



## REQUEST FOR GRAND RAPIDS EDA ACTION

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**AGENDA DATE:** January 13, 2022

**STATEMENT OF ISSUE:** Discuss Downtown Planning Project

**PREPARED BY:** Rob Mattei, Director of Community Development

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### **BACKGROUND:**

Consistent with direction provided by the *Grow Grand Rapids 2040 City Comprehensive Plan* and the GREDA 2022 Work Plan, GREDA will take a leadership role in the organizing, funding and contracting with a consulting in the preparation of a new master plan and strategy for the downtown.

As the draft RFP describes, it is our intent that the Plan will draw upon local knowledge and leadership together with the expertise of a consultant team to articulate a vision for improvements to the public and private realm, which will further encourage private investment and enhance downtown Grand Rapids as a more livable, walkable and thriving urban center.

Out of concern over declining investment and activity in the downtown, GREDA, together with the Downtown Business Association, Chamber of Commerce and others in 2006, led a community driven effort supported by a planning consultant to gather input and prepare a *Downtown Redevelopment Masterplan*. As is noted in the attached copy of that plan, much has been accomplished and much has changed over the life of this current plan. With budding activity and investment interest, in the downtown, the updating/revision of the Plan seems very appropriately timed.

To prepare for this process, staff has reviewed the current plan from 2006 and added comments that note some of the activities, accomplishments and changes that have occurred. These can be discussed at the meeting.

Staff is also in the process of developing an RFP (Request for Proposal) which would seek a consultant team to assist in the process. We are still working on the statement of work, particularly the market assessment and implementation strategies sections. If the GREDA Commissioners have any input they would like to provide at this time that would be appreciated. I will be bringing this back for authorization to issue the RFP at a later meeting.

In my research and based upon my experience with past planning projects, a budget of between \$70,000 and \$80,000 is appropriate for this type of project. I have submitted an inquiry with the Blandin Foundation indicating our interest in their assistance in funding this project at a level of \$40,000. The Foundation supported the development of the current plan, so I am hopeful that they will want to participate again.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Review the attached materials and discuss.

**REQUIRED ACTION:**

None required.