East Dearborn Downtown Development Authority

East DDA Board Meeting
November 18 2026; 10:00 AM

Dearborn Administrative Center, Council Chambers
16901 Michigan Ave, Dearborn MI 48126

MEMBERS PRESENT: Director Zaineb Hussein, Vice-Chair Jay Kruz, Director Steven Witkowski, Secretary Treasurer Jennifer Lorenz, Mayor Abdullah Hammoud

MEMBERS ABSENT: Director Kamal Turfeh, Director Rana Saad, Director Siham Said, Director Maria Willett

NON-MEMBERS PRESENT: CITY OF DEARBORN: Laura Aceves-Sanchez (ED), Lara Rayshouny (ED), Rebecca Schultz (Legal), Amanda Sancen (ED), Courtney Skora (Finance), Chelsea Jones (ED)

1. **CALL TO ORDER**: The meeting was called to order by Chair Hammoud at 10:09 AM.

2. **ROLL CALL**: A roll call was conducted by Secretary Treasurer Jennifer Lorenz. A quorum was present.

3. **APPROVAL OF EDDDA MINUTES:** A motion to approve the East DDA meeting minutes from October 21, 2026 was made by Director Steven Witkowski and seconded by Vice-Chair Jay Kruz. The motion passed unanimously. Minutes approved.

4. **REVIEW AND FILING OF TREASURER'S REPORT**: Acknowledgment, review, and filing of the Treasurer's Reports from October 2026 were conducted.

5. **EDDDA ACTION ITEMS**
    a. **ED 26-11-01: Approval of the Proposed FYE 2028 Budget:** The EDDDA approved submitting the proposed three-year budget for FYE 2028-2030 to the City Council. This action was taken in fulfillment of the requirement under Public Act 57 for the EDDDA to prepare and gain approval for its operating budget annually. The proposed budget was reviewed by the Authority as it had been presented by the Economic Development Department and the Finance Department. Director Zaineb Hussein made a motion to approve and was seconded by Vice-Chair Jay Kruz. A voice vote passed unanimously. Motion approved.

    b. **ED 26-11-02: Approval of the 2027 Calendar of Events:** The EDDDA approved the 2027 Calendar of Events and Promotions, recognizing the benefit of marketing and promoting businesses and activities to bring vibrancy and a positive economic impact to the District. The Authority resolved to fund these events using the Community Promotions Budget account #297-6100-911-51.00 and Contractual Services account #297-6100-911.34-90, consistent with the Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Plan for District

Marketing, Promotion, and Support of Arts and Cultural Programs. Staff were authorized to implement the approved calendar, make necessary adjustments, and work collaboratively with the WDDDA (West Dearborn Downtown Development Authority) to execute jointly held events, as outlined in the 2020 Memorandum of Understanding, with the understanding that specific dates and details may be subject to change. Director Steven Witkowski made a motion to accept the resolution and was seconded by Secretary Treasurer Jennifer Lorenz. A voice vote passed unanimously. Motion approved.

c. **ED 26-11-03: 2027 Nominating Committee Elections:** The EDDDA elected the 2027 Officer Nominating Committee to prepare for the annual election of the Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary-Treasurer, who will serve as the Executive Committee. In accordance with the EDDDA bylaws, these officers are required to be elected at the first meeting of the calendar year. The EDDDA Board of Directors resolved to elect Board members Maria Willett, Zaineb Hussein, and Jennifer Lorenz to serve on this committee. Director Steven Witkowski made a motion to accept the resolution and was seconded by Vice-Chair Jay Kruz. A voice vote passed unanimously. Motion approved.

6. **DISCUSSION ITEMS** General discussions were held regarding the following items:

a. **Holiday Lights Updates:** Economic Vitality Manager Laura Acevez-Sanchez reported that the new star- and wave-shaped holiday light post mounts are currently being installed across both East and West downtown Dearborn. The contractor is ahead of schedule and expected to complete the installation by the end of the week without any issues, with the displays remaining up from Thanksgiving until after Ramadan in mid-February. She also asked board members to help monitor the displays and report any flickering or malfunctioning light posts with a photo and location so repairs can be coordinated promptly.
b. **Sanitation Study Updates:** Lara Rayshouny provided a status update on the sanitation study, noting that the consultant team held its kickoff meeting in October and has begun reviewing city records, maintenance budgets, and enforcement histories. Next steps include launching business focus groups in December and a digital survey in January to evaluate daily waste operations, with initial findings scheduled to be presented to the board in March and final study completion targeted for August 2027.

7. **DDDA ACTIVITY UPDATES**
   a. **Events Update:** Special Events and Outreach Manager Amanda Sancen provided an update on recent fall programming and upcoming winter activations for the East district.

She noted that full 60-day recap reports for both Dearborn Coffee Week (DCW) and the Fall Bazaar will be presented to the board in December, adding that future Fall Bazaars will return to a four-hour Friday night format based on strong attendance and resource efficiency. She also reported that sponsorship applications for the Downtown Dearborn Ice Sculpture Walk (scheduled for January 22, 2027) are currently open through November 30, with selected sculpture designs due by December 4; 11 of the 20 target sponsorships have already been secured.

8. **CITY UPDATES**: Mayor reported on major upcoming infrastructure work and commercial developments across the district. Major road construction projects will begin in 2027 along West Michigan Avenue, West Ford Road, Greenfield Road (from Warren to Ford), and a two-year reconstruction of Warren Avenue extending into 2029. Additionally, the City secured grant funding to install a HAWK pedestrian crossing signal on Schaefer Road to improve school-hour safety. Regarding commercial growth and parking, two city-owned surface lots—next to Alano's Eatery and behind the old City Hall—have been approved for sale, while ACCESS is preparing an office development at the Schaefer corner that will bring over 200 employees and fill the lot behind the Arab American National Museum. Other active investments include HYPE Athletics constructing a youth space inside the 5050 building.

9. **CALL TO BOARD:** Vice-Chair Jay Kruz. inquired about potential plans to beautify the district's surface parking lots and alleyways, expressing concern over their current appearance. Mayor Hammoud addressed these concerns by detailing several active private and municipal investments that will transform local parking and alley spaces over the next few years—including ACCESS's office development filling the lot behind the Arab American National Museum, the Detroit Jiu-Jitsu office renovation increasing traffic, upcoming apartment developments, and a paused alleyway activation design behind the museum awaiting adjacent construction.

10. **CALL TO AUDIENCE** None.

11. **ADJOURNMENT:** A motion to adjourn the meeting was made at 10:35 AM by Mayor Abdullah Hammoud, and was seconded by Secretary Treasurer Jennifer Lorenz. A voice vote was passed unanimously. Motion was approved and the meeting was adjourned.