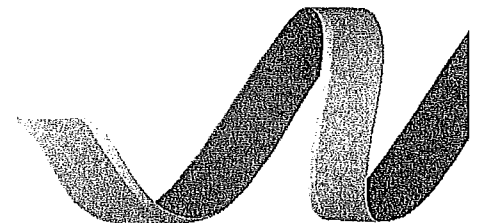


**COUNCIL MEETING  
AGENDA  
May 9, 2022  
7:00 p.m.**

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Posting of Colors – City of Mason Police Color Guard
4. Police Recognition and Swearing ins
5. Minutes: April 11 Council Meeting
6. City Manager’s Report
7. Committee Reports
8. Mason Arts Council Presentation: Karen Kilgore and Kim Martin
9. Recognition of Visitors
10. **Res. 2022 – 7** Recognizing David Werner – Representing the State of Ohio at the 2022 Special Olympics USA Games
11. **Res. 2022 – 8** Proclaiming the week of May 15 – 21, 2022 as National Police Week and May 15 as Peace Officers’ Memorial Day
12. **Res. 2022 – 9** Proclaiming the week of May 15 – 21, 2022 as Emergency Medical Services Week
13. **Res. 2022 – 10** Declaring May as Mental Health Awareness Month
14. **Res. 2022 – 11** Supporting the development of the Fire Department Strategic Plan
15. **Res. 2022 – 12** **1<sup>st</sup> Reading** – Adopting the Budget of the City of Mason for the year January 1, 2023 through December 31, 2023
16. **Ord. 2022 – 64** Authorizing the City Manager to enter into a pre-annexation agreement with Bruce Jones



17. **Ord. 2022 – 65** Approval of the preliminary plat of the Ainsley Subdivision
18. **Ord. 2022 – 66** Approval of the replat for WRLD Subdivision, Section 2
19. **Ord. 2022 – 67** Approval of the dedication plat for Mesa Properties, LLC (UDF) at Tylersville Road and US 42
20. **Ord. 2022 – 68** Authorizing the acceptance of certain donated easements and the acquisition of other certain easements as part of the Mason-Montgomery Road Widening – Concord Crossing Drive to Enterprise Drive Project
21. **Ord. 2022 – 69** Authorizing the City Manager to engage the Southwest Ohio Philharmonic for the performance of a concert in an amount not to exceed \$40,930
22. **Ord. 2022 – 70** Authorizing a grant funding agreement between the City of Mason and the Mason Deerfield Chamber Community Development Corporation related to the Mason Mile Project
23. **Ord. 2022 – 71** Authorizing the City Manager to enter into a contract with Semper Fi Industrial Coatings, Inc. in an amount not to exceed \$292,000 for the Wastewater Clarifiers and Thickener Rehabilitation Project at the Water Reclamation Plant
24. **Ord. 2022 – 72** Authorizing the City Manager to enter into a contract with Coating Consulting, LLC in an amount not to exceed \$20,000 for inspection services related to the Wastewater Clarifiers and Thickener Rehabilitation Project at the Water Reclamation Plant
25. **Ord. 2022 – 73** Authorizing the City Manager to enter into a contract with All Safe Industries for the purchase of hazardous gas detection equipment and declaring an emergency
26. **Ord. 2022 – 74** Authorizing the City Manager to enter into a contract with ProAir Midwest for a replacement breathing air compressor for the City of Mason Fire Department
27. **Ord. 2022 – 75** Authorizing the City Manager to enter into contracts with various vendors in an amount not to exceed \$250,000 for the development of a dog park at Mason Sports Park
28. **Ord. 2022 – 76** Authorizing the City Manager to enter into a contract with Mt. Pleasant Blacktopping Company, Inc. for the Community Center Senior Parking Expansion Project in the amount of \$194,204
29. **Ord. 2022 – 77** Authorizing the City Manager to enter into a contract with Cincinnati Bell in an amount not to exceed \$1,500 per month for services at The Grizzly Golf and Social Lodge and declaring an emergency
30. Old and New Business
31. Recognition of Visitors
32. Adjourn

**TO:** City Council  
**FROM:** Eric Hansen, City Manager  
**DATE:** May 5, 2022  
**RE:** Mason Mile Project – MADE CDC Grant Funding Agreement

**ITEM:** An ordinance authorizing a grant funding agreement with Mason Deerfield Community Development Corporation (MADE CDC).

**ACTION REQUESTED:** By motion, adopt **Ordinance 2022 – 70** authorizing a grant funding agreement with MADE CDC in an amount not to exceed \$180,000 to support continued progress on the Mason Mile Project.

**PURPOSE:** In 2018, the Mason Deerfield Community Development Corporation (MADE CDC) was developed as a result of the MADE Chamber's Strategic Action Agenda. CDCs are often valuable tools used in communities in partnership with local governments to spearhead revitalization projects as they have the ability to leverage resources from both the public and private sector. Upon its establishment, the MADE CDC developed a Strategic Prosperity Plan (SPP) to help identify the organization's priorities. As a result of the SPP, one of the priorities identified was to advance Downtown Mason; the Mason Mile Project is the result.

The goal of the Downtown Mason Mile project is to create a vibrant and sustainable Downtown area that is the civic and social center of Mason. The executive summary attached provided by the MADE CDC outlines a very detailed history of efforts to enhance Downtown Mason as well as actions the CDC has taken since its establishment to begin setting the stage for successful revitalization of Mason's Downtown. Collaboration, public engagement and public private partnership are key components of successful implementation of this project and are reoccurring themes in the project's strategy as outlined in the executive summary.

The Downtown Committee of Council has been meeting with members of the MADE CDC on a regular basis to discuss ways in which the City can support both the mission and sustainability of the MADE CDC and the Downtown Mason Mile project in particular. As a result of continued conversations, the City and the MADE CDC have worked together to develop a partnership agreement that recognizes the investment and success MADE CDC has had to date in building community support for the Mason Mile and a desire to continue its leadership of the project. The agreement was structured in a manner that allows the City to remain an active stakeholder in advancing progress towards revitalizing the Downtown Mason Mile while also emphasizing public engagement and the market's role in determining success. The grant agreement provides \$180,000 from the City to help fund the next step of progress in the Mason Mile Project. I anticipate this initial funding to be the first step of ongoing investment in the project.

The attached agreement includes two Exhibits (Executive Summary: Downtown Mason Mile Project PHASE 2 GUIDEBOOK and Downtown Mason Mile Process and Phase Timeline for CoM Grant) which provide more context and detail of anticipated work and timing. However, public and stakeholder engagement is the initial focus and will guide priorities, additional outputs, and direction of the project.

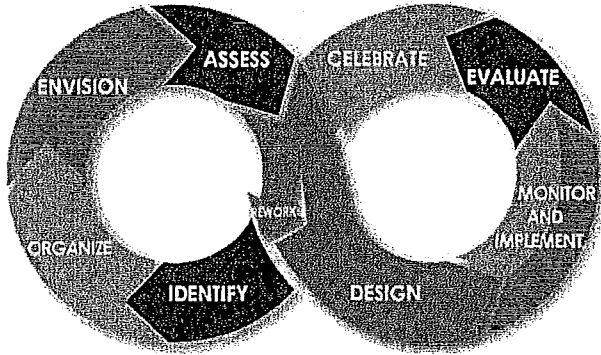
The Downtown Committee of Council is recommending adoption of **Ordinance 2022 – 70**. If you have any questions, please contact me.

# DOWNTOWN MASON MILE

Where *progress* and *nostalgia* meet

## DOWNTOWN MASON MILE PROCESS AND PHASE TIMELINE FOR CoM GRANT

This overview serves as an accompaniment to the Executive Summary or Guidebook for Phase 2. Tasks are sorted by goal and not chronologically in the Phase 2 Guidebook. Not all of the tasks outlined in the Phase 2 Guidebook will be completed in Phase 2 as many will flow into Phase 3 of the ASSESS/DESIGN phase.



MADECDC Community Development Process/Phase Model

### IN PROCESS/FUTURE PHASES AND MILESTONES:

- **PHASE 2 – ORGANIZE/(EN)VISION/ASSESS**
  - *Timeline Aim\**: Spring 2022 – Winter 2022/2023
  - **ORGANIZE** stakeholders and community engagement strategy
    - Team of Teams development and implementation
    - Mason Mile Project Advisory Council development and launch
  - **(EN)VISION** for the future
    - Community Engagement to identify desires and a vision for the Mason Mile
    - Market study with SMART and guided goals
  - **ASSESS** the will and way to make the vision a reality based on progress of the Mason Mile goals list, community engagement, and market analysis
  
- **PHASE 3 – ASSESS/DESIGN**
  - *Timeline Aim\**: Spring 2023 - Fall 2023
  - **ASSESS** the will and way to make the vision a reality
    - Connect with government and the public on the findings
    - Prioritize outstanding tasks and identify resources necessary to complete them
  - **REWORK** if necessary
  - **DESIGN** conceptual master development framework based on what the community desires and market can support
  
- **PHASE 4 – DESIGN/IMPLEMENT/MONITOR/EVALUATE/CELEBRATE**
  - *Timeline Aim\**: TBD

*\*Timeline needs to be flexible to adjust according to community engagement and market study efforts  
Note: None of Phase 1, kickoff to Phase 2, completion of Phase 3, or none of Phase 4 is part of the CoM grant.*

**DOWNTOWN MASON MILE**  
*Where Progress and Nostalgia Meet*

**Our Downtown Mason Mile  
will be a refreshed, healthy, vibrant  
regional heart –  
where we will honor our past and  
build into the future together.**

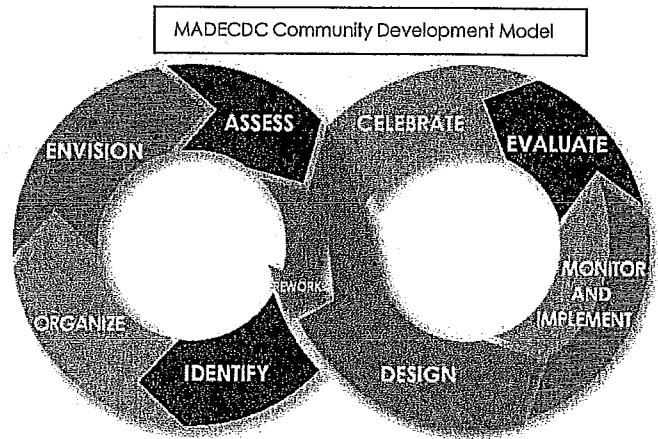


### MADE CDC Background

In 2018, following nearly 20 months of broad-based participation, coordinated by consulting firm, Market Street Services, the MADE region published its holistic, consensus-based, Strategic Action Agenda. Its purpose was to initiate a collaborative effort toward building a stronger, more competitive community for jobs, talent, and investment. One important recommendation that came out of the action agenda was for the Mason Deerfield Chamber to create a connected non-profit to advance regional community development initiatives. Several members of the steering committee, in partnership with the Downtown Mason Association Board of Directors and MADE Chamber Board of Directors established MADE CDC, a 501c3 non-profit community development corporation, to focus and coordinate public and private efforts to grow our region into a more globally recognized, dynamic, healthy, and resilient place. Current members of MADE CDC's Board of Directors include Scott Jones, John Kramer, and Randy Kuvin.

With a goal to create a unified community vision for the MADE region, the first priority for MADE CDC was to develop a Strategic Prosperity Plan (SPP) that would aggregate plans from across the MADE Region's organizations, create a framework for long-term success, and utilize available resources to grow our community. MADE CDC partnered with Verity Management Group in 2019 to create the SPP which was published in October 2020.

As part of the SPP, MADE CDC monitors places where conditions indicate underperformance can be remedied to enhance capacity, improve assets, increase property values, and create on-going economic and social activity. MADE CDC will implement projects to address underperforming conditions via two techniques: community development and Private/Public Partnerships. The "Downtown Mason Project" was proposed as MADE CDC's first project following its community development model (**Appendix A**).



### Downtown Mason Mile Project Rationale

Timing is right for this project because stakeholder interests are aligned. Property owners want a stronger real estate market, business owners see an opportunity for increased business with a vibrant downtown, city government wants a flourishing downtown, and MADE CDC is now in a position to coordinate the project. Previous downtown projects have fallen short of expectations because of economic factors, lack of direction and leadership, and lack of a unified goal.

### Downtown Mason Mile Project History

In the 1960s, the newly formed Mason Area Chamber of Commerce (now known as Mason Deerfield Chamber or MADE Chamber) banded a group of people together to take the first steps to create a lively, vibrant Downtown by implementing the first community project to hang Christmas lights on the poles throughout the city center to help drive commerce and bring the community together. Founded by seven businessmen with an installment of 27 members, the Christmas Light Fund started with \$26 and grew to over \$2,000, and by 1979 it had grown into the Christmas in Mason festival. The Mason Area Chamber of Commerce continued to grow and engage in the community and

launched multiple initiatives to support the then Village of Mason that was home to less than 5,000 residents. Some of these initiatives included projects like Clean-up, Paint-up, Fix-up Week each spring, and Community Unity Days later known as the Mason Bicycle Festival and present day, The Mason Heritage Festival. From 1969 to 1978, they organized Youth in Government Week, and in 1983, funded Mason Against Crime. It wasn't until 1996 that the Chamber hired its first full-time paid executive. Our community has a history of leaning in and volunteering to make it a better place as exemplified through operating the Chamber for 28 years under the leadership of passionate Board members and community members.

In the 1970s, the City government led an effort to enhance the area visually, eliminating on-street parking, installing turn lanes and streetscape elements including trees, sidewalks and trash receptacles.

In the 1990s, a group of concerned citizens formed to instigate a redevelopment effort, but quickly disbanded when it failed to find sufficient unity among its membership to develop a cohesive plan.

In 1999, the City government hired a consultant to "establish broad-based grassroots community support for a comprehensive downtown revitalization plan," which subsequently identified a consensus for revitalizing and maintaining downtown as the focal point for the City, with a strong emphasis on its heritage, character, and quality of life.

In 2002, two separate groups working on different issues relating to the revitalization of downtown merged to form the Downtown Mason Association (DMA). The two separate groups were the Downtown Mason Revitalization Committee (DMRC) and the Mason Core Association (MCA).

In 2003, a Downtown Mason Revitalization Comprehensive Plan emerged centered around the creation and management of the Downtown Mason Central Business District. Consequently, the City government and its planning team excluded the downtown area from its 2001 update to the City's Comprehensive Plan. The official downtown revitalization plan was modeled after the National Main Street Movement that is administered by the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

In 2004, the city government hired a downtown/small business coordinator and was awarded a \$400,000 grant through the Ohio Department of Development Comprehensive Downtown Revitalization Tier Two Program. The grant was intended to be used primarily to improve infrastructure, but also to encourage renovation of central business district buildings.

By late 2005, although the city government committed \$5 million to traffic, parking and streetlamps, and several businesses had jumped aboard the historic renovations theme, momentum toward a revitalized downtown had not yet materialized. It took more than two years to get the Main Street/Reading Road construction underway, and by the time it was finished, little if any of the promised private redevelopment appeared. Ultimately, the nearly decade-long effort to rehab downtown seems to have started and stopped with a roadway project and a small pocket park.

In 2005, a Downtown Overlay District was added to the City's Zoning Code to protect historically and architecturally significant assets (including buildings); encourage higher density mixed use development; reinforce physical, visual and spatial characteristics of urban design; and restrict uses that are disruptive to walkability and walkable design. Mason City Ordinance 2004-70, which created the Downtown Mason Preservation District and established the Design Review Board to review proposals for alteration, demolition, and new construction in the district. A steering committee

# MADE CDC Executive Summary: Downtown Mason Mile Project PHASE 2 GUIDEBOOK

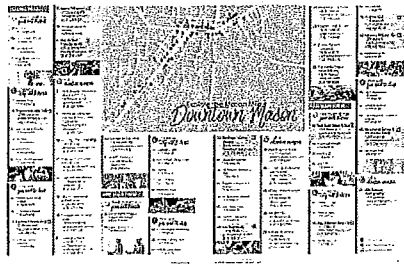
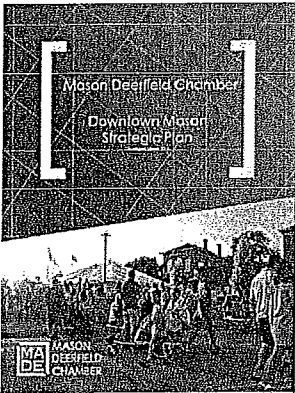
comprised of local property owners, city officials, downtown representatives and design review board members met regularly to guide its development.

In 2010, following two years of intense fact finding, data analysis, and public meetings, the City government published an update to its Comprehensive Plan to respond to slowing growth and changing dynamics. The comprehensive plan identified "a revitalized downtown" as one of seven components of an ideal vision for Mason, "creating a fully functioning live-work-play (family friendly) downtown" as one of five major planning issues, and "the complete downtown revitalization from Tylersville to Hanover" priority #2 of 10.

Our findings and research have shown that from the 1990s until the present, each attempt to focus on downtown has encountered some form of resistance, mostly by residents who have expressed concern about change and abandoning the small-town character of the city they've known and loved. At least twice over the past twenty years, the reluctance to leave "old Mason" behind was sufficient to stymie any progress. Residents, business owners, and property owners have felt as though they have been left out of the process in each attempt the government has made to drive the change.

## Recent Efforts to Generate Momentum

In 2016, MADE Chamber leaders began to take steps toward transparent and inclusive efforts to rebuild trust with the community and overcome the lingering concerns. Championed by Cathy Harbison and Dave Yost, both lifelong Mason residents with two of the longest standing businesses in the community, in under three years, efforts led to the creation of the 2018-2019 Downtown Mason strategic plan developed as a result of community engagement, collaboration with City leaders to create the Music in Mason concert series and revive Christmas in Mason, relationship building among business and property owners, partnership with Mason City Schools on the butterfly mural, development of a map of downtown Mason, and the collaboration on a charter amendment that would enable conversations about increased density in the area.



## Resolution

RESOLUTION 2018 - 20  
SUPPORTING ISSUE 4 REGARDING DENSITY OF DWELLING UNITS

WHEREAS, the Charter Amendment proposed by Issue 4 is an important step toward a vibrant downtown, mixed-use environment; and

WHEREAS, Issue 4 helps to remove the barriers which previously have stifled private sector investment, allowing for new and creative solutions to developing market housing; and

WHEREAS, Issue 4 provides the opportunity to develop more compact and diverse residential units that meet the needs of our community, thereby setting the way for a more vibrant and lively downtown; and

WHEREAS, the community desires a vibrant, walkable downtown with strategically placed residential options; and

WHEREAS, making homes at key strategic locations, called by the City of Mason Comprehensive Plan, is vital to the economic growth strategy for the community; and

WHEREAS, the Mason Deerfield Chamber of Commerce supported Council plan the Amendment on the 1st and 2nd readings and for a vote on the 3rd reading; and

WHEREAS, Mason City Council and the Mason Deerfield Chamber of Commerce support and affirm such as promoting Issue 4 for the benefit of downtown Mason and all businesses and residents of Mason; and

WHEREAS, Resolution 2018 - 20 is a Joint Resolution by the Council of Mason, Ohio AND the Board of Directors of the Mason Deerfield Chamber of Commerce;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Mason, Ohio, its members shall meet and assemble on the 1st and 2nd readings of the Charter Amendment;

Section 1. That the Council of the City of Mason, Ohio, and the Board of Directors of the Mason Deerfield Chamber hereby support approval of Issue 4 placed before voters at the November 6, 2018, election;

Section 2. That the Council of the City of Mason and the Board of Directors of the Mason Deerfield Chamber urge all citizens of the City of Mason to support Issue 4 regarding amendments to the Charter of the City of Mason;

Section 3. That all citizens are urged to express their support for Issue 4 and vote. Results and members who will join them;

Section 4. That this Resolution shall take effect and be in full force and effect the instant public clerk by law.

Passed this 28<sup>th</sup> day of September, 2018.

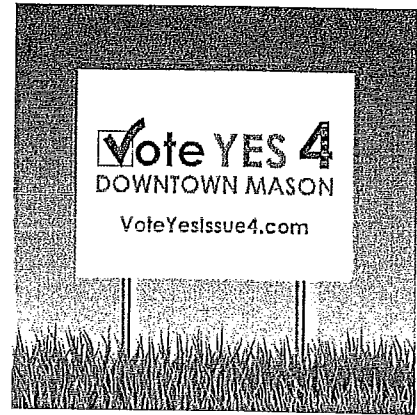
*[Signature]*  
Mayor Victor Eick

Attest:  
*[Signature]*  
City Clerk



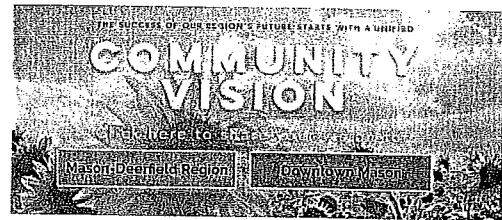


In November 2018, Mason voters evaluated an amendment to the Mason Charter allowing higher density housing in designated locations in Mason including downtown. Increased density is often identified as a prerequisite for a healthy downtown, yet often higher density zoning is innately contentious. Weighing the potential increase in housing density reinvigorated the community's interest in downtown development, but also raised the recurring question, "does progress have to mean forgetting our past and losing our identity?" Voters overwhelmingly approved the charter amendment, demonstrating significant support for not just denser housing but also tackling the long-lagging downtown yet again as the grassroots campaign



message to the public was **VOTE YES (ISSUE) 4 DOWNTOWN MASON**. Its approval, particularly in the face of opposition, was seen as the community's recognition that progress would require some change in the heart of the city. Still, many believe it would be a huge mistake in pursuit of such change, to overlook the desire to acknowledge and emphasize Mason's history and heritage, as well as to forge ahead without the community. Because it, and the people who made it, were a big part of how we got to where we are today, the continual promise to engage the public was at the heart of the campaign, and that promise is at the core of how MADECDC intends to operate.

In summer of 2019, the MADE Chamber kept its promise to the community and partnered with the newly created MADECDC to conduct broader community engagement sessions as a part of crafting a vision for the MADE region and Downtown Mason. From March 14 – June 1, 2019, the effort garnered interest of 421 community members who provided feedback on their visions and desires for the community in forms of public meetings and surveys. The high-level overview of those findings was shared with Mason City Council in November 2019, which included:



shared with Mason City Council in November 2019, which included:

- the public clearly has opinions and wants to be heard;
- Mason-Deerfield is successful despite some rough edges that need help;
- we should all stop being parochial – regionalism is important and borders don't matter;
- people are seeking more culture and opportunities to connect with their neighbors;
- economic growth isn't enough – real success is sustained prosperity, peak quality of life and we need the ability to thrive in the face of substantial challenges;
- our community compels us to think differently, act differently, and move at the speed of trust.

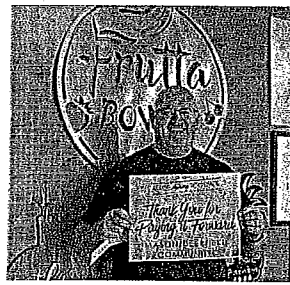
MADECDC ensured all members of Mason City Council were aware of the strategy we selected which is *Community Development* - defined as a time-tested approach that encompasses a wide variety of work done by engaged members of the community – residents and neighbors, employers and employees, private and public property owners, and institutions of every kind—to improve the area in which they live, learn, work and play. Community development means people making decisions about, and making investments in, their block, town or region, to increase the likelihood they and their neighbors will prosper. MADECDC cited that our history, resources, and current conditions suggest the best opportunity for a great start for the work of MADECDC lies in creating a vibrant uptown/downtown. MADECDC noted that while the ingredients for a successful downtown remain consistent across the country, and others--some even close by--have successfully tackled

## **MADE** CDC Executive Summary: Downtown Mason Mile Project PHASE 2 GUIDEBOOK

such complex undertakings, we have learned that our community compels us to think differently, act differently, and move at the speed of trust. MADECDC has been prioritizing these precepts, and affirmed then, and still now, that if the process "feels slow," it's because work is still being done to attain broad representation, identify and fill roles, and uncover conditions that will "democratize success."

Staying on this path, MADECDC and the MADE Chamber spent the next several months in late 2019 and early 2020 connecting with property owners in the area to discuss future project goals to develop a broader plan for Downtown Mason. One consistent theme from property owners has been that they have consistently been left out of the process and planning discussions with the multiple attempts to revitalize the City center. Our community development strategy ensures they are not left out of the process, as well as anyone else in the neighborhood who wants to play a role.

In March 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic struck the world, and both organizations put their efforts for Downtown Mason development on hold. MADECDC and MADE Chamber quickly pivoted their efforts to be a resource for the community to support the local, small business community through two major funding programs in 2020. The Pay It Forward MADE fund and the City of Mason Small Business Recovery Initiative Voucher Program infused over \$190,000.00 in funds to businesses who had been most impacted as a result of the COVID-19 mandated government shutdowns. The Pay It Forward MADE fund generated over \$38,000 from nearly 170 contributors in a matter of a few weeks as a means to give hope and encouragement to businesses struggling due to the shutdowns. MADECDC developed a website to collect contributions, assembled a grant review committee, created an application process, and granted funds to 100% of the businesses who applied, resulting in stop gap grants to support over 30 businesses while they awaited support from the governments.



As a component to the SPP published in October 2020, the proposed first project of MADECDC was Downtown Mason. In January 2021, efforts resumed to spark progress in Downtown Mason, and conversations began again among property owners and major stakeholders to discuss the framework and approach for the community to take with respect to Downtown efforts. Building on the five initial goals from the strategic plan developed by the MADE Chamber in 2018, and incorporating the new MADECDC community development framework, the community now has a "plan for a plan" for Downtown Mason redevelopment built around six core pillars. Supporting details pillars can be found in our detailed community development plan to create a conceptual master development plan.

1. Looking back but moving forward;
2. Community Development;
3. Placemaking & Design;
4. Connections & Wellness;
5. Private/Public Partnerships;
6. Trust & Inform.

### **Downtown Mason Mile Potential Project Vision**

A vibrant, sustainable, pedestrian-oriented, mixed use, cultural, civic & social heart of the MADE Region.



*Mason Mile Map – Appendix E*

Through an innovative partnership between the private and public sectors coordinated by MADECDC, downtown Mason will be refreshed with an assortment of fresh, healthy, sustainable offerings resulting in:

- clearly defined boundaries of a downtown area that promotes the Mason/Region brand
- increased density, sufficient to support downtown commerce
- increased property values and diverse housing offerings to stimulate downtown migration
- regional, local, specialty retail, dining and entertainment
- a culture & arts hub
- a long-term plan for maintenance and coordinated infrastructure: utilities, transit, parking, streets, safety and cleanliness
- new jobs, employment volume and variety to attract business and talent
- increased community connections, health, and education

### **Downtown Mason Mile Project Approach**

MADECDC is uniquely suited to the crucial role of representing, coordinating, and communicating the non-partisan interests of the general public across organizational and governmental boundaries. MADECDC's primary strategy is Community Development and desires a region where residents, business owners, private and public property owners, and institutions of every kind prosper.

MADECDC's approach involves placemaking and partnership while maintaining respect for the region's heritage and history while continuing to move forward. This project is seeking long-term change for the region with visible changes coming in the next five years. Since public participation and support is crucial, MADECDC will act as an interface for stakeholders and the general public.

MADECDC will:

- maintain a public webpage to show progress and engage the community
- track opinions, proposals and progress and share with all parties
- coordinate the planning, organizing, and communication of programs and projects that support our priorities and fit with our current focus
- help the community identify, plan and coordinate projects, programs, goals, tasks, roles and the resources necessary to achieve them

### **Downtown Mason Mile Planning Considerations**

Through careful planning and oversight, MADECDC can help create the appropriate underlying conditions to instigate progress and achieve goals. MADECDC has laid out ten planning considerations that should focus and guide discussion toward the critical issues of redevelopment.

1. Highlight what Downtown Mason should be through placemaking and design.
2. Designate walkability as a cornerstone of Downtown Mason character through use of design guidelines and by creating destinations that highlight and connect great places.
3. Create people focused districts to emphasize Downtown Mason's emerging "live, work, and play" character.

4. Support Downtown Mason's existing businesses.
5. Connect existing Downtown Mason businesses and the startup community.
6. Reconnect public assets to Downtown Mason.
7. Build diverse and inclusive neighborhood clusters to add new residents, including options for families, young professionals, and empty nesters.
8. Rethink the street network, parking, and public transit to support expanded mobility choices.
9. Honor our history and encourage its preservation but look toward the area's future.
10. Opt-in team of teams approach for implementation (see Appendix E).

#### **Downtown Mason Mile Project Goals (see Appendix C)**

1. Collaboration: Foster a spirit of support to achieve maximum impact
2. Governing: Advance cross-organizational policies that foster, support public and private investment
3. Branding: Implement a brand that supports and promotes business growth
4. Experiences: Partner on select impactful events that draw people to community gathering spaces
5. Wellness & Resiliency: Promote resilience, healthy living by educating residents
6. (Re)Development: Enhance downtown appearance, bolster lagging real estate market, create jobs, increase residency, promote commerce.

#### **Downtown Mason Mile Project Resources**

- Investments by private individuals and institutions
- Loans or gifts from private individuals or organizations
- Fee and/or profit generating activities and projects
- Publicly owned assets including land and buildings
- Public agency loans and grants
- Tax incentives from government

#### **Downtown Mason Needs from City Government – Coordination**

For this effort to succeed, we must take the advice of the Urban Land Institute (referenced in complete document) to create, and continually nourish, a shared vision between local government, neighborhood organizations, developers, and financial institutions. Because the mission of the MADECDC is to represent the interests of the MADE Region, an optimal relationship between the public and its government will be integral to our success. Four processes will be key:

1. identifying the clearly distinct roles and responsibilities of MADECDC, private entities and government;
2. creating substantial feedback loops to ensure effective communication between participants;
3. ensuring MADECDC has the responsibility and the authority to bring together money, land, and deal-making capacity, especially when public assets are being used.
4. creating from the outset, an ethical but practicable method for resolving differences between the parties because uncertainty and breakdowns in communication are the most often cited reasons for failure of P3s.

The City of Mason long ago endorsed the concept of revitalizing downtown and even proposed a number of tactical tools in its Comprehensive Plan, revised in 2010. Moreover, some steps have already been taken by government or private parties in the ensuing years; for example, the 2018 charter amendment to increase density in downtown.

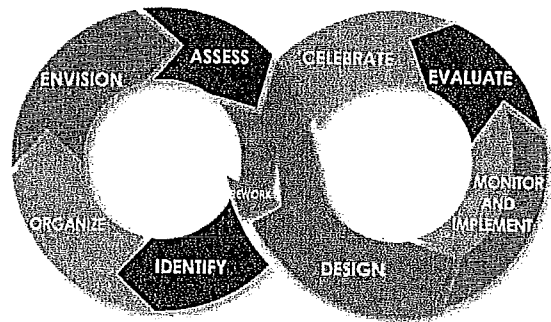
We recommend City leaders revisit the assumptions and recommendations made in the 2010 Comprehensive Plan and where appropriate, commit to:

- wherever possible, providing incentives to encourage redevelopment, meet job, industry and wage goals.
- using relationships and economies of scale to help aggregate property and other resources toward a shared vision.
- appropriate design standards and guidelines including those for historic preservation that support desired outcomes but don't create substantial barriers to redevelopment.
- helping plan for:
  - zoning and land uses;
  - streets, paths, open spaces, streetscapes, drinking, seating, games, water, art, clocks, hearths, greenery, flowers and trees, etc;
  - utilities including broadband/fiber, high capacity internet in downtown
  - safety & cleanliness;
  - management of an entertainment district and Designated Outdoor Refreshment Area (DORA);
  - a comprehensive parking plan
  - Consider appropriate P3 with health-related orgs to emphasize health/education throughout the city;
  - Help communicate and promote project plans, outcomes and progress.

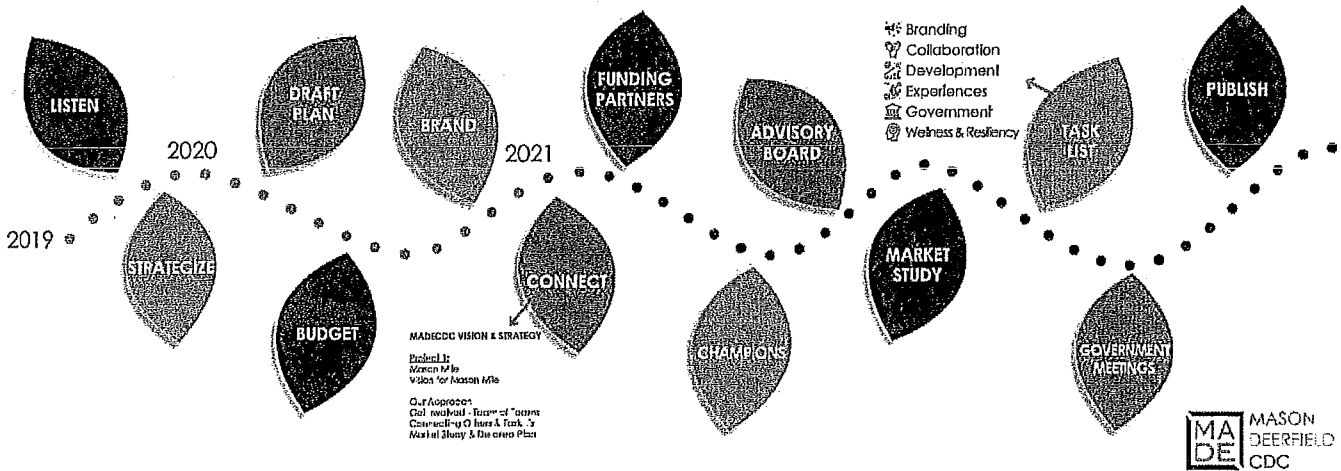
To accomplish this high level of communication and collaboration, we intend to invite at least one high level member of the city government to participate on the MADECDC's Advisory Board and to hold regular meetings with that/those member(s) for the duration of this project.

#### Appendix A: MADECDC Community Development Model – MADECDC Process

- **IDENTIFY** underperforming areas with opportunity for progress
- **ORGANIZE** stakeholders who have a desire and ability to make progress happen
- **(EN)VISION** for the future
- **ASSESS** the will and the way to make the vision reality
  - **REWORK** if no collective will or way
- **DESIGN** the plan based on what the market needs and can support
- **IMPLEMENT** the plan together
- **MONITOR** and track progress and opinions
- **EVALUATE** effectiveness to course correct and build on gains
- **CELEBRATE** the successes with the community along the way
- **IDENTIFY** and catalyze the next opportunity



**Appendix B: MADECDC Project 1 Timeline (NEEDS TO BE UPDATED WITH NEW TIMELINES)**



**Appendix C: Downtown Mason Project Tasks by Goal**

**1. COLLABORATION**

**Purpose:** Legitimize the project/process; foster a spirit of cooperation and consensus

**Goals:** Inspire highest and best use of real property, Re-fresh; eliminate existing brand disparity, Enhance the appearance of downtown, Create a long-term plan for its upkeep

**Tasks:**

- 1.1. Identify, get contact information for all residents and property owners in the downtown area
- 1.2. Identify, categorize existing businesses with a downtown nexus
- 1.3. Identify champions to organize committees
- 1.4. Photograph exterior of all Mason Mile buildings
- 1.5. Count parking spaces in Mason Mile
- 1.6. Compile data for Mason Mile map
- 1.7. Schedule quarterly Mason Mile meet ups
- 1.8. Develop a survey for all Mason Mile residents, business and property owners
- 1.9. Develop coordinated business promotions to deepen community engagement
- 1.10. Partner with MADE for Authentic Leaders project (i.e., mural)

**2. GOVERNING**

**Purpose:** Advance cross-organizational policies that foster, support public and private investment

**Goals:** Effective, efficient, transparent, responsive across organizations; Foster/support public & private investment;

**Tasks:**

- 2.1. Develop a communications plan for all interested parties
- 2.2. Create downtown advisory board
- 2.3. Become property management association
- 2.4. Adopt financial plan and budget
- 2.5. Schedule regular meetings with government leaders
- 2.6. Perform comprehensive market analysis, develop & maintain list of desired products/services

- 2.7. Improve relationships with property owners to understand needs
- 2.8. Create a Business Improvement District
- 2.9. Implement a system to measure progress & outcomes
- 2.10. Revise design standards and guidelines including those for historic preservation
- 2.11. Establish a cleanliness and safety enhancement program
- 2.12. Develop/manage revolving loan program

### **3. BRANDING**

**Purpose:** Implement a brand that supports and promotes community goals

**Goals:** Re-fresh downtown's image; Align brand with desired image; Eliminate existing brand disparity

**Tasks:**

- 3.1. Identify what Downtown Mason wants to be known for
- 3.2. Develop brand standards and marketing messages
- 3.3. Communicate progress to the community regularly
- 3.4. Incorporate Mason Mile map into communications plan
- 3.5. Integrate the brand into design guidelines
- 3.6. Develop downtown marketing plan to complement communications plan
- 3.7. Integrate the brand into cross-business marketing promotions

### **4. EXPERIENCES**

**Purpose:** Partner on select impactful events that draw people to community gathering spaces

**Goals:** Draw people downtown; Establish community gathering spaces; Deepen community engagement

**Tasks:**

- 4.1. Partner with government to promote Music in Mason concert series
- 4.2. Partner with MADE Chamber to sponsor Christmas in Mason
- 4.3. Partner as needed to integrate and expand the Arts
- 4.4. Explore opportunities to celebrate the ethnic and cultural heritage of MADE residents
- 4.5. Collaborate with veterans' organizations to assemble a roster of MADE veterans
- 4.6. Explore additional partnerships to promote experiences that deepen community engagement

### **5. WELLNESS & RESILIENCE**

**Purpose:** Promote resilience, healthy living by educating residents

**Goals:** Enhance connections, health, education & resiliency of residents

**Tasks:**

- 5.1. Encourage interaction among neighbors to strengthen connectedness and community
- 5.2. Collaborate with health-related organizations to perform a community health needs assessment
- 5.3. Encourage healthier options for eating, shopping, walking, other activities
- 5.4. Work through OSU Extension agency to re-unite Mason's agricultural history to its future

### **6. DEVELOPMENT & REDEVELOPMENT**

**Purpose:** Enhance downtown appearance, bolster lagging real estate market, create jobs, increase residency, promote commerce

**Goals:** Enhance appearance of downtown; Bolster the lagging downtown real estate market (3-5% growth); Create hundreds of new jobs (5-25 new retail spaces); Add hundreds of downtown residents (75-500 urban living units); Promote commerce (shop/work/experiences) in the heart of the City;

**Tasks:**

- 6.1. Identify barriers in zoning and laws/regulations
- 6.2. Recommend charter amendments and zoning code changes to match project theme and desired land uses;
- 6.3. Help create a comprehensive parking plan
- 6.4. Recommend street improvements, closures & realignments
- 6.5. Plan a system of pedestrian paths, open spaces, streetscapes: drinking, seating, games, water, art, clocks, hearths, greenery, flowers and trees, etc.
- 6.6. Plan for public transit
- 6.7. Plan for directional and monument signage, including gateways
- 6.8. Develop recruiting target list to supplement/complement existing uses including destination businesses
- 6.9. Create, implement process for recruiting new businesses from target list
- 6.10. Establish business visit process & schedule to support retention/expansion
- 6.11. Establish a small business incubator
- 6.12. Encourage denser and diversified housing options
- 6.13. Develop a property enhancement program that leverages all available forms of financing
- 6.14. Explore alternative energy options
- 6.15. Assemble a for-profit investment group





**Appendix E: The Mason Mile:** The downtown is a contiguous area that consists of both residential and commercial uses that can be characterized by their proximity to Reading Road/Main Street. The residences and businesses whose occupants spend a significant portion of their day up and down Reading Road/Main Street make up the approximately 400 acres shown in red above.

The approximate center of the area is the Mason-Deerfield Library at 200 Reading Road, just about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile from its border north/south along Reading and east/west on Main making the Area Under Consideration approximately one square mile.

It contains approximately 850 parcels of land; 555 (65%) are residential, 235 (27%) are commercial and 66 (8%) are exempt (owned by non-profits or government). Generally, the perimeter abuts to suburban style residential neighborhoods, providing a fairly clear delineation between inside and outside of downtown. The area inside includes a few single-family neighborhoods made up of primarily older buildings on smaller lots, giving them an urban character more appropriate for inclusion. Typical suburban density is around 3 density units (du) per acre. The area shown above, with smaller properties, residences interspersed among commercial and institutional uses such as churches and schools lead to an approximate density of 2 du per acre.

The area of interest was determined by following principles developed by Easton & Owens through the American Planning Association. These principles include sufficient walking traffic is necessary for retail centers to thrive, current households within  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile walking distance should establish what the area can sustain in the way of retail space, and in a situation such as ours which would entail infill growth, the goal must be to design an authentic, lively, inviting place, and the key is careful planning and good design. Based on well accepted national planning standards, our preliminary analysis indicates we should be aiming for 1,400 households and 60,000 square feet of downtown shopping and entertainment in the area which will need to be validated through a market study.

**Appendix F: Overview of Team of Teams Approach**

**OPT-IN TEAM OF TEAMS APPROACH**

- a. Create a culture of broad representation and participation, but each resident, property owner and business owner gets to choose whether and how they'll participate.
  - b. Combination of formal and informal structures under MADECDC will focus, guide and manage participation and representation. In some cases, laws and regulations will create an operating structure (ie, boards of directors, relationship to government, etc.). Most others will be less formal, consisting mostly or entirely of volunteers.
  - c. "Team of teams" approach recognizes the real work of change happens not through isolated acts of visionary leaders but within teams of people who each make important contributions. The model emphasizes decentralized autonomy, meritocracy, and a sense of partnership.
- Cross-organizational and cross-functional teams:
- I. organized and coordinated by volunteer team leaders;
  - II. grow connections to broader community;
  - III. meet regularly;
  - IV. implement projects, develop plans and do work;
  - V. keep track of progress;
  - VI. report to the community;
  - VII. shift as needed: teams, members and projects are fluid;

**Appendix G: 12 Month Framework Estimated/Sample Implementation Budget (NEEDS TO BE UPDATED BASED ON 2022 DIRECTION)**

Expense Item	Amount
Administrative Fees	\$ 20,000.00
Accounting Fees	\$ 3,000.00
Business Development/Planning	\$ 80,000.00
Community Meetings	\$ 35,000.00
Legal Fees	\$ 7,000.00
Marketing	\$ 25,000.00
Design	\$ 5,000.00
Insurance - D&O, Liability	\$ 3,000.00
Miscellaneous	\$ 2,000.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 180,000.00</b>

We expect the project year one budget to be a subset of the MADECDC's year budget. This project budget does not contain the preponderance of cost to operate the MADECDC outside of this project, for example employee salaries, but does contain operational and administrative costs oriented toward this project. This budget was developed late 2020 and minor revisions early 2021, but will need to be revisited before establishing a more definitive budget.

Added April 2022: Additionally, this serves as the Executive Summary or Guidebook for Phase 2 and does not reflect the entirety of our work for the Mason Mile Project. Tasks are sorted by goal and not chronologically in the Phase 2 Guidebook. Not all of the tasks outlined in the Phase 2 Guidebook will be completed in Phase 2 as many will flow into Phase 3 of the ASSESS/DESIGN phase.

**DOWNTOWN MASON MILE**  
*Where Progress and Nostalgia Meet*

Our Downtown Mason Mile  
will be a refreshed, healthy, vibrant  
regional heart –  
where we will honor our past and  
build into the future together.



**ORDINANCE 2022 - 70**

**AUTHORIZING A GRANT FUNDING AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF MASON AND THE MASON DEERFIELD CHAMBER COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION RELATED TO THE MASON MILE PROJECT**

WHEREAS, MADECDC is a 501(c)3 non-profit community development corporation that was created to focus and coordinate public and private efforts to grow the Mason Deerfield (“MADE”) region into a more healthy, vibrant, successful, and resilient place to live, learn, work, and play; and

WHEREAS, the Mason Mile Project vision is a vibrant, sustainable, pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use, cultural, civic, and social heart for the MADE Region. The Mason Mile Project draws on prior studies, preliminary market analysis based on fundamental planning concepts, and initial community engagement feedback which laid the groundwork to develop SMART and community shepherded goals for appropriate growth for our community through a guided conceptual master development framework; and

WHEREAS, the City acknowledges and appreciates the investment that the MADECDC has made to date in formulating and building community support for the Mason Mile project. The City believes the MADECDC’s continued leadership of the Mason Mile project can build community and business support for long-term success of Mason’s downtown area; and

WHEREAS, the City has determined that it is in the public interest and hereby constitutes a valid public purpose to enter into a grant funding agreement with the MADECDC related to the Mason Mile Project.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Council of the City of Mason, Ohio, \_\_\_\_\_ members elected thereto concurring:

Section 1. That the City Manager is hereby authorized to execute a Grant Funding Agreement substantially in the form of the agreement attached hereto as Exhibit A.

Section 2. That the Finance Director is hereby authorized to make any and all payments consistent with the terms of said Agreement.

Section 3. That this Ordinance shall be effective from and after the earliest period allowed by law.

Passed this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2022.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor

Attest:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Clerk of Council

## GRANT FUNDING AGREEMENT BETWEEN CITY OF MASON AND MADECDC

This Grant Funding Agreement ("Agreement") is hereby entered into by and between the City of Mason, Ohio ("City") and the Mason Deerfield Chamber Community Development Corporation ("MADECDC") as of the date of the last party to execute this Agreement.

### RECITALS

WHEREAS, MADECDC is a 501(c)3 non-profit community development corporation that was created to focus and coordinate public and private efforts to grow the Mason Deerfield ("MADE") region into a more healthy, vibrant, successful, and resilient place to live, learn, work, and play; and

WHEREAS, MADECDC identifies places in the region where conditions indicate underperformance can be remedied by employing existing resources and attracting new ones to enhance capacity, improve assets, increase property values, and create ongoing economic and social activity. Within those places, MADECDC will coordinate projects to address the underperforming conditions using existing or newly created programs via two techniques: community development and private/public partnerships; and

WHEREAS, the rationale for MADECDC to begin work on the Mason Mile Project in 2018 stemmed from preliminary analysis demonstrating the neighborhood economics being out of step from the rest of the MADE region, the brand not being in alignment with the Mason brand, and interests being aligned to advance the neighborhood forward that could benefit from community development techniques; and

WHEREAS, the Mason Mile Project vision is a vibrant, sustainable, pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use, cultural, civic, and social heart for the MADE Region. The Mason Mile Project draws on prior studies, preliminary market analysis based on fundamental planning concepts, and initial community engagement feedback which laid the groundwork to develop SMART and community shepherded goals for appropriate growth for our community through a guided conceptual master development framework; and

WHEREAS, MADECDC's approach positions community engagement and the public at the heart of the planning process. It involves placemaking and partnership while maintaining respect for the region's heritage and history while continuing to move forward at the speed of trust. Previous downtown development efforts have fallen short of expectations because of economic factors, lack of direction and leadership, and lack of a unified goal, and emphasis has been, and will continue to be, placed on all three of these areas in the further advancement of the Mason Mile Project; and

WHEREAS, the Mason Mile Project planning horizon is ten plus years, and is currently anticipated to have four phases, all of which include specific milestones, yet overlap somewhat in time. In planning phase one, which has already concluded, MADECDC committed and partially expended, resources valued at over \$200,000; and

WHEREAS, the City acknowledges and appreciates the investment that the MADECDC has made to date in formulating and building community support for the Mason Mile project. The City believes the MADECDC's continued leadership of the Mason Mile project can build community and business support for long-term success of Mason's downtown area; and

WHEREAS, the City recognizes that success of Downtown requires multiple stakeholders and multiple interests to align on definitions, plans and actions, and that attempts to drive that process without full stakeholder involvement create conflicts and inhibit progress and that government authority driving the process can create conflicts and reduce opportunities to partner or for the market to guide decision making; and

WHEREAS the City government has demonstrated an interest to invest in the continuation of MADECDC's efforts and is providing a grant to MADECDC for \$180,000 to partially fund planning phases two and three. Additional resources for phases three and four and/or additional project related resources will need to be identified and evaluated further into phases two and three as community engagement and planning efforts progress; and

WHEREAS, Downtown is a unique asset to the City of Mason; traditional economic development incentives and return on investment calculations need to recognize the quality of life components that contribute to the City's business model and tax revenues; and

WHEREAS, the City agrees that successful development of downtown areas is a patient, iterative process of carefully and collectively building on previous successes. The City intends the funding grant to demonstrate an early investment in a long-term and on-going commitment to partner with MADECDC to align all stakeholders towards shared goals and strategies; and

WHEREAS, the City is committed to sustaining partnership with MADECDC and exploring other efforts to engage and strengthen the MADECDC as a tool for regional development and additional projects to the benefit of Mason residents.

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the benefits and representations recited above, the City and MADE CDC accept the following.

1. Grant funds will be used for advancing the Mason Mile project, including community engagement, planning, marketing, administrative, and other project expenses. MADECDC anticipates supplementing grant funds with private contributions or other grant funds.
2. City grant funds will not be used to purchase equipment, real estate or real property or interest in such without prior written agreement.

3. MADECDC will establish a Mason Mile project advisory council and will invite city participation for the duration of the Mason Mile Project scope.
4. MADECDC representatives will meet regularly with the Downtown or other appropriate committees of Council to share progress, including financial statements and disclosures of City of Mason grant fund expenditures, as well as work product generated in support of the Mason Mile project and participating board and committee members pertinent to use of grant funds, and inform city leaders when additional support or resources are needed to advance the project.

5. **MADECDC agrees to:**

- a. Be incorporated as a nonprofit organization (as evidenced by articles of incorporation filed with the Ohio Secretary of State), have a current Statement of Continued Existence issued by the Ohio Secretary of State, and maintain tax-exempt status with the U.S. Treasury.
- b. Be Current with the State of Ohio- as evidenced by a Certificate of Good Standing
- c. Currently maintain by-Laws approved by the agency's Board of Directors.
- d. MADE CDC shall hold harmless, defend and indemnify the City of Mason and its officers, officials, employees and volunteers from and against all claims, damages, losses and expenses including attorney fees arising out of the funding partnership described herein, caused in whole or in part by any negligent act or omission of the MADECDC or anyone for whose acts the MADECDC may be liable, except where caused by the sole negligence or wilful misconduct of the City.
- e. Maintain a Project Advisory Council that is comprised of representatives from each of the service area's segments including residential, institutional, business owner, property owner, and economic stakeholders. Participation in the Council or in project efforts will not be restricted to or contingent on MADE Chamber membership.
- f. Actively pursue community engagement and outreach efforts, methods and procedures to secure broad public input into its program development and implementation.
- g. To approach and secure City awareness and assistance in selection of outside expertise such as engineering analyses, zoning code authoring, planning consultant, or other typical government functions.



- h. MADECDC is committed to best-in-class operational and organizational efforts, policies, and procedures, including the mitigation of perceived and real conflicts of interest. Employees, agents, consultants, officers, elected, or appointed officials of MADECDC will be subject to MADECDC Conflict of Interest policies and disclosures relevant to their specific involvement.

**6. City of Mason agrees to:**

- a. Provide a grant of \$180,000 to provide funding in support of Phase 2 and 3 of the project including an aggressive public engagement effort.
- b. Provide consistent participation on the Mason Mile Project Advisory Council. Cooperate with planning efforts and provide information, context, and appropriate resources for Mason Mile project efforts. Based on public engagement and joint efforts, identify and prioritize projects, studies or initiatives that may require additional funding.
- c. Cooperate on securing grants, private contributions or other funding to assist identified priorities.
- d. Provide opportunities to meet with Council, appropriate committees of Council, or other City boards, commissions or staff to share progress, updates and further communication.
- e. Use City resources such as web site, newsletters, e-mail lists, and City facilities to encourage public participation in Mason Mile engagement efforts.

**7. MADE CDC and City of Mason both understand and agree that:**

- a. Many issues that are topics of the Mason Mile project and public engagement are local government functions. While the City anticipates discussion and recommendations on items such as zoning classifications or revisions, public infrastructure, utilities, transportation, regulations, tax rates or districts, etc.; the City cannot substitute and is not contracting those responsibilities to an outside agency or inferring any commitments or preferences related to roadway alignments, right-of-way acquisition, or property acquisitions. Any recommendations will be used as part of the legal process (including formal notices, hearings at Planning Commission, Council and other appropriate bodies). The City's participation and funding should not be confused with existing adopted and public plans or obligations. City cannot be held responsible/liable for programs administered by the MADECDC.
- b. They will work cooperatively to focus on public engagement, building common consensus among various stakeholders, building awareness, enlisting volunteers, etc. Other ambitions will likely develop depending on direction of

public engagement - surveys, web page, monitoring, events, additional expert studies or analysis may all materialize and require new partners, funding, or prioritization. The City and MADECDC intend a long-term partnership and ongoing cooperation to promote Downtown Mason to the benefit of Mason residents and businesses.

c. The attached Exhibits *Executive Summary: Downtown Mason Mile Project PHASE 2 GUIDEBOOK* and *Downtown Mason Mile Process and Phase Timeline for CoM Grant* more broadly present the history of the Mason Mile Project with approach, ambitions, and possible items for additional discussion or action. Final priorities will rely on ongoing public engagement. While the exhibits capture the philosophy and intent of the Mason Mile Project it is not a comprehensive list or commitment from the current City grant or a list of stipulated outputs.

8. The above Recitals are hereby incorporated in this Agreement and are made an integral part thereof.

9. This Agreement shall be governed by the laws of the State of Ohio.

10. This Agreement may be executed in multiple counterparts which together shall constitute the whole Agreement.

The parties have caused this Grant Funding Agreement to be executed on the date set forth below.

MADE CDC

City of Mason

By \_\_\_\_\_

By \_\_\_\_\_

Its \_\_\_\_\_

Its \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_