



## THE WORK OF THE BID

**On an annual basis, the BID provides the following beautification services to our property owners (this list is not all inclusive):**

### PUBLIC ART PROGRAM

Since 2012, the BID has been active in the installation of several public art projects. We've installed over 21 works of art on traffic signal boxes. Also begun in 2012 and completed in 2013, we installed an 11,000 square foot mural on the 1<sup>st</sup> Ave North underpass. We've assisted property owners in installing public art on their buildings, to help combat graffiti. In our continued efforts to remove graffiti problems within the BID we have spent over \$65,000 since 2009 installing public art projects and removing graffiti on behalf of our property owners.

### BIKE RACK PROGRAM

Commencing in 2014 we launched a partnership with the welding class at CM Russell High School. The students upgraded our existing 26 original bike racks, built three new bike racks and have since created seven custom bike racks for some businesses. We formally established a bike rack policy and support our property & business owners in pursuing bike racks for their locations. Ten-year expenditure for bike racks = \$4,165

### BOULEVARD TREE PROGRAM

On behalf of our property owners, the BID has taken the lead on maintaining the 382 boulevard trees within the District. These tax dollars come directly out of BID's annual operating budget. Due to the frost in 2009, the BID replaced over 10% of the trees within the Downtown; we continue to budget and maintain/replace trees as needed. Ten-year expenditure for tree service = \$85,763 versus an expenditure of \$66,000 from 1999-2009.

### HOLIDAY DÉCOR

Since 2009, the BID has managed the installation of holiday décor in the downtown core, taking this task over from the City. On an annual basis we have over 100 pieces of holiday décor installed, in addition to lighting placed on 34 boulevard trees. Ten-year expenditure for holiday décor = \$85,763.62.

### FLOWERS

Since 2009, the BID has increased the hanging flower pots from 23 pots to 53 pots this summer; we also manage the 11 rock planters on the street corners along Central Ave. Ten-year expenditure for flowers over \$25,000. In 2012, the BID hired a Community Ambassador to maintain the flowers.

### TRASH REMOVAL

On behalf of our property owners, the BID takes care of trash removal from more than 90 concrete trash receptacles located on the sidewalk throughout the district.

### BANNERS

In 2017, the BID increased our banners from 17 to 35. Installation of new banners depicting beautiful Great Falls images were installed. The BID funded the additional hardware and received sponsorships for the banners. Ten-year expenditure for banners = \$10,950.



### SNOW REMOVAL

During the winter months, the BID provides for snow removal on behalf of our property owners. Property owners remain responsible for the removal of snow from their sidewalks, but the BID will provide a narrow path so guests visiting Downtown will have a clear sidewalk to venture on safely.

### COMMUNITY RESOURCE AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

Commencing in 2012, the BID has worked to establish a Clean & Safe Team. This group of paid and volunteer individuals are responsible for promoting a cleaner, safer and friendlier downtown. Our Community Resource Ambassadors interact directly with residents, business members, and visitors. They are responsible for helping to improve the perception and wellbeing of Downtown Great Falls, ensuring that the image is a positive one.

### THE JOHNSON HOTEL

In 2001, the BID took the lead in revitalizing the Johnson Hotel building located at 417 Central Ave. The revitalization of this building is a proven success; the BID closed the sale on its ownership interest in the building in July 2018. The Boards hope is to redeploy the funds from the sale into another real property redevelopment project.

### PEDLET PROGRAM

Beginning in 2017, the BID launched its pedlet program. A pedlet is a unique, safe, ADA-compliant wooden structure that acts as a sidewalk extension beyond the existing curb line allowing for uninterrupted outdoor dining on the sidewalk. The BID installed its first pedlet in the summer of 2017, with installation of three additional pedlets and one suspendlet in the summer of 2018.

## IF NOT THE BID, THEN WHO?

This report is an outline of the BID's work to improve downtown for the past ten years. This is just a glimpse of the areas the BID supports. The goal of the BID is to maintain, beautify, and stimulate development in Great Falls' historic downtown district.

Your affirmative vote and contribution will provide ongoing efforts in all of these areas as well as other areas of economic development. The renewal of the BID is dependent upon your vote. Without it, the downtown and all of our positive steps forward that have been made these past ten years may falter. The real question is if the BID is not renewed through this tax assessment program where will the money come from to support these programs and projects in the future? Please consider the entire program, what it does for the overall appearance and the ongoing vision for future development of the downtown area when considering your vote.



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# BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

A Business Improvement District (BID) is an organization formed by private property owners within a legally constituted city district. Property owners pay a special assessment on their property tax bill to cover the expense of providing their BID with services beyond what the local government offers in their area.

In 1989, organizational leaders in Great Falls introduced the idea of creating a BID to the property owners of Downtown Great Falls. 2019 marks the third renewal of the Great Falls BID.

The BID petitions property owners to approve or deny an additional assessment that appears on their property tax billing that is directed back to the BID for improvements within the district.

The renewal of the BID requires more than 60.1% of property owners within the district to approve the tax plan in order to continue for an additional ten-year period.

The BID is operated by an all volunteer Board of Directors who are property owners or their designated representatives from within the district; with additional administrative support within their office setting. All Board members are approved by the City Commissioners and serve a four-year term with an option to renew for one additional four-year term.

The purpose of this report is to inform you, the property owners, where your BID assessment dollars have been invested over the past ten years and how your Great Falls Business Improvement District operates.

The BID has proven itself to be a vital part of the downtown area, providing for improvement and beautification, and our hope is to continue serving Downtown Great Falls through the next decade.



## THE TAX ASSESSMENT FORMULA

Per Montana State Statute 7-12-1133:

The tax assessment for the Great Falls BID remained the same since its original creation in 1989. Historically, the assessment has been separated into three parts. In 2017, an additional fourth component was added to the assessment formula, acknowledging the increase in condominium residential units downtown. The amounts assessed are different for each parcel in the district based on square footage, current market value of the property plus a flat fee. The assessment is paid to the district when your property tax payment is made to the County Treasurers.

**BIDS (BID Square Footage rate)**  
\$.015 times the square footage of the land area

**BIDF (BID Flat Rate)**  
\$200 per parcel or lot

**BIDR (BID Residential Rate)**  
\$50 per parcel or lot with a designated Land Use Code of 125, which is a Residential Condominium

**BIDT (BID taxable rate)**  
\$.00165 times the market valuation as provided for by the Montana State Legislature

An average, non-residential BID parcel example:  
BIDS = \$56.25  
BIDF = \$200.00  
BIDT = \$194.70 (value is \$118,000 based on current market findings)  
Annual BID tax = \$450.95



The total special assessment dollars are directed into the BID for improvements. The BID's annual operating assessment income budgeted has ranged from \$158,000 in 2009 to \$248,000 on our most recent budget for fiscal year 2019. We've managed to make our small budget go a very long way!

## TEN-YEAR REPORT OF GRANT ACTIVITY 2009 - 2018

### Facade, Interior, Residential & Business Incentive Grant Programs

Our grant programs were established to financially assist both property owners and businesses in the areas of permanent improvements to the Facade (exterior), New & Existing Business (Interior) and the Residential Development of downtown buildings. The largest portion of funding from the tax assessments collected are utilized to fund these grant programs each year.



Utilizing our grant programs, over the past ten years the BID has made substantial contributions through these programs to assist in property beautification efforts within the District. **The total tax valuation of all of the properties located within the BID boundaries was \$65,433,684 in 2009 and most recently was \$110,547,999 in 2018.**

**As reported in our ten-year report in 2009 to our property owners, the BID funded \$537,931 in grants from 1999-2009. During the 10-year period from 2009 to 2018 the BID has funded \$1,140,442 in grants.**



### Facade Grants (Exterior)

Total amount Facade grants awarded 2009 to 2018 = \$267,137.25  
In comparison, Facade grants awarded 1999 to 2009 = \$107,218.00

### New, Existing, & Expanding Business Grants (Interior)

Total amount Interior grants awarded 2009 to 2018 = \$314,611.77  
In comparison, Interior grants awarded 1999 to 2009 = \$405,368.00

### Residential Grants

Total amount Residential grants awarded 2009 to 2018 = \$343,871.00  
In comparison, Interior grants awarded 1999 to 2009 = \$20,140.00

### Business Incentive Grants

Total amount Business Incentive grants awarded 2011 to 2018 = \$54,785.00

Business Incentive grants are grants to new businesses within the BID boundaries, covering a month's rent on their behalf, this program was established in 2011 and has aided 59 businesses with this grant program.

Additional grant programs funded include the streetscape project for \$134,200; sidewalk grants totaling \$10,043; art grants for \$4,625 and a Preserve America grant we matched for \$11,168.

