

Riverside Downtown Parking and Business Improvement Area

Annual Renewal Report for the year January 1 to December 31, 2022

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Good Times Await

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Background

The Riverside Downtown Association (later Riverside Downtown Partnership - RDP) was formed in 1981 by downtown businesses and stakeholders to advocate on important downtown issues.

The Riverside Downtown Parking and Business Improvement Area, or Downtown BID, was established in 1986 as a vehicle to improve downtown.

RDP was charged with the responsibility for the Downtown BID and identified six areas in which to focus its efforts;

Promotion of business activities Security

Public events Music in public places
Beautification Parking activities

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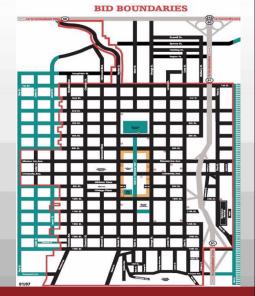


Boundaries

The initial boundaries were the Tequesquite Arroyo on the South, First Street on the North, the 91 Freeway on the east and generally the west side of Brockton Avenue on the West.

Since then, the boundaries have extended to include the Marketplace area and both sides of Market Street from 1st to the 60 Freeway.





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Benefits Provided by the BID

Benefits in a business-license based BID are based on the goals of the organization and what can be provided financially. They can be direct such as advertising or security, or indirect such as advocacy, events to bring visitors, or improving the downtown physical environment. They can also be intangible such as making downtown more attractive to work and live in.

This differs from a property-based improvement district where benefits are based on a formula tied directly to an assessment on property footage or value and incorporated within a management plan.

RDP as the Downtown BID manager provides benefits in its six areas of focus; promotion of business activities, security, public events, music in public places, beautification, and parking activities. It also provides other benefits as circumstances arise. The following illustrates deliverables of these benefits.

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Promotion of Business Activities



Direct benefit – RDP promotes downtown, downtown businesses, and downtown attractions and offerings through print media, electronic media, and other communications and marketing methods. Marketing includes ads, website, Facebook and Instagram pages plus Constant Contact event updates. RDP has 4,000 followers and 3,400 likes on Facebook and 4,500 followers on Instagram.

Direct benefit – RDP produces a monthly newsletter to communicate items of interest and importance, and to help build business capacity. The print edition goes to 900+ businesses and individuals while the online edition can be viewed by anyone.





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Promotion of Business Activities

Direct benefit – RDP produces a Pocket and Dining Guide that lists all downtown shops and most services, and information on downtown restaurants by category. The guide is provided to businesses, hotels, and other locations and can also be downloaded from the website. The Downtown Riverside Historic Walking Guide is a companion piece.



Direct benefit –RDP sends out a welcome package to all new businesses and announces them in the BID bulletin. The welcome package includes copies of all printed materials including the organization's annual calendar, "What's Up with RDP", and its Annual Report.



Direct benefit – RDP offers and co-promotes workshops and seminars of interest and information to businesses. Past workshops/seminars include business development and marketing as well as security situations such as active shooter.



RDP also works with other organizations such as the City, Riverside Convention and Visitors Bureau, and arts and cultural groups to promote downtown businesses.

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Security

Direct benefit – RDP Ambassadors patrol the downtown BID area from 9 am to 5 pm Monday to Saturday. They assist with moving transients along and other problems encountered by downtown businesses, and assist both businesses and visitors as needed.

Direct benefit – Recognizing the need for extra security during the pandemic, RDP funded additional external safety patrols. RDP spent \$168,337 on such patrols during the fiscal year that ended June 30, 2021, and allocated an additional \$67,160 for the remainder of calendar 2021. Continuing the external patrols in 2022 will be dependent on funding.

Direct benefit – Under a contract funded by the City, RDP has sub-contracted Multi-Housing District Patrol to patrol City parking garages downtown Thursday to Sunday from 8:30 pm to 5:30 am.

Indirect benefit – RDP monitors security issues through a committee, distributes updates, and holds workshops as necessary.



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Beautification

Indirect benefit – RDP has funded outdoor murals, assisted in repairing a historic pergola, and purchased cleaning equipment for the City to use.

Recently RDP removed Ficus trees that were damaging sidewalks and replaced them with Goldenrain trees. RDP also improved the three alleys between Main and Orange from Mission Inn to 10th with new lighting and public art.

The alley adjacent to The Mark will be considered for improvement with lighting and public art in 2022.



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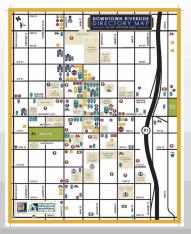
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RIVERSIDE DOWNTOWN PARTNERSHIP

Parking Activities

Direct benefit - To assist visitors in navigating downtown, RDP partners with the City on a downtown directory map available online and updated periodically.

Indirect benefit – RDP advocates on issues such as the potential loss of 325 parking spaces from the downtown parking inventory by the sale of garages 1 and 2, and on appropriate actions and parking rates for a clean and safe environment in parking garages, lots, and metered street parking downtown.



DOWNTOWN is CALLING



Responding to Emerging Needs

The needs of businesses in the Downtown BID can change as downtown changes, with certain sectors becoming more or less prominent. Or they can emerge in response to environmental changes such as the COVID-19 and variant pandemic. The RDP Board is reflective of downtown businesses and sectors and along with staff, identifies and responds to those emerging needs. In addition, businesses contact RDP directly with concerns, issues, and specific requests that evolve into goals and ultimately benefits.

For example, RDP redirected its resources and dipped deep into its reserve funds to make business and patron security a top priority during the pandemic. This was driven by concerns from businesses to RDP staff and Board about increasing issues caused by transients, particularly in the flex dining spaces in the Downtown Entertainment District and in business properties within the broader BID area.

With COVID mask restriction in place, RDP identified a need for disposable masks, and thanks to the County providing a source, was able to supply businesses with disposable masks as needed.



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Vision, Mission, and Goals

To achieve the *current* vision of Downtown Riverside as a regional destination for business and service industries that is recognized for its quality of cultural life and urban living opportunities, RDP promotes, represents, and manages a supportive environment.

RDP's current goals are to promote downtown Riverside as a destination, enhance RDP's influence and activities with downtown stakeholders, and promote Riverside as a regional economic, cultural, and residential center. Progress is tracked by effectiveness of advertising, event attendance, awareness of downtown Riverside, name recognition of RDP, and partnerships with other downtown stakeholders.

With respect to *future* goals, RDP is in the process of preparing a strategic plan to cover 2022 through 2026. RDP's assessment of and response to current and emerging needs will be reflected in that plan.





Looking Forward

RDP's strategic planning process for 2022 to 2026 has started. It is expected to be completed by the end of 2021 with implementation starting January 2022.

One of the first components of the process was a survey of Board members and committee members. Some initial findings include RDP increasing its advocacy efforts and outreach to businesses, adding new 'clean and safe' efforts, and providing more promotion of downtown businesses and attractions.

Adding new clean and safe programs echoed responses from businesses in a previous survey on security issues. Providing those types of programs will require RDP to find new sources of funding. That will be a key component of the 2022 to 2026 Strategic Plan, and may require a new organizational model such as a Community Benefit District (CBD), or public-private partnership with property owners to supplement the basic level of services provided by the City.



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RIVERSIDE

Estimated cost of 2022 Activities

BID Promotion of Business Activities	\$180,000
BID Security	\$142,000
BID Public Events	\$18,500
BID Music in Public Places	\$13,500
BID Beautification	\$9,500
BID Parking	\$4,500

Total BID Levy allocation = \$368,000

The RDP Board approved a budget for the fiscal year of July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022 that included an operational deficit of \$67,160 to cover external security patrols during calendar 2021. It is anticipated that there will be an operational deficit carried over as a result.

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Summary

RDP is pleased to be the manager of the Downtown BID and provide the benefits as outlined in the areas of promotion of business activities, security, public events and music in public places, beautification, and parking activities. As indicated, the benefits were achieved by specific deliverables in each area.

RDP responded to the need emerging during the pandemic by providing additional external security patrols funded though reserve funds. During the comeback, RDP is responding by increased promotion through advertising and social media, and resuming public events. However RDP is still committed to security and will provide additional security as funding becomes available.

RDP will continue to communicate with business to listen to their issues and concerns, and advocate on their behalf. This is essential to RDP responding to their needs and incorporating them in our goals, programs, and activities. RDP will provide ongoing reports to its stakeholders on its progress.



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Thank you for your support!

