



MISSOULA DOWNTOWN ASSOCIATION  
BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT  
MISSOULA DOWNTOWN FOUNDATION

May 6, 2020  
Missoula Media

## **MISSOULA DOWNTOWN FOUNDATION BEGINS DISBURSING FUNDS TO DOWNTOWN BUSINESSES IMPACTED BY CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC**

The Missoula Downtown Foundation (MDF) established a Downtown Missoula Business Support Fund to assist businesses and organizations negatively impacted by the Coronavirus pandemic.

As the fundraising arm of the Downtown Missoula Partnership, the MDF has the mission to support and promote the spirit and heritage of Missoula through cultural, historical and economic enhancement of Downtown Missoula, now and for future generations. In an effort to help rebuild the economy and vibrancy of Downtown, the MDF has been fundraising and seeking support from individuals, businesses not impacted by the crisis, and partner organizations to raise and distribute a minimum of \$100,000 in 2020.

Since the creation of the fund two weeks ago, the MDF has received numerous applications for financial support and will be disbursing the first round of checks to local businesses this week. The foundation and its board of directors will continue to review applications and provide downtown businesses with financial help every week until funds are depleted.

We can enjoy Missoula's unique downtown in large part due to the presence of small, locally-owned businesses and organizations. These businesses and organizations are not immune to the COVID-19 pandemic, which has resulted in shuttered store fronts, job losses, and supply chain interruptions.

"Supporting and maintaining a strong and vital small business presence in downtown Missoula is how we keep our authenticity. Preserving our culture and uniqueness in Missoula can only be done if small businesses thrive downtown. The MDF is committed to doing what it can to ensure this outcome," said Alan Newell, MDF board member

The MDF contributed \$25,000 to the Support Fund, and pivoted its spring fundraising campaign from street décor to this urgent issue. The Downtown Business Improvement District contributed \$10,000 from its business development budget to the fund. As of May 6th, Clearwater Credit Union, First Interstate Bank, First Security Bank, Stockman Bank, Missoula Broadcasters Association, TrailWest Bank, and Montana Scotch Whisky Society have each contributed to the fund, which as of today totals \$83,000.

The Foundation started an online fundraising campaign last week to provide an opportunity to individuals or entities to support Downtown businesses and organizations through the Missoula Downtown Business Support Fund.

“In working with the groups that promote Downtown over the years, the thing that has impressed me the most is the willingness of Downtown folks to selflessly contribute their time and money for the betterment of Downtown and the entire Missoula community. The MDF Small Business Support Fund is another sterling example of that willingness. Many businesses and individuals have made extremely generous contributions to the fund to help those negatively impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. As a Board member of the MDF, I am proud and humbled to have a part in the MDF Small Business Support Fund,” said Dan Cederberg, MDF board member

Individuals and businesses interested in contributing to the Downtown Missoula Business Support Fund can send a check, payable to the Missoula Downtown Foundation, to 218 East Main Street, Missoula, MT 59802. Donors can also contribute through the Foundation’s GoFundMe Campaign <https://www.gofundme.com/f/downtown-missoula-business-support-fund>. The MDF is a qualified charitable organization, and all donations are deductible to the full extent allowed by law.

“Downtown Missoula has always been based on the businesses that operate there. Everything we love about our Downtown can be traced back to the people who do business there. Helping our Downtown businesses is helping ourselves,” said Geoff Badenoch, MDF board member.

The MDF is receiving applications from affected businesses every day. Applicants must have a City of Missoula Business License or an IRS Determination Letter, operate in the Downtown Business Improvement District, and/or service the community in Downtown Missoula. Downtown businesses and organizations in need of support shall complete a simple online application located at <https://www.missouladowntown.com/missoula-downtown-foundation/downtown-missoula-business-support-fund/>

Applications will be reviewed and approved by the MDF staff and board members, and disbursement of funds shall be in the form of one-time checks distributed by the Downtown Missoula Partnership.

For more information, visit [www.missouladowntown.com](http://www.missouladowntown.com) or contact the Downtown Missoula Partnership office via phone (406-543-4238) or email ([info@missouladowntown.com](mailto:info@missouladowntown.com)).

*Downtown: Connecting Our Community!*