

Mission Report





Dear Downtown Stakeholders.

As we reflect on the past year, 2024/2025, we are proud to share a snapshot of what has been a period of tremendous growth, transition, and momentum for the Iowa City Downtown District.

This year, we successfully introduced one of our most significant new direct service lines for our membership: the **Downtown lowa City Ambassadors**. Their presence has made a marked difference in the vibrancy and welcoming nature of our district. At the same time, our focused advocacy efforts led to real wins, where collaboration and consistent communication helped bring meaningful change for our businesses and community.

There is an undeniable energy in the air with the completion of the Dubuque Street streetscape-a longawaited and transformational investment in one of our major corridors. We are equally excited about the upcoming development of the 21 S Linn Street building, a project that sets the stage for a key downtown corner to evolve with a design that embraces many ICDD priorities and will further activate and enhance our downtown core.

Much of this year was also dedicated to laying the groundwork for the newly adopted ICDD 2025-2031 Strategic Plan, a forward-thinking document that charts our course for the next five years and beyond. Through this work, we are now poised to begin the renewal of the Self-Supported Municipal Improvement **District (SSMID)** for the next decade—a foundational tool that enables our continued progress. We are ready to launch this renewal with bold ideas and clear direction.

We would be remiss not to acknowledge the challenges we've navigated and areas of current uncertainty: significant shifts in the real estate market, slower development cycles, and broader economic uncertainties. Yet through it all, the strength and resilience of our downtown stakeholders have remained unwavering.

As we look to the future, we are confident and optimistic. We are ready to expand, evolve, and embrace what lies ahead. With a strong vision and the collective power of this community, we know the next decade will be one of opportunity, innovation, and continued progress.

With appreciation,

Betsy Potter Executive Director, Iowa City Downtown District

Wendy Zimmermann President, Iowa City Downtown District

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS:

MidWestOne Bank

Hills Bank

GreenState Credit Union

THANK YOU TO OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

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

David Kieft, University of Iowa Nina Lohman, Brink Literary Magazing Kevin Felker, Prairie Kitchen Store Josh Immerfall, Donnelly's Pub, Giddy Up, Camp Scout's Honor Jamie Skinner, Molly's Cupcakes Jeet Saini, Om Gifts Allison Hoflen, Graduate Hotels Bethany Young, Iowa Artisans Gallery Sophie Donta, OPN Architects Kris Mondanaro, Joseph's Steakhouse, Bread Garder **ReUnion Brewery** Diego Lasansky, Lasansky Gallery Macy Krall, 223 Baby Co.

EX OFFICIO

Rachel Kilburg Varley, City of Iowa City Cady Gerlach. Better Together 2030/ Greater Iowa City Inc. Monica Nieves Hirsch, Think Iowa City Kylie Buddin, Summer of the Arts Jennifer Miller, University of Iowa Downtown Health Care Ava Martinez, USG 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

FLYCID Chase Bank Graduate Iowa City University of Iowa Harm Reduction Coalition iBev Hilton Garden Inr Pagliai's Pizza Performance Foodservice Lasanky Gallery & Studio MetroNet Phelan Tucker Law LLF RDG Planning & Design Thompson & Co Salon Parlo Lionheart Early Learning Cente Iowa Speedway

The Learning Grove Academy McGrath Toyota of Iowa City The Tuesday Agency ImOn Communication Phoebe Martin, Realtor, Blank & McCune Heather Bright, Realtor, Lepic Kreuger **Riverside Resort & Casino** New Pioneer Co-op **OPN** Architects Tru Art Color Graphics and Bankers Advertising Company **Raising Cane's**

THANK YOU TO OUR STAFF:

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

TRENDS & STATS VISITATION DATA

May 3, 2024–May 3, 2025

DATA COLLECTED BY PLACER.A

9.5 M TOTAL VISITS FROM

1.2 M **VISITORS, RESIDENTS OF THE DISTRICT, AND EMPLOYEES** WITHIN THE DISTRICT

> 3.3% **INCREASE FROM THE**

PREVIOUS PERIOD

FACEBOOK REACH	609,737
INSTAGRAM REACH	216,909
WEBSITE VIEWS	453,000
IMPRESSIONS (How Many Times A User	14.6 M

SAW A LINK TO OUR SITE 4.0 M IN SEARCH RESULTS)

State of Downtown

6.5 M **VISITS WERE FROM PEOPLE**

WHO VISITED AT LEAST

13 TIMES

SEPTEMBER 7, 2024 HAD THE HIGHEST NUMBER OF VISITORS IN THE LAST YEAR, WITH

84,320 visits

TO THE DOWNTOWN DISTRICT -HIGHER THAN ANY OTHER HOME FOOTBALL GAME WEEKEND



\$128,709

WORTH OF DOWNTOWN GIFT CARDS WERE SOLD IN 2024, A **68% RATE OF REDEMPTION**



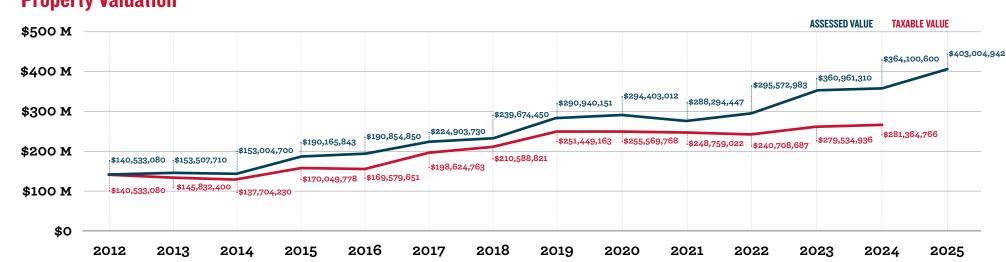
100 **BIOHAZARD CLEAN UPS**

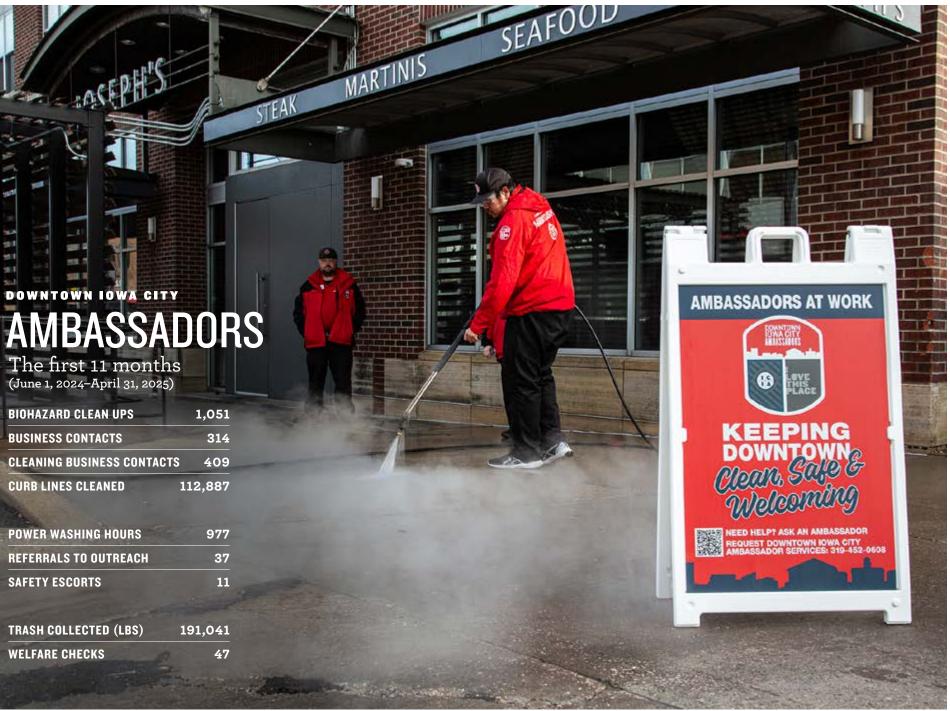
BUSINESS CONTACTS CURB LINES CLEANED

POWER WASHING HOURS REFERRALS TO OUTREACH SAFETY ESCORTS

TRASH COLLECTED (LBS) **WELFARE CHECKS**

Property Valuation





Placemaking & Place Management

Having developed an established program for creative placemaking initiatives, many activations this year are now seasonal traditions, each seeing increases in investment and engagement. Our largest and most transformative effort was a pivot to Place Management for the Central Business District and parking facilities through a new collaboration between ICDD and the City of Iowa City, launching the Downtown Ambassador Clean & Safe Program. The focus on public space activation, stewarding a clean and hospitable downtown, and providing unique experiences through the District has become a key service and visible workload of the organization.



Marketing & Communications

operating for over 20 years.



- CREOS Los Trompos Installation
- Business Attraction & Retention programs: CoSign+, Property Evaluation
- Pickleball, Shuffleboard & Hopscotch Court
- Ian Hubert Mural
- BenchMarks Public Art Program
- Winter Lighting
- Protective Environments Lighting & Safety Program
- Northside Outside: Outdoor N Linn St Dining Space











Providing key support and engaging in new ways to communicate downtown's authentic attributes has been a driving force behind our marketing and communications agenda. This year, we invested heavily in strategic campaigns designed to support local businesses. These multi-faceted efforts included targeted outreach and marketing support for those directly impacted by the Dubuque Street construction project, the launch of LocateDowntownlowaCity. com-a new economic development website created in collaboration with the City of Iowa City to attract prospective businesses-and the designation of May as Legacy Business Month, celebrating downtown businesses that have been





- Dubugue St Construction **Business Support**
- Launched Locatedowntowniowacity com
- X Marks the Arts: Free Week
- Legacy Business Month
- Retail Data Report
- Downtown Dish Podcast
- Social Media Campaigns

WILSUPPLIES

Events

Over the past year, there has been an expansion to the lineup of high-quality, traffic-driving events, strengthening both beloved annual traditions like Farm to Street, Top Chef, etc., with exciting new additions like Scoop the Loop, 'Tis the Season Kickoff, and X Marks the Arts: Free Week. The jam-packed calendar now includes over 40 signature events designed to provide traffic-driving experiences to downtown businesses. From the intimate activations of Literary Pub Crawl to large-scale gatherings drawing tens of thousands at the summer Block Party, these events continue to enhance downtown's vibrancy by providing meaningful connections between businesses and visitors.



■ First Round — Monthly community

- happy hour
- Cookie Crawl
- Gallery Walk
- Seasonal Shop Crawls
- Free Week
- Top Chef: Downtown
- Scoop the Loop
- Farm to Street
- Downtown Block Party
- Taste of Iowa City
- Holidays
- Northside Oktoberfest
- Sidewalk Sales











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Business/Property metrics & data

- Retail mix Space utilization
- Business succession
- High Impact properties

and an expanded boundary.







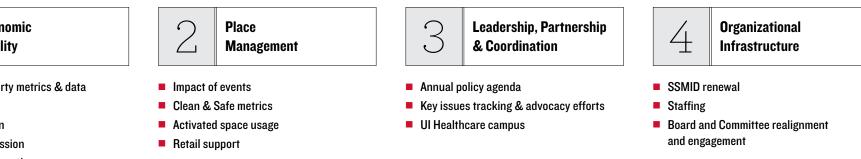
Embrace Strategic Priorities

The ICDD adopted a new Strategic Plan this year, outlining the organization's 4 strategic priorities for disproportionate emphasis over the next five years: Economic Vitality, Place Management, Leadership Partnership & Coordination, and Organizational Infrastructure.

With the new Strategic Plan now adopted, the work begins! The ICDD board, staff, and committees will develop milestones to monitor implementation of the plan and begin the first-year action steps and high-level metrics for each strategic priority.



See the full 2025-2031 lowa City Downtown District **Strategic Plan**



SSMID Renewal & Expansion

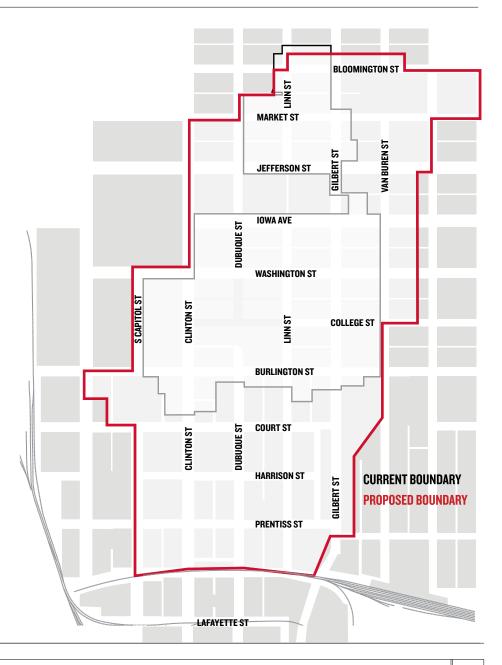
The current term of the Self-Supported Municipal Improvement District (SSMID), the primary revenue source of the Iowa City Downtown District, is set to expire in 2026. The ICDD Board of Directors and staff are working toward a major petition drive to support a renewed IO-year term

Over the 13 year history of the ICDD, having built a strong, recognizable brand, launched dynamic marketing campaigns, hosted hundreds of traffic driving events, built business support systems, implemented a comprehensive cleaning and hospitality program, and becoming a major advocacy voice for downtown priorities-these accomplishments have laid the foundation for continued impact and innovation in the years ahead. The 2025-203I Strategic Plan established a framework for expanding our work-both in geographic growth of the assessment district and depth of services to the greater downtown community and its many diverse stakeholders.



Property owners: Learn more about the 2026-2036 SSMID renewal, and sign your petition today.









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