement | Metrics for newsletter opens Talking points (existing) Newsletter calendar | Marketing Committee | December 2017 |

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- 6. Strategically grow membership up to 10% a year for the next three years to increase both clout and financial resources to the association**
- **Measured by an increase in membership from 200 to 220 members.**

| Steps | Resources Required | Contact | Milestone Date |
|---|--------------------------------------|---|-----------------------|
| Activate the Membership Committee to prospect and approach potential members in under-represented areas. | Next generation of volunteers | Membership Committee & Board | September 2015 |
| Develop a prospect plan with potential member targets | Next generation of volunteers | Membership Committee & Board | December 2015 |
| Articulate the association's value proposition | Next generation of volunteers | Membership Committee & Board | December 2015 |
| Execute a sales plan to close memberships on targets | Next generation of volunteers | Membership Committee & Board | Ongoing |
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