

Memorandum

Date: April 7, 2009
To: Members of the Main Street Monroe/Downtown Development Authority
From: Andrea Jones, Main Street Manager
Re: Downtown Database

At the National Main Streets Conference in Chicago, I saw a demonstration of a Database system created by a former Main Street Manager. After the conference, I scheduled an online demonstration with her so that I could get more details to make sure that the database template would benefit our organization. I was impressed with the amount of information that is tracked in the database and the ease of use. Some of the topics that can be tracked and functions that can be performed in the database include:

- Import data from different files
- Generate mailing lists for different targeted audiences (Façade Grants, resident information, post cards, etc.) with automatic removal of duplicates
- Mass email
- Multiple buildings are linked to one owner
- Graffiti inventory and action to be taken
- "Close" business so that data is retained, but space is listed as vacant and business is removed from mailing lists
- Track façade improvements, public and private investment amounts
- Vacancy list and calculated vacancy rate if all square footage downtown is listed
- Shows all of the businesses located in a building
- Easily generate reports
- Categorizes contacts

I have spoken with other downtown people who either use or are in the process of purchasing this database template. I hear great reviews about it.

Last year, I presented the Board with a database template in Microsoft Access that needed some adjustments made in order for it to contain the information that would be beneficial to the organization. The Board agreed to "authorize up to \$750.00 to set up the database system" with the intent that we would contract with someone to make the changes to the database. I have compared the two databases and find that the new database described above will be easier to use and keep track of information as well as reduce the amount of time that I already spend on some of the operations that it can do. It will also reduce the amount of time it takes me to maintain the information since I only have to update it in one location as opposed to now where I have several different Excel spreadsheets that serve different purposes.

April 9, 2009

I request that the MSM/DDA Board redirect the \$750.00 allocated to the original database correction and instead use the funds to purchase this new database with an estimated cost of \$621.00 (database at \$375.00 and File Make Pro to operate database at \$246.00). Included in the purchase of this database is online training and technical support as well as files to help easily import Excel spreadsheet data. I still have an offer from DTE volunteers to help input information into our database although some of it will have to be done by me due to the added knowledge I have about downtown. I think this database will be a great asset to our organization. I have attached the database brochure for additional information.

Thank you.