

Downtown BID Board of Trustees Meeting
Tuesday, November 18, 2025 at the DMP Conference Room & on Zoom

Present: Charlie Beaton, Scott Stearns, Ellen Buchanan, Chris McClead, Karen Sippy, Luke Jackson, and Michael Albritton

Absent: N/A

Staff: Linda McCarthy, Jack Hall, and Jake Treece

Charlie Beaton called the meeting to order at 3:06 pm.

FEEDBACK ON DMP BOARD RETREAT & NEXT STEPS

Board members shared reflections on the recent DMP Board Retreat. The overall impression was very positive, and members felt that Rachel Huff-Doria did an effective job facilitating discussions and guiding the group toward clear next steps in the strategic planning process.

APPROVAL OF OCTOBER MINUTES

There were no comments or edits to the October minutes. Chris McClead moved to approve the minutes, Luke Jackson seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

REVIEW & APPROVAL OF DMP CONTRACT & 2026 BID ALLOCATION

The Board reviewed the formal contract outlining how the three DMP organizations work together. The five-year framework will be added once finalized. Recent updates included additional financial details recommended by Stearns.

Jack Hall reviewed how BID contributions toward staff positions and administrative support have decreased due to reduced workload placed on the BID. Lower administrative demands mean the BID will contribute a smaller portion toward the four core office staff positions and the two maintenance managers. A portion of 2026 funds will also support general operational costs. Under the proposed 2026 budget, the BID will fund approximately **29% of DMP staff salaries**. Discussion followed regarding whether the MDF, MDA, and DMP Boards are comfortable with this shift.

The reduced contribution from the BID helps account for the BID's tightened financial position heading into 2026.

Karen Sippy moved to approve the contract, McClead seconded, and the Board unanimously approved.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The October 31 financials were reviewed. A large portion of City of Missoula funds were recently withdrawn, which—combined with pending tax assessments—has resulted in tighter cash flow. Net income currently sits at **-\$141,308**, which is typical for this time of year.

On the Profit & Loss statement, minimal income has been received from early tax assessments. Power washing charges were posted for the quarter. Administrative and maintenance contract payments have been

made. Summer repairs to the power washer and prior-year repair costs were paid out. Standard equipment and material expenses remain within expected ranges.

Clean Team operating supplies include the purchase of new high-visibility vests. Business development reimbursements were also issued. Discussion took place regarding shifts in local tax structures and anticipated protests related to BID assessments.

DOWNTOWN MAINTENANCE & CLEAN TEAM UPDATES

Clean Team statistics were reviewed. The team is currently focused on leaf removal and clearing organic debris throughout the district. The Downtown Maintenance Team is working with Urban Forestry to install garlands and holiday decorations across the core.

Discussion followed about design and activation of public spaces to encourage positive use, increase visibility, and deter loitering or camping in concealed areas.

DOWNTOWN POLICING QUARTERLY REPORTS

The Board reviewed the most recent DDPO data. Members noted an observable increase in both general downtown activity and the unhoused population. There has been a rise in incidents involving individuals sleeping outside of businesses.

Camping and disorderly conduct reports have increased, though members emphasized these issues are not yet severe but remain concerning.

DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN UPDATES

The Board packet included the outlined goals for Downtown Master Plan implementation from 2025–2027, including the work anticipated through the UDC and the Downtown SAM Project.

Several projects are currently moving forward or under early review, including the Riverfront Triangle area, the Library Block, and the new Higgins Waterfront redevelopment concept, which has not yet been presented to the BID. Further discussion took place regarding upcoming UDC work and associated timelines.

BID COMMUNICATIONS

Growth policy updates and zoning materials are available at EngageMissoula.com. The Board discussed changes to residential and commercial zoning and broader implications for downtown.

The West Broadway River Corridor Plan has been released and is pending review. This plan focuses on the Broadway Island area, where the existing irrigation ditch will be removed and Grant Creek will be reconstructed as a naturalized streambed. The project is being funded by MRA and will significantly alter hydrology and flow in the area.

Board members discussed ideas and potential opportunities related to the project. A call to action was made encouraging outreach to Montana Rail Link regarding graffiti removal on the west side.

McClead asked about the timeline for implementation, and it was noted that this will take multiple years as it is one of the largest rivers and corridor restoration projects undertaken in recent years.

No additional Downtown SAM updates were discussed.

The annual BID meeting will continue to occur in June. The second annual BID newsletter will be released by year-end and will include updates on parking expansion, the Bank Street Parking Garage, Caras Park projects, SAM, the Caras Canopy, and Clark Fork River access improvements. It will also highlight the Arts & Culture Impact Grants, with emphasis on more alley activations and public artworks. Snow removal reminders will also be included.

DOWNTOWN BUSINESS ACTIVITY AND COMMUNITY LAND TRUSTS

Business activity has remained steady in the final quarter of the year. There have been 11 business closures, along with several expansions and relocations. A few ownership transitions have occurred, and several downtown buildings remain on the market. The Depot has expanded the amount of property it is offering for sale.

Community land trusts have become a growing topic locally, particularly in relation to how a commercial-focused land trust could support new ventures or preserve existing small, unique downtown businesses.

MDF FALL CAMPAIGN

The MDF Fall Campaign is underway, focusing on arts, culture, and downtown beautification. Board members were encouraged to contribute. About half of the \$50,000 fundraising goal has been met.

DOWNTOWN HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES

The holiday season is underway. The DMP anticipates selling approximately \$560,000 in Downtown Gift Cards this year, with the highest volume occurring in December. Shop Small Saturday takes place at the end of November.

Holidays on Higgins is expected to be one of the largest to date, with record numbers of floats, market vendors, and children's activities.

The DMP's annual holiday party will be held at the Florence Hotel. Due to unexpected issues, the Holiday Inn is unable to host or support the event this year, so all expenses will be covered by the DMP.

The next BID Board meeting will be held on December 16, followed by a small holiday cocktail gathering. The agenda will be brief, and the Five-Year Framework may be ready for approval at that time.

NEW BUSINESS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

LOCI will be hosting an Open House in December.

TRUSTEE COMMENTS

No additional comments were shared.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:26 pm.