

Program Description

The Downtown Business Improvement District (BID) was created in 2005 through the efforts of the Missoula Downtown Association to address the challenges created by the termination of the Downtown Urban Renewal District (URD I). With 70% of the property owners supporting the BID, it was renewed in 2010 for a 10-year period. In 2020 and with 73% of the property owners supporting the BID, it was renewed for another 10-year period.

The BID serves as an advocate and service provider for property owners in the district and works to improve Downtown safety, cleanliness, marketing, business retention and recruitment, and both public and private investment in buildings and infrastructure. The BID's obligation is to ratepayers, but the board members recognize the importance of working with business owners, employees and potential investors in Downtown.

Goals & Objectives

ADMINISTRATION

The Downtown BID joins with the Missoula Downtown Association (MDA) and the Missoula Downtown Foundation (MDF) under the umbrella of the Downtown Missoula Partnership. While maintaining organizational independence, autonomy and identity, the Downtown BID focuses on serving the property owners, improving property values, and improving effectiveness and efficiency of common-area maintenance and management for all ratepayers and Downtown stakeholders.

The Executive Director manages all existing programs, such as the Clean Team and Dedicated Downtown Police Officers, communicates with ratepayers, implements the Downtown Master Plan, and develops a business retention and recruitment effort. The BID contracts with the MDA for rent and utilities.

Objectives:

The BID focuses on the following programs, but recognizes that needs may change as additional input and knowledge is available. These objectives are subject to change as the Board and ratepayers further define the priorities for the District.

1. Maintain an accurate database of ratepayers within the BID.
2. Maintain a formal system for communicating with ratepayers within the BID.
3. Oversee common-area maintenance and management in Downtown Missoula, including the activities of safety and maintenance, cleanliness, and the Clean Team and Ambassador programs, refining them as needed to meet the needs of the ratepayers.
4. Identify new programs and priorities for the BID based on input from the ratepayers.
5. Maintain focus on economic development, including recruitment and retention of businesses in the Downtown district.

MARKETING

Promoting Downtown Missoula as a destination for consumers, entrepreneurs, and investors remains a priority. In partnership with the Missoula Downtown Association and Missoula Parking Commission, the BID is committed to promoting Downtown as a thriving "live, work, play" destination for all through comprehensive marketing and media relations. The BID helps to showcase the assets and attractiveness of Downtown Missoula through branding, marketing, communications, and media relations. The BID will continue to seek, acquire and distribute data and information on Downtown Missoula that is relevant for both consumers and investors.

Objectives:

1. Communicate the assets of Downtown and identify the programs that will achieve that purpose.
2. Refine the BID communication tools to best serve the needs of the ratepayers and serve as a forum for dialogue and dissemination of ideas.
3. Distribute educational and promotional materials to ratepayers, developers, investors, elected officials, and the general public.
4. Work with business and property owners to identify marketing needs and develop programs and activities to address those needs.
5. Identify ways in which the BID can enhance the uniqueness of the downtown district through branding, graphics, signage, or other means.
6. Work with the MDA and the MDF to identify areas where the organizations can enhance each other's activities and efforts.
7. Refine and enhance the recruitment and retention of new and existing businesses.

STREETSCAPE/MAINTENANCE

One of the highest priorities of property and business owners is cleanliness and the appearance of the common-area spaces of downtown, including streets and sidewalks. The BID created the Downtown Clean Team in 2006 and the Downtown Maintenance Program in 2009. Garbage and recycling receptacles, benches, tree guards and cigarette butt receptacles have been purchased and deployed by the Downtown BID. The BID maintains and services 87 garbage and 15 recycling receptacles throughout downtown. The BID empties and disposes of all the garbage and recycling seven days a week, in addition to plowing the alleys and cycle tracks, and providing graffiti removal, sidewalk cleaning, and snow and ice removal for the ratepayers.

Objectives:

1. Work with business and property owners and other stakeholders to improve Downtown Missoula's appearance and cleanliness.
2. Refine the operation of the Clean Team to best serve the needs of the downtown property owners and businesses.
3. Coordinate with community partners and Downtown stakeholders to improve the street environment through the use of place-making initiatives and street decor: planters, flower baskets, boulevard trees, banners, flags, holiday decorations, benches, trash receptacles, public art and place-making.
4. Invest in streetscape improvements and street décor.
5. Evaluate and implement garbage and recycling expansion and improvements as needed.
6. Provide snow removal services for all Downtown alleys, protected bike lanes on North Higgins, and for Downtown property owners as a contracted service.

SAFETY

In addition to cleanliness and appearance, another high priority for property and business owners is safety and security Downtown. The Downtown Ambassador Program is on hold due to Covid. The program helps reduce crime and mischief by serving as the community's eyes and ears on the streets. Ambassadors also provide hospitality services at Downtown public events, including First Fridays, Saturday Markets, and Caras Park events. However, the BID is conscious of Covid and safety of team members is paramount. The BID Board will evaluate the program and look to improve or reassess use of resources. The BID contracts with the City of Missoula for two Dedicated Downtown Police Officers (DDPO) for full-time, year-round, seven days a week dedicated patrol of Downtown Missoula.

Objectives:

1. Evaluate and refine the Downtown Ambassador Program to best address the needs of the downtown stakeholders and community members.
2. Work with City Police to enhance crime-prevention efforts to improve safety in Downtown Missoula.
3. Work with community leaders to reduce homelessness, loitering, and panhandling in Missoula, including support of the Homeless Outreach Team.

DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT**Downtown Master Plan**

The Downtown Master Plan was created in 2008 and approved by the Missoula City Council in 2009. The community vision has helped guide Downtown growth and investment in the areas of land use, transportation, employment, housing, parking, retail and tourism. With nearly 70% of the recommended actions in that plan having come to fruition, the BID led the update of the Downtown Master Plan in 2019 and has transitioned to working on implementation. One Downtown Wayfinding Information and Heritage Interpretation Kiosk was placed at the new Missoula Public Library and additional kiosks are planned to be in place in the spring and summer of 2021.

Business Development

The BID's Business Development program was created in 2014 and expanded to a full-time service in 2017 with the hiring of a Business Development Director to meet the demands of the evolving business landscape in Downtown Missoula. This program is responsible for tracking investment and business activity in the district, connecting new businesses to downtown locations, and acquiring and maintaining current and relevant data for investment and decision making. The BID recently completed a downtown alley inventory and activation project, as defined in the Master Plan. This project identifies better use of alley space for artwork, outlines efficient practices for cleanliness and waste removal, and identifies the potential for retail usage.

Objectives:

1. Focus on retention of businesses in the district
2. Focus on data acquisition and distribution in the areas of economic impact, downtown business inventory, new investment, housing, and retail to help understand overall investments, value of Downtown Missoula, and gaps in goods and services
3. Focus on continued implementation of the new Downtown Master Plan
4. Advocate for infrastructure upgrades needed to support a healthy business environment in Downtown

Budget

It is impossible to anticipate all of the needs and budget accordingly. The Downtown BID Board has placed a portion of its anticipated revenues and carryover from FY21-22 into marketing, policing and safety services, and for implementation of the Downtown Master Plan. The BID Board budgets each year based on the prior year’s revenue collection.

| Expenditures Category | FY20-21 Budget | Proposed FY21-22 Budget | FY20-21 % of Budget |
|---------------------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Administration | \$ 85,083.00 | \$ 105,638.00 | 18% |
| Safety | \$ 123,836.00 | \$ 92,260.00 | 16% |
| Maintenance and Streetscape Programs | \$ 184,128.00 | \$ 176,128.00 | 30% |
| Marketing | \$ 40,000.00 | \$ 53,500.00 | 9% |
| DT Master Plan Implementation | \$ 71,500.00 | \$ 102,750.00 | 18% |
| Business Development | \$ 50,000.00 | \$ 50,000.00 | 9% |
| Total | \$ 554,547.00 | \$ 580,276.00 | 100% |