SIEZING OUR OPPORTUNITY

Downtown is special. Not just because it’s a hub for activity. It’s the anchor for our region and its well-being affects all of Spokane.

Our regional identity, economic health and civic pride are fundamentally intertwined with the health of downtown Spokane. After several years of shutdowns, work from home, increasing crime and homelessness, the pandemic put a freeze on downtown’s primary advantage as a place where people and ideas come together, intersect and spark innovation. Today, the freeze is thawing, and downtown Spokane is finding itself in a moment of unprecedented opportunity.

From Gen Z to Millennials and even Boomers, the research is showing they’re still attracted to downtowns and the diverse, sustainable lifestyle they provide. With the traditional office ecosystem transforming to flexible, creative new destinations to attract employees, there’s a necessity to expand and create new amenities, like active storefronts filled with restaurants and immersive retail, creative civic spaces, and a neighborhood where residents can also thrive. As downtown Spokane evolves into a multi-dimensional mixed-use neighborhood, there will be more demand for housing and programming.

While we restore downtown Spokane as a place to work and live, programming and activity will continue to create exciting, positive occasions for everyone to re-experience the heart of our region. In 2024, Downtown will host the return of beloved traditions like Bloomsday, Lilac Festival and Hoopfest as well as NCAA basketball playoffs at Spokane Veterans Memorial Arena, kick-off the inaugural season of professional soccer at ONE Spokane Stadium, cheer for champions in The Podium, see the best of Broadway in First Interstate Center for the Arts, welcome groups from across the globe at the Spokane Convention Center, enjoy comedy in the great outdoors, and recapture the magic of the World’s Fair as we commemorate the 50th anniversary of Expo ’74.

With this excitement, we understand that the most critical ingredient in reviving a strong downtown is safety. Everyone should feel and be safe in downtown Spokane. As the manager of the BID, the DSP has a unique understanding of challenges to keeping downtown safe and clean. We will continue to work closely with city and regional elected officials, community and civic leaders, property owners, commercial tenants, residents, and nonprofits to adopt policies, investment and support that enhance Spokane’s urban core so that it continues to fuel our regional economy.

DSP is honored to continue our mission of building a better place to live, work and do business for all.

Emilie Cameron
President & CEO
Downtown Spokane Partnership
SPOKALADES

- 1,800 Residential units
- 130 Condo units
- 74 Local Restaurants
- 7 Breweries and cideries
- 8 Tasting rooms
- 5,171 Theater seats
- 8,195 Off-street parking stalls
- 6 miles bike lanes

RETAIL MIX

- Retail: 32%
- Dining: 21%
- Financial Services: 6%
- Hospitality: 7%
- Nightlife: 6%
- Coffee: 4%
- Tasting Room: 5%
- Theater: 9%

- 320,000 2023 City Line riders
- 21,000 employees
- 1,800 residents

- 32 NEW ground floor retail businesses
- 80% unique & local
- 41% Retail
- 35% Dining
- 12 Women owned
- 3 BPOC owned

- 1,355 Tenants
- 599 Properties
- $1.5 billion Assessed Value of Properties
- 100 Park Acres

- #2 "best cities for new graduates" Zillow
- "best places to live in the us" Livability.com
- #57 "best place to start a career" Wallet Hub
- #73 Pollstar – Live Event Ranking
- "2023 america’s best cities" Resonance Consultancy

- 6 miles bike lanes
- 35% Dining
- 12 Women owned
- 3 BPOC owned

- 80 Square Blocks
- 1,355 Tenants
- 599 Properties
- 1,800 Residential units
- 130 Condo units
- 74 Local Restaurants
- 7 Breweries and cideries
- 8 Tasting rooms
- 5,171 Theater seats
- 8,195 Off-street parking stalls
I fully support the work that the clean-up and ambassador teams are doing and consider their work a top priority. I think it’s important to ensure those jobs are well designed and funded to support retention within these teams!

~ 2023 survey respondent

We had a great event. The vendors and guests were all super happy. Very excited to grow the event next year. I can’t thank you enough for all the help, and the use of the tents and the heaters.

~ Deb Green

On several occasions I have had to call both the Clean Team and the Security Ambassadors… I want to praise their work and appreciate the responsiveness and professionalism they all embody when they respond. Thank you for providing those services to keep our employees safe.

~ 2023 survey respondent

In the second quarter of 2023, the Clean and Safe Team implemented mobile-friendly reporting software to streamline tracking of interactions and improve services for the BID. This innovative tool enables the teams to remain updated on trends and identify hot spots, furnishing invaluable data since its integration.
Our office had a great time participating and really enjoyed this. Had several members of our team come tell me they are glad they participated and that they have never done anything like that before as an office. Think it helped to bring camaraderie to our office and also got people out to enjoy some places they maybe haven’t tried before.

~ Spirit Week Team Lead

Thank you for offering the grant. This time of year any extra expenses are difficult so we appreciate the opportunity to apply.

~ Dani Maahs
Monterey Café

I have enjoyed working downtown for decades. I also enjoy coming downtown when I’m not working for arts and cultural events, dining and shopping. I think the DSP has really stepped up their game and created a lot of vibrancy.

~ 2023 survey respondent

BECU

small business façade improvement grants

In 2023, BECU supported the DSP with $30k in funding to provide grants for downtown façade improvements. Research proves exterior upgrades boost economic vitality, foot traffic, and public safety in commercial areas.

18 Number of Grantees

$24k Small Business Façade Improvement Grants awarded

$3k Repair Mini-Grants awarded

What funded the BID in 2023?

BID Assessments – 88%
City of Spokane – 5%
Events & Sponsorship – 5%
Grants & Other Revenue – 2%

What did the BID fund?

Security & Maintenance – 59%
Administration – 12%
Planning & Development – 11%
Marketing & Communications – 10%
Events & Programming – 8%

$3K Repair Mini-Grants awarded

$24K Small Business Façade Improvement Grants awarded

2022 audited financials

current assets
Cash and cash equivalents $687,537
Accounts receivable $35,328
Property and equipment, net $39,182
Total assets $762,047

liabilities and net assets
Accounts payable $193,613
Total liabilities $193,613
Net Assets
Without donor restrictions
Undesignated $145,986
Board designated $422,448
Total net assets $568,434
Total liabilities and net assets $762,047
As a provider of enhanced municipal services in the Downtown Business Improvement District (BID), the Downtown Spokane Partnership conducted the second annual survey of business owners and managers within the BID in September 2023. Results from the survey aim to inform annual and ongoing planning, and to better understand the needs of Spokane’s city center. The purpose of the survey is to identify factors and trends affecting business operations and commerce in downtown Spokane.

**Perceptions of safety decline from day to evening/early morning.**

Respondents felt safest in downtown during the hours of 7am to 6pm. Safety perceptions of downtown improved during all hours from 2022 survey responses.

**Respondents overwhelmingly felt that the maintenance of sidewalk planters in the BID contributed to a positive feeling in downtown.**

**Clean & maintenance services, along with security were strongly rated the most important of the BID services posed to respondents.**

**50% of respondents have been doing business in downtown for over 10 years**

**11% of respondents have owned property in downtown for under two years**

**76% of respondents felt downtown was a good to fair place to do business.**

**50% OF RESPONDENTS have been doing business in downtown for over 10 years**

**11% OF RESPONDENTS have owned property in downtown for under two years**

**How would you rate downtown Spokane as a place to do business?**

- Fair 42%
- Poor 26%
- Good 34%

**I generally feel...**

- downtown Spokane is an exciting and active place
- downtown Spokane is an economic engine powering the Spokane region
- downtown Spokane contributes positively to the overall well-being of Spokane
- downtown Spokane is a welcoming and inclusive place
- downtown Spokane is a good place to live
- downtown Spokane has improved over the last year

- Strongly agree
- Neutral
- Strongly disagree

**Please rate the following priorities within the BID**

- Clean & maintenance services
- Security
- Returning/growing the downtown in-person employees
- Streetscape improvements
- Retail recruitment and retention
- Urban planning and design
- Events and programming
- Hospitality ambassadors
- Office recruitment and retention
- Marketing and advertising
- Social outreach
- Conversion of commercial properties to residential
- Economic Vitality

**Please rate the following within the BID**

- Public transit unseated micro-mobility over the 2022 survey, receiving the highest satisfaction score. On-street parking availability received the lowest satisfaction score.
PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

In 2023, the DSP began a strategic planning process with Progressive Urban Management Associates (P.U.M.A.) to reevaluate the way visitors, residents, and employees interact with downtown in the post-pandemic era. Following nearly a year of stakeholder engagement, with external environment and internal organizational assessments, P.U.M.A. synthesized feedback and observations to create a roadmap for the DSP to support ongoing pandemic recovery and economic resiliency, cultivate greater inclusivity, and identify ways the DSP can be more effective moving forward.

A REFRESHED MISSION…

A strong organizational framework can support strategic goals and objectives.

VISION

downtown spokane is the cultural and economic heart powering the region.

MISSION

the downtown spokane partnership is dedicated to the creation of a dynamic, vibrant, livable, and sustainable downtown.

CORE VALUES

collaborative
innovative
diverse

A Refined BID Work Program…

Based on this stakeholder outreach and evaluation, P.U.M.A. suggested changes to BID services and work programs that emphasize the priorities of BID Ratepayers and the needs of downtown Spokane. To do this, the DSP is streamlining and simplifying services and programs into four clear categories:

safe & clean
core security and maintenance services

economic vitality
business support with thought leadership

public place activation
enhancing a vibrant and beautiful place

management
adding new approaches with flexibility

Nearly 500 respondents in a community-wide online survey shared their vision for a safe, clean, vibrant, fun, beautiful, and accessible downtown. Retail recruitment and urban design & planning ranked highest among current services provided by the DSP, while enhancing safety and reducing nuisance behaviors emerged as priorities for the future. Respondents emphasized improving pedestrian accessibility, redeveloping surface parking lots, and enhancing housing options as key physical improvements for downtown’s future.