



2023 DOWNTOWN BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (BID) MANAGEMENT PLAN

Downtown Spokane finds itself at both a moment of unprecedented challenge and opportunity. Uncertainty coupled with rising costs and a slow return to the office, public safety concerns, and increasing competition in hospitality and retail sectors have been challenging. But, downtown Spokane is resilient. It is evolving into a multi-dimensional mixed-use neighborhood with a growing demand for more housing and programming. The historic challenges and opportunities accelerated by the pandemic have changed the way we maintain a vibrant, clean, safe and welcoming downtown.

As the Downtown Business Improvement District (BID) manager for nearly 30 years, Downtown Spokane Partnership (DSP) has a unique understanding of the opportunities and challenges ahead. DSP is well-positioned to foster a strong downtown with staff working 7-days-a-week to maintain a dynamic and inviting 80-block district where Spokanites can work, live, shop and recreate.

The following 2023 BID management plan and budget were developed with the BID Ratepayer Advisory board to effectively leverage opportunities and support ongoing post-pandemic recovery efforts, with an emphasis on sustaining enhanced service levels across the BID. Blending local aspirations with national best practices, the 2023 management plan is by design a plan to activate a stronger downtown for years to come. 2023 activities will continue to focus on enhanced security, maintenance, beautification, business support services and residential amenities while also engaging the BID Ratepayer Advisory Board, ratepayers and stakeholders in the design and creation of a BID Management District Plan and evaluation of BID expansion options tailored to the unique needs of potential new ratepayers. These activities are designed to reaffirm service priorities that keep the heart of our region clean and safe while elevating the issues that support a vibrant and vital downtown.

The 2023 management plan will continue refine our fundamental strengths, from operations and security, to transportation, beautification, marketing, events and business support, while also exploring meaningful ways to become more responsive to the needs and goals of BID ratepayers. Reserves built up during the pandemic are being spent on one-time capital outlay projects to support long term efficiencies like a new robust database and operations platform as well as key projects and initiatives, including development of the Management District Plan, support to launch the Expo+ 50 partnership, add new parking wayfinding, expand business support to entrepreneurs from historically marginalized communities, extend the social service ambassador pilot launched in late 2022, and more. Additionally, completion of the BID expansion analysis and recommendations in spring 2023 will help to determine next steps and budget related to potential expansion of the BID and potential streamlining of BID assessment methodology in 2024.

DSP is honored to continue to manage the investments of BID ratepayers to address the most pressing needs of the district, making downtown a better place to live, work and do business for all.

2023 PRIORITIES

A. Management & Administration

- Complete internal review and external environment assessment to understand the strengths, challenges, and opportunities for improvement in downtown Spokane.
- Leverage assessments to develop a comprehensive Management District Plan (MDP) with annual timelines and milestones.
- Improve connectivity between services, programming and activities across the BID.
- Enhance and implement priorities focused on inclusion, diversity and equity, including collaboration and deeper relationships with other civic organizations, cultural associations and private entities.
- Build a centralized electronic directory of all business, property, development and infrastructure information in the BID.
- Execute a robust annualized ratepayer survey to gauge priorities and feedback.
- Provide staff assistance and efficiencies to the BID Ratepayer Advisory Board.
- Identify and relocate office/workspace for all BID activities.
- Provide quarterly written reports of time allocated by individual employees engaged in BID activities with accomplishments.

B. Financial Stewardship

- Continue to exercise sound and flexible expense management practices to protect 17% risk operating reserve.
- Sustain sound financial cash management with a focus on investing in projects to enhance BID management and services.
- Maintain financial liquidity, solvency, and compliance with GAAP, RCW 35.87A.010 and Spokane Municipal Code 04.31.030.
- Pursue grant opportunities for capital items not included in the 2023 budget.
- Continue delivering unqualified audit opinions.
- Complete Assessment Matrix Fee analysis with recommendations for any changes for fiscal year 2024.

C. Safe and Welcoming

- Continue Security Ambassador coverage throughout the BID with evaluation of expanded and emphasis patrols.
- Enrich services to enhance the feeling of safety in downtown, including expanded hospitality focus to support retail and hospitality sectors.
- Expand training and education program for Ambassadors inclusive of crisis intervention, de-escalation techniques, security and personal safety best practices, medical emergency response.
- Increase “on the street” presence of Ambassadors with increased foot and e-bike patrols.
- Collaborate with city and private partners to establish lighting standards and maintenance schedules for streetlights, pedestrian scale lights, façade/exterior lighting and decorative lighting programs.

- Re-initiate CPTED program to identify and evaluate “hot spots” with ratepayer education workshops.
- Maintain and expand coordinated trainings and communications with SPD.
- Launch a downtown security collaborative with monthly safety stakeholder meetings.
- Promote 3-1-1 and Crime Check reporting, including stakeholder education for use.
- Build a centralized electronic reporting tool for Ambassadors and Clean Team members to track and report activities, service requests and concerns.
- Complete uniform update.

D. Social Outreach Ambassador Pilot

- Develop tailored program to provide navigation to housing and services for unhoused populations in downtown.
- Identify program benchmark goals and training needs.
- Maintain and expand coordinated communications with service and housing providers.
- Complete year one pilot evaluation and develop recommendations for ongoing integration.

E. Clean and Beautiful

- Maintain optimal staffing levels for removing graffiti, sweeping and power washing, litter/debris removal and general cleanup work as well as shoveling snow and seasonal activities.
- Maintain and increase coordination with City Code Enforcement for enhanced cleaning and graffiti removal initiatives, in particular in the viaducts and alleyways.
- Work with City Waste Management to enhance and secure public trash receptacles in North Bank area.
- Enhance walkway infrastructure including encouragement of private property maintenance of sidewalks and within the BNSF viaducts.
- Improve preservation, replacement and maintenance of trees and tree wells in coordination with the City Arborist to enhance the urban canopy.
- Evaluate beautification and landscaping programming to reduce water use and increase sustainability.
- Establish regular communications and information sharing with city departments.
- Partner with Spokane Arts and community organizations on placemaking and public art initiatives, with a focus on alleyways and viaducts and an emphasis on art/artists who are people of color, women and/or historically marginalized communities.
- Advance and support initiatives that invest in the improvement of underutilized public spaces, such as alleys, streeteries, and parklets.
- Correlate data to identify trends, enhance infrastructure and develop/adjust service routes.
- Complete uniform update.

F. Economic Development

- Focus on business retention with assistance to existing businesses in accessing resources, information and helpful information.
- Support advisory ad hoc councils to review and recommend policies, regulations and projects to support the economic health of downtown.
- Expand partnerships with GSI and regional business organizations to showcase downtown for recruitment of new and expanded businesses and diversify talent.

- Implement an economic development campaign focused on outreach and coaching for new and expanding businesses to access downtown retail locations, with an emphasis on entrepreneurs who are people of color, women and/or historically marginalized communities.
- Develop and promote activities and programming to incentivize return to work and hospitality/retail activities in downtown.
- Focus support for strategic development of underutilized properties and increased residential density.
- Develop materials and resources to communicate data, trends and information about downtown investment activity, business growth and demographics.
- Identify and emphasize uses and access to river, including the Zipline project and Expo+50 partnership.

G. Transportation and Parking

- Monitor transportation projects and initiatives and increase awareness of downtown accessibility.
- Facilitate communications with city staff and contractors to support commerce and reduce impacts during downtown construction projects.
- Promote greater use of transportation options, including City Line and STA's rebranded "Shuttle Park" program.
- Identify and recommend designated parking zones, speed zones and enforcement/regulation of micro-transit vehicles.
- Evaluate and support vision zero initiatives.
- Develop materials to report data related to availability of long-term and short-term off-street parking availability and rates within the BID.
- Leverage parking validation programs to incentivize retail and recreational activities in the core.
- Participate in traffic management planning with the city, SPD, PFD, and Spokane Public Schools to reduce congestion in and around the North Bank area of the BID.
- Continue implementing key elements of 2019 Parking Study, including launch of the first phase of the "Park Spokane" program focused on visible, branded wayfinding to highlight accessibility of available off-street parking.
- Develop implementation strategy, including parking management partners and funding recommendations, to further the Park Spokane program in 2024 and beyond.

H. Marketing and Events

- Continue regular electronic updates to ratepayers, sharing important information, announcements, resources and insights.
- Establish an advisory ad hoc committee of marketing experts.
- Develop a comprehensive marketing and communications strategy with a focus to increase use of online/digital marketing and platforms to promote businesses and activities in downtown.
- Leverage media to highlight new and existing downtown businesses, showcase existing diverse businesses and activities, and elevate economic trends and insights.
- Explore recommendations for a downtown brand refresh.
- Create an event toolkit with information on permitting and processes to remove some of the uncertainty and encourage events in downtown.
- Deepen relationships with cultural organizations and associations to program and activate key locations across the BID.

- Continue programming and activations focused on Wall Street and Post Street to increase foot traffic and visitors to downtown, working with City and SFD staff to explore temporary weekend closures of Wall Street to support programming.
- Develop complementary programming to extend events in Riverfront Park into downtown.
- Support promotions for the opening of the new downtown stadium on the North Bank.

I. BID Expansion

- Manage consultant to complete BID expansion analysis with report of findings, service level, assessment methodology and recommendations.
- Staff BID Expansion Ad Hoc Committee.
- Complete analysis of expansion operations support space needs and options, including outreach interviews and evaluation, identification of potential ratepayers, service needs and corresponding assessment formula recommendations.
- Develop BID expansion recommendations, outreach timelines and budget, including capital outlay assessment and staffing.