



City of Waukesha
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| Committee: City Council | Date: 2/20/2025 |
| Common Council Item Number: ID#25-00246 | Date: 2/20/2025 |
| Submitted By: Doug Koehler, City Planner | City Administrator Approval: Click here to enter text. |
| Finance Department Review: Click here to enter text. | City Attorney's Office Review: Click here to enter text. |
| Subject: ID#25-00246- Williams Street Placemaking Plan- Review and take action on adoption of the placemaking plan for Williams Street | |

Details:

Over the past four months, the Community Development Department has been working with Ayres & Associates on a placemaking design for Williams Street in Downtown Waukesha. Williams Street is one of the most historic and unique commercial corridors in Waukesha. The City hired Ayres to provide a plan to include streetscaping, branding, ideas to create a visually inviting destination, while honoring the local heritage and history of Williams Street. Revitalizing the area bounded by Williams Street, Maple Avenue, and Grand Avenue is part of the Central City Master Plan which was approved by the City Council. The contract for the Williams Street Placemaking plan was approved at the July 15, 2024 RDA meeting and the August 6, 2024 City Council meeting.

Ayres and City staff met with several stakeholders along Williams Street to create a working placemaking plan which brings vision and functionality to the district. New branding was created for Williams Street which incorporates the history of the area with a focus on the train depot and Les Paul. The branding will be used for promotional material, banners, and signage along Williams Street.

The final placemaking plan for Williams Street took into account feedback from city staff and the local business owners and stakeholders. The plan activates the historic block with placemaking opportunities, which includes monument signage, banners, lighting, and additional street furnishings. The plan also puts an emphasis on pedestrian use and safety with outdoor seating and crosswalks, including a midblock crossing. Some parking spaces along the street were removed to create outdoor seating areas and pedestrian amenities.

The placemaking plan includes several short term and long term elements as part of the implementation timeline. In the short term, promotional material, signage, landscaping, and street furniture can be obtained. Having this plan in place can help the city apply for funding like the WEDC and CDBG grants. Infrastructure improvements and enhancements will be a long term focus to get on future CIP budgets and construction plans. The businesses along Williams Street and stakeholders have been active participants throughout the process and will be involved with implementation. The business owners will continue to take on an active role in the implementation and will assist with some of the final tasks.

Options & Alternatives:

The City Council can make changes to the plan

Financial Remarks:

Adoption of this plan will not have any financial impact on the City's budget. Funding for items contained within the plan will need to be funded through the City's budget, donations, or grants. Having the plan in place will put the city in better position when applying for various placemaking and arts grants.

Executive Recommendation:

Staff recommends the City Council adoption of the Williams Street Placemaking Plan