



CITY OF IONIA
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
REGULAR MEETING AGENDA
8:00 AM, Wednesday, May 21, 2025
IONIA THEATRE - MAIN FOYER

I. Call to Order

II. Roll Call of Members Taryn Altobelli, Precia Garland, John Krueger, Tricia Meyers, Heather Poland-Sizemore, Zachary Sheehan, Dustin Sommer, Ben Weller, and Ryan Wilson.

III. Public Comments

IV. Consent Agenda

1. To approve the May 21, 2025 meeting agenda.

V. Approval of Minutes

1. To approve the minutes from April 16, 2025 meeting.

VI. Financial Report

1. To accept the Accounts Payables for the DDA: March 26, 2025 – April 25, 2025 in the amount of \$1,355.07

To accept the Accounts Payables for the Theatre: March 26, 2025 – April 25, 2025 in the amount of \$13,299.29

VII. DDA Director Report

1. Report included in Board meeting document packet.

VIII. Theatre Report

1. Report included in Board meeting document packet.

IX. Board Decisions and Action Items

1. Downtown Rock Snake
2. Discover Ionia Social District
3. Marketing Committee Update

X. Discussion Items

XI. Other

XII. Adjournment

The Mission of the Ionia Downtown Development Authority is to promote and control economic growth which enhances the quality of life through planning and implementation of activities and projects within the Development District.



CITY OF IONIA
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

8:00 AM, Wednesday, April 16, 2025
IONIA CITY HALL - COUNCIL CHAMBERS

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson John Krueger called the meeting of the Ionia Downtown Development Authority to order at 8:00 AM held at the Ionia Theatre.

II. ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS

Roll call revealed a Quorum with Board Members Taryn Altobelli, Tricia Meyers, Heather Poland-Sizemore, Benjamin Weller, Precia Garland, Ryan Wilson, Zachary Sheehan, Dustin Sommer, and John Krueger present.

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS

IACC Director L. Wilson discussed numerous upcoming events, including Thirsty Thursday (4/17), Coffee & Connect at the Ionia Theatre (4/22), Legislative Update (4/28), Mega Mixer (5/8) and only a few remaining spots for their annual golf fundraiser (5/30.) Assistant to the City Manger M. Oszust was also present.

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

(IV.1.) To approve the April 16, 2025 meeting agenda.

With no changes or additions, Member Garland made a motion, seconded by Member Sommer, to approve the agenda as presented.

MOTION BY VOICE VOTE.

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

(V.1.) To approve the minutes from March 19, 2025 meeting.

Minutes from the regular meeting on March 19, 2025, were reviewed. Member Wilson made a motion, seconded by Member Weller, to approve the March 19, 2025 meeting minutes as presented.

MOTION BY VOICE VOTE.

VI. FINANCIAL REPORT

Member Garland introduced M. Oszust and informed of his communication role for the city and theatre.

(VI.1.) To accept the Accounts Payables for the DDA:

February 26, 2025 – March 25, 2025 in the amount of \$9,869.82

To accept the Accounts Payables for the Theatre:

February 26, 2025 – March 25, 2025 in the amount of \$11,183.55

It was noted that the contribution of the general fund is held back until the end of the fiscal year. Director Rice noted the increase in payables is due to the down payment of the fireworks.

Member Sommer made a motion, seconded by Member Wilson, to accept the financials as presented.

MOTION BY VOICE VOTE.

VII. DDA DIRECTOR REPORT

(VII.1.) Report included in Board meeting document packet.

Director Rice discussed the Match on Main submission of Grand Event Rentals, connections made with organizations for new or returning events, status of the social district exploration and marketing maps connection with vendor.

VIII. THEATRE REPORT

(VIII.1.) Report included in Board meeting document packet.

Assistant Director Rice discussed the previous month's numbers and activities, as well as what is upcoming. New format will be used going forward.

IX. BOARD DECISIONS AND ACTION ITEMS

(IX.1.) Adoption of DDA Strategic Plan

Member Garland noted the objectives are brief yet to the point and captures everything. Member Wilson expressed appreciation for objectives that provide the board and director more of a direction. It was also noted that the mission and vision of the DDA be reviewed and refreshed.

Member Wilson made a motion, seconded by Member Garland, to adopt the objectives as laid out .

MOTION BY VOICE VOTE.

X. DISCUSSION ITEMS

(X.1.) Marketing Committee Update

Director Rice reviewed the status of the four marketing categories. The marketing committee did not meet in April due to spring break.

(X.2.) Williams & Works Downtown Businesses and Parking Maps Proposal

A proposal from Williams & Works for the creation of a parking and downtown map. Options for either a plan view map for both or a plan view parking and a pictorial downtown wayfinding map were presented. Discussion revolved around the cost not being much more for a more details option and Member Garland noted funding could be identified if unable to fit in current marketing budget, which is running under budget currently, as well as agenda placement of item. It was requested to ask for vector files of images for marketing purposes. Proposal was noted as not to exceed.

Member Garland made a motion, seconded by Member Wilson, to proceed with proposal as laid out for the plan view parking map and pictorial downtown map.

MOTION BY VOICE VOTE.

XI. OTHER

Member Wilson noted the upcoming AI event on April 17 at the ISD with lunch being provided and open to everyone, beginning at 11 am.

UPCOMING EVENTS AND STREET CLOSURES

(1.) Event listing included in Board meeting document packet

(2.) Street Closure Listing included in Board meeting document packet.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

Member Wilson made a motion, seconded by Member Sommer, to adjourn.

MOTION BY VOICE VOTE.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:47am.

Respectfully Submitted,

Cassie Rice, Recording Secretary
for Heather Poland-Sizemore, Secretary

DDA REPORT GL FOR CITY OF IONIA
Balance As of 04/30/2025

GL Number	Description	End Balance 06/30/2024	24-25 Amended Budget	YTD Balance 04/30/2025	% Bdgt Used
Fund: 248 DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT OPERATING					
Account Category: Revenues					
Department: 000.000					
248-000.000-415.000	2 MILL LEVY	44,293.87	46,000.00	44,985.34	97.79
248-000.000-655.000	PROMOTIONS AND SPONSORSHIPS	4,300.00	4,300.00	4,080.00	94.88
248-000.000-655.000-248.001	PROMOTIONS AND SPONSORSHIPS	11,850.00	8,500.00	50.00	0.59
248-000.000-655.000-248.002	PROMOTIONS AND SPONSORSHIPS	(140.00)	0.00	0.00	0.00
248-000.000-665.000	INTEREST	2,194.42	500.00	4,501.38	900.28
248-000.000-676.002	Reimbursement for IFF Agreeemnt	27,500.00	30,000.00	7,500.00	25.00
248-000.000-688.000	OTHER REVENUE	1,360.21	750.00	135.76	18.10
248-000.000-699.101	CONTRIBUTIONS FROM GENERAL FUN	250,000.00	270,000.00	0.00	0.00
Total Dept 000.000		341,358.50	360,050.00	61,252.48	17.01
Revenues		341,358.50	360,050.00	61,252.48	17.01
Account Category: Expenditures					
Department: 558.000 ADMINISTRATIVE					
248-558.000-702.000	SALARY & WAGES	74,842.71	96,900.00	89,744.77	92.62
248-558.000-710.000	PAYROLL TAXES & FRINGE BENEFIT	51,543.44	59,000.00	39,460.98	66.88
248-558.000-727.000	OFFICE SUPPLIES	1,421.28	1,800.00	1,072.34	59.57
248-558.000-801.000	CONTRACTUAL & PROFESSIONAL SEV	1,154.93	0.00	1,056.11	100.00
248-558.000-851.000	TELEPHONE	900.00	900.00	840.00	93.33
248-558.000-860.000	TRANSPORTATION AND TRAINING	1,803.17	1,600.00	1,775.00	110.94
248-558.000-954.000	INSURANCE	5,790.00	5,400.00	5,286.26	97.89
248-558.000-980.700	CAPITAL OUTLAY - THEATRE	44,200.00	155,000.00	0.00	0.00
Total Dept 558.000 - ADMINISTRATIVE		181,655.53	320,600.00	139,235.46	43.43
Department: 600.000 DOWNTOWN MAINTENANCE					
248-600.000-740.000	OPERATING SUPPLIES	5,233.00	21,000.00	3,256.87	15.51
248-600.000-920.000	PUBLIC UTILITIES	8,031.96	6,500.00	7,469.72	114.92
Total Dept 600.000 - DOWNTOWN MAINTENANCE		13,264.96	27,500.00	10,726.59	39.01
Department: 610.000 DDA DEVELOPMENT					
248-610.000-801.000	CONTRACTUAL & PROFESSIONAL SEV	359.64	20,000.00	3,422.51	17.11
248-610.000-972.000	PROMOTIONS AND FIREWORKS	14,955.92	5,000.00	1,371.50	27.43
248-610.000-972.000-248.001	PROMOTIONS AND FIREWORKS	0.00	15,000.00	7,000.00	46.67
Total Dept 610.000 - DDA DEVELOPMENT		15,315.56	40,000.00	11,794.01	29.49
Expenditures		210,236.05	388,100.00	161,756.06	41.68
Fund 248 - DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT OPERATING:					
TOTAL REVENUES		341,358.50	360,050.00	61,252.48	17.01
TOTAL EXPENDITURES		210,236.05	388,100.00	161,756.06	41.68
NET OF REVENUES & EXPENDITURES:		131,122.45	(28,050.00)	(100,503.58)	

DDA REPORT GL FOR CITY OF IONIA
Balance As of 04/30/2025

GL Number	Description	End Balance 06/30/2024	24-25 Amended Budget	YTD Balance 04/30/2025	% Bdgt Used
Fund: 250 THEATRE FUND					
Account Category: Revenues					
Department: 000.000					
250-000.000-633.000	MOVIE ADMISSIONS	73,184.58	80,000.00	73,839.00	92.30
250-000.000-634.000	MOVIE CONCESSIONS	100,846.75	110,000.00	105,250.85	95.68
250-000.000-635.000	LIVE ENTERTAINMENT REVENUE	1,038.40	2,000.00	57.98	2.90
250-000.000-636.001	PREPAID TICKET SALES	335.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
250-000.000-639.000	THEATRE RENTAL	8,275.00	7,500.00	6,775.00	90.33
250-000.000-640.000	ADVERTISING REVENUES	4,301.50	5,000.00	5,166.38	103.33
250-000.000-665.000	INTEREST	497.43	1,000.00	(376.68)	(37.67)
250-000.000-675.000	GIFTS DONATIONS	1,796.82	2,500.00	7,380.94	295.24
250-000.000-688.000	OTHER REVENUE	1,445.36	2,000.00	2,743.00	137.15
250-000.000-699.248	CONTRIBUTION FROM DDA	35,000.00	155,000.00	0.00	0.00
Total Dept 000.000		226,720.84	365,000.00	200,836.47	55.02
Revenues		226,720.84	365,000.00	200,836.47	55.02
Account Category: Expenditures					
Department: 442.000 OPERATIONS					
250-442.000-702.000	SALARY & WAGES	100,489.13	103,000.00	84,198.95	81.75
250-442.000-710.000	PAYROLL TAXES & FRINGE BENEFIT	8,226.43	11,000.00	6,924.43	62.95
250-442.000-727.000	OFFICE SUPPLIES	1,154.27	800.00	854.14	106.77
250-442.000-728.000	POSTAGE	0.62	100.00	21.44	21.44
250-442.000-729.000	CREDIT CARD FEES	6,454.65	6,000.00	3,560.06	59.33
250-442.000-732.000	LIVE ENTERTAINMENT EXPENSE	0.00	1,000.00	0.00	0.00
250-442.000-740.000	OPERATING SUPPLIES	3,768.60	3,750.00	640.85	17.09
250-442.000-801.000	CONTRACTUAL & PROFESSIONAL SEV	11,885.77	18,000.00	11,963.06	66.46
250-442.000-804.000	FILM EXPENSE	41,662.27	45,000.00	46,159.71	102.58
250-442.000-805.000	CONCESSION EXPENSE	40,955.53	42,000.00	33,863.17	80.63
250-442.000-851.000	TELEPHONE	1,020.00	1,100.00	930.00	84.55
250-442.000-861.000	MEMBERSHIP AND DUES	0.00	500.00	500.00	100.00
250-442.000-862.000	SUBSCRIPTIONS	366.99	500.00	222.50	44.50
250-442.000-920.000	PUBLIC UTILITIES	30,421.43	35,000.00	31,554.93	90.16
250-442.000-931.000	BUILDING REPAIR & MAINTENANCE	20,942.45	25,000.00	29,201.22	116.80
250-442.000-956.001	SALES TAX	5,561.99	6,000.00	5,508.28	91.80
250-442.000-962.200	ADVERTISING - PROMOTION	7,305.50	5,000.00	7,021.39	140.43
250-442.000-968.000	DEPRECIATION	25,434.93	0.00	0.00	0.00
250-442.000-980.000	CAPITAL OUTLAY	0.00	55,000.00	0.00	0.00
Total Dept 442.000 - OPERATIONS		305,650.56	358,750.00	263,124.13	73.34
Expenditures		305,650.56	358,750.00	263,124.13	73.34
Fund 250 - THEATRE FUND:					
TOTAL REVENUES		226,720.84	365,000.00	200,836.47	55.02
TOTAL EXPENDITURES		305,650.56	358,750.00	263,124.13	73.34
NET OF REVENUES & EXPENDITURES:		(78,929.72)	6,250.00	(62,287.66)	
Report Totals:					
TOTAL REVENUES - ALL FUNDS		568,079.34	725,050.00	262,088.95	36.15
TOTAL EXPENDITURES - ALL FUNDS		515,886.61	746,850.00	424,880.19	56.89
NET OF REVENUES & EXPENDITURES:		52,192.73	(21,800.00)	(162,791.24)	



**Ionia Downtown Development Authority Director's Report
May 2025**

Economic Development / Special Events / District Activity / Business Updates:

- Parking Parcel Project – identified landmarks to be used, took photos and provided historical information for landmark/wayfinding map
- Continued introductions with businesses in DDA district
- Continued cultivation of Marketing Projects
- Hosted IACC Coffee & Connect
- Co-Hosted Mega Mixer at Olde Stone Porch
- Numerous Apps in for Events: IFF 5k, The Paisley Fig Vendor Market and Ionia Farm Power Parade
- Social District Analysis
- Attended Dog Park Ribbon Cutting

Meetings / Seminars / Webinars:

- Meetings: Council Budget, Regular City Council, City Manager Connections, Legislative Update, Department Head, DDA Board of Directors and Marketing Committee meetings, MiPitch Steering Committee Meeting
- Webinars/Training attended: MDA Lunch and Learn, Leveraging DDAs in Rural Communities, MSU Extension Fiscally Ready Communities: Internal Controls

Theatre hours were increased for numerous special events in recent weeks.

Respectfully submitted,
Cassie Rice, Ionia DDA Director/Assistant Theatre Director

Upcoming DDA Events:

- Mercantile Bank: Fraud Prevention, schedule for June 3, 2025
- City of Ionia Fireworks Display: June 26, 2025

IONIA THEATRE MONTHLY REPORT

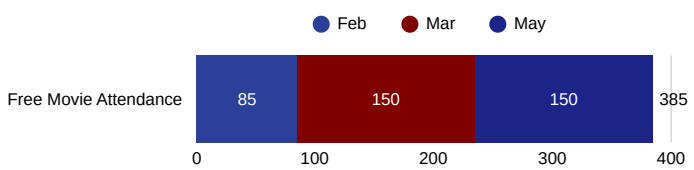
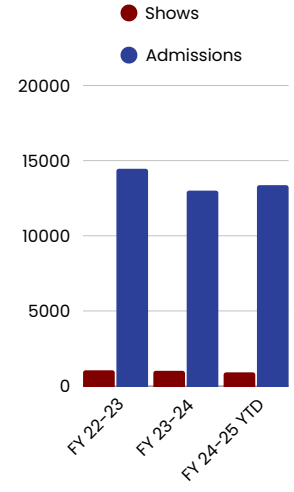
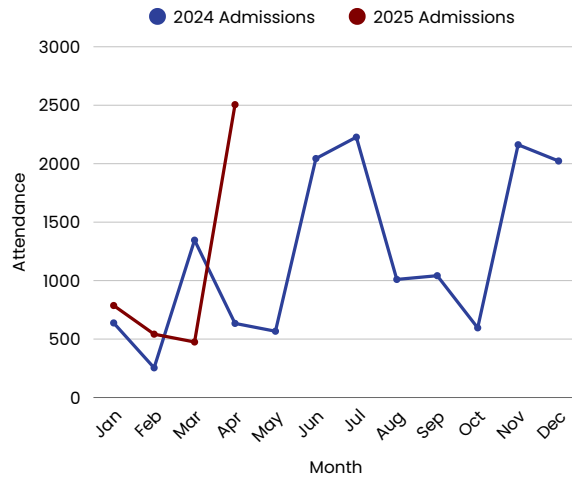


MOVIES PLAYED IN APRIL



BY THE NUMBERS...

MONTHLY SHOWINGS	MONTHLY ATTENDANCE
111	2,505
Compared to Last Year +31	Compared to Last Year +1,871



UPCOMING @ THE THEATRE

EVENTS

5/17 Performance Dixon's Violin	5/20 IHS Class Night	5/26 Parade Popcorn Sales	6/3 DDA Educational Event - Fraud Prevention	6/13-6/14 Cow Pie Classic Bike Race
6/16 WION Free Movie Monday	7/9 Hannah Rae and Shelby Hometown Concert	7/12 Parade Popcorn Sales	8/10 Jake Slater - Elvis Tribute	10/23 Autumn Celebration

MOVIES

STARTING 5/2	STARTING 5/9	STARTING 5/23	STARTING 5/23

ONGOING...

- DDA Monthly Board Meeting
- Session 1 and 2 Day Camp Movie Fridays

IDEAS IN THE WORKS...

- Sensory Showings
- Private Showing Marketing
- Memberships
- Non-Credit Classes
- Basic Sound Rentals
- Popcorn Passes



**CITY OF IONIA
STAFF REPORT FOR DDA AGENDA ITEM**

TO: DDA Board of Directors
FROM: Cassie Rice, DDA Director
DATE: May 21, 2025
RE: Rock Snake

Background

The DDA was approached regarding having a rock snake that went along the side of the buildings. Rocks would be painted by businesses and individuals and displayed throughout summer months. Examples of rock snakes are pictured below:



Requested Action/Motion:

It is requested the DDA Board of Directors consider making a motion to approve or deny allowing a rock snake in the DDA.

Motion By: _____ Seconded By: _____



CITY OF IONIA
STAFF REPORT FOR DDA AGENDA ITEM

TO: DDA Board of Directors
FROM: Cassie Rice, DDA Director
DATE: May 21, 2025
RE: Social District

Background

In July of 2020, Public Act 124 of 202 was signed into law to allow local governments the ability to designate and manage a social district that contains a commons area that may be used by qualified licensees that obtain a social district permit. Initially there was a sunset on this law. In March the House Bill 5090 was signed by Governor Whitmer to remove the sunset and amend some other parts of the Act.

Beginning in December 2024, research on Social Districts throughout Michigan was conducted to evaluate the feasibility of establishing a Social District within Ionia, and recommend next steps for consideration. As of May 16, 2025 over 140 municipalities in Michigan have established Social Districts, citing increased foot traffic, enhanced downtown vibrancy, and support for local businesses as key benefits.

Statutory Requirements

Under PA 124 of 2020, municipalities may designate a Social District if:

- The area is clearly defined and designated by resolution.
- Participating licensees obtain a Social District permit from the Michigan Liquor Control Commission (MLCC).
- Signage and barriers clearly demarcate the boundaries of the Social District.
- The city must file a copy of the adopted resolution, a map of the district, and maintenance/management plans with the MLCC.

Proposed District Area

Staff proposes consideration of establishing a Social District in Downtown Ionia and a portion of the Steele Street Corridor. The proposed area includes Main St. and Adams St., from Dexter to Library, Steele St. from Main to Brown Boluward and Brown Boluward which is believed to be well-suited due to its walkability, proximity to licensed establishments, and access to public amenities.

Tentative Time and Days have been determined with the caveat of City Manager amendment of times or closure power at any time for any reason.

Fiscal Impact

Initial costs will include signage, marketing, public outreach, and increased sanitation services for large scale events.

Benefits

- **Economic Development:** Supports local bars, restaurants, and breweries by expanding service options.
- **Community Engagement:** Encourages residents and visitors to spend more time in the district.
- **Public Safety:** Designated and managed areas provide structured oversight of alcohol consumption.

Staff Recommendation:

Staff is recommending the following:

- Directing staff to finalize the proposed district boundaries and management plan.
- Finalizing the resolution and supporting documents for submission to the MLCC, pending Council/Board approval.
- Establishing the Commons Area with potential establishments applying for Social District Licenses (the trail must be omitted from the Commons Area.)
- The Discover Ionia Social District Logo to be used for the Common Area logo.
- The Discover Ionia Social District be created and managed by the City through its downtown development authority. (This will include a marketing, maintenance and management plan.)

ATTACHMENTS

- Social District Requirements for Local Governments
- Draft - Social District Marketing, Management and Maintenance Plan
- Draft Map of Proposed Social District with Potential Establishments
- Understanding Social Districts Presentation

Approval and further planning discussions are requested to proceed with implementation.

Requested Action/Motion:

It is requested the DDA Board of Directors consider making a motion to approve moving forward with a Social District as presented.

Motion By: _____ Seconded By: _____



Michigan Liquor Control Commission (MLCC)

P.O. Box 30005, Lansing, MI 48909
866-813-0011 – www.michigan.gov/lcc

Social District Permit Information For Local Governmental Units

Pursuant to MCL 436.1551, the governing body of a local governmental unit may designate a Social District within its jurisdiction. Qualified licensees whose licensed premises are contiguous to the commons area within the Social District, and that have been approved for and issued a Social District Permit, may sell alcoholic liquor (beer, wine, mixed spirit drink, spirits, or mixed drinks) on their licensed premises to customers who may then consume the alcoholic liquor within the commons area of the Social District.

If a non-profit organization requests a Special License for a location within a Social District commons area, the governing body of the local unit of government shall delineate the portion of the commons area to be utilized exclusively by the Special Licensee and the portion of the commons area to be used exclusively by Social District permittees. The Special License applicant must submit documentation from the local governmental unit, including a clear diagram, with its application.

The term commons area is defined by MCL 436.1551(8)(a):

"Commons area" means an area within a social district clearly designated and clearly marked by the governing body of the local governmental unit that is shared by and contiguous to the premises of at least 2 other qualified licensees. Commons area does not include the licensed premises of any qualified licensee.

The term qualified licensee is defined by MCL 436.1551(8)(c):

"Qualified licensee" means any of the following:

- *A retailer that holds a license, other than a special license, to sell alcoholic liquor for consumption on the licensed premises. (This includes the following license types: Class C, Tavern, A-Hotel, B-Hotel, Club, G-1, G-2, Brewpub.)*
- *A manufacturer with an on-premises tasting room permit issued under section 536.*
- *A manufacturer that holds an off-premises tasting room license issued under section 536.*
- *A manufacturer that holds a joint off-premises tasting room license issued under section 536.*

A list of all licensees, sorted by county and local governmental unit, may be found on the MLCC website.

The governing body of a local governmental unit may designate a Social District pursuant to MCL 436.1551 under the following conditions:

- Designate a Social District that contains a commons area, as defined in MCL 436.1551(8)(a).
- Establish local management and maintenance plans, including hours of operation, for a commons area.
- Define and clearly mark with signs the designated commons area.
- A governing body of a local governmental unit shall not designate a Social District that would close a road unless the governing body receives prior approval from the road authority with jurisdiction over the road.
- The governing body shall maintain the commons area in a manner that protects the health and safety of the community.

- The governing body may revoke the designation if it determines that the commons area threatens the health, safety, or welfare of the public or has become a public nuisance. Before revoking the designation, the governing body must hold at least 1 public hearing on the proposed revocation. The governing body shall give notice as required under the open meetings act of the time and place of the public hearing before the public hearing.
- The governing body shall file the designation or revocation of the Social District with the MLCC.

Before applying to the MLCC for a Social District Permit, a qualified licensee must first obtain approval from the governing body of the local governmental unit. A fillable resolution for this approval is part of the Social District Permit Application (LCC-208).

Filing the Designation of a Social District with the MLCC

A local governmental unit must file the following items with the MLCC when designating a Social District:

- A copy of the resolution passed by the governing body designating the Social District and commons area.
- A copy of the management and maintenance plans, including the hours of operation, established by the local governmental unit for the Social District and commons area.
- A diagram or map that clearly shows the boundaries of the Social District and commons area. Please indicate the name, address, and location of the qualified licensees that are contiguous to the commons area on the diagram or map.

Submit the items above to:

By Mail: Michigan Liquor Control Commission - P.O. Box 30005 - Lansing, MI 48933

By Fax: (517) 763-0059

By Email: mlccrecords@michigan.gov

Additional sections of the Liquor Control Code for a local governmental unit to consider when establishing a Social District or commons area within a Social District:

[MCL 436.1915](#) - Possessing or consuming alcoholic liquor on public highway or in park, place of amusement, or publicly owned area; authority of local governmental unit or state department or agency to prohibit possession or consumption of alcoholic liquor; definitions.

(1) Alcoholic liquor shall not be consumed on the public highways.

(2) Except as provided in subsections (3) and (4), alcoholic liquor may be possessed or consumed in public parks, public places of amusement, or a publicly owned area not licensed to sell for consumption on the premises.

(3) The governing body of a local governmental unit may prohibit by ordinance, order, or resolution the possession or consumption of alcoholic liquor in any public park, public place of amusement, or publicly owned area that is owned or administered, or both, by that local governmental unit. When land is leased from a department or agency of this state, an ordinance, order, or resolution adopted pursuant to this subsection shall be subject to the approval of the department or agency.

(4) A department or agency of this state that administers public lands may prohibit by rule, order, or resolution the possession or consumption of alcoholic liquor on the public land under its jurisdiction.

(5) As used in this section:

(a) "Local governmental unit" means a county, city, township, village, or charter authority.

(b) "Publicly owned area" means an area under the jurisdiction of a local governmental unit.

MCL 436.1913(1), (2), & (5) - Prohibited conduct; unlicensed premises or place; unlawful consumption of alcoholic liquor; exceptions; construction of section; "consideration" defined.

(1) A person shall not do either of the following:

(a) Maintain, operate, or lease, or otherwise furnish to any person, any premises or place that is not licensed under this act within which the other person may engage in the drinking of alcoholic liquor for consideration.

(b) Obtain by way of lease or rental agreement, and furnish or provide to any other person, any premises or place that is not licensed under this act within which any other person may engage in the drinking of alcoholic liquor for consideration.

(2) A person shall not consume alcoholic liquor in a commercial establishment selling food if the commercial establishment is not licensed under this act. A person owning, operating, or leasing a commercial establishment selling food which is not licensed under this act shall not allow the consumption of alcoholic liquor on its premises.

(5) As used in this section, "consideration" includes any fee, cover charge, ticket purchase, the storage of alcoholic liquor, the sale of food, ice, mixers, or other liquids used with alcoholic liquor drinks, or the purchasing of any service or item, or combination of service and item; or includes the furnishing of glassware or other containers for use in the consumption of alcoholic liquor in conjunction with the sale of food.

Potential District Establishments

Six establishments within the established boundary:

- RYAM 2, LLC dba **STEELE ST. HALL** (115 S Steele St.)
- OLIVERA'S, LLC dba **OLIVERA'S RESTAURANT** (390 S Dexter St.)
- THE SANFORD BEVERAGE COMPANY, INC. dba **STEELE STREET BREWING** (300 S Steele St.)
- **EL MARIACHI MEXICAN GRILL LLC** (412 W Main St.)
- BRICK ROAD BAR, LLC dba **VENUE 404** (404 1/2 W Main St.)
- DEVINE ENTERPRISES, INC. dba **BRICK HOUSE TAVERN** (312-314 W Main St.)



Understanding Michigan Social Districts

Rules, Benefits, and Requirements for Communities and Businesses

Overview

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What Are Social Districts?

- Designated outdoor areas allowing alcohol consumption from nearby businesses
- Created to support local hospitality post-2020
- Must be approved and regulated by local government and MLCC



The strength of a city lies in its streets, its people, and the spaces where they come together.

Key Terms:

Understanding Michigan Social Districts



Social District

A designated area established by a local government where people can purchase alcoholic beverages from participating businesses and consume them in an approved outdoor commons area.



Commons Area

The shared public space within a Social District—such as sidewalks, plazas, or closed-off streets—where alcohol consumption is legally permitted.



Qualified Licensee

A business holding a valid on-premises liquor license (e.g., Class C, B-Hotel) and an approved Social District Permit that allows them to sell alcohol for consumption in the commons area.



Social District Permit

A special license issued by the Michigan Liquor Control Commission (MLCC) that allows qualified businesses to serve alcoholic beverages in the Social District using properly labeled containers.

Benefits



Businesses

- Boosts customer traffic and visibility
- Encourages casual outdoor dining and drinking
- Lower overhead for expansion
- Increases revenue and customer engagement
- Enhanced Visibility
- Supports post-pandemic recovery



Community

- Activates public spaces
- Supports local events and walkable areas
- Safe, Regulated Environment
- Increases tourism and unique downtown experiences
- Enhances the sense of community

Social District vs To-Go Alcohol

SOCIAL DISTRICT

In The District (Outdoors)

Branded Plastic Cups

Social District Permit

Experience Based

FEATURES

Where You Drink

Container Type

License Needed

Goal

TO-GO ALCOHOL

At Home

Sealed Bottles/Cans

Carryout License

Convenience Based



Requirements for Municipalities

To establish a Social District, municipalities must take several formal steps to ensure compliance and successful implementation.



Boundaries

Clearly outline the limits of the Social District and its commons area. These boundaries must be walkable, well-marked, and suitable for public gathering and alcohol consumption.



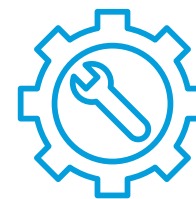
Resolution

The local governing body must adopt a resolution officially creating the Social District and approving its designated commons area.



Documentation

Municipalities must provide the Michigan Liquor Control Commission (MLCC) with a detailed map of the commons area, a copy of the approved resolution, and a maintenance plan.



Maintenance

The city is responsible for maintaining the commons area, which includes regular cleaning, trash removal, public safety enforcement, and ensuring signage is visible and accurate.

Requirements for Establishments

To participate in a Social District, businesses must meet several key requirements to ensure smooth operation and compliance with local and state regulations.



On-Premise License

Establishments must hold a valid on-premises liquor license (such as a Class C or B-Hotel license) to sell alcohol for consumption within the Social District.



Apply for Permits

In addition to the on-premise license, businesses must apply for a Social District Permit from the Michigan Liquor Control Commission (MLCC). This special permit allows them to serve alcoholic beverages in the designated commons area. A city permit is also required.



Serving

Participating businesses are required to serve alcoholic drinks in specially marked cups that are clearly branded with the city's logo or the Social District's identifier. This helps with identifying drinks within the designated boundaries.



Education

It's essential for businesses to educate their staff and customers about the boundaries of the Social District. Employees should ensure that drinks are consumed within the designated area and that patrons understand the rules of the district. **including staff training

Requirements for Consumers

To ensure a safe and enjoyable experience, there are a few important rules for consumers within a Social District.



Age

Consumers must be at least 21 years old and purchase alcoholic beverages from a licensed, participating business within the Social District.



Limit

For safety and compliance, each person may only have one alcoholic drink at a time within the Social District.



For Purchase Only

Consumers are not allowed to bring their own alcohol. All beverages must be purchased from a permitted business within the district.



Adhere to Rules

Alcohol consumption is only permitted within the designated commons area of the Social District. Consumers must remain within the marked boundaries.

Proposed District Boundaries

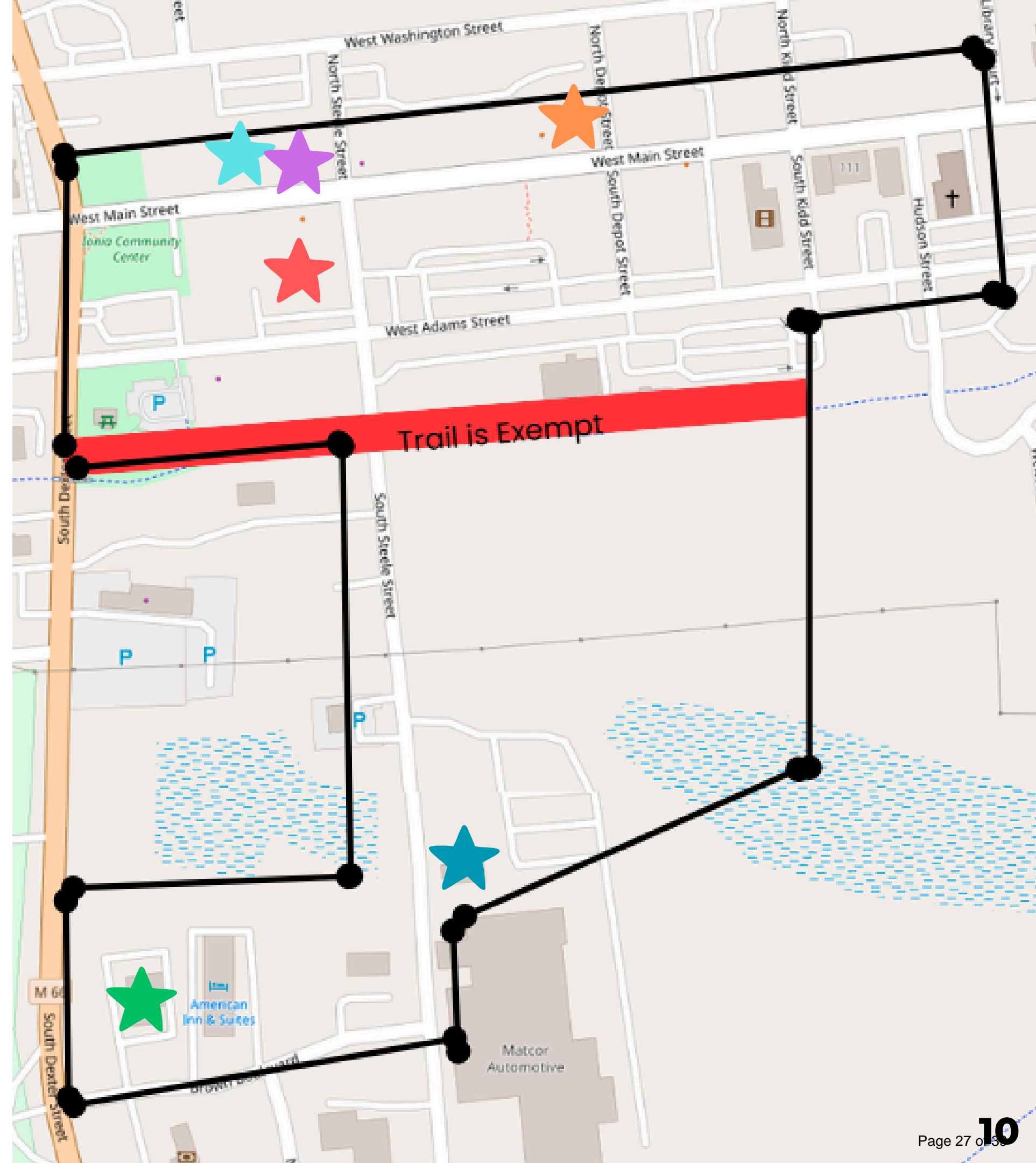
- Four boundary options were provided to the Director of Public Safety for guidance.
- Boundary is inclusive of Main Street, Steele Street and Brown Boulevard businesses with current licenses.
- Foot traffic is NOT encouraged near Dexter Rd./M66 to ensure district patron safety.



Potential District Establishments

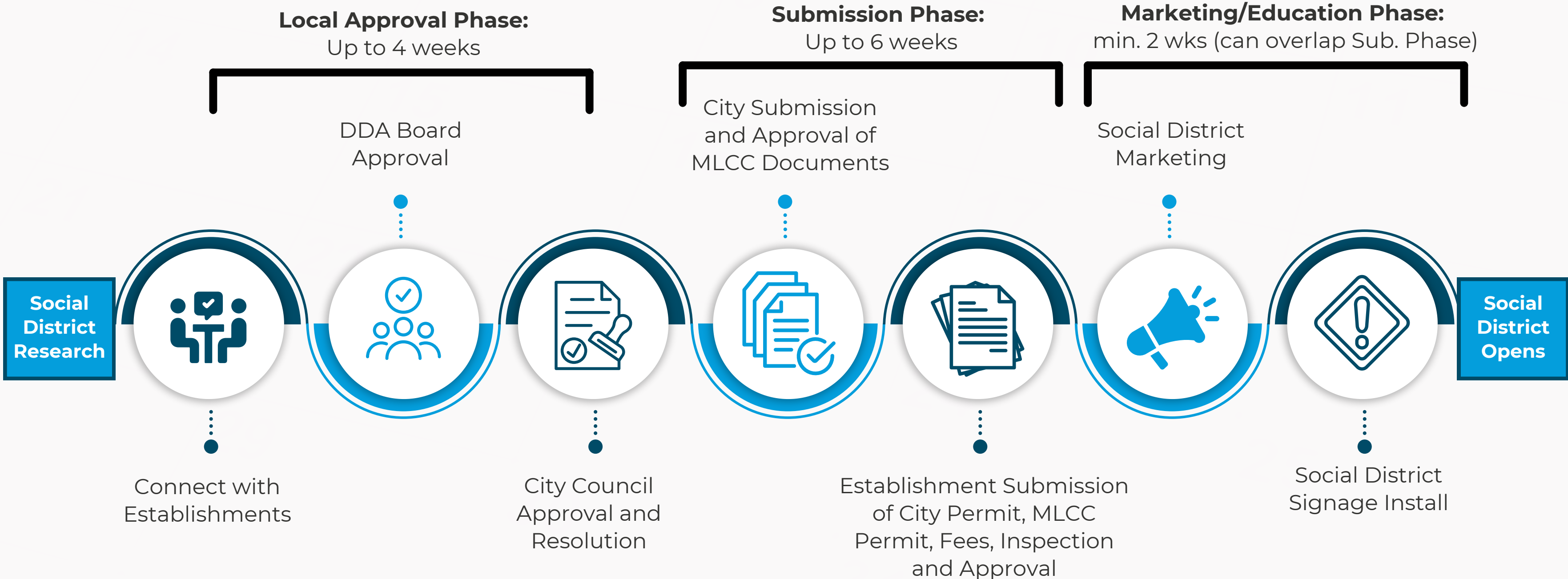
Six establishments within the established boundary:

- RYAM 2, LLC dba **STEELE ST. HALL** (115 S Steele St.)
- OLIVERA'S, LLC dba **OLIVERA'S RESTAURANT** (390 S Dexter St.)
- THE SANFORD BEVERAGE COMPANY, INC. dba **STEELE STREET BREWING** (300 S Steele St.)
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Implementation Timeline

Establishing a successful Social District involves several key phases, typically unfolding over a few months. Here's a general overview of the timeline:



Social District Associated Fees



\$250 MLCC Annual Permit for Establishments

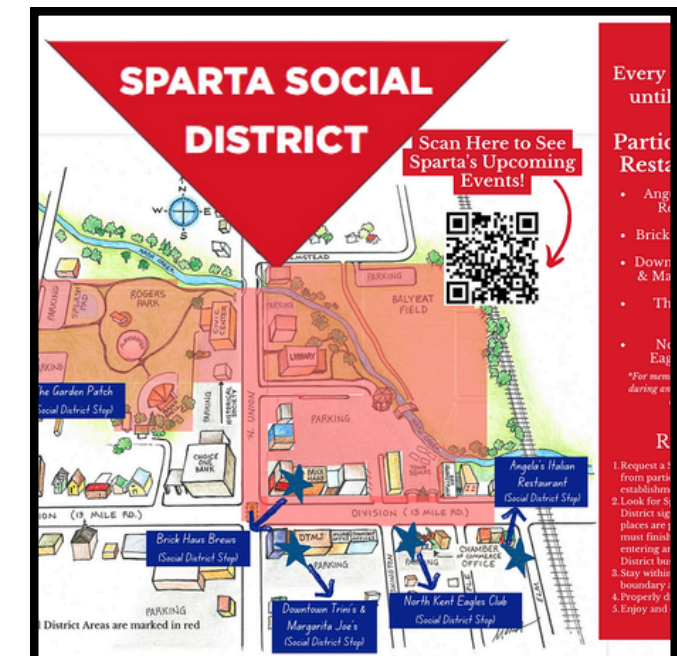
\$70 MLCC One-Time Inspection Fee

City Examples in Michigan

Numerous cities were interviewed in the research phase of the social district. A few of those are showcased here, with links to their respective sites embedded.



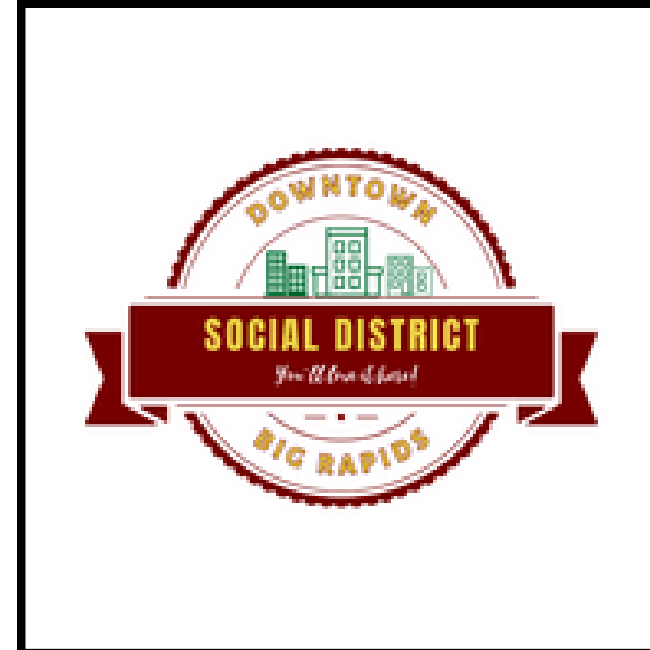
Mount Clemens
The Oasis, Downtown Mount Clemens' Social District



Sparta
Sparta Social District



Rockford
Rockford Outdoor Refreshment Area (RORA)



Big Rapids
Big Rapids Social District



St. Claire Shores
Downtown SCS Social District



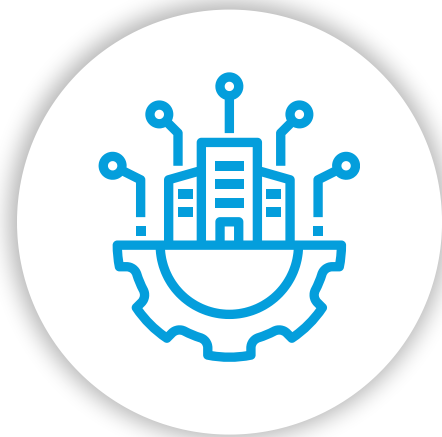
Greenville
Greenville Outdoor Lafayette District



Lowell
Showboat City Social District

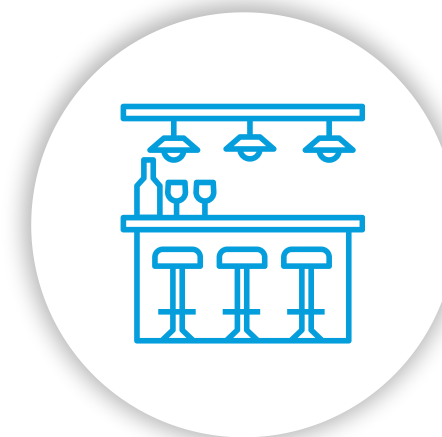
Document Links

Access key materials—maps, policies, data, and community input—using the links provided. These documents support and expand on the details shared in this presentation.



Municipalities

- LARA Social District Information
- MLCC Local Governmental Units Permit
- Proposed Social District Boundaries and Common Area
- Draft Marketing, Management and Maintenance Plan
- Draft Resolution



Establishments

- LARA Social District Information
- City of Ionia Social District Permit and Agreement
- MLCC Establishment Permit
- Proposed Social District Boundaries and Common Area

Discover Ionia Social District

- Draft Logo for Sticker and Signage
- Stickers approximately:
\$1,000/5,000
- Establishments required to sticker cups, as well.



Discover Ionia Social District

- Signage
 - Locations: Main, Steele, Dexter, Kidd, Hudson, Library, Adams, Brown
 - Fixed to lightposts, trash cans, in establishments, etc.
 - Cost: \$4,000+

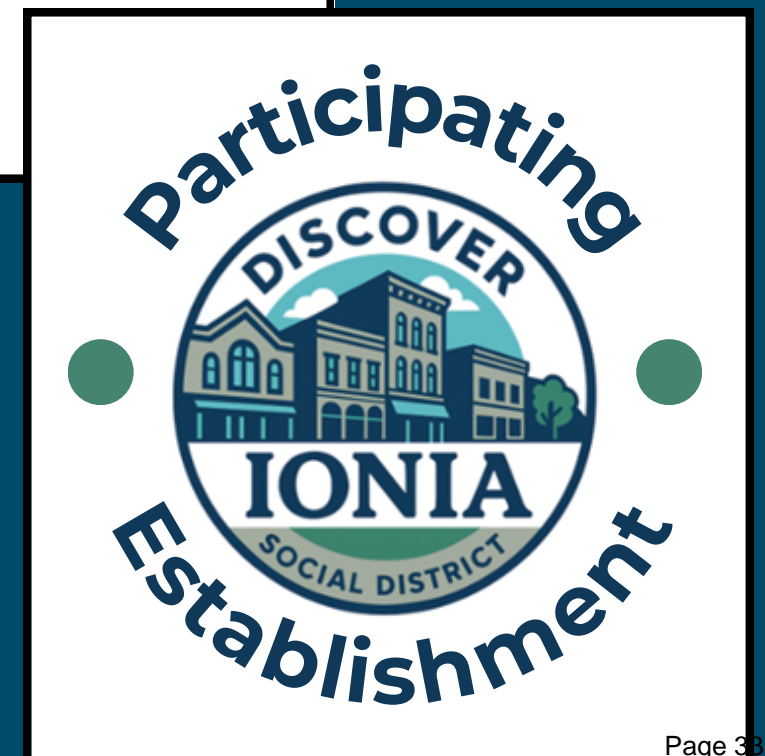
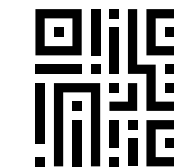


Entering Discover Ionia Social District
Social District Containers Permitted Daily
11 AM – 10 PM

Rules and Regulations

1. No alcohol beyond this point
2. Each cup is one-time use
3. Dispose of your cup properly
4. Drinks/Cups only available at participating “social district” establishments
5. Do not take your cup from one establishment into another.

Scan for Participating Establishments



**City of Ionia Downtown Development Authority
Discover Ionia Social District
Marketing, Management and Maintenance Plan**

Maintenance and Operations Plan Introduction

On July 1, 2020, Michigan House Bill 5781 (MCL 436.1551) was signed into law, creating the “Social District Permit,” which allows local governments to designate a Social District within their jurisdictions. Businesses that are granted a Social District Permit may sell alcoholic liquor (beer, wine, mixed spirits, or mixed drinks) on their licensed premises to customers who may then consume the alcoholic liquor within the commons area of the Social District. The City of Ionia, in coordination with the City of Ionia Downtown Development Authority, now seeks to establish such a Social District.

In the plan that follows, the management and maintenance of the Discover Ionia Social District is outlined, for review by the City Commission and other stakeholders. Pending local approval, the plan would then be submitted to the Michigan Liquor Control Commission (MLCC) for state approval.

Management

The Discover Ionia Social District will be created and managed by the City of Ionia Downtown Development Authority. The district management and operations will be supported by the Police Department for safety and the Department of Public Works for signage and maintenance.

District Boundaries

The Discover Ionia Social District would be located between Dexter and Kidd for Main and Adams Street, Steele Street to Brown Boulevard, Brown Boulevard to Dexter, with a reduced boundary directly bordering Dexter for safety purposes. Refer to Discover Ionia Social District Commons Area Map.

Potential Participating License Holders

As the Social District is established, the City will welcome businesses to participate once they apply for and receive their Social District license from the MLCC. All participating businesses will sign a Social District Resolution with the City of Ionia before applying with MLCC. Current participating liquor license holders within the Social District are listed below:

- **RYAM 2, LLC dba STEELE ST. HALL (115 S Steele St.)**
- **OLIVERA'S, LLC dba OLIVERA'S RESTAURANT (390 S Dexter St.)**
- **THE SANFORD BEVERAGE COMPANY, INC. dba STEELE STREET BREWING (300 S Steele St.)**

- **EL MARIACHI MEXICAN GRILL LLC (412 W Main St.)**
- **BRICK ROAD BAR, LLC dba VENUE 404 (404 1/2 W Main St.)**
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Operations

1. The Discover Ionia Social District will operate year-round, 7 days a week, from 11am – 10pm. These hours are subject to change in order to accommodate Special Events and as necessary to maintain the public health, safety, and welfare and can be amended or closed at any time by the City Manager. The DDA intends to establish the Social District upon approval from the MLCC.
2. No tents or lighting or privately owned tables or chairs or heating mechanisms or fire pits of any kind shall be installed within the Social District or Commons Area without City permission in advance.
3. No amplified sound shall be used in the Social District or Commons Area without City permission.
4. Umbrellas may be installed with City permission but shall not be mechanically fastened to street or sidewalk surfaces.
5. Dogs are permitted in the Social District and Commons Area (the City's leash laws still apply, as does the obligation to pick up after your dog.)
6. Please clean up after yourself.

Access

1. Pedestrian access shall be maintained to all buildings in the Social District and Commons Area as required by the City of Ionia.
2. Emergency access shall be maintained to all adjacent properties in the Social District and Commons Area as required by the City of Ionia.

Alcohol

1. Alcoholic beverages are allowed in the Commons Area only in accordance with a Social District Permit issued by the Michigan Liquor Control Commission (MLCC), any accompanying MLCC regulations, and City of Ionia requirements.
2. ONLY Alcoholic beverages purchased by an adult 21 or over from the licensed premises of a Social District Permit holder may be consumed by an adult 21 or over within the designated Commons Area.
3. NO OUTSIDE ALCOHOL ALLOWED. Alcohol purchased from any place other than the licensed premises of a Social District Permit holder (bar or restaurant) may not be brought within the Social District or Commons area. You may NOT bring alcohol from home or purchased outside of the Social District into the Social District.

4. Alcoholic beverages consumed in the Commons Area are required to be in designated cups per the requirements of the MLCC and the City of Ionia.
 - a. Beverage Containers and Rules of Use:**
 - i. The container prominently displays the social district permittee's trade name or logo or some other mark that is unique to the social district permittee under the social district permittee's on-premises license.
 - ii. The container prominently displays a logo or some other mark that is unique to the commons area.
 - iii. The container is not glass.
 - iv. The container has a liquid capacity that does not exceed 16 ounces
5. Social District Permit holders are responsible for the sale of alcohol on their licensed premises in accordance with their individual Social District Permits and all MLCC rules and regulations, including but not limited to, confirming the consumer's identification and age, and prohibiting the sale of alcohol to intoxicated parties.
6. During regular patrols, the Ionia Police Department will monitor the Social District and Commons Area as assigned for compliance with MLCC and City of Ionia rules and regulations.
7. City staff and/or contractors may also monitor the Commons Area and report compliance issues to the proper authorities.

The DDA will make available the Social District Stickers for the containers. Participating license holders will provide their own sticker displaying their trade name or logo and containers meeting the state requirements. The following additional rule applies to the use Social District containers:

Financing

The Discover Ionia Social District will be funded by the City of Ionia Downtown Development Authority and local establishments.

Security and Enforcement

Security and enforcement in the Social District will be done by the Ionia Department of Public Safety.

Insurance

The City of Ionia and DDA are self-insured for their management and operation of the Social District. As part of the required Social District Agreement participating license holders will secure their own liability insurance and indemnify the city, DDA, elected/appointed officials and employees.

Sanitation and Maintenance

The City of Ionia Department of Public Works will provide sanitation services within the district including trash removal and litter pick up. Trash/recycling receptacles will be located at the boundaries of the Social District to encourage patrons to properly dispose of their used cups, as well as throughout the Social District as presently available throughout the downtown.

Marketing and Promotion

1. Marketing will be done by the Ionia Downtown Development Authority City of Ionia and participating businesses of the district.
2. Signage
 - a. City staff, the Downtown Development Authority (DDA), and/or contractors will provide signage that designates the Commons Area and Commons Area boundaries.
 - b. Existing City of Ionia sign ordinances are still applicable within Social District and Commons Area.

District Designation and Logo

The Social District will utilize a Discover Ionia Social District logo – an example is depicted below. Boundaries of the Social District will be clearly marked with signs affixed to light posts, in grass area, etc...



Seating, Tables, and Related Furnishings

1. City staff, the Downtown Development Authority (DDA), and/or contractors will maintain any seating, tables, and related furnishings that have been purchased and deployed by the City or the DDA within the Social District.
2. Seating, tables, and related furnishings that have been provided by individual Social District Permit Holders shall be the sole responsibility of the Social District Permit Holders and must comply with ADA accessibility requirements.
3. Related furnishings are defined as planters, fencing, spatial delineators or other elements that are deployed as part of a seating expansion within the Social District.

Review

1. The Management and Maintenance Plan shall be included in any future Social District reviews conducted by the City of Ionia.
2. The City Manager shall be included in any review and consulted on any revisions to the Social District and Management and Maintenance Plan.
3. Additional Commons Areas may be considered at a future date by City Council.
4. The City of Ionia reserves the right to close the Social District and/or Commons Area.



**CITY OF IONIA
STAFF REPORT FOR DDA AGENDA ITEM**

TO: DDA Board of Directors
FROM: Cassie Rice, DDA Director
DATE: May 21, 2025
RE: Marketing Committee Update

- **Videos/Photos – budget spent to date: \$475**
 - Projects: Stock Photos, Library for Businesses
 - Status: Image gallery purchased with ongoing access and additional images uploaded periodically.
- **Discover Ionia Updates – budget spent to date: \$0**
 - Projects: Public Website, City Website
 - Status: Negligible updates have been made on both the Discover Ionia website and the DDA City page. Currently, working on cleaning up outdated content, refreshing information, and improving overall navigation.
- **Promo Info – budget spent to date: \$50**
 - Projects: Full District Listing, Downtown Business Focus, Stackable Experiences, Vacancy Listing, Ionia Sell Sheet
 - Status: Final pieces and Drafts for the promotional materials are in progress, currently at different stages of development. Stackable Experiences and DDA Board One pager are finished. Parking and Downtown Landmark map have 1st draft due June 3rd and final viewing on June 18th. District business contact info is still required, initial run of district brochure can happen with anticipation of edits on next run.
- **Project Bulldog – budget spent to date: \$2,016**
 - Projects: Bulldogs painted
 - Status: One bulldog finished with students receiving the naming rights to bulldogs. Bulldogs will travel to a new location each month. Monthly locations and a news release are in the works.
- **Direction Requested:**
 - Logo and Branding for same or different for DDA vs City vs Discover Ionia
 - Auction of Bulldogs with proceeds going to the DDA for future placemaking activities and IHS Art Department