

Downtown Improvement District Summary

DOWNTOWN OLYMPIA

DID

DOWNTOWN IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

Downtown Olympia is a true gem, offering community members and visitors alike the opportunity to have positive experiences that are unique and authentic to our downtown. As Downtown Olympia continues to grow and evolve, significant resources are necessary to support a vibrant urban environment that people are excited to live in, work in, and visit.

Purpose of the DID

The Downtown Improvement District (DID) is a PROPOSED private sector funding mechanism designed to help support the downtown environment with services financed by a self-imposed assessment paid by downtown property owners, requiring approval of the Olympia City Council. These services would be provided exclusively within the district, and are an enhancement to – rather than a replacement of – those already provided by the City.

DID's are common tool. There are over 1,000 DID's across North America, many concentrated in downtown areas. Virtually every other urban area in the West is served by a DID charged with managing and marketing downtown. In Washington, there are DID's in Seattle, Tacoma, Everett, Yakima, and Spokane. They are also common in state capitals such as Sacramento, Boise, and Madison, to name a few.

DID Administration

The DID would be administered by an existing non-profit, the Olympia Downtown Alliance. This partnership would allow the DID to leverage staffing, services, and programming already managed by the Alliance.

PROPOSED BUDGET

Clean & Safe	\$425,000
Assisting Small Businesses	\$45,000
Management	\$90,000
TOTAL	\$560,000

Additional Questions?

Contact Todd Cutts, Executive Director,
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DID Services

The DID would provide services as determined by its board of directors (made up of property owners and business operators with the DID). The board could adjust services on an annual basis as needs and priorities change. Initial services would fall within the following two main categories:

- **Beautification & Hospitality Services**

- ☐ Concentrating on downtown's streetscape, the DID would complement existing City maintenance efforts, providing services that may include: comprehensive sidewalk sweeping, scrubbing, and power washing; litter and graffiti removal; and landscaping.

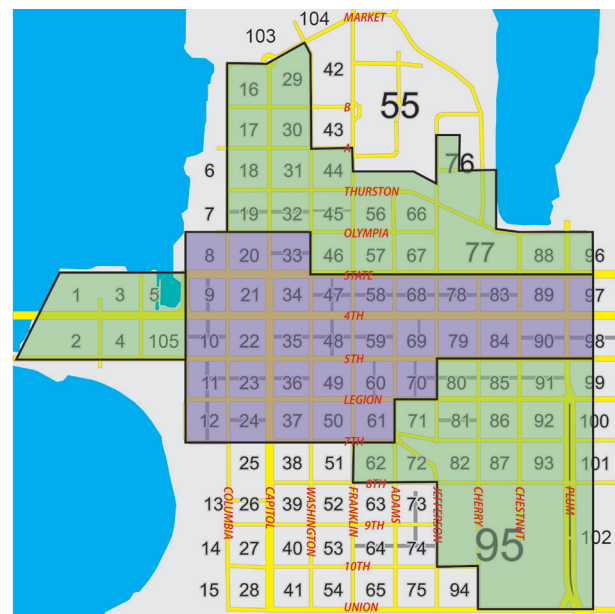
- ☐ Focusing on the downtown experience, an ambassador-style program would have the ability to offer visitor's information and insights, while also providing street dependent individuals outreach and connection to local service providers.

- **Assisting Small Business**

- ☐ The DID would provide resources to assist in the success of small businesses downtown. Programming could include enhanced marketing efforts, new and expanded special events, small business training, and other targeted special projects.

DID Boundaries

Note: Properties in the core (purple) would receive higher service levels and thereby pay a higher assessment than those in the non-core (green).



Small Business FAQ

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Cost

Will my property owner pass the assessment cost through in my lease? The first thing to do is check your lease agreement. There are two types of leases, triple net (NNN) and gross. This expense would likely be passed through if you have a triple net lease, but not a gross lease.

I have a triple net lease, how will the DID impact my cost of doing business? The projected DID assessment rates are comparable to the existing PBIA rates for small retail businesses in a storefront (see below). Many larger corporate buildings and tenants (i.e. banks, office buildings) will pay substantially more in the DID. If the DID assessment replaces the PBIA, then the financial impact should be minimal to small business. In some cases, the DID assessment

would be less than the existing PBIA rate. It is important to note that the PBIA rates have not changed for more than a decade, and if the PBIA remains in place, rate increases are being contemplated.

As a result of the DID, would property values, and hence lease rates, rise? It is possible that property values will rise if the effort helps support and clean, safe, and comfortable downtown. However, increased property values don't necessarily translate to higher lease rates. Vacant spaces don't generate revenue for property owners. Typically, property owners are more concerned about having occupied space than impacts of property values. If a higher volume of the community visits downtown, increased sales should conceivably outpace an increase in lease rates.

Relationship to the PBIA

How is this different than my PBIA (Parking & Business Improvement Area) assessment?

The PBIA assessment is placed directly on business owners. The proposed DID assessment is placed on property owners. Also, the budget for the PBIA is approximately \$100,000 per year. The DID proposed budget is \$560,000 per year.

If the DID is put in place, what will happen to the existing PBIA?

This has yet to be decided.

There are three likely scenarios:

- 1) PBIA stays in place and DID is not implemented;
- 2) DID is implemented and PBIA is disbanded; or
- 3) PBIA stays in place and DID is implemented (creating two assessment districts downtown). While the contemporary model for downtown assessments is property based, there are rare examples of downtowns with both assessments in place.

Impacts to Small Businesses*

Business Type	Building Square Footage	Tenant Square Footage	Building Assessment	DID Business Expense	Existing PBIA Expense
Art Gallery/Workspace	9,180	675	\$2,159.00	\$154.00	\$200.00
Café	900	900	\$217.00	\$217.00	\$750.00
Specialty Retail	20,594	1,500	\$3,112.00	\$226.00	\$200.00
Specialty Retail	4,800	800	\$1,550.00	\$258.00	\$200.00
Arts Gallery	2,328	1,128	\$774.00	\$374.00	\$250.00
Boutique	19,000	3,000	\$3,015.00	\$476.00	\$500.00
Restaurant	2,235	2,235	\$479.00	\$479.00	\$600.00
Diner	3,300	3,300	\$510.00	\$510.00	\$750.00
Boutique	6,296	3,148	\$1,115.00	\$557.00	\$500.00
Restaurant	7,125	2,325	\$1,982.00	\$646.00	\$400.00
Specialty Retail	26,965	4,000	\$4,566.00	\$676.00	\$750.00
Bank	10,122	10,122	\$3,130.00	\$3,130.00	\$600.00

**These examples are actual downtown businesses. The table assumes triple net lease structures and tenant square footages have not been confirmed.*

Gentrification Concerns

Will the DID lead to gentrification of Downtown Olympia? Many factors have led to gentrification in other downtowns. The primary goal of the DID is to help support a welcoming environment in Downtown Olympia that our community will feel comfortable in, and visit in greater numbers. Creating programs that help accomplish this goal is not gentrification.

Outcomes

I'm concerned the goal or natural outcome of the DID would be more corporate enterprise. Is that the kind of business community we want downtown? No, this is not the goal. The goal is to create a cleaner, safer and more welcoming environment for everyone downtown. This should help small businesses most if our local market returns in increasing numbers to downtown to shop, dine, and recreate.

Governance & Accountability

How can I be confident that the needs of our small businesses are being taken into account in the DID? In building the proposed DID budget, both businesses and property owners were surveyed about their needs. Consistent with feedback from downtown stakeholders historically, safety and cleanliness ranked at the top of the list. Accordingly, 75% of the DID budget is programmed for safety and cleanliness programs. The budget also considers funding for small business assistance, special projects, promotions & special events.

If property owners representing 60% of the assessment sign a petition in support of the district, a vote of the Council is required to implement. That puts more power with those who have wealth and holdings in downtown. The larger property owners will have more influence in the petition that creates the district, but once the district is created, the DID board will be one-member one-vote, regardless of holdings. The DID plan provides for a balanced DID board including both property owners and small businesses.

I'm concerned that we're privatizing the assessment. Having a public entity (City) manage the assessment rather than a non-profit (Downtown Alliance) is more democratic.

The assessment needs to be accountable to who pays. The DID would be funded by property owners, thus the need for a new governance structure. Importantly the new DID board would include a mix of both property and business owners, plus city representatives.

Additional Questions?

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