

Downtown San Rafael BID

2013 Programs & Accomplishments

Organization

- Researched BIDs and developed proposed work plan for expansion based upon the priorities of an expanded business district.
- Produced communications pieces for prospective BID members on expanded BID goals and proposed programs.
- Held several informational meetings on BID expansion proposal for office tenants.
- Guided organization through successful expansion of BID.
- Utilized Email and Constant Contact newsletters to reach BID members and communicate programs.
- Recruited four new board members & created new board packet to be distributed January 2014.
- Held bimonthly board meetings to keep BID moving forward during transition. Reestablished monthly meetings beginning in September.
- Held first member mixer at Fenix in March in which over 50 people attended. Held a second successful mixer at Rafael Film Center in August, sharing vision for engagement of new members. Established plans for quarterly mixers in 2014.
- Continue to build engagement among business owners with routine communications, door-to-door presence and monthly committee meetings.
- Engaged professional bookkeeper for 2014 financial management.

Safety

- Conducted Business Issues Survey in January with a focus on the impact of transient street population in Downtown. Reported results to Business Issues Committee and SRPD.
- Held our first Safety Meetings for Downtown businesses and Police and Service Agencies. These served as the kickoff to monthly meetings with SRPD representatives and establishment of our Safety Committee.
- Met biweekly with "Thursday Morning Group" on homeless issues, bringing downtown business concerns to service providers and to work toward identifying potential improvements in service delivery in County.
- Established positive relationships with St. Vincent De Paul and Ritter Center staff to ensure open dialogue and build collaborative efforts to mitigate impact of service centers in downtown.
- Held informative meetings about regulation of massage parlors, with plans to follow up routinely in 2014, beginning at January meeting.

Parking and Transportation

- Established monthly committee meetings with Parking Services Manager and facilitated discussion of parking meter improvements and parking master plans, keeping merchant concerns in forefront.
- Recommended keeping garage parking most affordable option, and using metered parking to effectively manage space turnover.

- Negotiated improved holiday parking program extending free 3-hour parking to all city parking lots.
- Began discussion of improved employee parking, pay-by-phone options and discounted pre-paid "smart cards" for 2014.
- Initiated review of bike parking toward goal of establishing downtown as the most bike friendly city in Marin.
- Proposed introduction of Bike corrals or parklets on Fourth Street to increase bike parking and increase pedestrian friendliness. Currently polling business owners to gauge support for a pilot program.
- Facilitated meeting with Business owners surrounding Cijos Lot to review proposed parking lot re-pavement & design. Public works modified several design components based on merchant requests.
- Managed Lindero Parking lot program, providing up to 85 parking permits for downtown employees, while generating critical operating funds through 2013.

Streetscape

- Established Streetscape Committee for the purpose of improving common areas of downtown.
- Worked with City to pursue replanting of tree wells, following demonstration corner initiated by BID property owner. Plan continuing improvements with BID member support.
- Established relationship with Downtown Streets Team (DST) to maximize attention to BID corridor while supporting DST with additional opportunities.
- Worked with City to address issues of unsightly newspaper racks. City created a new program to manage new racks, which are being installed in December 2013.
- Requested City to utilize beautification funds to replace leaking, unsightly trash cans. Currently working with City staff to identify attractive and functional receptacles for 2014 installation.
- Worked with City staff on modifications to banner program and initiated plan to create a community-based banner art program, in collaboration with artists from Art Works Downtown and Fortnight Collective, for the purpose of engaging the community back into downtown (expected to introduce first quarter, 2014)
- Collaborated with Shelly Jackson (formerly of Marin History Museum) and brought idea of "The Mothering Tree" to Fortnight Collective artists to bring interactive "Mothering Tree" to City plaza in honor of Mother's Day. The community response was powerful and positive. Over 1000 leaves were added to the tree in one week. Generated positive media coverage in Marin IJ and Patch.
- Secured commitment from parking services to direct a percentage of parking meter funding back into BID for streetscape improvements. Planning to fund increased sidewalk steam cleaning in 2014 to benefit entire BID district.

Events

- Surveyed BID members after 2012 Taste of Downtown. Based upon input, board voted to table event for 2013, preferring to create a fresh event for downtown, or bringing it back only when resources can deliver a great event.
- Created a "Sweetheart Scavenger Hunt" in February in partnership with Marin History Museum. Both merchants and participants praised event.
- Produced 2013 May Madness event. Invited Davidson Middle School Marching Band to participate, initiating effort to establish stronger community connections to event. After compiling post-event merchant surveys, Board voted to produce May Madness in 2014, continuing to fine tune with intent to make it more relevant to younger demographic. Moving event to May 31, eliminating conflict for merchants for Mother's day weekend.
- Secured \$5000 from the Target Funds for West End merchants for events in 2013. Funded West End Village Celebration and West End street banners for January 2014.
- In 2012, sent out a pre-market season survey to BID members to solicit input to City Council on Thursday Night's Farmers Market. Succeeded in incremental quality improvements in market, including removal of "tube sock" vendor. Market Manager has brought more organic vendors to market and is working to improve overall quality of market.
- Introduced a new Second Fridays' event as an overlay to Art Works Downtown's Second Fridays Art Walk. Produced successful "Latin Flavors on Fourth," "Feast on the Piazza," "Almost Midnight in Paris" (which included an attention grabbing poodle parade!) "Fall Harvest Evening and Flash Sale." Closing out year with Holiday Cheer event on December 13. Goal is to create multiple areas of interest on Second Fridays to create critical mass in downtown one evening a month.
- Produced annual Trick or Treat on Fourth event – from Heatherton to West End.
- Collaborated with HeadsUP foundation on "Shop Local For Schools," providing funding for advertisement and assisting with adventure passport program.

Marketing and Promotions

- "Mothering Tree" Project served as a promotion for Shopping downtown for Mother's day – advertisements were placed in Marin IJ and through many email distribution lists.
- Established a Downtown San Rafael Facebook page showcasing photos from events and communicating ideas about downtown. Cross promoting downtown businesses and events through FB, building a community of followers for Downtown.
- Sponsored Mill Valley Film Festival with commitment from CFI's Director of Development to work together in 2014 to increase co-promotional opportunities.
- Subsidized 4 full-page ads in Marin IJ welcoming Italian Street Painting to Downtown, providing members a significant discount on color display ads.
- Met with Dominican University to build stronger connection to Downtown for students and faculty. Reintroducing Dominican Discount Program "Penguin Pals." Created downtown guide for students. Program will be strengthened in early 2014.
- Subsidized holiday advertising opportunities in Marin IJ and Pacific Sun for all downtown merchants.

Economic Development

- Reached out to restaurant broker to introduce BID as resource for prospective tenants.
- Advocated for proactive retail recruitment effort for Downtown with Economic Development Manager. Arranged an introduction to a retail recruitment specialist for built-out downtowns and Main Streets, with whom we expect to be working in 2014.
- Set foundation for working with Economic Development to fund retail recruitment research and identify niche market opportunities for downtown.

General Advocacy

- Sent Survey to BID members on feedback on City's proposed no-smoking ordinance.
- Notified Businesses of City's proposed polystyrene food packaging prohibition.
- Participated in monthly Business Issues Committee with City Manager, Mayor, Council, Chamber of Commerce.
- Kept issues of sidewalk cleanliness, proliferation of massage parlors, transient street population and parking at forefront of all discussions with City staff and service agencies.

Board of Directors (Interim) as of December 2013

President

Andre Sisneros - Gamescape North

Vice President

Kyle Hixon - Fenix

Secretary

Stan Gibbs - Art Works Downtown

Treasurer

Greg Gener - First Bank

Directors

Ashley Applegarth - WestAmerica Bank

Joel Eis - Rebound Bookstore

John Godsey - Fourth Street Press

Tim Hedrick - Weir Andrewson Architects

Mike Lamorte - Napoli Restaurant

Forrest Manning - Double Rainbow

Patricia Stevenson - Headlines Salon

In February 2014, a slate of candidates will be presented to all members for election at the General Membership Meeting in March, establishing a new board for the BID. As the BID serves as an advisory board to the City, the elected board will be presented to City Council, with a board approved work plan for 2014, representative of the priorities of the expanded Business Improvement District.



2014 Work Plan Summary

The Work of the BID will be carried out through committees tasked with prioritizing initiatives and programs. All BID members are encouraged to participate in a committee that is tasked with issues of interest to them, or to which they feel they can contribute talents and expertise. The Committee meeting times and places will be posted on the BID website and are always open to members and guest attendance.

Safety/Hospitality - How inviting and safe does downtown feel to visitors and those who work in downtown? The BID will work closely with the City, police department and service providers to address issues of safety, as well as fund projects that directly enhance the streetscape. The BID will also work closely with the Downtown Streets Team to ensure business interests are represented and we will work together to maximize the effectiveness of this new program in the downtown. Approximately 20 percent of the BID Assessments will be allocated to streetscape improvement. Our Streetscape Committee is proposing supplemental sidewalk cleaning, a community-wide street banner design project, and a design competition for a pilot "parklet" project for 2014.

Parking and Transportation - Easy public access and consumer-friendly parking remains a priority concern for downtown businesses and the BID will continue to meet monthly with Parking Services to ensure future investments in parking technology meet all stakeholder interests. Priorities for the Parking Committee will be reviewing new parking meter utilization, monitoring citation rates, working with Parking Services to improve employee parking options and affordability, and will explore pre-paid meter cards at reduced rates. Additionally, establishing a bike-friendly downtown and connecting downtown to the transit station are vital to maximizing downtown economic vitality.

Marketing and Promotions - Downtown must reclaim its birthright as the heart of the community and that requires tending to safety, attracting and retaining strong businesses and establishing a top-of-mind loyalty among our City's residents. The BID will dedicate approximately 20 percent of assessments to marketing and promoting our local businesses throughout the year. Branding, mobile and online presence, print advertising and direct promotions are all important aspects to BID marketing and will require a phased-in approach guided by priorities identified by the sub committee. An updated website, utilizing carryover funding from 2013, is a priority to maximizing member and community connections. Member hosted BID mixers will also foster engagement and building a sense of community.

Events – Attracting the community into downtown must be an ongoing effort and event planning will range from small, low cost events such as Second Friday activities, to larger festivals such as May Madness and holiday-themed celebrations. Events will be designed to maximize participation and exposure to local businesses while having the broadest appeal to our community. In 2013, the board committed to producing the 2014 May Madness event to ensure BID members retained a strong voice in the event. We look forward to a return of the February Scavenger Hunt, Second Fridays, Holiday

celebrations – and new non- street closure events geared to bringing families into downtown on a regular basis.

Economic Development - The BID will work closely with the Economic Development Department, downtown property owners and leasing agents to attract solid businesses with a goal of strengthening the mix of retail, restaurant and entertainment venues. Establishing the BID as a resource for existing businesses and prospective businesses are equally important in the effort to sustain and grow the downtown economy. The BID will facilitate member-to-member communication and collaboration, in an effort to cross-promote businesses and to collect factual economic data on the health of our downtown economy.

Organization

Perhaps the most critical aspect of the BID's work plan will be developing effective communication between the BID and our members. An improved website that contains a members-only section providing routine access to all meeting agendas and minutes, a member-to-member forum, and monthly electronic newsletters, and occasional mailed communications will be critical to building the engagement that will be necessary to effectively represent our members interests. Building engagement is our number one priority in our first year of operation under the expanded BID. Following the National Trust for Historic Preservation's *Main Street Program* model as a guide will provide a solid foundation upon which the BID can flourish, as it depends not only upon BID members, but also upon building community engagement – a critical component to fulfilling the vision of downtown San Rafael returning to its historic role as the heart—and soul of our City.

2014 BID
Preliminary Budget

2013 BID Fund Balance - Carry Over	\$67,000
Lindaro Parking Lot Rent - accrued liability	-7000
Net carry over funding	\$60,000

2014 Revenues

	BID Assessments	\$	94,000	
(Jan-April)	Lindaro Parking Lot	\$	15,000	
	*May Madness Income	\$	20,000	Income & grant based on historical
	*Target Grant - May Madness	\$	10,000	experience

Total Operating Income \$ 139,000

Expenses

Events: \$ (45,000)

*May Madness	*Note: May Madness production costs
Trick or Treat	average \$30,000, and goal is for event
Second Fridays	to be cost neutral based on anticipated
West End Village Fest	income and Target grants totalling
New Event	\$30,000

Marketing & Promotions \$ (19,000)

Advertising
Website Revision
Maps/directories
Member communications

Streetscape & Safety \$ (19,000)

Supplemental sidewalk cleaning
Banner program
Beautification projects

Operating Expenses

Lindaro Lot Expenses	\$ (3,500)
Salary	\$ (44,000)
payroll taxes & admin	\$ (5,000)
office rent & equip	\$ (6,000)
Insurance	\$ (3,000)
Misc. office/support	\$ (5,000)
professional bookkeeping	\$ (4,500)

Total Expenses \$ (154,000)

Net Profit/loss	\$ (15,000)
Shortfall funded by 2013 carryover funding	\$ 15,000
Net Profit/loss	0

Reserves	\$ 45,000
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