**Compilation of Responses Regarding DDA and Library Partnerships in Michigan**

**From Alto Branch, Kent District Library:**

Here at Alto we work quite a bit with our DDA. Full disclosure, I am the chairman of it, but the relationship started before I was on the board. When a library question comes up for a vote, I abstain.

Our building was purchased by the DDA and is maintained by the DDA. The intention was to turn the building over to the township when the purchase and renovation were done (we are in an old grocery store), but the DDA board didn’t feel the township would care for it as they wished, so they have kept the ownership…keeping in mind that the DDA is part of the township, so in a way the township does own us.\* The DDA pays for all the utilities, the cleaning of the building, and for snow removal. (They actually pay for the snow removal on all of Main Street, plus clear our parking area behind the building.)

The DDA considers this the “crown jewel” of the district, so they invest quite a bit into us every year (The last couple of years they voted to budget $20,000 toward us). We have done custom built furniture for the building, and supplies and signage that we would not be able to purchase with the budget we are assigned through Kent District Library, with this gift. We have also been purchasing equipment to house here for the community to use: a laptop projector, with various accessories; portable sound system; projection screen; folding picnic tables…things people may need once a year, or once in a lifetime, so don’t want to purchase themselves. We have taken suggestions from the District residents for the purchases. These are free to use to anyone in the DDA district; available to anyone in the community for a $5 donation to the Friends of the Library. (The Historical Society, Lions Club and our community Festival have also used these.)

Two years ago I started co-operating with the local school (Alto Elementary in the Lowell Area Schools system) on “March is Reading Month”, making this a celebration of reading for the whole family, not just elementary students. The DDA has been a sponsor of this, helping to cover the cost of supplies and programs.

Hope this is of some help to you. Let me know if there is any more information you would like.

Sandy

\*In Kent District Library, the 18 branch buildings are owned and maintained by the local municipalities, not KDL.

Sandy Graham

Branch Manager

Alto Branch, Kent District Library

**From Berkley Public Library:**

I know I am retired now, but the DDA paid for Berkley's new roof. $165000 was budgeted but the roof is going to come in under $100,000 and the DDA has agreed to allow the rest of the money to be used for lobby improvements which Matt will be doing. The roof was nearly finished when I left.

Celia

**From the Rochester Hills Public Library:**

RHPL got $2.5 million from our local DDA to purchase land within the DDA to build the library. We did that in 1992. Since then we’ve partnered on little things, but nothing involving money.

Christine Lind Hage, Director

**Holly Township Library**

This will be short and sweet for Holly Township Library—zero to both parts of your questions. Shirley Roos

**Bacon Memorial Library in Wyandotte**

Our DDA and the Farmers Market representative it supports have been part of a couple of our youth programs; they have provided an activity for the kids in exchange for promoting a youth program they were conducting at the Farmers Market. They have also provided us space at their events to promote our Geek the Library campaign last year.-Anita O’Brien, Director

**Commerce Township Library**

Our DDA was a key partner in our 2005 startup.  The DDA purchased two golf courses for development and parkland and when the township decided to start up a library the DDA made available to us one of the country club buildings.  We spent about half a million on the renovating the banquet halls and furnishings, and six years later another 400,000 on renovating the back end.  It works pretty good considering.  The DDA has turned our piece over to the ownership of the township.

Unfortunately with the "crash" the DDA found all development grind to a halt, and did not receive the projected revenue to pay off their bonded indebtedness, which has meant the township operating fund has had to pick up 2 million in debt payments this year and last.

So good and bad.  
  
Connie

**Peter White Public Library, Marquette**

We held a very large Harry Potter event that involved the whole downtown  
when the 7th book came out. The DDA served on the planning committee,   
helped advertise, hung decorated brooms from the lampposts, set up the  
electronics so I could show the 1st film outdoors, etc. Great fun. Cathy

**Hopkins District Library**

I'm working with our DDA right now to get a bike rack put in front of the library. They are paying for the cement and rack and we are coordinating everything. Good luck!

Natalie Bazan MA, MLIS  
Library Director

**Plymouth District Library**

Our DDA has not provided financial support to the library.

However, they do include our programs in their calendar of events - both

in print and online. In turn, we have participated in DDA events, like

the Kidpalooza, Christmas gingerbread house scavenger hunt, etc.

Susan

**Brighton District Library**

Brighton District Library sits within the Brighton DDA boundaries but we are NOT subject to tax capture by the DDA.

We have a cordial relationship with the City of Brighton, one of the four political units within our service area.

Although it took some time, and some politicking by members of the DDA committee who had already made personal donations themselves, the Brighton DDA made a $1,000 leadership level donation to the Library's $13,000 Light the Way capital campaign to replace the 13 bollard lights at our entryway.

As Matt Modrack, the DDA exec director said, the Library is an activity center in the community and it makes sense to help the Library keep the community safe by donating to the lighting project.

And it didn't hurt the DDA to be included in both the radio and the newspaper stories which followed, for the Mayor to be one of those speaking at the lighting dedication ceremony, and to have the DDA gift noted by the donor plaque on their "very own light".

-- Nancy

Nancy B. Johnson, Ph.D.

Director, Brighton District Library

**Charlevoix Public Library**

We have a very unique relationship with our DDA as they helped secure the purchase of our property prior to a bond sale. They then made a pledge to pay $30,000 each year for 20 years to help reduce the millage rate for our new bond millage. The $30,000 is about what they capture from our millages. Now, this relationship has worked out well, until the last few years when the property values have decreased and they did not have enough money to pay their own bonds and pay their pledge…. This does not sit well with many people, but the DDA board has “stated” they will continue their pledge after their bond is paid off next year. We will see….

We also partner with the DDA to bring a children’s concert to the concert in the park series in the summer. This amounts to us writing a grant to pay for the musician, and the DDA providing a lovely outdoor venue and lots of publicity.

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All in all, it is hard to get dollars from them, but the director is very supportive and helps with non-cash support like publicity and planning assistance.

Although I know DDA’s are quite controversial, ours is here for a while, so we make the best of it and work with them when we can. They are quite supportive and seem to understand the value of the library downtown.

Val

Valerie Meyerson, Library Director

**Chelsea District Library**

We are subject to tax capture from the DDA and are part of our community's downtown corridor. A few years back, our director would regularly attend DDA meetings to keep abreast of current local events and build relationships there. When complaints surfaced about their cramped basement meeting quarters, he volunteered the library's meeting room for their monthly meetings, which was a major improvement for them. They met here for a year or more, which was good exposure for us and a gesture of goodwill. When new city council quarters were built in a new police station, they moved their meetings to that location, which happened in summer 2012.

We hadn't previously approached them for funding of any kind, but in winter 2013, my director and I asked them to support our 5th Annual Midwest Literary Walk in April. The event features readings by poets, playwrights and authors taking place throughout the day in a variety of locations, from our local theater, to an art gallery, to a brewpub, to a coffee bar/sushi place, to the library. All the locations are in the DDA footprint and we draw a few hundred people into the immediate downtown area for the all-day event. They responded positively and funded us in the amount of $3,000. We plan to ask them for support again for next year's event and have already heard some off the record commentary that we have a good chance. The event was really a perfect fit for them to sponsor and we hope to continue a relationship with them from that event.

I hope this helps. Happy to talk more or in detail if that would be useful.

-Sara Wedell

**Royal Oak Public Library**

Our DDA has not been receptive to helping us/partnering in any way despite the fact that they benefit from the library millage.

Mary Karshner, Director

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