

MEMORANDUM

TO: Ray Bell, Downtown Development Authority Chair
Oliver Turner, City Manager

FROM: Justin Knepper, Downtown Development Director

DATE: December 5th, 2016

SUBJ: End of the Year Report for City Commission

Per request from City Manager Turner to present to the City Commission, please find the DDA's End of the Year Report for 2016 summarized below:

Significant Department Initiatives/Projects

Submittal of the Michigan Main Street Application

The DDA Board, along with a large number of community partners and volunteers, successfully submitted an application to become a "Select Level" Main Street community.

As a result of the application process, over 150 individuals pledged to volunteer for downtown events and causes going into 2017. Over \$35,000 was pledged from various businesses and organizations to support the DDA/Main Street program. Finally, stronger partnerships and relationships were formed between the DDA and such entities as the Sault Tribe of Chippewa Indians, the Chippewa County Community Foundation, the Chamber of Commerce, the Sault Ste. Marie Convention and Visitors Bureau, and Community Action Agency, to name a few.

Application and award of the Michigan State Historic Preservation Office's "National Park Service Historic District Nomination"

The DDA successfully applied, and was chosen with two other eligible districts in Michigan for a grant valued at as much as \$40,000 for a historian to write the Historic District Nomination to the National Park Service.

The nomination will be written in 2017, and once the National Park Service recognizes downtown as a national historic district, each of the more than 100 buildings listed will be eligible for 20% federal tax credits, should they engage in historic rehabilitation.

Administration and close-out of five successful historic façade restorations (see photos)

The DDA successfully administered and is in the process of closing out the \$662,827 CDBG grant for the façade restorations for five buildings downtown. These buildings include:

111 Ashmun Street: Brewster & Lewinski
115 Ashmun Street: Chippewa County Historical Society
101 E. Portage Avenue: Island Books & Crafts
548 Ashmun Street: A Cut Above Salon & Spa
707 Ashmun Street: UP Engineers & Architects

Launch of first annual “Ladies Night Out” shopping event (see photos)

The DDA successfully created and launched the first “Ladies Night Out” shopping event in May 2016, which resulted in a huge boost to our retail stores in the off-season. More than 400 shoppers pre-registered for the event, and hundreds more made their way downtown to enjoy old-fashioned trolley rides, fashion-related events, sales and specials, live mannequin displays, and amazing food and beverages.

Details from this past year can be seen here: <http://downtownsault.org/events-2/ladiesnight/>.

Launch of first annual “Sault Ste. Marie Restaurant Week”

The DDA successfully created and launched the first “Sault Ste. Marie Restaurant Week,” which featured 11 of the City’s finest eating establishments – each paid to participate in the event. Hundreds went out to eat during the week-long event, and feedback was positive. More than 250 people registered online for a chance to win \$25 gift certificates to the various locations. Details can be seen here: www.saultrestaurantweek.com.

Involvement in the launch of, as well as marketing for 11 new, small businesses Downtown that opened in the 2016 calendar year.

DDA staff worked very hard to ensure the success of 11 new businesses that opened downtown, assisting in the following areas: identifying rental locations; coordinating grand openings with the Chamber of Commerce; writing press releases; creating social media posts; and linking each businesses with various support services. The following businesses opened:

727 School of Cosmetology (opened on the corner of Water & Ashmun)
906 Gym & UP north Nutrition (opening soon)
B Boutique (opened in the former Tux Deluxe)
Boutique Sweetcheeks & Lemongrass (opened on the corner of Peck & Ashmun)
bUmP & Tot (opened next to the Chippewa County Historical Society)
Cornerpieces Autism Charity (opened an office in Arlington Plaza)

Derek's Barber Shop (moved in to the Small Mall)
Pen & People Gaming (opened on Ridge Street near the Fire Hall)
Shad Miller – Farm Bureau Insurance Agency (purchased the former //dotgames)
The Salty Dog (opened on the corner of Ferris & Portage)
Wise Owl Computers (relocation to Osborn Boulevard)

Successful management of or direct involvement in more than 30 events utilizing over 300 volunteers

The DDA was involved in managing, promoting, or assisting with more than 30 events in 2016, and relied on more than 300 volunteers to make each a success. These events include:

Winter Ice Festival (lead organization: CVB)
I-500 Pub Crawl
Outhouse Races
St. Patrick's Day - bar and restaurant promotion
Healthcare Employee Appreciation Day
Raise the Roof Summer Concert Series (lead individual: Abby Baker)
Ladies Night Out
Bike to Work Day
Rally Kings Waterfall Run (lead organization: Zim's)
Citywide Cleanup Day (lead organization: City of Sault Ste. Marie)
Memorial Day Parade (lead organization: VFW/Legion)
Citywide Flower Planting
Music in the Park
Soo Locks Engineers Day (lead organization: US Army Corps of Engineers)
Sault Arts, Crafts & Family Fun Fair (lead organization: Dispute Resolution)
Music for Alex (lead individual: Dennis Brooks)
Sault Ste. Marie Farmers Market (lead organization: Farmers Market Committee)
Slashin' Ashmun Cruise (lead individual: Jeannie O'Connor)
July 4th Parade (lead organization: Chamber of Commerce)
Gus Macker Basketball Tournament (lead organization: Sault Events, Inc.)
Rendezvous in the Sault (lead individual: Angela Patterson)
Paint the Pavement Party on Portage
Downtown Days & Sidewalk Sales
Moloney's Michigan Beerfest (lead organization: Moloney's Alley)
9-11 Tribute to First Responders (lead individual: John Riley)
International Festival of Races (lead organization: Sault Events, Inc.)
Oktoberfest
Soo Film Festival (lead organization: Soo Film Festival)
Walk for Warmth (lead organization: Community Action Agency)
Sault Ste. Marie Halloween Spectacular
Zombie Walk for Autism (lead organization: Cornerpieces Autism Charity)
Small Business Saturday
Christmas Open House

Successful crowdfunding campaign for the Downtown Sault Ste. Marie Mural Project, and successful administration of the project (see photos)

DDA staff successfully applied for a crowdfunding grant through the MEDC, and received a 50% match of \$16,000. The grant required the local match of \$16,000 be raised in 30 days – DDA staff raised over \$20,000 in 30 days! Three of the four murals have been painted, with just the Alpha Bar mural left for spring 2017.

Successful application for and administration of Crosswalk Art grant (see photos)

The DDA applied for \$4,000 in a grant through the Building Healthier Communities Coalition of the Sault Tribe, to be used for crosswalk art. The project brought more than 50 people downtown to help five professional, local artists paint art pieces on various crosswalks along Portage Avenue.

The Total Value of Grants Received/Obtained

\$60,000 (most of 2016 was spent administering various other grants already in place)

The Total Value of Efficiencies Made

DDA staff is in the process of an energy audit for the parking garage, which will result in cost efficiencies for 2017. Volunteerism also played a large part in reduce costs for gardening, park maintenance, and flower planting.

Pictures of any Significant Initiatives/Projects

111 Ashmun



115 Ashmun



101 E Portage



548 Ashmun



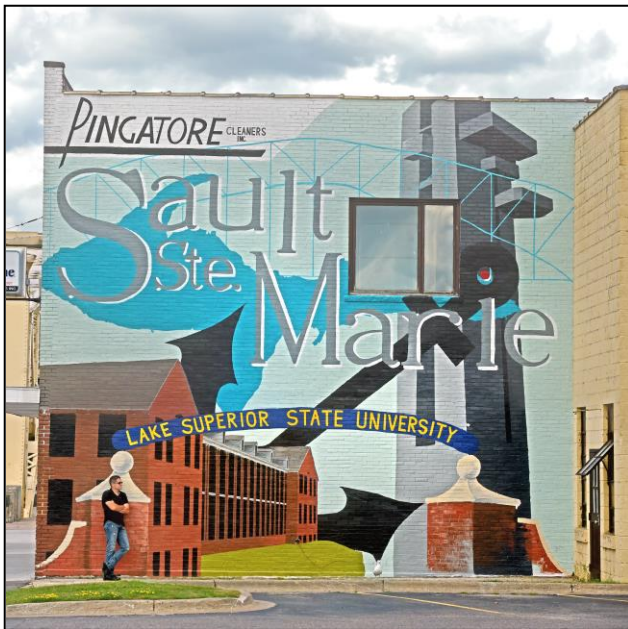
707 Ashmun



Ladies Night Out



Mural Project



Crosswalk Art



Staffing Changes

Maintenance staff person Arnie Hallai was hired by the City DPW.

Seasonal maintenance staff person Kevin Killips was hired full-time to replace Arnie Hallai's vacancy.

April Jones resigned from the Parking Department.

Natashia Dewey was hired as the new parking enforcement officer to replace April Jones.

Kristy Wyngaarden resigned from the DDA's marketing and events position.

Lindsay Ellis was hired as the DDA's new marketing and events staff person.

Significant Initiatives/Projects Planned in 2017

Continue making grant applications for downtown façade restorations

Apply for residential rental rehabilitation grants for vacant upper floors (goal of 10 apartments)

Inspect and update lighting and gate system at Parking Garage

Improve green spaces downtown

Improve parking lots downtown

Grow our events and festivals that specifically benefit downtown retailers and business owners