

# Annual Report

## Fiscal Year 2023



### To Our Property Owners

The Helena Business Improvement District (BID) is a 501(c)6 organization funded by the owners of more than 400 properties who invest in the vitality of our downtown community through an assessment paid to the organization. The BID makes downtown Helena more vibrant and prosperous for property owners and businesses through beautification, promotion, and advocacy.

### NEWS

#### News: FY2023

We hired John Dendy as Executive Director. John has nonprofit and private sector management experience and is well-connected with Helena's downtown decision makers and enthusiasts.

After a lengthy review, we changed the assessment methodology. The old method had become difficult to understand and explain. The overall result of the change is approximately a 5% reduction in budget based on 2022 property values. Under the new system:

- Commercial properties pay a \$300 flat fee plus 4% of taxable value.
- Residential properties pay a flat fee of \$100 plus 1% of taxable value.
- Nonprofits pay a flat fee of \$300 plus \$0.03 per square foot (in lieu of the taxable value portion).
- The City of Helena pays only the flat fee of \$300 per property.

### Recap: FY23 Program and Service Highlights

#### BEAUTIFICATION

- Purchased and cared for 100 hanging flower baskets and 12 flower barrels. They looked better than ever!
- Emptied and maintained the 25 trash cans that BID owns in the district.
- Maintained summer and winter banners, as well as those for Governor's Cup and new ones for Prickly Pear Land Trust.
- Installed a portable toilet in Constitution Park so people have a place to go when they are downtown, 24/7, 365. **\*New!**
- Maintained the landscaped areas on the 300 and 400 blocks of Last Chance Gulch.
- Awarded two façade grants – Montana Book Company and the Guardian Building – and two parklet grants – Blackfoot River Brewing Company and the Gold Bar.
- Removed more than 140 graffiti tags.

#### PROMOTION

- Promoted downtown businesses with print, online, social media, and radio marketing.
- Supported Downtown Helena Inc (DHI) operations, including events like Alive at Five.
- Purchased free parking downtown for holiday shoppers.
- With support from Great Northern Town Center, developed and began implementing an outreach plan for the BID. **\*New!**
- Continued our advertisement wall at Helena Regional Airport.
- Printed and distributed the downtown calendar and downtown maps.

#### ADVOCACY & BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

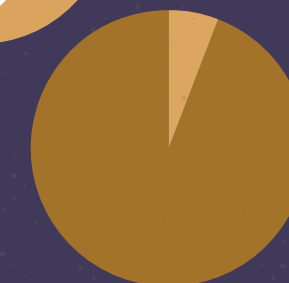
- In partnership with the City of Helena and Montana Main Street, funded the Multimodal and Infrastructure Plan for the district. The plan presents downtown travel proposals, infrastructure needs, and cost estimates for improvements.
- With DHI, acted as a liaison between property owners and the City. We made changes to the snow removal protocol to reduce snowmelt flooding and improve business access.
- Provided flash flood grants to properties and businesses flooded on July 3, 2022.
- Wrote and distributed "Downtown Helena Toolkit on Homelessness" in partnership with United Way and Good Samaritan Ministries. The Toolkit is a guide for businesses and their employees on how to effectively and kindly deal with unhoused people. **\*New!**

### Forecast: Projects for FY2024

- With DHI, we are investigating the feasibility of building a downtown stage for Helena. Montana State University architecture students are enrolled in a course this fall to evaluate sites and present some preliminary designs. They are evaluating various stage sizes at several of the downtown parks.
- In partnership with Visit Helena, we designed and are renting billboards on I-15 encouraging people to exit the highway and experience downtown Helena.
- We are pursuing a permanent downtown public restroom that is open 24 hours/day. The City of Helena has allocated \$98,000 and Lewis and Clark County has allocated \$35,000. Durable and safe public toilets are expensive, and we are raising additional funds for the project.
- In partnership with the City, we increased our flower baskets to 125 and flower barrels to 20 in summer 2023. The City contributed \$8000 to assist with our trash collection and flower maintenance.

### Financial Summary

**INCOME : \$325,400**



**94% ASSESSMENT**

**6% RENT, PROGRAMS, & INTEREST**

**EXPENSES : \$324,700**



**64% PROGRAMS**

**26% ADMINISTRATION**

**10% FACILITIES & EQUIPMENT**

- Program expenses include \$49,500 in program payroll.
- Administration expenses include \$46,100 in administrative payroll.





The BID provided Parklet Grants to Blackfoot River Brewing and The Gold Bar



The BID provided façade grants to Montana Book Company and the Guardian Building.



Grant Opportunities

TIF : TAX INCREMENT FINANCING
Do you know about the Downtown Urban Renewal District and the Tax Increment Financing (TIF) grants available? TIF grants support projects that improve downtown and increase property values.
BID : BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT
The BID awards façade and parklet grants to encourage private investment in downtown curb appeal.

To pursue grants, please visit downtownhelena.com

Board of Trustees

- Chair – Seth Brandenberger
Vice Chair – Onawa Linden
Treasurer – Ryan Stavnes
Rex Seeley | Alicia Pichette
Randy Burrington | Alice Santos
Serving part of the fiscal year:
Lee Shubert | Sean Morrison

Staff

- Executive Director – John Dendy
Maintenance Ambassadors –
Mike Thiel, John Murdy, and Nolan Lister
Events and Administrative Assistants –
Alex Sedlock and Hillori Bogey\*

\*Ms. Bogey is in a training position paid by Career Training Institute



Making downtown Helena vibrant and prosperous for property owners, businesses and the greater Helena community.

We want to keep you informed, and we want to know what you think.

We need your email address to do that. To find out about grants and other services, please provide your email one of these ways:



- 1 Scan the QR code and fill out the short survey.
2 Don't like QR codes? Please visit downtownhelena.com/owners. You'll find the same survey there.
3 Email John Dendy at director@helenabid.com or give him a call at (406) 447-1535. Tell him what you want from the BID.



Helena Business Improvement District
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Helena, MT 59601



Promoting the vitality and prosperity of downtown Helena