

# DDA turns the spotlight on budget

By Bob Sklar  
staff writer

At the direction of City Manager Robert Deadman, the Downtown Development Authority will ask the city council to provide \$4,700 to cover the DDA's operational and administrative expenses for 1988-87.

In unveiling the proposed DDA budget Tuesday morning, Deadman reminded that the "DDA is really an entity unto itself."

"You have to come up with some permanent financing," he said.

But until a downtown development plan is adopted, Deadman suggested that the DDA contract for financial services through the city treasurer and contract for staff services through the city manager. Consultant, auditing and legal services will be contracted for as needed.

The city council will consider the DDA's 1988-87 budget proposal Monday, April 21.

A DDA has several funding options:  
• A two-mill levy on all taxable property within the development district for improvements and promotion.  
• A tax increment financing authority through which the DDA could capture the increase in the development district's assessed value from the time the area's latest assessment roll was equalized.

- Revenue bonds, carrying the city's full faith and credit.
- Private capital.
- Federal grants.
- The city's general fund.

A TIFA would generate the most money, Deadman said. But that kind of financing scheme came under fire recently from the Farmington Public Schools when Farmington Hills proposed using it to finance improvements to a three-mile stretch of 12 Mile Road — a stretch where property values weren't already in decline. Meanwhile, Birmingham Public

**'We're not going to build a Taj Mahal. We're going to do what's reasonable.'**  
— Robert Deadman  
city manager

Schools is suing Beverly Hills over creation of a TIFA district in that Oakland County village.

"I'd suggest we let things cool down until the TIFA question can get through the courts," Leadman said.

DDA MEMBER Frank Clappison said he thinks the DDA could sell the Farmington school board on supporting a TIFA downtown "if we get our facts and figures together."

Deadman agreed: "We're talking about improving downtown's image, which affects the entire area. We're not talking about building a road." A TIFA district would have to be established by Dec. 31 if the DDA

wanted to capture the increase in assessed value of the new Farmington Crossroads Center at Farmington Road and Nine Mile, Deadman added.

Clappison asked whether the DDA should establish a finance committee to explore fund-raising options.

Calling TIFA "the ultimate (fund-raiser) in DDA districts," Deadman said: "TIFA doesn't have to stand alone. It can be grouped with special assessments, the two-mill levy and private enterprise contributions."

"We're not going to build a Taj Mahal," Deadman added. "We're going to do what's reasonable."

BEFORE THE DDA could even consider establishing a TIFA district, it needs to adopt a comprehensive development plan for the 64-acre downtown development district. Deadman and administrative aide Robert Schultz have been charged with preparing a draft plan. Schultz said he envisions the plan saying "we're moving in this or this direction — toward a super convenience center or a comparison shopping center."

In other action Tuesday, the DDA appointed several advisory committee members.

The downtown services committee consists of DDA members E. Gregory Hohler and Ronald Oglesby and Glenn Grace, Craig Grace, Howard Silverman, Carol Forsythe and Sandi Forsythe.

Making up the communications committee are DDA member JoAnn Soronen and Arnold Campbell, Rob-

ert Heinrich, Kathleen Verstrace, Jerry Wingerter and Michele Lipinski.

Serving on the beautification committee along with DDA member Richard Gundiach are Andrew Baker, Janie Gundlach, Denise Tawyea-Nitz, Betty Jarvis, Dick Bliznik and Sandi Forsythe.

The beautification committee's design criteria subcommittee is made up of Denise Tawyea-Nitz, William Burke, Dorothy Squair, Carol Gaiser and Del Cornwell.

THE DDA has scheduled a special study session to discuss future development plans as they relate to findings in previous downtown studies. The session will be held at 7 p.m. Tuesday, April 22, in the Farmington Municipal Building.

"It's going to be hard building a development plan unless we know your feelings," Deadman said.

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