

# DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE, EQUITY, & PLACEMAKING

## A Proposal for a Sustainable, Inclusive Community

This proposal is guided by the principals and practices discussed in the articles listed below. The information provided in the articles listed below provide the foundation of this proposal and should be reviewed to provide context for the vision, mission, and desired outcomes of the proposed Department of Culture, Equity, & Placemaking.

**Placemaking**, a collaborative process by which we (residents, architects, activists, community leaders and planners alike) shape our public realm together, is fundamentally about *inclusion* and shared community ownership: <https://www.pps.org/article/equity-and-inclusion-getting-down-to-the-heart-of-placemaking#:~:text=Placemaking%2C%20a%20collaborative%20process%20by,inclusion%20and%20shared%20community%20ownership>.

**What is a multidisciplinary team?** *A multidisciplinary team needs authority*

To make decisions in pursuit of a goal, a multidisciplinary team needs authority to make important decisions. *This can be a challenge in power structures where leadership is exercised from the top down. However, it's important to note that autonomous multidisciplinary teams do not undermine the inherent hierarchy in an organization. The MDT might have license to make decisions but it's essential that the team continually engages leadership, providing ample opportunity for feedback, debate and challenge.*

<https://digitalpublicservices.gov.wales/what-is-a-multidisciplinary-team/>

**Community-centered Economic Inclusion.** *community-centered economic inclusion—a new, multidisciplinary and systems-level approach to building community wealth within underinvested places, while driving city and regional economic growth and development that centers equity at its core:*

<https://www.brookings.edu/essay/community-centered-economic-inclusion-a-strategic-action-playbook/>

**Business Recruitment.** *Communities can influence business investment decisions by drawing attention to local market characteristics that might otherwise be overlooked. A business recruitment team can identify high potential business sectors, compiling information of interest to business prospects, and marketing to those prospects. The key is to demonstrate that the community is a profitable place to do business. This is done on continuous basis covering a variety of business categories.*

<https://economicdevelopment.extension.wisc.edu/articles/business-recruitment/>

### Abstract

The Department of Culture, Equity, & Placemaking (CEP) is a division within the Department of Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion (DEI) designed to further the goals established in the City's Economic Development Strategic Plan and Housing Action Plan goals and facilitating community-driven, place-based investments; strategic stakeholder outreach and engagement strategies; program policies and operating procedures review; and inclusive, cultural events.

**Purpose**

This proposal aims to bring a multidisciplinary, inclusive approach towards the implementation of the City of East Lansing’s Economic Development Strategic Plan. The Department of Culture, Equity, & Placemaking (CEP) is tasked with finding out which groups of people a problem affects and how it affects them and, subsequently, develop meaningful solutions that balance economic, environmental, and social needs of the East Lansing community. CEP will implement programs, policies, procedures, and projects that align with the Economic Development Strategic Plan. CEP will provide cohesive, streamlined, and centralized programming accessible to all walks of life.

**Overview: The Department of Culture, Equity, & Placemaking**

The Department of Culture, Equity, & Placemaking (CEP) is designed to further the goals established in the City’s Economic Development Strategic Plan, Housing Action Plan goals, and to facilitate community-driven, place-based investments; strategic stakeholder outreach and engagement strategies; program policies and operating procedures review; and cultural events.

Existing staff from the Community & Economic Development Division (CED), within the Department of Planning, Building, & Development (PBD), will be used to create CEP and will include subject matter experts in event planning, marketing, and promotions, grant administration, inclusive economic development strategies, stakeholder input, and all forms of the arts. In addition, existing staff from the Department of Parks, Recreation, & Arts (PRA), will also consist of the CEP team.

By removing CED and PRA staff from their respective Departments, CEP can concentrate limited resources, and place a greater focus on inclusive economic development practices. This approach will also reduce the overall size and number of responsibilities of PBD and PRA, allowing more resources and a greater focus on remaining staff, programs, projects, and boards and commissions. The Department of Parks, Recreation, & Art will now revert to the Department of Parks & Recreation.

**Proposed Positions**

CEP proposes the recasting of CED positions to the proposed positions listed below. CEP will focus on inclusive economic development strategies, community-centered investments, and ensure an equity lens and multi-faceted approach towards program and project development is applied using the multi-disciplinary team proposed below.



*\*Significant need/new position*

**Funding**

This proposal will use the funding structure for the current positions to fund the proposed positions, as existing staff from one or more departments will be used to create CEP. Current funding levels for all staff, including the Department of Planning, Building, & Development, will be maintained. Below are the current funding sources for staff in CED, which are proposed to staff CEP.

<b>Estimated Current Wages</b>	<b>S&amp;W</b>	<b>Fringe Expenses</b>	<b>Total</b>
Community & Economic Dev Administrator	\$ 96,600	\$ 28,980	\$ 125,580
Community & Economic Dev Associate	\$ 50,270	\$ 14,578	\$ 64,848
Community & Economic Dev Specialist	\$ 46,134	\$ 17,756	\$ 63,890
Community & Economic Dev Specialist	\$ 46,134	\$ 17,756	\$ 63,890
Arts Programming Specialist	\$ 25,000	\$ 1,930	\$ 26,930
Cultural Events Specialist	\$	\$	\$
Arts Festival & Arts Initiative Coordinator	\$	\$	\$
*Business Analyst	\$	\$	\$
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>

<b>Current Funding Sources for Current Positions</b>	<b>GF</b>	<b>DDA</b>	<b>DMB</b>	<b>CDBG</b>
Community & Economic Dev. Administrator	64%	36%	0%	0%
Community & Economic Dev. Associate	74%	26%	0%	0%
Community & Economic Dev. Specialist	44%	23%	33%	0%
Community & Economic Dev. Specialist	6%	16%	0%	78%
Arts Programming Specialist	44%	56%	0%	0%
Cultural Events Specialist				
Arts Festival & Arts Initiative Coordinator				
*Business Analyst				

**General Responsibilities**

The Department of Planning, Building, & Development (PBD) will continue to administer the Brownfield Tax Increment Financing Program and manage the Brownfield Redevelopment Authority; however, CEP staff will facilitate the review of incentive policies, including green building standards, related to brownfield tax increment financing. CEP proposes to keep the BRA responsibilities within PBD. Furthermore, PBD will continue to solicit and package development projects, and manage the Downtown Materials & Waste Management Program and the Evergreen Properties. The Farmers Market, Aquatic Center, Hannah Center, and other Parks & Rec related programming will stay with the Department of Parks & Rec.

**Proposed Position**

**General Core Responsibilities**

CEP Administrator	Administration of CEP programs per direction of CEP Director
Community & Economic Opportunities Specialist	CD Advisory, Community Development Block Grant, MSU Relations, Community Relations, Incentive Policies SME, HRC support, RFPs
Business Relations & Marketing Specialist	DMB, Downtown East Lansing social media management, business intelligence, Communications Dept. Liaison, business visits, business outreach, input, & engagement
Event Planning & Strategic Partnerships Specialist	Cultural events, Downtown events, small-scale performances, Grand Openings, Albert EL Fresco events, vendor contracts
Creative Placemaking Specialist	DDA/DMB programming, creative community relations, creative placemaking (SME), project development, arts programming
Cultural Events Specialist	Athletic programming, Art Festival assistance, cultural events
Arts Festival & Arts Initiative Coordinator	Arts Commission Liaison, Arts Festival Coordinator, public art projects, creative sector relations, sponsorships
*Business Analyst	Operating procedures/workflows/internal business processes/cross-departmental problem/solution identification

**Boards/Commissions/Partners**

- Arts Commission
- CD Advisory Committee
- Downtown Development Authority
- Downtown Management Board
- MSU Strategic Partnerships
- Neighborhood Liaisons
- Artspace Workgroup Liaison

**Office Location:** CEP is a boots on the ground Department and requires frequent interaction with stakeholders. A majority of stakeholders, and funding sources, represent the downtown. The Departmental Office should be located and centralized downtown in a ground floor office setting. Funding for a short-term lease should be considered while long term plans are prepared.

### **Needs Assessment [to be completed upon CEP establishment]**

Beyond current responsibilities of CED staff, CEP staff will seek to implement solutions such as the examples listed below. These solutions require further investigation; however, are being considered for future implementation.

- Flexible, nimble, responsive, adaptable placemaking programming
- Centralized Grant Applications & Workflow Approvals
- Centralized Artist and Performer Applications & Equitable Opportunities
- Centralized Event Applications & Equitable Opportunities
- Strategic Partnerships
- Centralized Sponsorship Application & Opportunities Program
- Sponsorships Program
- Business Support & Technical Assistance Programs
- Stakeholder Outreach, Engagement, and Input
- Equity Lens Analysis on Incentives, Policies, Procedures, and Opportunities
- Internal Operating Procedures and Workflows
- Standard Operating Procedures and Workflows
- Business Incubation and Acceleration
- Business Intelligence Software

### **[long term] Downtown Maintenance & Operations Team [to be completed upon CEP establishment]**

The following positions should be considered over the next several fiscal years:

- Cleaning & Sanitization
- Maintenance & Waste Management
- Sidewalks & Streets

**Event Staff:** CEP will require staff capacity to execute community, cultural, and downtown events.

## Economic Development Strategic Plan

CEP will facilitate and lead the implementation of the Economic Development Strategic Plan. To facilitate the implementation of this Plan, staff will work with internal and external stakeholders to develop solutions through defined objectives, strategies, and work plans that meet the goals associated with each of the following five (5) Focus Areas.

### FOCUS AREA 1: Inclusive Economic Development Practices

- GOAL 1.1** Evaluate all economic development programs through an equity lens.
- GOAL 1.2** In partnership with PR&A and other partners, support the design and production of inclusive, diverse, and frequent programming, including community and cultural events, to welcome community members of all ages and backgrounds to the Community.
- GOAL 1.3** Update economic development financial incentives and other economic development programming with a focus on small businesses and marginalized populations.
- GOAL 1.4** Foster an inclusive and diverse local economy that supports entrepreneurship and increases economic opportunities for broad participation.
- GOAL 1.4** Facilitate meaningful opportunities for broad stakeholder input and implement pilot projects to identify representative community needs.
- GOAL 1.5** Implement strategies to improve diversity of representation on related boards and commissions.
- GOAL 1.6** Seek out and incorporate inclusive and accessible economic development practices into existing economic policies, procedures, and projects.
- GOAL 1.7** Support planning and zoning with updated zoning ordinances and city code to remove barriers towards attainable housing and economic development opportunities.

### FOCUS AREA 2: Placemaking

- GOAL 2.1** Incorporate placemaking strategies in a Downtown Strategic Plan in coordination with the downtown development authority and downtown management board.
- GOAL 2.2** Continue and increase collaborations with local and regional partners to design and implement creative placemaking projects.
- GOAL 2.3** Prioritize a people-focused, high-quality built environment conducive for socializing, participating in the local economy, and enhances the pedestrian experience.
- GOAL 2.4** In partnership with PR&A, DPW and other partners, to support the redevelopment and transformation of underutilized public spaces into interesting and unique public places that offer a wide range of seating options, are conducive to hosting community activities, incorporate all forms of the arts, and provide attractive amenities for an enhanced visitor experience. SEE ALSO GOAL 3
- GOAL 2.5** Ensure safety and security, maintenance, and sanitization are factored into and addressed in placemaking projects.
- GOAL 2.6** Enhance the supportive environment for innovators and entrepreneurship, especially in relationship to MSU's strength in applied sciences SEE ALSO Goals 3 and 4
- GOAL 2.7** Work with PD, DPW and other to incorporate downtown mobility solutions focused on delivery services, alley congestion, alternative transportation modes, parking, and an enhanced pedestrian experience. SEE ALSO Goal 3
- GOAL 2.8** Market and promote placemaking initiatives that align with the goals in focus area 5.

### FOCUS AREA 3: Vibrant/Unique City and Downtown District

- GOAL 3.1** Increase opportunities for office-based businesses, service providers, retail merchants, and artists to participate in the local economy.

- GOAL 3.2** Support the PD goal to create a downtown business neighborhood district with subdistricts that align with the character of the subdistrict neighborhoods.
- GOAL 3.3** Provide support to police to address mutual safety concerns, including support to assign officers to the downtown neighborhood district.
- GOAL 3.4** Update the DDA’s Strategic Priorities to align with the 5 focus areas.
- GOAL 3.5** Develop a Downtown Marketing Plan to align with the 5 focus areas.
- GOAL 3.6** Attract more diversity in age groups to live downtown.
- GOAL 3.7** Support DPW with downtown maintenance and sanitization services and ensure appropriate funding levels are maintained for the level of growth being experienced downtown.
- GOAL 3.8** Continue supporting the Downtown Development Authority’s camera expansion project.
- GOAL 3.9** Encourage sustainable development and infrastructure concepts into downtown development and revitalization projects.

**FOCUS AREA 4: Expand/Diversify Tax Base**

- GOAL 4.1** Align approval criteria for financial assistance programs with the 5 focus areas.
- GOAL 4.2** Prioritize and support specific development and redevelopment opportunities, including city-owned priority sites and underutilized, blighted, and/or environmentally contaminated sites.
- GOAL 4.3** Balance the redevelopment of the Evergreen Properties with the desired uses of properties while responsibility managing the debt liability.
- GOAL 4.4** Work with other departments and divisions to support the streamlining of internal workflows, where possible, and increase transparency for a predictable development review process.
- GOAL 4.5** Work with other departments and division to support the streamlining of internal workflows, where possible, and increase transparency for predicable business licensing, permitting, and communications process.
- GOAL 4.6** Continue working closely with regional partners on business attraction and retention efforts with a focus on office-based tenancy and uses. SEE ALSO Goal 2 and 3.

**FOCUS AREA 5: Branding & Marketing**

- GOAL 5.1** Continue data collection initiatives with the business community and residents to inform decision-making on project development and program design.
- GOAL 5.2** Continue developing highly visible and innovative branding and marketing campaigns that highlight the downtown business district, including the business community, promotional events, and other downtown-related activities.
- GOAL 5.3** Develop sponsorship opportunities to help offset the cost of implementing downtown programming in partnership with the Parks, Recreation, & Arts Department and other stakeholders.
- GOAL 5.4** Support Communications Department with innovative marketing & advertising campaigns that promote Community assets and inform residents.
- GOAL 5.5** Update the design, use, and functionality of the EL Buzz Website.
- GOAL 5.6** Continue utilizing online platforms and data collection software to maximize data collection efforts and increase access to participation.
- GOAL 5.7** Focus on small-scale, frequent events to promote the downtown district that align with the 5 focus areas.
- GOAL 5.8** Market and promote economic redevelopment and development priority sites and brownfield sites identified in focus area 4.

FY2022 Activities	Lead
Albert EL Fresco	DDA
Art Festival – financial/marketing support	PRA
Battle of the Businesses	DMB
Business Communications	DMB
Business Resource Guide	DMB
Clock Tower Banner Program	DDA
Community Chalk Walk in EL Fresco	DDA
Downtown Materials & Waste Management	DDA
DNA Branding Campaign	DMB
DNA Card (Yiftee eGift Card)	DMB
DNA Card Holiday BOGOs	DMB
DNA Skywalk Banner	DMB
East Lansing Pride	DMB
EL Buzz Construction Updates	DMB
Farmers Market - marketing support only	PRA
Game Night in EL Fresco	DMB
GLAM Jam in EL Fresco	DMB
Grand Openings	DMB
Great Pumpkin Walk	DMB
Holiday Decorations	DMB
Izzo 5k - marketing support only	Izzo 5k
K-12 Artwork Business Pop-ups	DMB
Live Music Performances	DMB
Media Releases /Requests	COM.
Moonlight ExtravaGRANDza	DMB
MSU Drawing Marathon	MSU
MSU Homecoming	MSU
MSUCU Fence Panel Beautification	DDA
October Fashion & Fiber Show	DDA
Parking with Matt Video Series	DMB
Parklet Program	DDA
Downtown Promotional Videos	DMB
Rotating Art Display Program	DDA
Sandbox Films Series	MSU
Security Camera Expansion Project	DDA
Small Scale Beautification	DDA
Smile! You're on Camera!	DDA
Social Media Collaborations	DMB
Social Media Management	DMB
Spartan Tartan	PRA
Takeout Tuesday	DMB
Trivia on the Street	DDA
Yoga on Albert	DDA
Brownfield TIF Reimbursements	BRA
State BF Reporting	BRA
DDA State Reporting	DDA
Community Development Block Grant	CDBG

Listed above are projects, programs, or other initiatives completed in whole or in part by CED staff.