



27400 Southfield Rd.
Lathrup Village, Mi 48076
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www.lathrupvillage.org

MARCH 2026 DDA DIRECTOR REPORT

To: LVDDA Board of Directors
From: Austin Colson, CED/DDA Director
Date: March 13, 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

- **28919 Southfield Road (Dairy Fairies)** – The applicant received site plan approval from the Planning Commission at its February 17th meeting for a change of use, contingent upon obtaining a variance from the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) related to the off-street parking requirements established in the Zoning Ordinance. The ZBA subsequently approved the requested parking variance at its February 23rd meeting, allowing the project to proceed.
- **27700 Southfield Road (Former School Building)** – The applicant, who had been awaiting a financing decision from MSHDA, requested a twelve (12) month extension of the site plan approval originally granted on April 15, 2025. The Planning Commission recommended approval of the extension at its February meeting, and City Council subsequently approved the request at its February 23rd meeting, granting the applicant a 12-month extension of the site plan approval.

Infrastructure

- **Capital Improvement Plan (CIP):** The FY26-31 CIP was presented to the Planning Commission at its February 17th meeting. During the Commission's March 17th meeting a motion was made to approve the CIP plan as presented, and recommend the plan to City Council for final approval.
 - **Monument Welcome Signs:** The DDA has requested inclusion of a project in the City's Capital Improvement Plan for the installation of two (2) new monument welcome signs along Southfield Road to enhance corridor identity and strengthen visual entry points into the district's north and south gateways.
 - **Wayfinding Signage:** The DDA has also requested inclusion of a wayfinding signage project to direct visitors to free public parking located in the northeast section of the DDA district along Southfield Road, improving accessibility and awareness of available parking resources.



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Miscellaneous

- **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*.
 - Since the kickoff meeting, staff have worked with the consultant team and fellow cohort communities to begin defining the goals and outcomes for Lathrup Village's participation in the program. Initial work has focused on identifying how this effort can strengthen the City's commercial corridor, support small-scale production and maker spaces, and expand opportunities for local entrepreneurs and small businesses. Staff also began outlining the target area for the initiative and identifying the community stakeholders who should benefit most from the work.
 - In preparation for the next cohort meeting, staff are currently working through the next phase of the program's strategic framework, which includes identifying the key economic development challenges affecting the corridor, evaluating barriers facing small businesses and historically underserved entrepreneurs, and outlining how the program's work can produce more equitable economic outcomes. This exercise is also helping staff refine the City's long-term vision for supporting small business growth, activating vacant storefronts, and strengthening the local entrepreneurial ecosystem within the business district.