

Program Description

The Downtown Business Improvement District (BID) was created in 2005 to address the challenges created by the termination of the Downtown Urban Renewal District (URD I). Per state law, the BID was renewed in 2010 with 70% support from Downtown property owners and again in 2020 with 73% support from ratepayers.

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 Downtown 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 Downtown common-area maintenance and management for all ratepayers and Downtown stakeholders. Areas the BID typically works in includes sidewalks, alleys, streets and parks within the district.

The Executive Director is the lead staff for the BID and its existing programs, including Downtown Maintenance, Downtown Clean Team and Dedicated Downtown Policing. The Downtown BID is focused on ratepayer communication, implementation of the Downtown Master Plan, common-area maintenance and management, business retention, and more. The Downtown BID contracts with the MDA for rent and utilities in a shared office space at 218 E. Main Street, Missoula, MT 59802.

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 Downtown BID ratepayers.
2. Maintain a formal system for communicating with ratepayers within the Downtown BID.

3. Oversee common-area maintenance and management in Downtown Missoula, including the activities of safety and maintenance, cleanliness, the Clean Team and Police programs, refining them as needed to meet the needs of the ratepayers.
4. Identify new programs and priorities for the Downtown BID, based on input from the ratepayers.
5. Maintain focus on economic vitality, including the retention of businesses in the Downtown district.

MARKETING

Promoting Downtown Missoula as a destination for consumers, entrepreneurs, and investors remains a priority for the Downtown BID. In partnership with the Missoula Downtown Association and the Missoula Parking Commission, the Downtown BID is committed to promoting Downtown as a thriving “live, work, play” destination for everyone through comprehensive marketing and media relations. The Downtown 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, including Downtown investment and business activity on a regular basis.

Objectives:

1. Communicate the assets of Downtown and highlight the projects and programs that serve as attractants for consumerism and investment.
2. Refine the Downtown 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 Downtown BID can enhance the uniqueness of the downtown district through branding, graphics, signage, wayfinding, 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. Focus on retaining existing businesses and recruit businesses that fit the needs of the community and contribute to a successful mix of businesses in Downtown.

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, sidewalks, alleys and parks. The

Downtown BID created the Downtown Clean Team in 2006 and the Downtown Maintenance Program in 2009, investing significant resources in ensuring the common-area spaces of Downtown are clean and attractive. Garbage and recycling receptacles, tree guards, cigarette butt receptacles, and benches have been purchased and deployed by the Downtown BID over the years. The Downtown BID maintains and services 87 garbage and 30 recycling receptacles throughout the district. Downtown BID maintenance staff empties and disposes of all the garbage and recycling seven days a week. The maintenance team also plows the alleys and cycle tracks, provides 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. Coordinate and deploy the operation of the Downtown 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 was put into moratorium at the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, and the Downtown BID shifted its resources to fund a second dedicated police officer to patrol Downtown on foot and on bike. The Dedicated Downtown Policing Program helps reduce crime and mischief by serving as the community's eyes and ears on the streets. The Downtown BID contracts with the City of Missoula Police Department for the Dedicated Downtown Police Officer (DDPO) program to provide year-round dedicated patrol of Downtown Missoula.

Objectives:

1. Reduce crime and improve safety for all Downtown Missoula consumers and employees.
2. Provide dedicated policing services for the Downtown District.

3. Work with City Police to enhance crime-prevention efforts and to improve safety in Downtown Missoula.
4. Work with community leaders to reduce homelessness, loitering, and panhandling in Missoula, including support of the Homeless Outreach Team and other programs.

DOWNTOWN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Downtown Master Plan

As the guiding document for all decisions in Downtown Missoula, the Downtown Master Plan was created in 2008-09 and updated in 2018-19 with input from nearly 6,000 Missoulians. The community vision helps guide Downtown growth and investment in the areas of urban design, transportation, infrastructure, arts & culture, economic development, historic preservation, parks & open space, river access, sustainability, inclusiveness and regional affordability. Additional plans tied to the Downtown Master Plan include the North Riverside Parks & Trails Plan, the Missoula Downtown Heritage Interpretive Plan, and the West Broadway Plan. These documents guide decision-making, investment, and focus, as implementation is paramount to a successful, vibrant and relevant city center. The Downtown BID is one of several organizations that have invested significant resources into implementation over the last two years.

Additionally, the Downtown BID has continued to invest in implementation of the Missoula Wayfinding Plan and the Downtown Missoula Legacy Trail. To date, three of the four Legacy Trail anchors have been completed, and one more to be completed.

Business Development

The BID's Business Development program was created in 2014, expanded to full-time in 2017, and modified in 2022 in partnership with the Missoula Economic Partnership. The BID tracks investment and business activity in the district, connects new businesses to downtown locations, and acquires and maintains current and relevant data for investment and decision making. The BID contracted with MEP in 2022 to co-fund a full-time Business Development Director at MEP to assist with business retention and recruitment efforts in a more collaborative format.

Objectives:

1. Focus on retention of businesses in the downtown district and more meaningful engagement on issues Downtown businesses need help with.
2. Focus on data acquisition and distribution in the areas of economic impact, 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 and its subset plans.
4. Advocate for infrastructure upgrades needed to support a healthy business environment in Downtown

Budget

With just over 500 property owners contributing annually to the Downtown BID, the Board of Trustees has allocated BID funds into safety, maintenance & streetscapes, marketing, Master Plan implementation, business development, and administration.

Expenditures Category	FY22-23 Budget	Proposed FY23-24 Budget	FY23-24 % of Budget
Administration	\$144,240	\$155,144	23%
Safety	\$102,260	\$120,856	18%
Maintenance & Streetscapes	\$175,956	\$232,090	34%
Marketing	\$40,500	\$50,000	7%
DT Master Plan Implementation	\$102,750	\$78,000	11%
Business Development	\$50,000	\$50,000	7%
Total	\$615,706	\$686,090	100%