



**CITY OF WALLED LAKE
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Tuesday, February 10, 2026**

The Meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance led by DDA Chairman Blair

ROLL CALL: Amin, Blair, Gunther, Johnston, Langan, Lublin, Marshall, Raleigh

ABSENT: Allen, Mechigian, McDonald

OTHERS PRESENT: City Manager Whitt, Council Member Ambrose, Council Member Woods, Public Safety Deputy Director Shakinas, Fire Chief Gonzalez, DPW Superintendent Ladd, City Attorney Vanerian, Finance Director Pesta, and City Clerk Stuart

There being a quorum present the meeting was declared in session.

DDA 02-01-26 MOTION TO EXCUSE DDA BOARD MEMBER MCDONALD FROM TODAY'S MEETING

Motion by Johnston, seconded by Raleigh: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY: To excuse DDA Board Member McDonald from today's meeting.

REQUESTS FOR AGENDA CHANGES: None

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:

1. Regular DDA Meeting of January 13, 2026

DDA 02-02-26 APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE JANUARY 13, 2026 MEETING

Motion by Lublin, seconded by Johnston: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY: To approve the minutes of the January 13, 2026 meeting.

CORRESPONDENCE: None

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION: None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Boss Engineering Downtown Presentation

Mr. Bradd Maki Boss Engineering provided a recap presentation on Phase I of the Downtown Improvement Project, focused on addressing ADA compliance requirements. Mr. Maki explained that the City received a Letter of Finding from the U.S. Department of Justice, placing the City on notice that certain downtown areas are not ADA compliant. Identified issues include accessibility concerns with ADA parking. In efforts to further improve the downtown accessible routes, street crossings, cross slopes, and streetscapes were reviewed. There was also the finding of an abandoned coal chute within the first block of the project area. Mr. Maki explained that in 2024, Boss Engineering was authorized to conduct a survey and preliminary engineering for the downtown area. Approval of a survey from Pontiac Trail to Hillcroft was received from both the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) and City Council. Conceptual ideas have previously been presented to City Council in May, August and again January 2026, with the primary focus on improvements in accessibility. Preliminary engineering plans were provided in August 2025. Phase I encompasses the area on Walled Lake Drive to Pontiac Trail to Liberty. Aesthetic features are provided. Letter of Finding will need to include conversation with Oakland County Road Commission regarding Pontiac Trail. Mr. Maki explained sidewalks and step ups in areas are significant and have to be addressed.

Mayor Gunther asked why design engineers were requested to fill the coal chute.

Mr. Maki explained filling the coal chute should not interfere with neighboring buildings. The integrity of the buildings must be validated by a structural engineer.

DDA Board Member Langan said there is nothing in the coal chute now if you fill the empty chute, it strengthens the chute.

Mr. Maki said structural engineers are required to ensure the structure of filling the chute to ensure that when the coal chute is filled it does not have a negative impact on the buildings or the neighboring buildings. The coal chute is in the city right of way.

Mr. Maki explained similar accessibility to turn right on to Pontiac Trail still exists. Mr. Maki explained some areas that have steps or stairs will be modified as well and the main focus of work was the north side due to the several elevation differentials on this side.

City Manager Whitt explained until there is a plan, the city cannot apply for a grant. A plan needs to be finalized and presented.

*Council Member Ambrose arrived.

Mayor Gunther expressed concern with the right turn onto Pontiac Trail, it will become backed up. Mayor Gunther said Boss Engineering was part of the original change for turning on Pontiac Trail, in particular the left-hand turn. He explained he deals with Pontiac Trail often as he travels from E. Walled Lake Drive.

DDA Board Member Johnston said he travels onto Liberty to turn onto Pontiac Trail.

The Board discussed the accessibility of turning with Pontiac Trail.

Mr. Maki explained that on the south side of E Walled Lake Drive, the slopes of the sidewalks are very steep and that is what was being addressed.

DDA Board Member Amin asked if there is detailed topography with this proposal for possible alternatives. She agrees it will create a bottleneck; taking away a parking spot will relieve congestion. She explained this design creates more traffic back up on E. Walled Lake traveling to Pontiac Trail from E. Walled Lake. She requested the detailed topography findings. She asked if it is the city or business owners' responsibility to address their entrance for ADA compliance.

Mr. Maki said Phase 1 addresses the building face, not the approach to the business doors. On south side the walkable path will be addressed.

DDA Board Member Langan asked if Barrels of Wine will have the two parking spaces in front of their business. Mr. Maki said yes.

Mayor Gunther asked why the design did not include dropping the wires underground. He asked what can DTE assist us with putting wires underground. We lose power all the time, this is an opportunity to improve the city's grid.

DDA Board Member Lublin said the job is only one block not the entire city, dropping wires will add cost. When the work for sidewalk is done, that would be good timing to drop the lines.

Mayor Gunther said exposed aggregate is more expensive than brushed. He asked why it cannot be all concrete. Board Member Langan agreed. He requested detailed cost estimates be provided.

Mr. Maki said they provided the city with an estimate; however, they cannot predict the future. The estimate provided includes civil, structural geotechnical underground, inspection related items, testing and site inspections. Most efforts will be to address the elevations.

DDA Board Member Johnston said the city does not own all the property to be worked on; the city will need to acquire land.

Mayor Gunther, why can we not get a letter of understanding from those businesses.

DDA Board Member Langan asked why condemn property, you must pay for it. Sit down and have a conversation, expressing that we are making it better for you and obtain a memorandum of understanding with these folks.

City Manager Whitt said several owners have not wanted to negotiate in the past, parking in the street is private. The DDA Board needs to have a plan and then the next big phase is budget and how to fund this.

DDA Board Member Amin asked what is required by the ADA to be complaint. She said there is not enough information, what we have is an overview slideshow.

Mayor Gunther said the numbers were almost \$85,000 of downtown work.

DDA Board Member Lublin said the work the engineers have done is correct. He said the DDA approves using our DDA funds to fund this project. He said the DDA refers to the City Council 1 to make sure it is the direction but it is a DDA project, and the DDA is willing to support the City Councils desires.

DDA Board Member Amin said she is not in favor of approving spending for others to approve it. DDA Board Member Amin said she is not in favor of giving a blank check, the board funded the last phase, and she has not seen any results. She asked to see site plans, detailed site topography. She said she is not willing to sign off on any funding.

Mayor Gunther said the city has paid a lot of money thus far, there were a bunch of checks that went out to do survey downtown, mapping of streets, etc. Mr. Gunther said there is an estimate provided, Boss needs to provide elevations drawings, if all the funds of the \$85,000 are spent and what has been provided.

DDA Board Member Langan asked if there was more information to be provided, and a more detailed package. He said the DDA board would like to see more detail first than just signing off a number.

**DDA 02-03-26 MOTION TO APPROVE FUNDING UP TO 1.1 MILLON FOR THE
 ONE BLOCK AND MOVE FORWARD TO CITY COUNCIL.
 FINALIZING A CONSTRUCTION STRATEGY AND PROGRAM.**

Motion by Lublin, seconded by Langan: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY: To approve the minutes of the January 13, 2026 meeting.

Discussion

Mayor Gunther does not like the idea to turn the project over to City Council.

DDA Board Member Amin said she agrees, she wants topography and detailed site plans.

DDA Board Member Langan said he would like to have the motion modified to incorporate that Boss Engineering provide the DDA with the plans and work that has been done for Phase 1.

**DDA 02-03-26 MOTION TO AMEND TO INCLUDE BOSS ENGINEERING
 PROVIDING DETAILED WORK OF WHAT HAS BEEN DONE,
 APPROVE FUNDING UP TO \$1.1 MILLON FOR THE ONE
 BLOCK AND MOVE FORWARD TO CITY COUNCIL.
 FINALIZING A CONSTRUCTION STRATEGY**

Motion by Lublin, seconded by Langan

Discussion

City Manager Whitt explained that the DDA is a component unit of the city, the board can surrender their independence to the City Council. City Manager Whitt explained Boss Engineering was asked to provide a full survey of downtown including the DDA properties. The studies were approved by the DDA and staff, they do not get a free ride. City Manager Whitt explained the scope was narrowed to what we are calling Phase I to get something done. This is all legit and you'll see accountability.

DDA Board Member Amin said she has not seen any studies.

DDA Board Member Lublin said he withdraws his motions.

**DDA 02-04-26 MOTION TO TABLE AND HAVE BOSS ENGINEERING
PROVIDE DETAILED FILE OF BILLINGS AND PLAN
IMPROVEMENTS**

Motion by Lanagan, seconded by Lublin, CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY: To table and have boss engineering provide detailed file of billings and plan improvements.

EXECUTIVE & MANAGING DIRECTOR REPORT:

1. Public Safety Activity Report

City Manager Whitt reported last weekend fishing derby was a success. There were minor issues with a fender bender. Police and fire did their part successfully. City Manager Whitt said the cost of these services will be documented and reviewed if they will remain free.

WARRANT REPORT:

1. January 2026

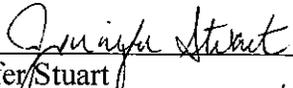
**DDA 02-05-26 APPROVAL TO RECEIVE AND FILE THE WARRANT FOR
JANUARY 2026**

Motion by Lublin, seconded by Raleigh: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY: To receive and file the warrant for January 2026,

ADJOURNMENT:

DDA 02-06-26 ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Lublin, seconded by Johnston: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY: To adjourn the meeting at 5:28P.M.



Jennifer Stuart
City Clerk
approved
3/10/26



Steve Blair
DDA Chairman