



27400 Southfield Rd.
Lathrup Village, Mi 48076
(248) 557-2600
www.lathrupvillage.org

APRIL 2026 DDA DIRECTOR REPORT

To: LVDDA Board of Directors
From: Austin Colson, CED/DDA Director
Date: April 14, 2026
RE: Department/Director Report

In an effort to provide consistent updates to the DDA Board of Directors, City Administrator, and City Council the following monthly report is submitted for your review.

Upcoming DDA Events

- **2026 Comprehensive Plan Update – Economic Development Discussion** – Tuesday, April 21, 2026, 7:00 PM, Lathrup Village City Hall
 - Hosted by the Lathrup Village Planning Commission – The session is open to residents and stakeholders to share input on strategies for supporting local businesses, strengthening the commercial corridor, and guiding future economic growth. An online survey is also made available to gather community feedback to help shape the City’s long-term economic development goals.
- **41st Annual Oakland County Economic Outlook Luncheon** – Wednesday, April 22, 2026
 - Hosted by Oakland County – Annual luncheon featuring economists from the University of Michigan presenting a comprehensive outlook on regional, national, and international economic trends impacting Oakland County. The event brings together business leaders, government officials, and community stakeholders to discuss key challenges, investment opportunities, and strategies for navigating a competitive economic landscape while fostering continued growth in the local economy.
- **2026 Comprehensive Plan Update – Transportation Discussion** – Tuesday, May 19, 2026, 7:00 PM, Lathrup Village City Hall
 - Hosted by the Lathrup Village Planning Commission – Residents, business owners, and property owners are invited to participate in the discussion and provide feedback on Parks and Recreation priorities.



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- **Fraud Awareness Workshop** – Wednesday, April 29, 2026, 10:00 AM–12:00 PM, Lathrup Village City Hall (27400 Southfield Rd., Lathrup Village, MI 48076)
 - Hosted in partnership with Chase Bank, the Lathrup Village Police Department, and the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) – Community workshop focused on helping residents recognize common scams, protect their identity, and secure financial accounts. The session will provide practical fraud prevention tips and highlight resources available to help individuals and families stay safe from increasingly common financial scams. The event is free to attend and open to the public, with registration encouraged.
- **International Placemaking Week** – June 24-26 (Detroit: Venue TBD)
 - Hosted by Project for Public Spaces in partnership with the Downtown Detroit Partnership. Detroit has been selected as the host city for the 5th International Placemaking Week. This global gathering brings together placemakers, community leaders, planners, and practitioners from around the world to share strategies and best practices for creating vibrant, people-centered public spaces. The three-day event will feature plenary sessions, breakout discussions, mobile workshops, networking receptions, and site visits to public spaces throughout Downtown Detroit and across the city. The event further highlights Detroit as a national leader in creative placemaking and community-driven redevelopment.

Past DDA Events

- ***The Magic of Customer Service – With a Twist!*** – Tuesday, February 24th 10–11:30 AM (Southfield Public Library Auditorium, 26300 Evergreen Road, Southfield)
 - The Tri-Cities Business Support Team will host an engaging customer service workshop featuring Anthony Grupido, blending magic, humor, and practical insight to reimagine how businesses approach customer service. Participants will learn strategies to turn everyday interactions into positive service moments, strengthen customer engagement through a resilient mindset, and use unexpected experiences to create lasting impressions.

Business/Property Updates

- **27651 Southfield Road (Middle Eats)** – Middle Eats restaurant is expanding into the adjacent 1,800-square-foot unit to the north to enlarge its dining area. Building permits have been approved, and significant progress has been made on the interior build-out.
- **26221 Southfield Road** – Façade improvement work has begun.

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MDOT Safety Grant Application (11 Mile Road): City and DDA staff are coordinating with the City's engineering consultant to prepare and submit an application to the Michigan Department of Transportation FY 2028 Local Safety Program (HSIP/HRRR) for roadway, curb, and pedestrian safety improvements along 11 Mile Road.

Miscellaneous

- **Farmington DDA Field Trip Opportunity:** Board Members and staff have been invited to visit Downtown Farmington in May to meet with their DDA team and tour their downtown. Notably, Main Street Farmington was awarded the *2026 Great American Main Street Award*, one of only three communities from nationwide to receive this recognition. The award recognizes Farmington's transformation from a car-oriented corridor into a vibrant, walkable downtown through strategic public-private investment, historic preservation, small business growth, and community-led placemaking. Staff recommends participation to gain insights and best practices that could inform ongoing DDA and Master Plan implementation efforts.
- **Recast Leaders Program:** DDA staff continue to make strides in the Recast Leaders program, a 10-month technical assistance initiative administered by *Recast City* in partnership with the *Michigan Municipal League*.
 - Refining program goals and outcomes, with a focus on strengthening the commercial corridor, supporting maker spaces, and expanding opportunities for small businesses. The target area and key stakeholder groups have also been further defined.
 - Identifying corridor challenges, evaluating barriers for small and underserved businesses, and refining strategies to support equitable growth, activate vacant storefronts, and strengthen the local entrepreneurial ecosystem.
- **New Progress – Connectors & Outreach:** Staff have begun implementing the “Connectors” strategy, identifying local leaders, business owners, and community influencers who can help facilitate introductions and strengthen engagement with the small-scale production and maker space ecosystem. Outreach efforts are underway to initiate conversations with 5–10 key connectors, with a focus on building relationships, gathering insights, and identifying additional stakeholders. These conversations are guided by the Recast Connectors Toolkit, which emphasizes listening, trust-building, and community-informed strategies .



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Business & Property Owner Identification: Staff have also started compiling a preliminary list of small-scale manufacturing and maker-oriented businesses, along with identifying property owners who are community-oriented and open to innovative uses and partnerships within the corridor.

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