



## MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor Heasley, Vice-Mayor Britigan and City Commissioners

From: Dennis Durham, City Manager

Date: April 29, 2010

Subject: DDA Community Investment Plan 2010-14

### Background

This coming fiscal year the Parchment DDA is expected to make the last debt payment for infrastructure investments made in 1991 as part of a Downtown Development Plan prepared by Wade-Trim/IMPACT. At my request and recommendation to the City Commission, the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) Board of Directors was charged with developing a long-term capital investment plan to guide the expenditure of DDA funds allocated by the City Commission for Kindleberger Park improvements in FY2009-10 and beyond. The DDA Board met on several occasions in 2009-10 to develop a list of projects for the DDA to undertake beginning in the current fiscal year.

### Public Input

A tentative meeting schedule was established in November 2009 that included a number of opportunities for public input at public meetings of the DDA Board or a special public forum. In January 2010 a public forum was held at the Parchment Community Library. The forum was noticed in the *Kalamazoo Gazette*, the City's quarterly newsletter and on the City's information sign in front of City Hall. Approximately 25 individuals attended the forum and presented ideas and concerns relative to the DDA investing in new recreational facilities in Kindleberger Park, replacing decorative lighting along the Riverview corridor and expanding parking in the park, among other potential projects. The DDA Board received this input and met over the next two months to develop a list of viable projects with the assistance of design firm O'Boyle, Cowell, Blalock & Associates. These meetings were open to the public and noticed per the normal practices of

the City. The DDA proposed plan was then presented to the City Commission for consideration on April 19, 2010.

### **The DDA Proposed Community Investment Plan**

The DDA Board discussed a number of possible projects to be included in the proposed 2010-14 plan that sought to:

- Preserve green space and trees throughout Kindleberger Park
- Reconfigure existing parking facilities to maximize capacity
- Identify new parking areas within the park
- Develop a third restroom facility to be centrally located in the park
- Invest in beautification of the downtown area
- Refurbish existing recreational amenities within the park

When received by the City Commission at its regular meeting of April 16, approximately 25 residents appeared before the Commission to object to various elements of the proposed plan – most notably the expansion of parking in Kindleberger Park, construction of a new restroom facility in the park and improvements to the lower baseball/softball diamonds.

### **Alternative Proposed**

Considering the input received by residents during this process (supportive of additional temporary parking during festival week, preservation of greenspace, replacement of downtown lighting, improvement of tennis court facilities and new park signage, but opposition to expansion of parking, additional restroom facilities and baseball/softball diamond improvements), I have worked to develop an alternative plan that will incorporate the work of the DDA Board and allow additional time to study parking needs in Kindleberger Park before new projects are undertaken. As such, the following is proposed:

#### **FY2009-10**

**Funds Available: \$95,000**

##### Project 1 – Downtown Signage

Replacement of two City entrance signs and installation of four directional signs in and around Kindleberger Park. Cost estimate: \$30,000

##### Project 2 – Downtown Lighting Replacement

Refurbishment/replacement of decorative lights along the Riverview Avenue Corridor. Cost estimate: \$65,000

#### **FY2010-11**

**Funds Available: \$0**

**FY2011-12**

**Funds Available: \$200,000**

Project 3 – Tennis Court Refurbishment

Replacement of existing tennis court facilities (2 courts), fencing and landscaping. Cost estimate: \$99,000

The alternative proposal will essentially reduce the number of years for the plan from five to three and focus the DDA resources on downtown lighting, new signage and tennis court replacement. The Administration will monitor the actual use of parking facilities in and around Kindleberger Park during this time and reconvene the DDA Board to consider parking infrastructure options at a future date should it be determined that parking issues exist.

Next Steps

If the Commission is desirable of pursuing this alternative plan, it is recommended that it be referred back to the DDA Board for review and approval in May.