



**Work Session Meeting Agenda
2 Park Drive South, Great Falls, MT
Gibson Room, Civic Center
February 17, 2026
5:30 PM**

The agenda packet material is available on the City's website: <https://greatfallsmt.gov/AgendaCenter>. The Public may view and listen to the meeting on government access channel City-190, cable channel 190; or online at <https://greatfallsmt.gov/344/Live-Meetings>.

Public participation is welcome in the following ways:

- Attend in person.
- Provide public comments in writing by 12:00 PM the day of the meeting: Mail to City Clerk, PO Box 5021, Great Falls, MT 59403, or via email to: commission@greatfallsmt.net. Include the agenda item or agenda item number in the subject line, and include the name of the commenter and either an address or whether the commenter is a city resident. Written communication received by that time will be shared with the City Commission and appropriate City staff for consideration during the agenda item, and, will be so noted in the official record of the meeting.

CALL TO ORDER

PUBLIC COMMENT

(Public comment on agenda items or any matter that is within the jurisdiction of the City Commission. Please keep your remarks to a maximum of five (5) minutes. Speak into the microphone, and state your name and either your address or whether you are a city resident for the record.)

WORK SESSION ITEMS

1. Annual Update from the BID - presented by Kellie Pierce (estimated 30 minutes)
2. Park and Recreation Department Update - Presented by Jessica Compton. (estimated 30 minutes)

DISCUSSION POTENTIAL UPCOMING WORK SESSION TOPICS

ADJOURNMENT

UPCOMING MEETING SCHEDULE

City Commission Work Session - Tuesday March 3, 2026 5:30 p.m.

City Commission Meeting - Tuesday March 3, 2026 7:00 p.m.



Downtown Development Partnership of Great Falls, Inc.

318 Central Avenue, Great Falls, MT 59401

Kellie Pierce – DDP Board Chair
Telephone: 406-727-5430
Email: kellie@downtowngreatfalls.net

2025 WAS ANOTHER GREAT YEAR FOR DOWNTOWN GREAT FALLS

Great Falls, Montana - As a certified member of the Montana Main Street Program, and a nationally accredited Main Street America member, the Downtown Development Partnership (DDP) collects data and submits quarterly Reinvestment Reports for Downtown Great Falls (utilizing the Downtown Master Plan boundaries that include 5th Avenue N to 5th Avenue S, west of 15th Street to the river). The data collected includes several downtown indicators including volunteer hours, impacts of events hosted, dollars invested in the rehabilitation/renovation of downtown buildings and the number of new businesses and associated jobs created. These statistics help demonstrate how the downtown area is performing.

In 2025 there were over 26,895 volunteer hours, over \$7.9 million invested in renovating/rehabilitating downtown buildings, \$30K in public investment, and 34 new businesses chose to locate downtown which created approximately 100 new jobs. The investment of over \$7.9M in renovation/rehabilitation of downtown buildings shows consistent growth happening, and our community's dedication to making downtown a thriving place to be. In 2025, there were 2 major public projects that were completed. The first was the replacement of an old stormwater drainage system on 1st Ave South the started in July and finished in late October. This had a major impact on the businesses and means of transportation downtown, but through consistent communication and partnerships the businesses saw an uptick in business and made it through construction with little disruption. The other project was an update to the streetscape on the 700 block of 7th Ave South in front of the O'Haire Inn and Sip 'n Dip Lounge, greatly improving the sidewalks and aesthetics of that block to match the surrounding area. The O'Haire also completed a "retro-vation" project, bringing the building back to it's iconic 1970's vibe!

There is no doubt about it, volunteers make Downtown Great Falls tick. Downtown volunteers come from all walks of life and have a wide array of interests – volunteers may

choose to donate their time with groups like the Downtown Chicks, The Mansfield Center of the Performing Arts or the Great Fall Police Department while others choose to help on special events like the Night Markets, Craft Beer Week or Downtown Summer Jam events. It says a lot about a community when individuals donate 26,895 hours of their time and energy to groups, organizations, events and activities that they believe in. If downtown organizations and businesses had to compensate volunteers in real dollars, in 2025 it would have translated to approximately \$935,677 (based on the current federal rate of volunteer time of \$34.79 per hour). It is evident that volunteers provide a significant investment to Downtown Great Falls.

The DDP provides a central focus for downtown development, encourages collaboration and cooperation between downtown organizations and is a champion for Downtown Great Falls. The DDP works in conjunction with the City of Great Falls, the Great Falls Business Improvement District, the Downtown Great Falls Association, Neighborhood Council #7, NeighborWorks, Great Falls Development Authority, Cascade County, Great Falls Public School District, City-County Historic Preservation, Parking Commission and the Great Falls Area Chamber of Commerce. For more information about what's been happening downtown, contact the Downtown office at 318 Central Avenue 727-5430 or 453-6151.

(end)

Great Falls Business Improvement District

Who we are and what we do!



1

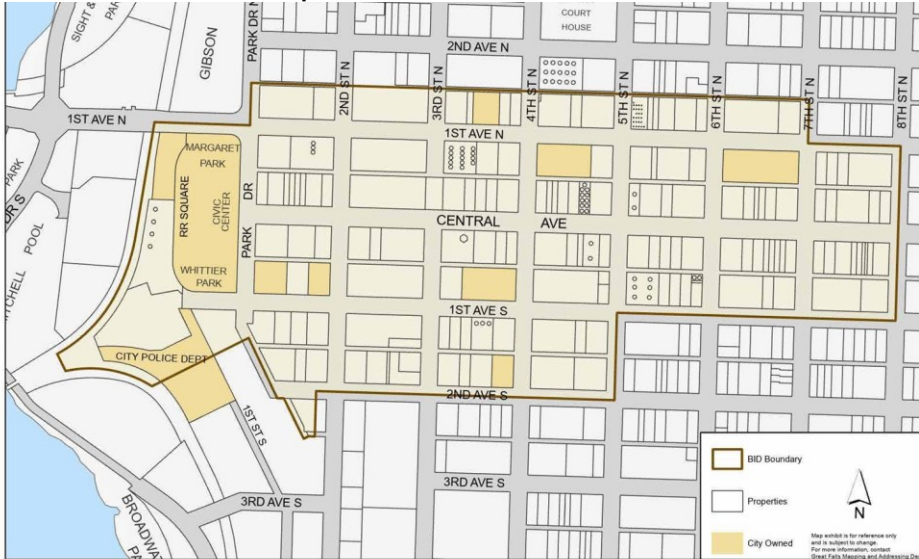
Mission & Vision

The mission of the Great Falls Business Improvement District is to represent the unique interests of the businesses and property owners located in the district. The goal of the BID is to create an environment that is appealing to shoppers, office workers, residents, tourists, and new businesses and investors. Overall, the BID is responsible for downtown revitalization through economic development, real estate development, short and long range planning, grant program administration, and physical and environmental improvement programs.



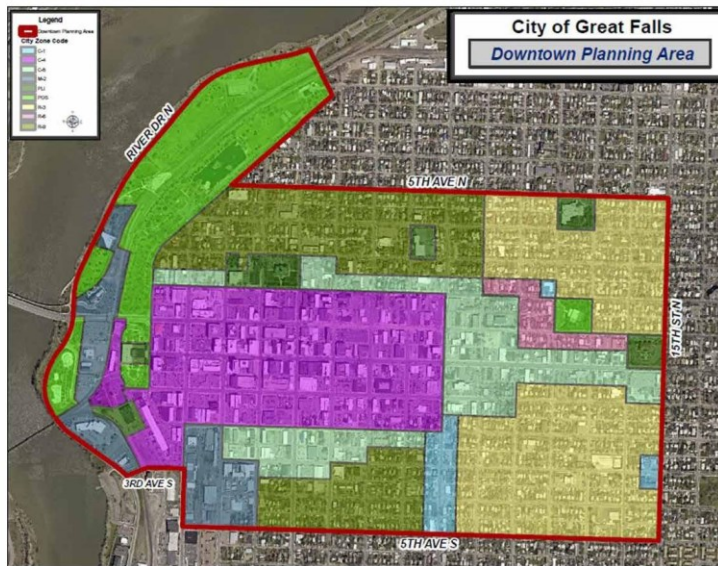
2

Business Improvement District Boundaries



3

Downtown Master Plan Boundaries



4

BID Assessment Formula

The assessment of the BID consists of the following:

- A flat fee of \$200.00 for each lot or parcel without a Land Use Code of 125,
- A flat fee of \$50.00 for each lot or parcel with a designated Land Use Code of 125 which is a residential condominium,
- An assessment of \$.00165 times the market valuation as provided by the Montana Department of Revenue, and
- An assessment of \$.015 times the square footage of the land area.



5

Services the BID offers

- Interior Improvement Grant program
- Business Incentive Grant program (paying 1 months rent for new businesses)
- Public art programs and graffiti removal
- Coins for a Cause
- Bike rack programs
- Boulevard tree program
- Garbage and snow removal
- Holiday Decor and banners
- Flower baskets and sound system management
- Community Resource Ambassador program
- Great Walls Great Falls (ArtsFest MT) - 68 murals with at least 5 more
 - Alley lighting project to create safer spaces and light the murals
- We have assisted with many Streetscape improvements and provided assistance with the stormdrain improvement projects.



6

A few BID projects and initiatives...



7

Growing our boundaries

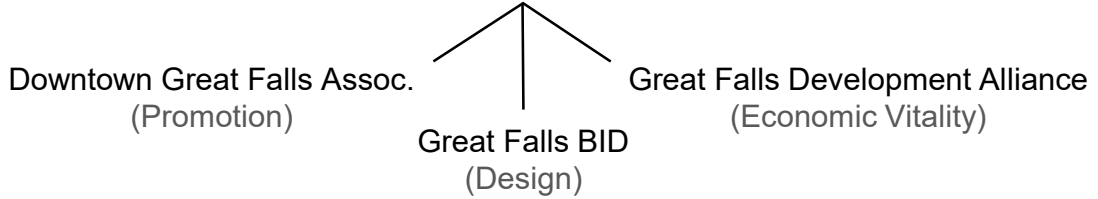
- Original boundaries set in 1989 with the formation of the BID
- Successfully expanded once in 2021 on to the 700 block of Central
- Unsuccessful expansion effort in 2023 to include the 800 block
- Expansion passes if a vote of 60.1% of property owners are in favor, and City Commission approves.

8



Downtown Partnerships

Downtown Development Partnership
(Accredited National Main Street Organization)

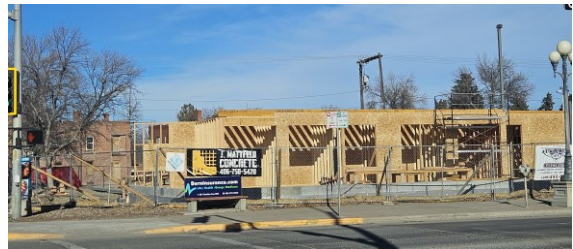


Safety Alliance
 TIF Programs/District
 Parking Commission
 Wayfinding Signage

Downtown Master Plan
 Transformation Strategies
 Revitalization Projects
 ArtsFest Montana/Traffic signal boxes

9

Development projects - GFDA



10

Kellie Pierce
Executive Director - BID/DGFA
406-727-5430
318 Central Ave
www.exploredowntowngf.com





PARKS & TRAILS, FORESTRY & BOULEVARD DISTRICT, S.A.H.B.S., AQUATICS AND RECREATION

Date: 2/17/26 Work Session City Commission

1

ENHANCING COMMUNITY WELL-BEING AND PUBLIC HEALTH

- Department: Improve services, programs, events and facilities to enhance the health and livability of the community.
- S.A.H.B.S. : “We strengthen Great Falls by helping people move, play, and connect – in the pool, on the court, and in the community”.
NEW 2025!



* Free 5k Fun Run Series 2025



* 30 Day Boot Camp Finishers

2

PARKS & TRAILS

Providing safe places for community and visitors to recreate regardless of race, wealth and age

- Park Maintenance District
 - FY 26 Projects
- Continuing the Work
 - Morony Park- ADA Accessible Playground
 - RET Trail Segments
 - Memorials and Donations
 - Trees, Bench's, Swings, Art

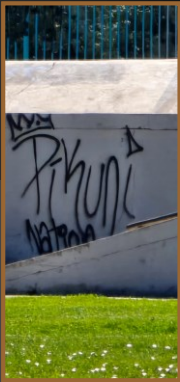


* Sleeping under Central Ave Bridge

- Vandalism
 - Graffiti
 - Stickers
 - Destruction



*Vandalism and Graffiti



3

FORESTRY AND BOULEVARD DISTRICT

Honoring the heritage of Charles Gibson by caring, planting and trimming Great Falls urban forest

- 44TH Annual Tree City USA
- 40K* trees maintained
- Leaf pickup
- Downtown Christmas Tree
- Gibson Roots Revival Completed
 - #50 Trees purchased and replanted* courtesy of community support
- Green Ash Trees
- Dutch Elm Disease
- Pollinator Bio-Blitz
- Planted #108 Trees/ #252 Stumps
 - Firewood
 - Mulch and Wood Chips



*1st in Show



*Pollinator Bio-Blitz Event- NRPA

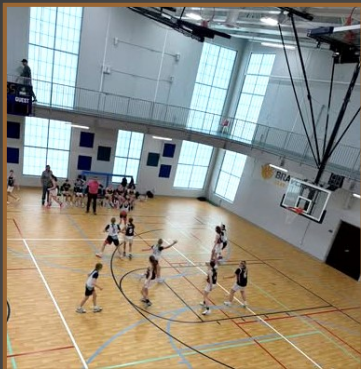
4

SHEELS AIM HIGH BIG SKY



“We strengthen Great Falls by helping people move, play, and connect – in the pool, on the court, and in the community”.

- Reset in Summer 2025
 - Staff Transition
 - Marketing
 - Facility Operations and Culture
 - Scholarship Program
 - Programming
 - Swim Lessons
 - Classes
 - Partners



*Winter Classic Girls



*Unique Programming: Sound Bowl

5

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
Modern consolidated aquatics & recreation facility	Enterprise fund structure with high fixed costs
Only full-scale indoor aquatics venue in region	Operating deficit; reliance on General Fund subsidy
Strong community anchor (schools, university, clubs)	Mechanical & infrastructure instability (boilers, controllers, equipment)
Diverse revenue streams (memberships, rentals, programs)	Limited local pricing elasticity
Cost Recovery implemented for all programs	Staffing constraints limit program growth
Year-round programming capacity	Digital presence still maturing

SWOT Analysis of SAHBS

OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
Membership conversion to long-term local users	Mechanical liability exposure (high intensity aquatic environment)
Corporate, medical, military partnerships	Perception risk if amenities remain offline
Clear cost-recovery policy framework	Utility and chemical cost volatility
Sponsorships / naming rights / foundation support	Economic downturn reducing discretionary spending
Regional draw marketing strategy	Competing free recreation alternatives
Strategic pricing decisions during partial closures	Policy misalignment (break-even vs. access expectations)

6

AQUATICS

Improve public health, safety, and community engagement through water-based recreation

- 2025 Overhaul of the Safety and Operations of Outdoor Pools

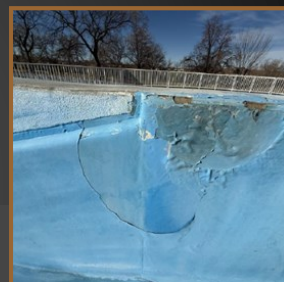
- Daily Audits
- Increased In-service and recuring training
- Standards and expectations of staff and patrons.



*Lifeguard training

- Concerns 2026

- Lazy River/Flow Rider Cost to repair
- Decreased Revenue
- Operational window
- Liner @ each pool
- 30-40 yr equipment



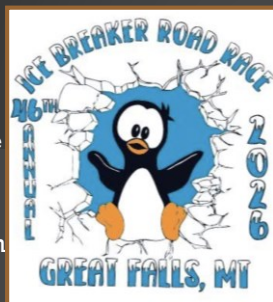
*ECWP Flow Rider

7

RECREATION

Maximize community resources, improve, and expand recreational opportunities, and foster social connections.

- FREE 5K Fun Run Series
- Ice Breaker Road Race
- Egg Hunt
- Triathlon- Returning in 2026
- Luminaria



* Luminaria Decoration



* Egg Hunt 2023

8

FEE STUDY & EFFICIENCY REVIEW

Month 3!

Mini-Poll Results

55% SAHBS not visited/ 63% SAHBS positive asset

81% Satisfied with Parks and Trails- RET Crown Jewel

Biggest Priority: Restrooms upgrade/operational more needed

Next Steps



9

COMMUNITY IMPACT AND FUTURE GOALS



10

CONCLUSION AND VOLUNTEERISM



- Park and Recreation is successful because of community support!
- Adopt-A-Park
- Volunteer at Ice breaker, Egg Hunt, Triathlon
- Report suspicious behaviors and activities in and around your neighborhood and premiere parks

