



AGENDA

GOAL 2 ALLIANCE

Board Members:

Aaron Terpstra • Angie Morales • Brian Grooms • Daniel Kvamme • Danielle Rowland • Nipun Nath • Noele Stith • Sarah Green •
Dave Nitkiewicz • Doreen Timmers • Jenn Schaub • Kate Hunter • Katy Hallgren • Landon Jones • Latesha Lipscomb •
Latrishia Sosebee • Monica App •

April 8, 2019

1:00pm-3:00pm

29 Pearl Street, NW Suite #1

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of Minutes – March 11, 2019
3. FY 20 Budget recommendations
 - Affordable Housing RFP draft review- final approval and dissemination in May
 - Heartside Quality of Life recommendations
 - Public Restrooms
 - Downtown Neighbor Network
 - Downtown Census
 - Public Inebriate Center
4. Grand Rapids Police Department Update
5. Next Meeting – May 13, 2019 1-3pm
6. Public Comment
7. Adjournment



DOWNTOWN
GRAND RAPIDS INC.



Goal 2 Alliance

March 11, 2019

1. Call to order: Annamarie Buller called the meeting to order at 1:03 pm.
2. Members Present: Brian Grooms, Danielle Rowland, Jenn Schaub, Katy Hallgren, Latesha Lipscomb, Monica App, Nipun Nath, and Sarah Green.

Members Absent: Daniel Kvamme, Aaron Terpstra, Latrisha Sosebee, Monica App Angie Morales, Nicole Kosheba, Noele Stith, Regina Bradley, Dave Nitkiewicz, and Nipun Nath.

Others Present: Connie Bohatch (City of GR), Michelle McIsaac (Mel Trotter Ministries), John Leman (Grand Rapids Fire Chief), Mark Miller, Kyama Kitavi, Annamarie Buller, and Amanda Sloan (DGRI).

3. Approval of Minutes- February 11, 2019
Ms. Buller motioned to approve the meeting minutes from February. *Motion carried unanimously. Minutes Approved.*
4. FY 20 Budget Kick off
Ms. Buller presented a brainstorming list of potential project ideas for Goal 2 to consider for the FY20 (July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020) budget, including some items that were budgeted for FY19.

Affordable Housing Support: We have allocated \$250,000 we are hoping to spend by the end of this fiscal year to increase the availability of affordable housing options downtown. Funds (up to \$150,000) for Public Restrooms for Heartside have been carried over for several years while we work to identify a solution. Degage Ministries, with the generosity of a donor, supports the Friendly Neighbor Program on Division (from Cherry to Weston) in which a

team works 6 days a week to clean storefronts. As we continue to collect data on public defecation, in support of a public restroom, we believe our data has been skewed by the friendly neighbor program. We have proposed with the Public Restroom Working Group to expand that program to include Weston to Fulton as a pilot in order to improve the data. We have been working with Heartside Ministries to expand the hours of their public restroom services or potentially activate a currently vacant space to provide this service. This week we will be engaging with property owners in the area while determining next steps.

Heartside QOL Implementation: With the Heartside Quality of Life Final Report & Recommendations finalization, we plan to support Dwelling Place community gardeners in the cleanup and maintenance efforts at Pekich Park. We have already approved \$3,000 to supply materials for this project. This kick off, to take place during the April Clean Sweep Event, will occupy the park in a positive way with the potential to expand gardening to other neighbors. This group will look next month at the recommendations from the city and consider other Heartside projects to support. Lighting/Road Construction Improvements for Heartside: We will continue to fund lighting in that area along with the full reconstruction, street trees, and other amenities. Downtown Neighbor Network: The DNN resident advisory group focused on improving downtown living is a pilot program that supports events, advocacy, and communications for downtown residents. Goal 2 will help oversee their recommendations.

Downtown Census: Ms. Buller stated we are looking for a complete data analysis of the current demographics within the expanded DDA boundaries. This could correspond with the annual Downtown Resident survey and become available on a yearly basis.

Ms. Buller also provided a list of potential projects as recommended in the GR Forward Master plan including: Revisit Zoning Regulations for Ground Floor Commercial (consider changing to live/work), Increase Fresh produce in Downtown (explore a farmers market), Expanding Youth Programming (adding river curriculum at GRPS), Explore Ways of Expanding Home Ownership Downtown (community land trust), or Preserve Historic Character while Accommodating Growth (update historic preservation list). Ms. Buller stated this list provides lots of things for Goal 2 to consider. At our next meeting we will examine the Heartside QOL Final Report in detail and then our focus will be to determine our budget priorities.

Ms. Schaub stated if we are considering revisiting zoning regulations we should allocate funds to engage in communications with property owners informing them of regulations before and after. Ms. Green asked where the City is with addressing this issue. Connie Bohatch stated the city commission is adopting a strategic plan for the next 3-5 years focusing on this process. Ms. Green suggested Neighborhood Association engagements. Ms. Rowland asked how much space is currently vacant. Ms. Buller stated we are always working on that but there will be substantial square footage becoming available with significant upcoming development; this is definitely a topic for us to start talking about it.

Public Inebriate Center

Ms. Buller invited Connie Bohatch (City of GR), Michelle McIsaac (Mel Trotter Ministries), and John Leman (GR Fire Chief) to discuss the Public Inebriation Center at Mel Trotter. Mr. Leman shared that although the Heartside neighborhood makes up only 2% of the Grand Rapids emergency services territory, it generates 16% of their call volume. Many of these calls are repetitive and tie up units for non-emergency events making them unavailable for true emergency situations. Though it is only meant to be a temporary crisis solution, the center serves as a critical community program for getting intoxicated people off the street while not overloading hospital emergency rooms. Ms. Bohatch stated that lately funding for the Public Inebriate Center, which has been in operation since 2002, has decreased significantly. The steering committee, made up of St Mary's, Metro Health, Spectrum, GR Police, GR Fire, and Mel Trotter, recently expanded to include DGRI and the City of GR as they invoke a community response to this funding gap. The committee looked at best practices and other models to examine the center's effectiveness and it was determined that enhanced services are very much needed. It is recommended that the center maintain 24/7 operations and change the current staffing model to align with critical hours of service in order to enhance safety. Paying competitive wages to a full time RN, staffing LPNs or ER techs during non-critical hours, and hiring a full time recovery coach are changes that will increase long-term success for clients.

The funding needed for this enhanced operation is approximately \$500,000 annually. Current partner sponsorships along with Mel Trotter budgeted support provide \$400,000 of the needed funds. Ms. Bohatch stated the City is seeking partnerships to fund the remaining \$100,000. GR Fire and GR Police Departments have generously allocated \$25,000 each in their FY20 budgets which leaves a gap of \$50,000. Ms. Bohatch stated the City is asking DGRI for a partnership to fill that gap of \$50,000 annually for the next 3 years.

Ms. Hallgren asked for clarification on how the program works. Officer Grooms proposed the scenario of receiving a call or seeing an individual passed out on the sidewalk. He stated he would make contact, give them a ride to Mel Trotter to get the attention they need from medical staff (instead of taking them to the ER and waiting with them to make sure they get treatment). He stated many calls come from a passerby and you can't be sure if it truly is an emergency but have to treat it as such. Ms. McIsaac stated the center cannot remain open without medical staff on hand which is why it has had reduced hours of operation. Mr. Nath asked how many beds are available and how long is a typical stay. Ms. McIsaac stated 11 beds are currently available and the typical stay is between 8-10 hours to allow the client to become sober, get cleaned up, fed, and provided the opportunity to speak to a recovery coach. Ms. Hallgren asked if the current location the ideal. Chief Leman stated there are possible alternative locations but right now the effectiveness of the program would be decreased with a new location. It certainly is needed downtown and it would be inefficient

to duplicate services with so many of these participants already using other Mel Trotter Ministry services. Ms. Hallgren asked if 11 beds were sufficient and if there was consideration for expansion. Ms. Bohatch stated there was a discussion on this topic but at this time the priority is to ensure this service remains available. Mr. Nath asked how many RNs are on staff. Ms. McIsaac stated there are 3 Registered Nurses on staff (and in this position requires a special person). The center is also looking at hiring LPMs, med techs, EMTs or other trained medical technicians that can be overseen by an RN. Chief Leman stated our services are being used in ways that it was not designed for and this program alleviates some of that load. Office Grooms stated in his experience, this service is needed. With the amount of time emergency services are tied up with non-emergency issues, this is nice asset for us to have available. Chief Leman stated the previous communication barriers throughout Heartside have been broken down and with consistent interactions the issues in the area are being addressed. This center is a key piece to holding the line while we create supportive housing and provide wrap around services to this demographic. Ms. Bohatch stated last year the Inebriate Center saw 3,600 visits from 350 individuals including 20 “super users” with over 175 personal contacts with 1 man. Medical bills from ER visits for that one individual totaled over \$1 million in 2018 but with wrap around services provided that number of personal contacts has decreased significantly to date in 2019.

Ms. App requested clarification as to why this request is coming to us. Ms. Buller stated it aligns with our Goal 2 Alliance priorities and if this is a program we wish to support our group would make the recommendation to the DGRI Board of Advisors for funding approval. Ms. Buller stated we will look at this again next month to determine if it is a priority to be included in our FY20 budget.

5. Affordable Housing Fund RFP

Ms. Buller presented a draft document containing broad scope ideas for the Affordable Housing Support RFP. She stated after our discussion today she will be ready to confirm with our legal counsel where and how (within the DDA statute) we are empowered to give these funds. This content was based off of a sample Retail RFP so these basic concepts are provided to give us a place to start discussion. Ms. App stated the process and timeline is a concern for her; she wonders is it feasible for us to get something out there and actually hand these funds out in time. Ms. Buller agreed we have limited time, though, there are very few people that are working in this area and even capable of submitting a proposal. The goal is to confirm with legal counsel what our options are and get this in front of the right organizations and individuals to do the best we can with the time we have. Ms. Rowland asked if we are looking for new organizations that can provide affordable housing or partnering with groups that already provide this service. Ms. App stated it could be either, depending on who responds to this proposal. Ms. Buller stated she suspects a current organization will have a wish list of project/programs that they would like to facilitate but this doesn't necessarily have to

come from an already established entity. Ms. Schaub stated she would like to see some research on forecasting affordable housing units that will be converted to market rate housing over the next decade. We may want to allocate a portion of these funds for a study so we are equipped to understand how this will shape the future of downtown. Ms. Buller stated we may have some of that data already, though, agreed that defining the search of what we have may shape the narrative of what we can do and is likely a way to utilize these funds within the next 4 months. Ms. Rowland asked why these funds need to be spent by July. Ms. Buller stated this was budgeted for as a priority in the FY18 and FY19 budgets and it hasn't been used. Ms. Lipscomb requested the definition of affordable housing. Ms. App stated we are working off the definition of affordable housing as the ability for someone to pay 30% of their income toward housing. In relation to Goal 2, or in the GR Forward plan, "income restricted" is defined as families earning up to 60% and 30% of the area median income (AMI). Another definition or another market consideration is the "missing middle" defined as families earning between 60% and 120% AMI. Ms. App stated she remembers another aspect in the GR Forward plan for holding properties to utilize as affordable housing. Ms. Schaub reiterated from the draft document, potential ideas include "Support development of affordable housing in empty or underutilized downtown spaces..."

Ms. Lipscomb stated she is in support of collaborating with a project already in progress whether that is to fund a mixed use development study, coincide with the City Affordable Housing Committee, or partnering with a builder to create new affordable housing units. Ms. Buller stated The Ferguson Apartments are slated for renovations in the next year or so; ICCF is planning on developing Wealthy and Division for multigenerational housing but is further behind The Dwelling Place in that process. We need clarification with legal about whether we need to actually *spend* the money or just allocate it. Ms. Schaub stated finding new affordable housing units while Ferguson is remodeling is a struggle, especially to keep this vulnerable population in the downtown area. Ms. Green stated that is a real problem if you are moving them out of downtown into an area without public transport options that they have become dependent upon. Ms. App stated this is a great example of a need that we have identified and could potentially address with this RFP. Ms. Schaub asked if the DDA would be accumulating any additional property. Potentially we could apply some of these funds to the purchase of land with the stipulation that a portion of this land is eventually used for affordable housing.

Ms. Buller encouraged members to bring any ideas for use of these funds to the board. Ms. App stated our next steps should be to finalize this draft, present to legal counsel, and move forward with getting this out so we can assess our options. Ms. Buller estimates a final RFP draft will be available at the April meeting for the board to approve.

6. Heartside Quality of Life Process Update

Ms. Buller stated we have the final report that Ms. Lipscomb presented to the City Commission which will be included in the agenda packet for next month's meeting. A final budget on Pekich Park (which has already been approved by this body) will be provided soon to include mulch and plants, as well as a kick off celebration (Compost in the Park), that will coincide with the Heartside Clean Sweep event and the Mayor's Greening Initiative in Roosevelt Park on April 27th.

7. Public Restroom Update

Ms. Buller stated she will be meeting with Heartside Ministries to determine the cost for possibly extending hours of operation or renting a storefront for this purpose. As previously stated, we are collecting updated public defecation data and considering a pilot timeline for the expansion of the Friendly Neighbor Program,

8. GRPD Update

Officer Brian Grooms presented a brief update from GRPD. Lucky's Liquor is still operating but not able to sell alcohol. Many folks are using the DASH bus to visit party stores and bringing it back to the neighborhood but things are relatively quiet in that area.

9. Open Alliance Member Discussion

None

10. Next Meeting – April 8, 2019

11. Public Comment

None

12. Adjournment

Ms. App adjourned the meeting at 2:56pm.

Minutes taken by:

Amanda Sloan

Administrative Assistant

Downtown Grand Rapids Inc.



DOWNTOWN
GRAND RAPIDS INC.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

AFFORDABLE HOUSING SUPPORT FOR DOWNTOWN GRAND RAPIDS, MI

Deadline:

Downtown Grand Rapids Inc. will receive proposals on a rolling basis

Deliver to:

Downtown Grand Rapids Inc.
Attention: Tim Kelly, President/ CEO
29 Pearl Street NW
Suite 1,
Grand Rapids, MI 49503
Or tkelly@downtowngr.org

Request for Proposals

Funds available for creative initiatives to help Downtown Grand Rapids grow and secure the neighborhood's overall supply of "affordable" housing.

Background

The City of Grand Rapids and the Downtown community are deeply committed to maintaining and expanding a broad range of housing choices, with a particular emphasis on "affordable" housing for low-wage earners. The GR Forward strategy, an investment guide for Downtown and a 2015 amendment to the City Master Plan, established the goal of maintaining 30% of the Downtown housing supply for those earning below 120% of area median income.

Downtown currently tracks with this housing goal. Currently 34% of the 4,579 housing units are income restricted and help low income renters find affordable housing. Indeed, the neighborhood today enjoys the highest concentration of "affordable" housing stock in the greater Grand Rapids area.

The challenge is maintaining and growing the supply. Home to two major medical campuses, a dozen colleges/universities, a growing number of jobs, the regional transit hub and an increasingly vibrant entertainment scene, Downtown is an increasingly attractive residential neighborhood.

What's more, major plans for investment and continued growth are on the horizon. The restoration of the Grand River as a signature public amenity is one particular project anticipated to significantly elevate the neighborhood's quality of life and, among many welcome benefits, also increase the competition for housing.

Ensuring Downtown Grand Rapids proactively maintains a robust supply of "affordable" housing for workers, students, seniors and others - commensurate with the GR Forward housing goal - is a top community priority.

Funds Available

Downtown Grand Rapids Inc. (DGRI) administers the Grand Rapids Downtown Development Authority (DDA). The DDA has funds available up to \$250,000 to support creative solutions that advance on Downtown's "affordable" housing goal. These funds are available through local increment tax capture by the DDA. As such funds are subject to geographic limitations, use restrictions and payment availability as established by PA 57 of 2018 (formerly PA 197 of 1975) and other policies established by the Grand Rapids DDA Board. See supporting documentation attached.

Potential Use of Funds

This process is open to ideas and initiatives that support and bring about innovation in “affordable” housing. The purpose of this RFP is to identify creative strategies and projects that effectively and measurably advance on the community’s goal of growing and maintaining “affordable” housing choices in Downtown.

Below are examples of situational uses eligible and not eligible for funding. These lists are meant to be illustrative, not exhaustive. DGRI staff is available to help potential applicants determine the eligibility of proposed uses not listed below. Given the complexity of ways in which tax increment funds can and cannot be used, potential applicants are strongly encouraged to involve DGRI staff in the review of potential proposals prior to submission.

Potential ideas for the use of DDA funds may include, but are not limited to:

- Securing existing affordable housing units
- Conducting original research that further defines Downtown’s affordable housing challenges and opportunities
- Construction of new affordable housing units

Examples of uses not eligible for DDA funding:

- Marketing specific individual housing projects
- Paying individual rents
- Staff and administrative fees for housing projects

Proposal Requirements

Proposals submitted shall be limited to 6 pages (or 12 double-sided pages, including cover and back page). The proposal should include the following:

- Description of approach--- A summary of your venture and how it will achieve the community goals.
- Relevant experience--- A description of your previous experience and qualifications on similar ventures.
- Team--- Description of the individuals working on this project and their role in the work. This could include other partnering organizations or funders.

- **Schedule---** Overview of timeline and important project milestones to ensure measurable movement towards the community goal.
- **Measurability---** Description of how the project process and results will be measured and documented to rate success and establish potential further replication and adaptation.
- **Project costs---** An outline of proposed costs, professional fees or other expenses required to complete the proposed approach.

Evaluation Factors

DGRI and the GR Forward Goal 2 Alliance will evaluate responses to this RFP based on several key factors including:

- The location proposed is within the DDA boundaries.
- The use of the funds is consistent with PA 57 state-statute, which empowers the Downtown Development Authority to fund Affordable Housing in Downtown Grand Rapids.
- Alignment with the aforementioned community goals defined in GR Forward.
- Creativity and development of proposed solution.
- Applicants relevant past performance/experience.
- Speed of implementation.
- Potential for success.
- Sustainability and replicability.
- Clear articulation of expected outcomes.
- Documentation of process and measurability of outcomes.

Timeline

DGRI invites applications on a rolling basis and will review proposals with the support of DGRI staff, the GR Forward Goal 2 Alliance and the DDA Board.

GOAL 2 ALLIANCE

Create a True Downtown Neighborhood that is Home to a Diverse Population

FY20 Projects for Goal 2 Alliance

This is a list of projects and initiatives prioritized for the budget items for Fiscal Year 2020 which runs from July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020. The brief descriptions are not meant to be all encompassing but rather to serve as a high level overview of the particular project.

Affordable Housing Support (\$250,000)

Determining the best use of these funds to develop a pilot program that increases the availability of affordable housing options in Downtown.

Heartside Quality of Life Implementation (\$30,000)

- Resident planning initiative final report and recommendations completed in March of 2019. Continue to fund the implementation of the Heartside Quality of Life plan.
- Support of 2 mailings for 1st year of the Heartside Downtown Neighborhood Association.
- Peckich Park gardening support.
- Lighting improvements.
- Work with local institutions and Dt Residents to explore CSA.
- Incentivize local farmers markets.

Public Restrooms for Heartside (\$150,000) (QL)

- Explore a restroom options for Division Avenue.
- Explore winterization of Heartside Park restroom as part of parks improvements.
- Friendly Loo or friendly business and organizational restroom campaign for Heartside/Downtown.

Downtown Neighbor Network (\$35,000)

Second year of pilot program to support Downtown and Downtown adjacent neighbors that are connected, informed and empowered to improve Downtown living.

Downtown Census (\$15,000)

Complete data analysis of current demographics of Downtown with new DDA boundaries focused on Downtown Residential population. Correspond with Downtown Resident Annual Survey.

Public Inebriate Center (\$50,000) 3 year commitment

Provide support to continue the work of the Public Inebriate Center operated by Mel Trotter Ministries.