

IOWA CITY DOWNTOWN DISTRICT

Mission Report

VOLUME 12 FY 2023/2024



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Dear Downtown Stakeholders,

The past year, 2023/2024, has been a period of transformation for the Iowa City Downtown District and our downtown community. As we reflect on the initiatives, changes, and achievements of the last year, we are excited to present the 2024 Mission Report.

This fiscal year marked a few significant milestones for ICDD. It was the first time the organization experienced an executive leadership change since the inception, and the first year our budget reflected the increased levy rate of our Self-Supported Municipal Improvement District (SSMID) to \$2.50. This crucial adjustment has empowered us to move forward with strong momentum, fully aligned with the key initiatives outlined in the ICDD Strategic Plan to **WELCOME, SHAPE, & DRAW**.

Like other communities throughout the country, we have faced economic challenges due to inflation and rising interest rates, causing development to slow and fostering uncertainty. Despite this, Downtown and the community at large remain well-positioned to weather these market changes. The demand for small offices, retail, and entertainment, coupled with the community's love for this place, shows that Downtown Iowa City is still a hub for business, entertainment, and living. Through these market changes, our focus has been clear: leverage our expertise, partnerships, and collaborations to impact a foundation of growth.

We have seen pivotal investments with the City of Iowa City, including the purchase of the 21 S Linn St lot to spur needed development, the \$3.75 million Dubuque St streetscape, and the place management cleaning and hospitality contract with Block by Block. These investments and collaborations among different interests for a common goal, exemplify the vital role downtown Iowa City plays in the community.

Looking forward, we are thrilled about the organization's future, with the next year focused on renewing the ICDD Strategic Plan while preparing for the upcoming SSMID renewal in 2026. Our unwavering commitment to set **BOLDD** goals will propel us forward, as we navigate the future of Downtown Iowa City. The ICDD remains deeply grateful for your support. Together, we through innovative collaboration and continued partnerships, we know the best is yet to come!

Sincerely,
Betsy Potter
Executive Director, Iowa City Downtown District

Wendy Zimmermann
President, Iowa City Downtown District

THANK YOU TO OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

President: **Wendy Zimmermann**, Get Fresh Cafe
President-Elect: **Jason Paulios**, Iowa City Public Library
Treasurer: **Angie Brown**, Midwest One Bank
Secretary: **Tony Branch**, United Action for Youth
Past President: **Charlie Nusser**, Hands Jewelers

David Kieft, University of Iowa
Nina Lohman, Brink Literary Magazine
Kevin Felker, Prairie Kitchen Store
Josh Immerfall, Donnelly's Pub
Jamie Skinner, Molly's Cupcakes
Jeet Saini, Om Gifts
Jay LeaVesseur, Graduate Hotels
Bethany Young, Iowa Artisans Gallery
Sophie Donta, OPN Architects
Kris Mondanaro, Joseph's Steakhouse, Bread Garden, Reunion Brewery
Diego Lasansky, Lasansky Gallery
Macy Krall, 223 Baby Co.

EX OFFICIO
Rachel Kilburg, City of Iowa City
Austin Korns, Greater Iowa City Inc.
Cady Gerlach, Better Together 2030
Monica Nieves, Think Iowa City
Kylie Buddin, Summer of the Arts
Adrienne Korbakes, CommUnity
Noah LeFevre, UI Student Government
Betsy Potter, Iowa City Downtown District

THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS:

University of Iowa
City of Iowa City
Better Together 2030
South of 6 SSMID
Greater Iowa City Inc.
Think Iowa City

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS:

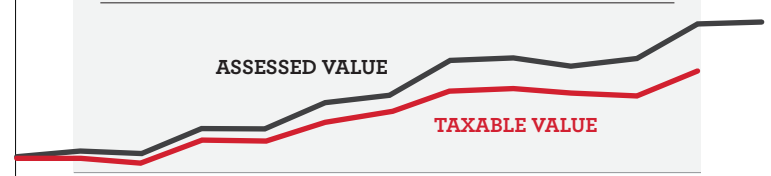
Midwest One Bank
GreenState Credit Union
Hills Bank
FLYCID
Chase Bank
Graduate Iowa City
University of Iowa Harm Reduction Coalition
iBev
Hilton Garden Inn
Pagliai's Pizza
Performance Food Service
Phelan Tucker Law LLP
RDG Planning & Design
Thompson & Co Salon
ImOn Communications
Phoebe Martin Realtor, Blank & McCune
Slingshot Architecture
ICON
New Pioneer Coop
OPN Architects
TruArt
Underground Printing
University of Iowa Stanley Museum of Art
metronet

THANK YOU TO OUR STAFF:

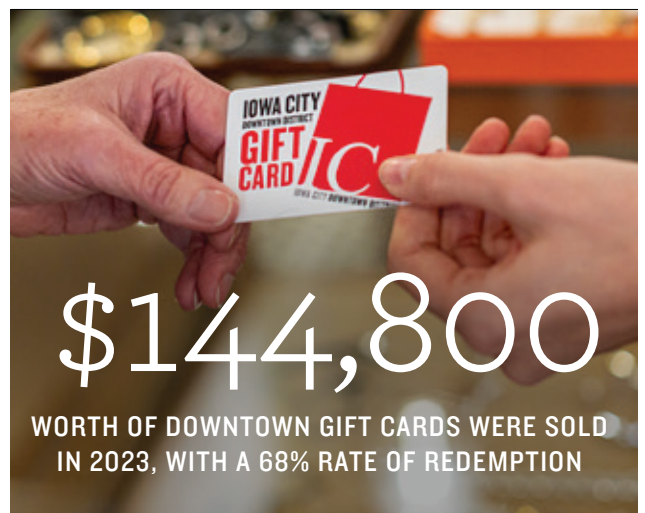
Betsy Potter, Executive Director
Christopher Hunter, Director Marketing
Joe Reilly, Nighttime Mayor
Katie Carpenter, Director of Special Events

PROPERTY VALUATION: IOWA CITY DOWNTOWN SSMID

YEAR	ASSESSED VALUE	TAXABLE VALUE
2012	\$ 140,533,080	\$140,533,080
2013	\$ 153,507,710	\$145,832,400
2014	\$ 153,004,700	\$137,704,230
2015	\$ 190,165,843	\$170,049,778
2016	\$ 190,854,850	\$169,579,651
2017	\$ 224,903,730	\$198,624,763
2018	\$ 239,674,450	\$210,588,821
2019	\$ 290,940,151	\$251,449,163
2020	\$ 294,403,012	\$255,569,768
2021	\$ 288,294,447	\$248,759,022
2022	\$ 295,572,983	\$240,708,687
2023	\$ 360,961,310	\$279,534,936
2024	\$364,100,600	



FACEBOOK REACH	803,100 (+157.1%)
INSTAGRAM REACH	144,900 (+228%)
WEBSITE VIEWS	595,000
IMPRESSIONS (HOW MANY TIMES A USER SAW A LINK TO YOUR SITE IN SEARCH RESULTS)	8.47 million



8.9 million

TOTAL VISITS

927,400

VISITORS

7.31 million

VISITS WERE FROM PEOPLE WHO
VISITED AT LEAST 12 TIMES

▲
5.2%

INCREASE FROM LAST YEAR

MAY 1, 2023

AUGUST 26, 2023

MAY 1, 2024

1ST SATURDAY OF UI ACADEMIC CALENDAR

70,000 visitors

HIGHEST NUMBER IN 2023



TRENDS & STATS: Downtown Iowa City

IOWA CITY DOWNTOWN DISTRICT 2023/2024 MISSION REPORT

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Creative placemaking

Bringing Downtown's public spaces and underutilized areas to life through vibrant and unique experiences that unite people. Supporting the arts, enhancing safety, and recruiting businesses is a round-the-clock effort. Over the past year, these creative placemaking initiatives have been among the most visible and impactful improvements.



- Business Attraction & Retention
 - In the Meantime
 - Retail Build-Out grants
- Pickleball, Shuffleboard & Hopscotch court
- Graduate Iowa City mural by Amos Goldbaum
- Doors of Downtown & BenchMarks public art programs
- CoSign+
- Ali Hval's Doodle Trees
- Support for BT2030 pillars
- Protective Environments lighting & safety program
- Northside Outside: outdoor North Linn St dining space



4 BOLD in 2023/2

Marketing

Increasing investment in the District’s Marketing and Communications has been a priority, both externally and in supporting internal communications with stakeholders. This year, we’ve provided marketing support for Dubuque St businesses, communicated streetscape updates and construction plans, launched the “X Marks the Arts” Cultural and Entertainment District campaign, and continued to grow our social media platforms. Thanks to new media partnerships, new programs have been introduced including the revival and launch of the Downtown Dish podcast.

- Dubuque St Support
- X Marks the Arts
- Gift Guides
- Social Media
- Downtown Dish Podcast



Events

With a robust events calendar of 30+ events in the past year, the Iowa City Downtown District consistently works to welcome & draw, offering a diverse array of activations in collaboration with Downtown businesses. Whether micro events or large-scale gatherings with over 40,000 attendees, they work collaboratively with businesses to curate unique experiences and generate heightened interest in Downtown Iowa City.



- First Round
- Workshops
- Gallery Walk
- Shop Crawls
- Top Chef
- Farm to Street
- Block Party
- Taste of Iowa City
- Holidays
- Northside Oktoberfest
- Sidewalk Sales
- Puttin Around





Heavy investment in clean & safe

Property owners have continually voiced the demand for enhanced cleaning services, especially in areas with heavy 24/7 foot traffic. The most significant step towards revamping Downtown cleaning efforts thus far will commence this year, as the ICDD and the City of Iowa City collaborate with Block by Block to introduce a new cleaning and hospitality system for the Central Business District and Downtown parking facilities. The forthcoming Downtown Iowa City Ambassadors program will introduce various new services and expand cleaning operations to run for 16 hours a day.



Focus on Culture and Entertainment District

Following the successful launch of the X Marks the Arts marketing campaign, the Iowa City Downtown District is gearing up for even more exciting developments. Building upon the momentum generated by the campaign, the District will roll out a series of new videos and content to further engage the community and promote the vibrant cultural scene.

Conduct key advocacy work

Better Together 2030 over the last year has made notable strides in advancing regional initiatives on a well-connected mobile region, as outlined in Pillar Three of their work, which underscores the importance of county-wide transportation accessibility. Expect the ICDD to be a key partner actively advocating for Downtown Iowa City's inclusion as a central component in their proposed Pop-Up Metro train options via the CRANDIC rail.

Continued retail recruitment & support

With a steadfast commitment to Downtown's retail core, in retail attraction and retention efforts, plans are in place to expand the range of retail initiatives. Guided by the principles established in the Downtown Retail Strategy, significant investments are earmarked for the coming year. These investments will be directed towards various methods, including retail build-out grants, continuing delivery services, enhancing the Local Rewards program, and launching a pioneering New Retail Mentorship curriculum.

Enhanced nightlife placemaking

In 2024, the Iowa City Downtown District will receive an ARPA grant from the City of Iowa City to bolster placemaking efforts. With these one-time funds, we aim to enhance nightlife experiences and safety by addressing crucial alleyways with unique and dynamic public art lighting. The areas selected include all of the alley entrances into the pedestrian mall where the enhancements intend to improve safety and accessibility while creating an immersive and visually stimulating addition to the area.

Future planning

As we approach the renewal of the Self-Supported Municipal Improvement District (SSMID) in 2026, the ICDD will work this year to undertake a comprehensive review and update our strategic plan. This strategic planning process will serve as the cornerstone for guiding the organization's efforts and investments over the next decade and beyond. The updated strategic plan will assess Downtown Iowa City's current landscape, and opportunities for the SSMID's future by identifying emerging trends, challenges, and opportunities that will shape the future.



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2023
2024