

MEETING AGENDA

THURSDAY, May 4, 2017

Town Hall Room – Meridian Municipal Building
5151 Marsh Road – 7:30 a.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER
2. **MISSION:** Set the standard in creating an entrepreneurial culture; be the example for revitalization of our business districts and be the leaders in building sustainable public/private partnerships.
3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA
4. CONSENT AGENDA
 - a. Communications
 - b. Minutes – April 12, 2017
5. PUBLIC REMARKS
6. PRESENTATION
 - a. Farmers' Market & Central Park Master Plan- LuAnn Maisner
 - b. LEAP Annual Report- Josh Holliday, Tri-County Development and Placemaking Manager
7. FINANCIAL REPORT
8. APPROVAL OF PAYMENTS
9. PLANNING COMMISSION REPORT
10. NEW BUSINESS
 - a. Matching Fund Façade Grant Program
 - b. Business Retention & Expansion (BRE) Program
11. OLD BUSINESS
12. CHAIR REPORT
13. STAFF REPORT
 - a. Update- Development Projects
14. TOWNSHIP MANAGER REPORT
15. TOWNSHIP BOARD REPORT
16. OPEN DISCUSSION/BOARD COMMENTS
17. PUBLIC REMARKS
18. NEXT MEETING DATE:
 - a. July 3, 2017, 7:30 a.m.
19. ADJOURNMENT

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
MERIDIAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
April 12, 2017 MEETING MINUTES
TOWN HALL ROOM, MERIDIAN MUNICIPAL BUILDING

PRESENT: Jade Sims, Chair Chris Buck, David Olson (left at 8:50), David Ledebuhr, Adam Carlson (left at 8:56), Shawn Dunham (left at 8:58), Trustee Phil Deschaine

ABSENT: Josh Hundt, Lynda Rowlee, Malinda Barr

OTHERS: Planning Commission Vice-Chair John Scott-Craig, Director of Community Planning and Development Mark Kieselbach, Associate Planner/Economic Development Coordinator Ben Motil

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Buck called the meeting to order at 7:32 a.m. and asked Member Carlson to read the Mission Statement.

2. **MISSION:** Set the standard in creating an entrepreneurial culture, be the example for revitalization of our business districts, and be the leaders in building sustainable public/private partnerships.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION BY TRUSTEE DESCHAIINE TO APPROVE AGENDA. SUPPORTED BY MEMBER CARLSON. MOTION PASSES 7-0.

4. CONSENT AGENDA

- a. Communications
- b. Minutes – March 2, 2017

MOTION BY MEMBER LEDEBUHR TO APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA. SUPPORTED BY MEMBER DUNHAM. MOTION PASSES 7-0.

5. PUBLIC REMARKS

None.

6. Presentation

None.

7. FINANCIAL REPORT

None.

8. APPROVAL OF PAYMENTS

None.

9. PLANNING COMMISSION REPORT

Planning Commission Vice-Chair John Scott-Craig provided a summary of recent Planning Commission activities.

10. NEW BUSINESS

A. 2017 Goals & Objectives- Chair Buck would like to continually assess the progress of the 2017 Goals & Objectives of the EDC. Chair Buck would like to remain proactive in the EDC's approach toward accomplishing these goals.

- Chair Buck summarized the formational meeting of the Meridian Township Corridor Improvement Authority (CIA). The CIA formed their bylaws and elected the Chair and Vice Chair. Chris Nugent was nominated to serve as CIA Chair and Kellie Johnson was nominated to serve as Vice-Chair. Chair Buck reported the CIA discussed possible mission statements and options for goals and objectives.

- Community Planning & Development Director Mark Kieselbach discussed development progress occurring in downtown Okemos, Haslett, and Carriage Hills. Communication is ongoing with developers.

B. Farmers' Market Project update- Member Ledebuhr provided an update on the proposed Farmers' Market relocation project.

- Parks Director LuAnn Maisner and Member Ledebuhr continue to meet with Mall administration to discuss the future development of this project. They have met with LEAP and Consumers Energy to discuss the proposed project in order to present the best possible proposal to Mall administration.

C. Revitalization ideas for downtown Okemos, Haslett, and Carriage Hills- Chair Buck opened the floor to EDC Members to come up with possible revitalization ideas. Discussion included:

- Bike sharing programs.
- Transportation programs.

- Establishing a matching fund façade improvement grant program within the Township.
- Striving to activate the spaces, rather than the buildings in the Potential Intensity Change Areas (PICAs).
- Designing and implementing a Business Retention & Expansion (BR&E) program.
- Creating economic development marketing and informational pieces such as a “How to Start Your Business” to better facilitate the start-up process for new business owners.
- Examining potential overlay districts to incentivize business districts.

11. OLD BUSINESS

Brownfield Redevelopment Authority (BRA) – Staff updated the EDC on the BRA initiative, noting the Township Board will have it on the agenda for discussion at its meeting on March 18, 2017.

12. CHAIR REPORT

Chair Buck provided a report that included the following:

- Updates on the first CIA meeting.
- Updates on the GLRPI meeting schedule.
- News regarding the passing of former Township Trustee John Veenstra.
- The resignation of EDC member Mark Epolito.
- A request to Parks Director LuAnn Maisner to speak to EDC about Parks Redevelopment plan.
- Status of dilapidated homes near Hagadorn Rd. and Bennett Rd.

13. STAFF REPORT

A. Development Projects Update – EDC staff provided updates on the status of proposed and ongoing projects within the Township. Report on file.

14. TOWNSHIP MANAGER REPORT

In lieu of the Township Manager’s report, staff requested the EDC Board to recommend an EDC member to be considered by the Township Board to serve on the proposed Brownfield Redevelopment Authority. The EDC recommended Chair Buck with Member Ledebuhr and Member Carlson as alternatives, if needed.

15. TOWNSHIP BOARD REPORT

Trustee Deschaine provided an update on Township Board activities including:

- Police and Fire millage – millage fact sheet available on Township website.
- Board discussion regarding the purchase of a new ladder truck for the Fire Department. Current ladder tuck is approximately 20 years old.

16. OPEN DISCUSSION/BOARD COMMENTS

- Discussion regarding the following items:
 - Michigan Women’s Hall of Fame opening in Meridian Mall.
 - Payless Shoes and Gordman’s closing in Meridian Mall.
- Community Planning & Development Director Mark Kieselbach provided updates on the following items:
 - Status of Costco construction.
 - Ongoing BRT/CATA discussions.
 - Elevation at Okemos Pointe project.
 - Form-based code in the Master Plan.
 - Proposed construction project at the Jolly Rd. and Okemos Rd. intersection, regarding the addition of dedicated turn lanes.

17. PUBLIC REMARKS

None.

18. NEXT MEETING DATE:

- May 4, 2017 7:30 a.m.

19. ADJOURNMENT

Hearing no objection, Chair Buck adjourned the meeting at 9:00 a.m.



To: EDC Board Members
From: 
Benjamin M. Motil
Economic Development Coordinator/Assoc. Planner
Date: April 27, 2017
Re: Matching Fund Façade Grant Program

At the EDC meeting on April 12th, 2017, the EDC Board discussed establishing a matching fund façade improvement grant as a means of revitalization for Meridian Township's business districts, as it pertains to the 2017 EDC Goals and Objectives.

A façade grant program would provide matching funds for exterior improvements to commercial or non-residential buildings and storefronts. It would also provide incentive for business owners to improve the outer aesthetics of their place of business while maintaining the structural integrity of the building.

A range of issues must be considered before implementing a matching fund façade improvement program. The EDC will need to define the areas they would like the program to occur. The EDC should consider if they would like to target specific areas, for example the three Potential Intensity Change Areas (PICAs) in the 2017 Master Plan, or if the program will be available to commercial/non-residential properties throughout the entire Township.

The EDC must also determine if the program will be available for a portion of the year, or if funding opportunities will be available to businesses year-round. The EDC will also have to decide the duration and timeline of the application process.

Other important factors for consideration include, but are not limited to:

- Designation of eligible buildings
- Funding amounts
- Façade design guidelines
- Eligible/Non-Eligible façade improvements
- Timetable (from application to project completion)
- Required documentation
- Application grading criteria
- Staff or committee oversight of projects
- Departmental coordination (Planning & Zoning, Building, Treasurer, etc.)

Staff has provided research and policy samples that provide further information regarding the creation and implementation of a matching fund façade improvement program.



Attachments:

- 1. How Façade Improvement Programs Can Benefit Your Community**
- 2. 2014-2015 Façade Grant Program Overview – City of Graham, NC**
- 3. Williamston Downtown Development Authority: Façade Improvement Program Procedures, Guidelines, and Application**

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How Façade Improvement Programs Can Benefit Your Community

by Amy Facca

October 28th, 2013

Read the start of this article below; to view full article you need to be a PlannersWeb member. Already a member? -- be sure you're logged-in. Not a member? Consider [joining the PlannersWeb](#). One year or one-day memberships are available.

The revitalization of a neglected commercial district or residential neighborhood often begins with improvements to a single building or storefront.

Even simple changes such as the removal of non-historic materials, repairs, or a new paint job that calls attention to the building's original architectural details signal positive change and often stimulate similar improvements in neighboring buildings.

While this process sometimes begins spontaneously through the work of individual property or business owners, it can be accelerated when a community creates a façade improvement program. **As a result, such programs are frequently among the implementing actions of comprehensive plans, downtown revitalization strategies, and historic preservation plans.**

Façade improvement programs are incentive programs created to encourage property owners and businesses to improve the exterior appearance of their buildings and storefronts. They focus on either commercial or residential properties in historic or non-historic areas and provide financial incentives such as a matching grant or loan, a tax incentive, and design assistance.

Although it may seem to be a minor aspect of an improvement program, **design assistance** enables and helps ensure that building modifications comply with any historic district guidelines or other design guidelines developed specifically to enhance buildings in the target area.

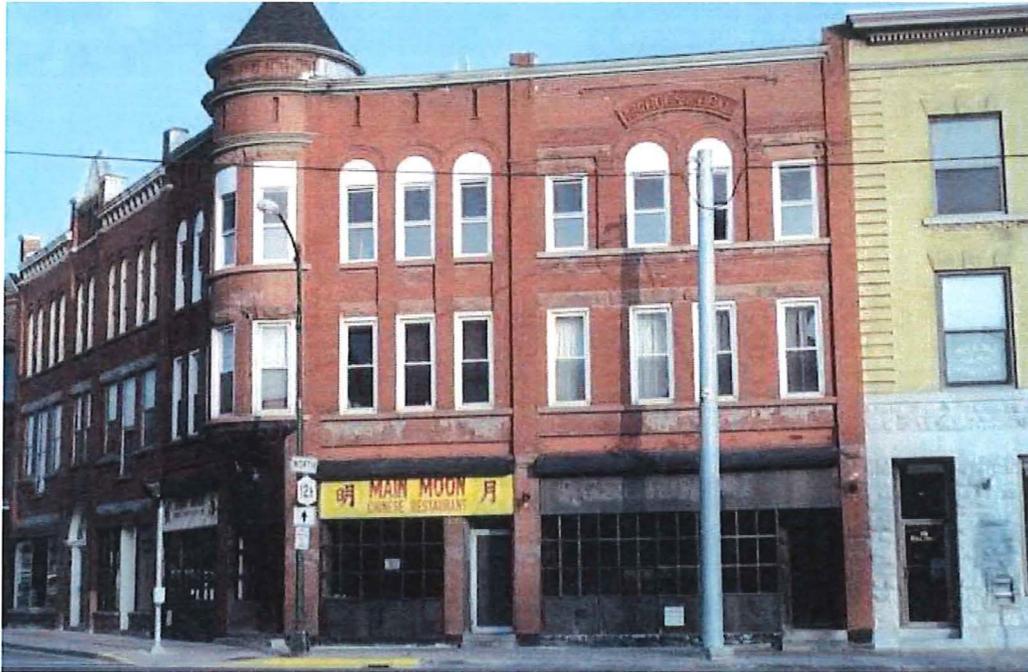


Improvements to this small building in Hamilton, New York, included a new sign, reduction of unsightly signage, a bold new paint scheme highlighting the building's historic character, and

Economic Benefits of Façade Improvements:

Façade improvement programs produce many benefits -- including strengthening locally owned businesses, which helps keep dollars in the local economy.

a new cornice for the roof gable. The dark paint was used to make non-historic building elements such as the garage door less obvious. All photos by Amy Facca unless otherwise noted.



Also in Hamilton, New York, the Nicols-Beal building. In addition to cleaning the brick masonry facade, paint was cleverly used to call attention to the turret cornice and minimize modern window elements in the storefront and upper floors; a new awning was also used to call attention to the storefront and conceal the modern, non-historic aluminum windows in the storefront.

A report in the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Dollar & Sense series¹ also found that:

- Commercial building improvements resulted in an increase in sales in the year after the improvements were made,

- Sales improvements were sustained for several years,
- Sales increases exceeded increases in local taxes,
- The improvements attracted new businesses and shoppers to the target area,
- Participants were often motivated to make additional improvements (such as to interior spaces or product lines), and
- Owners/tenants of properties and businesses in surrounding areas were motivated to make improvements

Façade improvement programs, and closely related building rehabilitation programs, are usually developed and managed by organizations with a vested interest in civic improvement.

Programs focused on commercial properties are usually administered and staffed by a municipality's planning, community development, or economic development office; a Main Street organization; a business improvement district; or other government-affiliated entities.

Residential programs are usually carried out by a government or non-profit housing agency or a nonprofit community or neighborhood development organization.

Other entities which may carry out façade improvement programs include institutions such as colleges or hospitals. Their programs are often designed to encourage reinvestment in the commercial or residential neighborhoods surrounding their campuses. Sometimes programs are organized by a blended team made up of local government, an institution such as a college or university, and a nonprofit community or economic development organization.

The big “carrot” that makes a façade improvement program successful is, of course, the incentives the program offers. While larger business improvement districts may be able to raise funds through the annual tax levy, funding is usually obtained from a combination of sources. The most common sources are federal and state grants for community and economic development, housing, and downtown revitalization; and municipal revenue. It is not uncommon for a municipality or organization to work with a consortium of local banks that contribute equally to the funding pool to share investment risks.

To read the rest of the article you must be logged-in as a PlannersWeb member.

Notes:

1. NTHP Dollars & Sense #12: An Analysis of the Economic Impact of Physical Improvements on Retail Sales (based on Brenda R. Spencer's Master of Architecture thesis from Kansas State University in 1995) ↵

You must be [logged in](#) or a [PlannersWeb member](#) to read the rest of the article.

Tags: [Amy Facca](#), [Downtowns & Town Centers](#), [Historic Preservation](#)

Printed From: <http://plannersweb.com/2013/10/how-facade-improvement-programs/>



2014-2015 Façade Grant Program Overview

The façade grant program provides matching funds for exterior improvements to historic non-residential structures. It is designed to provide incentive funds to property owners in the Historic District to increase rehabilitation activity. It promotes the beautification of the Historic District and its importance to the history of Graham and its residents. The funding only applies to improvements that are consistent with the historic district. Applications for funding are approved by the Historic District Commission. Examples of improvements include:

- Removing of false fronts and metal canopies
- Safe cleaning of brick and stone fronts
- Sign replacements
- Canvas awning installation
- Window and door repairs or replacements
- Repainting
- Structural repair to exterior
- Historic reconstructions
- Store front reconstruction
- Tuck point mortar joints
- Stain brick to match existing
- Roof vents on store face
- Exterior lighting
- Relocate electrical wiring

Who is Eligible?

Owners or tenants of non-residential properties in the Courthouse Square Historic District are eligible to apply. Tenants must include a signed letter of permission from the property owner as part of their application.



Funding and Renovation Guidelines

This is a cost reimbursement program. Projects are funded on a 50-50 matching basis, with the maximum City contribution being \$5,000. The applicant's match may include funding from other sources. Only one grant per year can be awarded to a property.

This program applies solely to exterior improvements. All proposals must follow the City's building code requirements. All renovations on buildings over 30 years old must follow the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*.

What is a Façade?

A façade is one side of a building regardless of the number of stories. Each store front of a building can be considered a façade. The rear of a building may also be considered for a façade grant with priority given to the front of the building.

How to Apply

To be considered for funding, a complete application packet must be received by the City Planner no later than **5:00pm on Thursday, September 11, 2014**.

A complete application packet includes:

- A fully completed application form
- An existing photo of the building or structure
- Drawings, sketches or pictures showing the proposed renovations
- At least two itemized cost estimates

Complete application packets should be sent to Melissa Guilbeau at mguilbeau@cityofgraham.com or at 201 S Main St, Graham, NC 27253.

What if my application is approved?

After approval, the applicant has until May 1, 2015 to complete the project. If more time is needed, a written request for an extension with a reasonable explanation must be submitted to the City Planner.

Applicants will receive reimbursement once the project is completed, it is inspected and approved by the City's Chief Building Inspector and Planner, and paid receipts are submitted to the City Planner. Any renovation work completed prior to an application being approved by the Historic District Commission will not be eligible for reimbursement.

For more information or questions, contact Melissa at mguilbeau@cityofgraham.com or 336-570-6705

This program is administered by the City of Graham's Historic District Commission and City Planner.



2014-2015 Façade Grant Program Application

Property Information	Applicant Information
Street Address: 200 N Main St	Name: Jason Cox
Tax Parcel ID#: 145857	Phone Number: (336) 263-1180
Owner's Name: Carolina Property Holdings	Email: jason@aedosgrp.com
Use of Building: Office	Relationship to Property (check one):
Business Name (if applicable): Co Operative	Property Owner <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tenant/Business Owner <input type="checkbox"/>

Description of Proposed Façade Renovation

Write a succinct description below and attach 1) an existing photo of the building and 2) a drawing, sketch or picture of the proposed renovations, specifically identifying changes and paint color for each detail of the building.

- 1) Tuck/repoint north wall which has softest brick and most deterioration.
- 2) Install new paint-on appearance signage for building.

Total Estimated Cost (lowest bid quote): \$ 9,869 Attach at least two itemized cost estimates for proposed work.

Checklist for a Complete Application

- I have read the City of Graham Façade Grant Program Overview and fully understand the agreement.
- I have met with the City Building Inspector. My project [does / does not - I have complied with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for rehabilitation. (Building is not over 30 years old)
- The owner's written and signed permission is attached, if applicant is not owner. (Not applicable)
- An existing picture of the building and a drawing, sketch and/or picture of the proposed renovation are attached.
- At least two itemized project cost estimates are attached.

I understand that the City of Graham Façade Grant Program must be used in the manner described in this application, and the application must be approved by the Graham Historic District Commission prior to commencement of any project. I understand that failure to comply with the approved application may result in a forfeiture of all grant funds.

 8/28/15
Applicant Signature Date

Williamston Downtown Development Authority

Façade Improvement Program Procedures, Guidelines and Application



Williamston City Hall
161 East Grand River Avenue
Williamston, MI 48895
P (517) 655-2774 | F (517) 655-6498
www.williamston-mi.us

Revised: October 18, 2012

WILLIAMSTON DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Restoration is preferable to renovation.

PROGRAM BACKGROUND & INTENT

In 1995, the City of Williamston Downtown Development Authority (DDA) established the present Façade Improvement Program (FIP) to stimulate appropriate improvements to the exterior of downtown commercial buildings.

The DDA finds that the creation and maintenance of an attractive downtown is a public purpose which can be achieved in part through improvements to building facades. Downtown Williamston is pivotal to the economic health of the community because its condition, whether perceived or actual, plays such a large part in the impression that any neglect will create an image of a deteriorating economic base. As a result, potential businesses may be discouraged from locating in downtown Williamston and existing property owners may defer maintenance and reinvestment in their real estate.

The intent of the FIP is to strengthen the economic viability of downtown Williamston by providing financial incentives for improving the exterior appearance of its buildings. The FIP provides an opportunity to preserve the architectural heritage of downtown Williamston and enhance the unique atmosphere that the area provides to the community. It is important to the aesthetic enhancement of downtown that building design treatments be compatible with each other. The DDA believes the best approach is through the preservation of a building's original architectural features.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Williamston DDA has created a FIP that is intended to stimulate façade design improvements to downtown buildings in a coordinated fashion, stressing overall compatibility with the historical significance and uniqueness of Williamston's downtown structures. The DDA will provide grant funds for partial reimbursement of costs incurred to improve buildings consistent with the DDA Façade Improvement Program guidelines.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Owners, tenants with owners approval, and land contract purchasers with consent of the fee title owner who have structures located within the Downtown Development Authority district may apply for FIP funds. A map of the DDA district is available at City Hall. Applicants must be in good standing with the City and all city accounts must be paid. Public agencies are also eligible to apply for FIP funds.

ELIGIBLE BUILDINGS

Any existing commercial, retail, mixed use or professional building located within the DDA district which is owned by an eligible applicant for commercial purposes is considered eligible for FIP funds. Newly constructed buildings and additions to existing structures are also eligible, subject to funding availability and the limitation listed under Eligible Exterior/Façade Improvements listed below. Public agency buildings are also eligible, however the DDA will give priority to commercial, retail, mixed use or professional buildings over those owned or used by public agencies.

When one building is under one ownership but divided into more than one commercial, retail, mixed use (including 2nd floor residential uses) and/or professional tenancy, each separate unit which has an individual storefront façade and an independent ground floor entry shall be eligible to individually participate in the Façade Improvement Program.

FUNDING AMOUNTS

One Story Buildings:

The Williamston DDA will reimburse up to 50% or \$2,000 (whichever is less) per façade side (up to 4 sides) for a maximum of \$8,000 per building of total eligible expenses upon approval of the DDA Board.

The total amount rebated to a property owner and/or tenant for the same building during a five year period may not exceed \$8,000.00/18,000.

Two or More Story Buildings:

The Williamston DDA will reimburse up to 50% or \$4,500 (whichever is less) per façade side (up to 4 sides) for a maximum of \$18,000 per building of total eligible expenses upon approval of the DDA Board.



The total amount rebated to a property owner and/or tenant for the same building during a five year period may not exceed \$8,000.00/18,000.

To incentivize the renovation and repair of unsafe buildings (as determined by the building department) and/or buildings that have been vacant for 90 days, the DDA, after careful review of project scope and other DDA obligations, may grant more than \$2,000 per façade face or \$8,000 per eligible building. However, in no case shall the DDA expend more than \$100,000 for any project(s) within any fiscal year.

DESIGN GUIDELINES & FAÇADE WORK GROUP

Projects approved for Façade Improvement Programs funds must comply with all applicable City of Williamston ordinances and Building codes. Some projects will require zoning and/or building permits. The Façade Work Group will meet with the applicant to discuss the project prior to the DDA considering the project. The Façade Work Group shall meet with the applicant within 30 days.

ELIGIBLE EXTERIOR/FAÇADE IMPROVEMENTS

The DDA and/or its Façade Work Group shall reserve the right to determine the eligibility of all times in a project's scope of work. The determination shall be conclusive and final. All grant funded improvements must be permanent and fixed in type and/or nature and have an anticipated useful life of 10 or more years. Improvements must meet all City of Williamston zoning, building and safety requirements. Applicant will be responsible for obtaining necessary permits.

Façade features eligible to be restored, renovated or constructed with grant dollars include:

- Signage promoting an on premises commercial/residential use*
- Exterior walls
- Windows
- Doors
- Storefronts
- Painting of exterior surfaces
- Cleaning and/or tuck-pointing of brick and stone
- Entrance/exit improvements (including ADA)
- Awnings*
- Exterior architectural features
- Exterior lighting*

**these items are closely examined through design guidelines and zoning ordinances*

Improvements must be started within 60 days of approval and completed within twelve (12) months of commencement.

With all grant funded projects, **restoration is preferable to renovation**. Restoration is the attempt to return the façade to its original appearance through the use of authentic materials and the faithful replication of the building to conditions shown in old photos and records. Renovation projects should be sensitive to the historic appearance of the building but may include modern materials and design elements.

Buildings on the State of National Register must be restored or rehabilitated according to the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings. If your project does not fall under this category, please see the Williamston DDA's Williamston Downtown Historic District November 2011 Report, available at Williamston City Hall. This report contains valuable information on the history of many downtown buildings, including the building's architectural style. The DDA will prefer façade improvements that seek to restore the building to the historically researched architectural style.

NON-ELIGIBLE EXTERIOR/FAÇADE IMPROVEMENTS

The following are non-eligible funding expenses:

- Expenses incurred prior to FIP application approval
- Real property acquisition
- Mortgage, title work, land contract financing, loan fees, easement work, or register of deeds filing
- Site plan, sign, or building permit fees
- Appraiser, attorney, architect or interior decorator fees
- Wages paid to applicant or applicant's relatives for work associated with the FIP
- Permanent job tools or those that have a shelf life longer than one (1) year
- Furnishings, trade fixtures, or other items taxed as personal property
- Roofs, landscaping, sidewalks or approaches (but not including ingress/egress ADA)



TIMETABLE

Unless otherwise agreed to in writing when the project is approved for FIP funding, in the event the actual physical construction on a project has not commenced within 90 days and been completed within twelve months of the DDA funding commitment, the DDA will re-evaluate the status of the project. At its discretion, the DDA reserves the right to cancel or extend the funding commitment.

RIGHTS RESERVED

The Williamston DDA reserves the right to reject any and all applications. The specific program guidelines detailed herein are subject to revision or amendment by the DDA Board. The Williamston DDA may discontinue this program at any time, subject to availability of program funding. At the DDA's discretion and with a majority vote of the Board, an exception to any FIP guideline may be granted.

QUESTIONS

Questions concerning this program should be directed to Community Development & Planning Staff. They can be reached at commdev@williamston-mi.us or at (517) 655-2774.

**CITY OF WILLIAMSTON
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM
APPLICATION PROCEDURES CHECKLIST**

BEGINNING THE PROCESS

1. _____ Read Description, Application, and Checklist provided by the DDA.
2. _____ Contact the Community Development & Planning Department at Williamston City Hall, 161 E. Grand River Ave., Williamston, MI 48895, (517) 655-2774 for the Façade Improvement Program Application Packet and guidelines between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. *Feel free to ask staff questions.*
3. _____ **PLEASE NOTE:** Some façade improvements may require Zoning Administrator or Planning Commission Review. Contact the Community Development & Planning Department at (517) 655-2774 to pick up any permits or additional applications you may need to evaluate your Façade Improvement Project (sign permits, zoning permits, Planning Commission review, etc.)
4. _____ **PLEASE NOTE:** Some façade improvements may require building inspection. Contact the Williamston Building Department to pick up any building, electrical, plumbing, etc. permits you might require and call 1-(800) 627-2807.
5. _____ **PLEASE NOTE:** Property taxes, special assessments, and water and sewer bills must be fully paid on the property proposed for façade improvement. Please check with the City Treasurer and Water Clerk to ensure that all accounts are up to date and paid at (517) 655-2774.

APPLICATION & FAÇADE WORK GROUP

6. _____ Fill out the application and return it to the Community Development & Planning Department at City Hall and be sure to include requested support material, proof of permit applications, etc. The Community Development & Planning Department will review for completeness and requests missing/additional information if required. No application can be reviewed by the DDA until Community Development & Planning reviews for appropriate completeness.
7. _____ The Façade Work Group (comprised of members of the DDA Board) will meet with the applicant (within 30 days of City Hall receiving the completed application) to evaluate the FIP application and supporting material before the DDA considers the application.
8. _____ The Community Development & Planning Department reviews all application material and forwards the recommendation to the DDA to be placed on the following DDA meeting. DDA meetings are held on the third Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in Council Chambers at City Hall, 161 E. Grand River Ave., Williamston, MI 48895.

DDA RECOMMENDATION

9. _____ The DDA reviews project submitted and approves or denies funding. Applicant receives notification of DDA decision and any conditions placed on funding.
10. _____ Applicant must commence project within 60 days of receiving grant approval and complete project within 12 months or



other timeline as accepted by the DDA. If this timeline cannot be met, applicant must return to the DDA in verbal or written format and request a re-evaluation and extension.

11. _____ Any modification (unplanned, unforeseen, or otherwise) to the approved application must be authorized by the DDA Director who may refer a decision to the DDA.

REIMBURSMENT

12. _____ Upon completion of the project, the applicant must provide paid receipts and invoices to the DDA Director, demonstrating that the project has been completed and paid for in full within 60 days of project completion. The DDA Director will forward proof of completion to the DDA, which will vote on the amount to be awarded for the grant.
13. _____ The Applicant agrees to façade improvement offer, reviews necessary paperwork (such as title work or title policy commitment) and grants the DDA a 5 year façade easement to ensure that improvements are maintained and altered only with permission of the DDA Director or DDA Board. The agreement is filed with the Ingham County Register of Deeds.
14. _____ City Treasurer writes a check from the DDA Account within 30 days and it is mailed to the address provided on the application.

PLEASE NOTE: PROJECT WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED FOR FUNDING IF:

1. The application process is not completed prior to beginning of construction.
 2. All documentation requested in the application is not provided.
 3. The property's taxes and other City accounts are not current.
 4. Final financial report is not completed with required documentation.



FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM APPLICATION

Application Date _____

Name of Applicant _____

Mailing Address _____

Telephone Number _____

E-Mail Address _____

Project Address _____

Building Owner _____

Owner Address _____

Proposed project start date _____

Proposed completion date _____

Project will involve the building's following façade sides: (check all that apply)

Front
Side as viewed from street _____ L _____ R
Rear _____

Estimated total dollar amount of the improvement project: _____

Estimated grant amount being requested (\$2,000 per side, \$8,000 cap) _____

Applicant must provide the following information in addition to this application:

1. Provide a detailed description and include cost breakdowns by major categories such as architectural fees, engineering fees, signs, awnings, painting, repair, carpentry, electrical, plumbing, etc.
2. Include all project bids with complete cost estimates when submitting application review.
We suggest that the applicant "shop around" to ensure the most competitive bid for your proposed project. Three bids is sufficient.
3. Once a commercial contractor has been selected, proof of commercial liability insurance for contractor shall be provided listing the City and DDA as additional insured.
4. Attach at a minimum one (1) color photocopy image of the existing façades(s) to improve.
5. Attach one (1) copy of the project design for exterior improvements for each side.

The undersigned applicant (s) affirms that:

1. The information submitted herein is true and accurate to the best of my (our) knowledge.
2. I (we) have read and understand the conditions of the DDA Façade Improvement Programs and agree to abide by its conditions and guidelines

Signature of Applicant (s) _____ Date _____

_____ Date _____

Signature of Property Owner(s) (if different from above) _____ Date _____

_____ Date _____

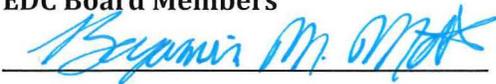


DDA USE ONLY

- Date application reviewed by applicant _____
- Date of review with CDP staff and Façade Work Group _____
- Date & opinion of Zoning (if necessary) _____
- Date & opinion of Building (if necessary) _____
- Date & opinion of Treasurer review _____
- Date completed application submitted _____
- Date & opinion Façade work group _____
- Date & opinion of CDP _____
- DDA meeting date & action _____
- Project beginning date _____
- Project ending date _____
- Project modifications & extensions (if any) _____
- Title Work -or- Title Policy Commitment _____
- Easement filed with Register of Deeds _____
- Date of receipts submitted & action _____
- Date reimbursement sent _____





To: EDC Board Members
From: 
Benjamin M. Motil
Economic Development Coordinator/Assoc. Planner
Date: April 27, 2017
Re: Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) Program

At the EDC meeting on April 12th, 2017, the EDC Board discussed creating a Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) program in order to ensure Meridian Township is a great place to run a business, as stated in the EDC's 2017 Goals and Objectives.

Staff has provided supplemental information that provides information regarding the development and implementation of a BRE program. BRE programs tend to fall into two types: Executive discussions and surveys.

Executive discussions tend to be ongoing efforts where local economic development representatives keep in contact with business owners. In this interview format, the interviewer is positioned as a peer to the business owner as opposed to a survey taker. This method is generally summarized as the economic development representative simply placing a call face-to-face with the business owner to see how things are going with the business. The benefit of this method is that it places the economic development representative on par with the business owner. The disadvantage of this method is that ancillary information derived from the meeting may be go unmentioned in following reports.

The second method is the survey based program. The survey program provides a means of quantifying data gathered from the business visit. This information can be tracked and tabulated to show trends in the business or the area. The disadvantage of this method is that it can be time consuming and places the economic development representative into a researcher role, which can be less conducive to the formation of a meaningful relationship with the business owner.

Staff has provided supplemental information regarding the creation and implementation of a BRE program.

Attachments:

- 1. Downtown and Business District Analysis: Business Retention and Expansion**
- 2. BRE Flow Chart**
- 3. BRE Planning Checklist**

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Business Retention and Expansion

Organizing business retention and expansion activities is a common application of market analysis findings. These activities include mobilizing a BR&E team, identifying issues, and helping existing businesses expand or, if they are at risk of closing or relocating, stay open and stay downtown. Too often the sudden closing of a long-time business surprises residents and local officials alike who assume a business is doing fine simply because the doors remain open each day. Instead, probing business owners about business challenges and future plans offers clues about possible future actions. Through the market analysis process, and the business survey in particular (see Business Survey section of the Toolbox), you have the opportunity to identify individual business needs you can act to fill, such as providing more space, addressing financing issues, or providing information resources.

Retaining and expanding existing businesses is a common economic development strategy because this is typically less costly and time intensive than recruiting new businesses. The success of existing businesses provides proof of the economic viability of a district. Furthermore, businesses content with their community become ambassadors to existing and new entrepreneurs.

Market analysis data can be used in the following four steps of a business retention and expansion strategy:

- Forming a business retention and expansion team,
- Identifying warning flags,
- Offering individual business assistance, and
- Developing business retention and expansion strategies.

Related Content

- University of Minnesota Extension and Ohio State University Extension operate comprehensive BR&E programs and have skills and expertise in developing BR&E strategies. See links to the right.
- Business Retention and Expansion International at <http://www.brei.org/>
- Fact sheet Series on Business Retention and Expansion from University of Florida Extension at http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_series_bre

Step 1: Establish a Business Retention and Expansion Team

A business Retention and Expansion (BR&E) team coordinates responses to individual business concerns, or warning flags (see Step 2), and develops strategies to improve the local business climate.

The committee should include four or five individuals with the skills and abilities to help businesses with common business challenges like marketing, accounting, or finance, as well as regulatory issues. City officials or economic development professionals commonly join BR&E teams since their role includes connecting businesses to state and local programs and acting as liaison between business and government departments. The credibility of team members and their rapport with the business community is critical. Businesses must trust team members to handle issues competently and confidentially or efforts to improve the business district will falter.

Market analysis data that has been assembled can be used by the BR&E team to help existing businesses make more informed day-to-day operating decisions. These decisions can relate to inventory, merchandising, advertising and other topics. In addition, data can be used to help make decisions related to location and business expansion. The following information is particularly useful in business retention efforts:

- Characteristics of the business district;
- Description of the trade area;
- Characteristics of existing and potential customers; and
- Trends and future opportunities.

Members of the team should be given a copy of the market analysis. Supplemental information such as detailed demographic reports, lifestyle segmentation profiles, and consumer survey data should also be made available.

Step 2: Identify Warning Flags

Warning flags or “red flags” are issues of individual businesses that are a cause for concern and targets of response from the BR&E team. The primary source of information to identify warning flags is the Business Survey (see Business Survey section of the Toolbox), which includes many questions to identify potential problems.

On the Standardized Business Owners Survey, the needs and opportunities section includes a range of questions to identify warning flags. Questions 7 and 8 address some of the most important warning flags related to moving or expanding a business:

- “How Satisfied are you with the present location of your business?”
- “Do you have plans to expand or reduce operations for your business in the foreseeable future?”

Other questions in the standardized survey ask business owners about their interest in receiving information resources and business incentive programs, and about challenges they face. The survey also asks business owners to rate community assets. For example, a business may cite restrictive regulations as a major challenge. The BR&E team would identify this answer as a warning flag and follow up on details to determine if it could help by modifying an ordinance or zoning codes.

A good process to identify warning flags includes setting aside a time in which the whole BR&E team can assess surveys together and discuss appropriate follow up. The team can use the warning flags worksheet (see following exhibit) to organize its thoughts and keep good records to facilitate a timely response. A good practice is to have two team members review each survey. A viewing by a second set of eyes may uncover issues the first team member did not notice.

The worksheet contains two important columns: (1) level of urgency and (2) organization or person responsible for follow up. Certainly not all warning flags have the same level of urgency. A business indicating plans to move to another community in the next six months is clearly an urgent matter in need of immediate attention, whereas interest in historic preservation tax credits may not be as pressing. The worksheet refers to red, yellow, and blue flags to rate the urgency—standard language in a BR&E program. When considering proper follow up to warning flags, the BR&E team should not limit itself to its own members' skills and abilities, but look to other organizations or people who can best assist with the issue at hand. The best people or organizations to handle follow-up are those who can retain the trust and confidentiality of the business owner. Be sure to notify businesses of your intentions to hand off some issues to appropriate resource people or organizations.

BR&E Plan for Action Worksheet
for use in identifying and responding to "Warning Flag" issues

Item No.	Survey Category or Question #s	Problem Description	Level of urgency*	Organization/ Person(s) Responsible to Respond	Date that Follow-up Initiated	Recommended Action	Update/Date of Resolution

*Level of Urgency = Red – immediate response required; Yellow – 3 to 6 month response timeframe; Blue – more than 6 month timeframe



See <http://www.extension.umn.edu/BusinessRetention/toolkit/> for more Business Retention and Expansion resources

8/25/11

Step 3: Offer Individual Business Assistance

A starting point for any BR&E team offering assistance to individual businesses is getting the market analysis data into their hands, and then helping them apply the information to their operations. Based on responses to the business survey, the BR&E team will know the particular needs of individual businesses and can use the market analysis data as a guide. Some businesses may be particularly interested in the customer survey findings for marketing or inventory purposes, whereas others keen on expansion may decide the findings on the retail and service opportunities most helpful. It's important for the BR&E team to determine the appropriate level of contact to best assist businesses. Simply mailing out market analysis results would not have the same impact as a member of the BR&E team sitting down with business management and discussing possible applications. Some uses of the market data include:

- Redesigning marketing plan to attract more customers;
- Opening a complementary new business;
- Motivating existing customers to spend more money;
- Identifying new markets for current product lines;
- Adding new product lines or services to capture a wider market range;
- Opening boutique shops with niche product lines inside other businesses;
- Identifying and adapting to business and marketing trends;
- Repositioning and differentiating the business by changing its image and product mix;
- Expanding existing space or relocating within the district; and
- Opening under one-ownership companion shops that support each other.

Beyond applying market analysis data to business decisions, other areas of assistance may include:

- Store presentation and window display;
- Succession planning and business transition;
- Merchandise presentation;
- Merchandise selection;
- Locating buying groups;
- Customer service;
- Developing/updating business plans;
- Accounting and record keeping;
- Compliance with local, state and federal regulations;
- Inventory control;
- Computer use;
- Website development;
- Personnel management and training;
- Financial incentives;
- Local code enforcement and public policy;
- Improving advertising and promotion; and
- Identifying and capturing new markets and planning for business expansion.

A warning flag that deserves special and prompt attention is any business owner who plans to sell, close or retire. The BR&E team's role here could include:

- Serving as a liaison between the business owner and potential buyers or brokers;
- Identifying potential buyers;
- Developing a financial incentive package;
- Helping set up an employee buy-in program;
- Providing information and resources on succession planning;
- Helping business owners prepare marketing materials; and
- Working with media on advertising and public relations during the transition.

When following up with individual businesses, the BR&E team may assist as members' time and skills allow, but should not be hesitate to reach out to others for help. Local university Extension educators, Small Business Development Center (SBDC) counselors, Main Street program business specialists, Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE), chamber of commerce and other public or private small business professionals can provide assistance. Follow-up can take many forms, ranging from a mailing in response to simple information requests to individual consulting.

Step 4: Develop Business Retention and Expansion Strategies

When reviewing business surveys, you will find some issues that cut across many businesses and call for strategies that will affect the whole business district. Some strategies may be simple, such as hosting group workshops to meet community training needs. Others may be more sophisticated, such as forming cooperative purchasing alliances or launching group advertising initiatives. The key is to develop strategies consistent with the findings of the market analysis data and business district activities already under way.

Needless to say, experts do not recommend developing business retention and expansion strategies in a vacuum. Instead, the BR&E team should put in place a process that allows businesses and other interested parties to review business survey findings and develop strategies that address issues common to many businesses in the business district. The process must allow participants time to learn about the business survey findings, brainstorm ideas, and prioritize and choose strategies. This may take the form of a half-day retreat with a facilitator or a couple of smaller meetings. The more people are involved with developing the strategies, the more they will be invested implementing the plan to realize their vision.

An action planning worksheet (see following figure) is a helpful tool the BR&E team can use to implement strategies and move from ideas to action.

NOTE: This format can be helpful in writing down all the "parts" to making a STRATEGY work!

Action Plan

STRATEGY:					
RECORDER:					
#	Task / Activity	Who's Responsible?	By When?	% Progress (Est.)	Additional Notes
				25 50 75 100 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
				25 50 75 100 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
				25 50 75 100 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
				25 50 75 100 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
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				25 50 75 100 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
				25 50 75 100 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	

What related activities are underway?	Is the project reaching all firms?	Do we want to partner with this project?



Developed by Jody Hornvold, Extension Educator, 2004

About the Toolbox and this Section

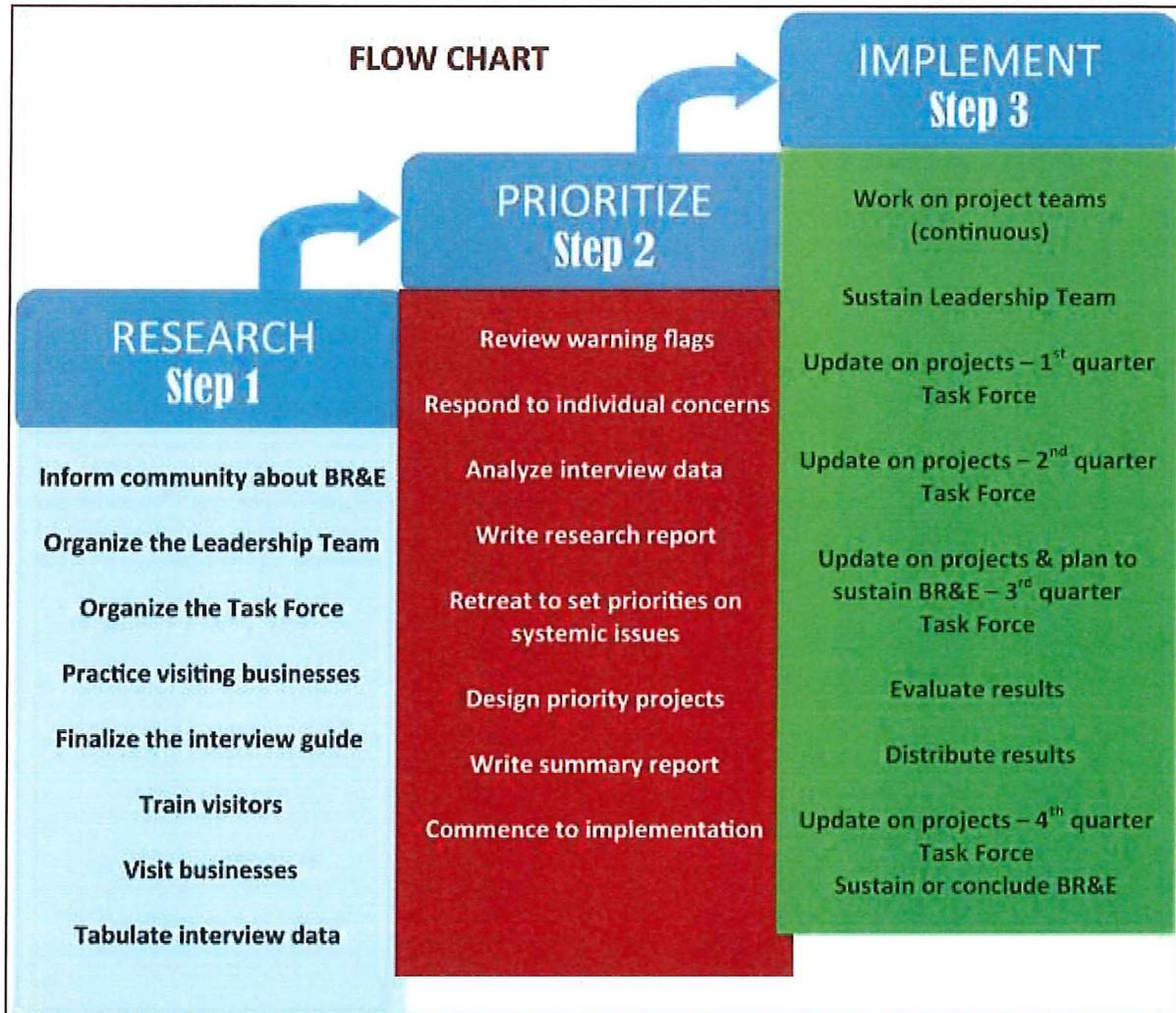
The 2011 update of the Downtown and Business District Market Analysis Toolbox is the product of a collaborative effort involving University of Minnesota Extension, Ohio State University Extension, and University of Wisconsin Extension. The update was supported with funding from the North Central Regional Center for Rural Development.

The toolbox is based on and supportive of the economic restructuring principles of the National Trust Main Street Center. The Wisconsin Main Street Program (Wisconsin Department of Commerce) has been an instrumental partner in the development of this toolbox.

This section includes new methods added by Ryan Pesch and Michael Darger of University of Minnesota Extension and Bill Ryan of University of Wisconsin Extension. This section was edited by Mary Vitcenda of the University of Minnesota Extension.

September 21, 2011

BRE FLOW CHART



BRE Planning Checklist



This checklist highlights many of the important issues to be addressed when setting up an executive contact program. The checklist moves through each major stage of the planning process. The individual issues are in a general order; however, there are very important questions in each section that will impact resource requirements and early choices. Therefore, it is best to review all of the questions before beginning to make choices. As you read through the questions, circle those that will be affected by known resource constraints. Ultimately, these issues will determine the nature of your executive contact program and should be addressed first. Once these resource related decisions have been made, other issues can be addressed.

GENERAL ISSUES

Who will organize, manage, and assume responsibility for the completion of the executive contact program?

What area will be covered?

- Community
- County
- Multi-county
- Regional
- Other _____

Will the program format be a:

- Blitz (Limited duration, e.g. 2 days, one month) _____
- On-going (certain number of contacts each week/month) _____

If blitz, will it be repeated:

- No planned re-contact
- Every year
- Every 2 years

If on-going, how many contacts will be made monthly? _____

Will the contacts be made by:

- Visit
- Mail
- Phone
- E-mail

If personal visits, how many firms will be targeted for contact? _____

What criteria will be used to select firms for contact

- Largest employers
- Representative sample
- Industry group
- Geographic area (industrial park, etc.) _____

BRE Planning Checklist

page 3



PROMOTION

How will members and/or the public be made aware of

The program _____

Sponsoring organizations _____

Findings _____

Will the program be promoted before it is implemented to alert business executives in the community?

Yes No

Will an internal report be prepared? Yes No

Will a report be prepared for public distribution? Yes No

Complete Report

Summary Report

Who will receive the report?

Media

Board members

Member/investors

Survey respondents

Elected leaders (local, state)

Training institutions

Issue related audiences

Colleges/universities

School districts

Economic development organizations

Other _____

Approximately how many copies will be needed for distribution? _____

How will the report be distributed:

Personal delivery

By Request

Direct Mail

E-mail

Website (downloadable)

Public meeting

Other

Will media coverage be encouraged:

At the beginning of the program

When contacts are being made

Once the findings are prepared

BRE Planning Checklist

page 5



Who will perform the analysis:

- Executive
- Staff
- Committee
- Consultant
- Other _____

How will responses from executives be analyzed:

- Individually reviewed for actions
- Entered into a spreadsheet
- Entered into an electronic database
- Analyzed as groups (industry, geographic, size, etc.) _____

Beyond tallying for totals, calculating percents, and distribution of responses, what additional analysis will be performed? _____

Will the committee or staff meet after the findings are tabulated to draw conclusions and identify actions to address the findings? Yes No

FOLLOW-UP

Who will track company-specific actions for completion? _____

Who will track actions taken for completion? _____

Who will manage company-specific follow-up actions? _____

Who will be responsible for follow-up actions with the individual companies? _____

Who will be responsible for initiating actions to help groups of companies or improve the community's business climate? _____

Who will be responsible for managing actions to
Change programs _____
Change local government business policy _____
Change resource allocation _____

Who will help work on the actions to stimulate change
Changes programs _____
Changes local government business policy _____
Changes resource allocation _____

Evaluation



**Charter Township of Meridian
Development Projects
(March 10, 2017 - April 28, 2017)**

New Business

None.

Project Updates

- Marriot Courtyard – site plan approved for new four story hotel with 97 rooms (64,052 square feet) at Jolly Oak Rd./Meridian Crossings Dr.
- Hannah Farms East – Proposed project of group of buildings greater than 25,000 square feet at Eyde Parkway/Hannah Boulevard. Planning Commission recommended approval on 3/27/17. Public hearing scheduled for 5/2/17 Township Board meeting.
- 1619 Haslett Rd- Request to demolish and reconstruct gas station, public hearing held on 2/13/17. Planning Commission recommended approval on 3/13/17. Public Hearing held on 4/18/17 at Township Board meeting.
- Patriot Ambulance Service- Proposed project to establish an ambulance transport service at 1673 Haslett Rd. Public hearing held on 3/27/17. Approved at 4/10/17 Planning Commission Hearing.
- Chamberlain Townhouses- Construction underway for a 19,500 square foot, 8 unit townhouse project at 1730 Chamberlain Drive.