

Downtown Partnership Celebrates

5 Year Anniversary

The Battle Creek Downtown Partnership (Downtown Partnership) was born out of a special initiative of Battle Creek Unlimited (BCU) five years ago. In 2003, Downtown development was managed by various groups including BCU's Downtown Development Advisory Committee. The advisory committee applied for, and was awarded, the Blueprint for Michigan Downtowns planning grant by the State of Michigan. Battle Creek was one of eleven communities to participate in the Blueprint program.

As part of the Downtown Blueprint process, extensive surveys, interviews, focus groups and a tremendously successful community vision session took place with over 300 people in attendance. From the information gathered, and armed with a newly established community vision, a five-year action plan and implementation strategy was put into place. The process resulted in bringing community leaders, citizens and organizations together for the greater good of Downtown Battle Creek. The creation of the Downtown Partnership was the first course of action.

Over the next five years, the following was accomplished:

Property & Physical Improvements:

Enhancing the Downtown's overall physical appearance was emphasized in the original Blueprint. Improvements have resulted in perceptions of safety and accessibility. Downtown is visibly different than it was five years ago. The following property and physical improvements were made:

- Updated Streetscape, Landscape, Riverscape and Maintenance Plan
- New Wayfinding (Signage) Program
- Ordinance Revisions: Outdoor Seating and Sign Ordinance
- Seven Building Façade Renovations/Restorations
- Sculpture Restoration & Re-installation
- Monthly Audits of Public Spaces
- Seasonal Décor Plan



Phase I Awards/Grants:

- Coverage and Grant from HGTV/Restore America
- Downtown Development Authority Grant
- Cool City Grant
- Michigan State Historic Preservation Award

Business Development:

Business Recruitment is the Downtown Partnership's number one goal. The following programs were designed and implemented to encourage new business development:

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| Façade Improvement Program | Outdoor Café Program |
| Building and Sign Design Assistance | Building Illumination Program |
| Retail Recruitment Incentive Program | Merchant Flower Pot Program |

Marketing Actions:

The Blueprint recommended marketing the Downtown wildly, using a cohesive and professional format with consistent messaging and appearance. Over the last five years the Downtown Partnership has worked to market existing businesses, available spaces, business opportunities, and events. An enhanced vibrant image of Downtown was promoted in the following ways:

New Brand and Tag Line

New Downtown Marketing Campaign: New Website, Electronic Newsletter, Regular E-Communications to Merchants, Cross-Promotional Pieces, and Consistent Advertising.

New Events: Spring (and Fall) into the Arts, Festival Market Music Series / Farmers Market, Vibe at Five, and the Post Concert Series.



Real Estate & Residential Development:

Residential and building development was also cited in the original Blueprint as one of the main priorities moving forward. The Downtown Partnership, with help from many partners, was able to achieve the following:

- Acquisition of Three Historic Structures
- Complete Phase I Renovation: 115-117 West Michigan Avenue
- Complete Downtown Partnership Office Renovation
- Complete and Occupy Victoria Flats Renovation

Many new businesses have opened, and unfortunately some have closed. The following new retail businesses currently in operation opened within the last five years:

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| Attic Bar | Pastrami Joe's |
| Antiquities & Eccentricities | Starbucks |
| Barista Blues Café | TJ's Photography |
| BiCi Bistro | Uvette's Braiding |
| Gary Fields Comedy Club | Yellow Submarine |
| Los Dos Compadres | |
| Monica's Art Gallery | Cricket Club & Sky Bar
(Scheduled Opening in 2009) |
| Motiv-8 | |

A strong and reputable organization has developed over the course of five years. A professional staff is working out of an office nationally recognized for urban design and restoration. A dedicated team of board members are actively involved in the continued revitalization of Downtown Battle Creek.

Five years of concerted and thoughtful effort has made a difference in Downtown Battle Creek. The Downtown Partnership eagerly looks

Live it up!

in downtown
Battle Creek

downtownbattlecreek.com

