

# Better Downtown together

**Downtown**  
COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP



**2020  
ANNUAL  
REPORT**



# Welcome to Downtown

Downtown Fargo has a one-of-a-kind culture and universal appeal which motivates the Downtown Community Partnership (DCP) team to ensure as many people as possible experience the true Fargo authentic character. Our goal is to promote Downtown Fargo as an exciting place to live, make lasting memories, work, shop, dine, and of course, invest.

There can be no true progress without focused collaboration, communication and partnerships with city leaders, developers, Police Department, Business Improvement District (BID), property owners, and stakeholders. The DCP surrounds itself, building relationships with all, which in turn strengthens the entire Downtown community as well as highlights the value of the DCP.

Nothing challenges strong relationships and communication more than a worldwide pandemic! This past year, COVID-19 quickly changed our focus from celebration to survival. Harsh economic and social impacts negatively affected everyday life for all. With the combined restrictions on large gatherings, loss of large signature events and travel restrictions, economic impacts continue to be deep and far-reaching. Our small and local Downtown businesses depend on tourism, events, and foot traffic. In March 2020, that all suddenly disappeared with a blink of an eye.

The DCP immediately pivoted, following directives and guidance from Mayor Tim Mahoney, Governor Doug Burgum, and public health officials with one thing in mind: keep our Downtown community safe, keep them informed and educated so they can do what they do best... focus on running their business.

The DCP made significant changes with COVID -19 effects on our community. The DCP coordinated monthly member meetings with city leaders, promoted Downtown amenities, supporting local business campaigns and services while becoming a go-to resource for COVID -19 resources. We adapted our website, newsletters and investor support to become one of the city's most comprehensive resources for COVID-related information and support systems launching fmstrong.com.

When it is safe for business to fully reopen, the DCP and BID will continue to support Downtown Fargo through promotion, advocacy, and direct cleaning and safety services. At the same time, we will continue working toward our overall purpose, which is to promote and expand Downtown as a preferred destination with a strong sense of place filled with vibrant culture, art, and commerce. Ultimately, we strive to be a dynamic force for an unforgettable experience.

*Thank you for being a part of the community!*



President/CEO Downtown Community Partnership

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COVER PHOTO BY DENNIS KRULL





# Our Vision

Our vision is for Downtown to be a thriving, vibrant, innovative, sustainable heart of the region.

## OUR PURPOSE

The purpose of the Downtown Community Partnership (DCP) is to serve our community through Advocacy, People, and Events. DCP is a strong advocate for businesses, residents, and community partners focused on economic growth, vibrancy, and advocacy of Downtown Fargo.

## OUR MISSION

To promote and expand Downtown as a preferred destination with a strong sense of place filled with vibrant culture, art, and commerce. Ultimately, we strive to be a dynamic force for an unforgettable experience.



# Strategic Plan

Vibrant Downtown Fargo is a growing residential neighborhood, home to small and entrepreneurial businesses possessing a collection of locally-owned stores, restaurants, art, and services that rivals that of cities around the country. Thoughtful leadership and key investments have helped Downtown Fargo turn a much-needed corner, teeing up an opportunity to grow and flourish into an ideal community to live, work, and play for all ages to enjoy.

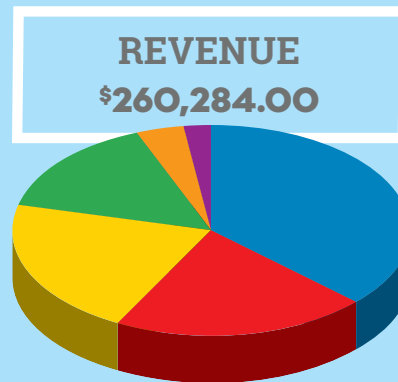
To develop a DCP Strategic Plan, a working plan, hundreds of community members, stakeholders, partners, local businesses, residents, and neighbors all came together to collaborate. In person focus groups of all sizes along with surveys captured a vision for the future of the DCP and what an ideal Downtown Fargo community would look like. Through this process, residents and stakeholders identified key actions for change to help make the vision a reality for the community along with referencing the Downtown Master Plan which was created in 2016.

## OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The DCP is committed to supporting the continued revitalization of Downtown Fargo. Our spirit of enthusiastic collaboration and appetite for advancement actively inform our approach. To advance and strengthen our mission, the DCP advocates and promotes Downtown as a preferred destination by developing strategic priorities to focus the organization’s work for the next three to five years.

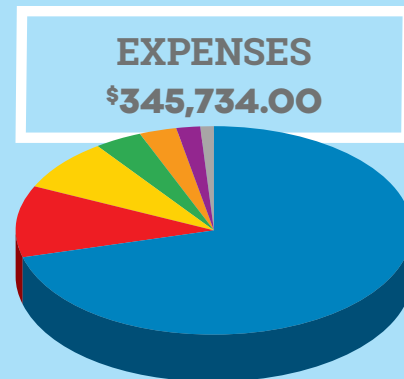


# 2020 Financial Report



Investors .....	37%
Events .....	21%
Membership.....	21%
BID Admin.....	15%
Gift Cards & Other.....	4%
Projects .....	2%

Labor & Benefits .....	71%
Office Expenses.....	11%
Events .....	8%
Gift Cards & Other.....	4%
Marketing.....	3%
Insurance .....	2%
Projects .....	1%



\*Based on preliminary 2020 Ordinary Income and Expenses

## What We Do

The Downtown Community Partnership (DCP) is here to help grow, advocate, and support healthy economic development in our Downtown community. As a 501C (6) nonprofit organization, we have been at the forefront of leading positive change in Downtown Fargo, North Dakota, for the past 50 years.

DCP is an essential organization serving the Downtown community and leading development since 1969. Since that time, it has continued to evolve as a critical organization involved with the city in business development, retention, and overall vibrancy of the Downtown experience with focus on the following five areas:

**Advocacy** – To influence direction, budget, and policy decisions with appropriate governmental entities and stakeholder groups for inclusive growth, development, and workforce development.


**Business Improvement District (BID)** - To ensure Downtown Fargo is clean, safe, and maintained.

**Education and Awareness** – To provide public education and awareness regarding Downtown Fargo, reinforcing the significant experiences and supporting the economic importance of Downtown to the greater metro region.

**Events** - To create signature events that add to the vibrancy of Downtown. We value engagement and believe that it is the key to creating a responsive, proactive, and connected community.

**People** – To grow and sustain value for our members, investors, and community partners. We value integrity and inclusivity, and that people are the core of all we do.

**Communication** - To successfully communicate with all community stakeholders by developing and implementing a comprehensive communications plan.

 In addition, the DCP manages three websites connecting people to information about Downtown: 

[Downtownfargo.com](http://Downtownfargo.com) is the central hub for everything downtown.

[FMStrong.com](http://FMStrong.com) includes links to resources that help support small businesses, restaurants, bars, and nonprofits.

[DowntownFargoBID.com](http://DowntownFargoBID.com) is a quick glimpse into services, stats, and contact information for the BID.



# Gift Cards

The Gift Card program turned 3 years old in December 2020! The DCP continues to offer this program to encourage spending at our local and independent Downtown businesses and keep dollars in the Fargo area. Gift Cards can be purchased at two locations in Fargo as well as on our website [Downtownfargo.com](http://Downtownfargo.com). The Gift Card makes an excellent gift as it can be spent at over 50 locations in Downtown Fargo and can be used towards shopping, eating, and Downtown experiences. We increased our dollar sales by 50% this year thanks to an amazing December and the generosity of many local businesses and individuals.

## 2020 STATS

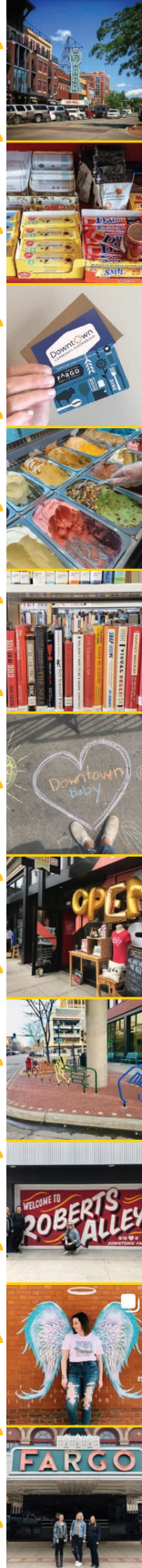
Cards Sold	Card Dollars	Dollars Spent Downtown
<b>1,840</b>	<b>\$86,783</b>	<b>\$25,516</b>

# Social Media

The DCP operates multiple Downtown Fargo social media pages that help us reach the community and visitors from outside of Fargo-Moorhead. Our pages allow us to better connect with the public and gives us a platform to educate about Downtown as well as share news from our members and investors.

## 2020 STATS

 <b>16,441</b>	 <b>13,100</b>
FOLLOWERS	FOLLOWERS
Up 1,657 from 2019	Up 1,700 from 2019



# Signature Events

The cornerstone of the Downtown Community Partnership has been the planning and execution of signature events and other small community events hosted within the Downtown Fargo community.

Signature events add to the vibrancy of Downtown. The DCP values engagement and believes that it is the key to creating a responsive, proactive, and connected community. Events drive traffic and encourage visitors and residents to make new connections in our community while exploring and discovering all of the incredible amenities the heart of the community offers.

The DCP continually strives to improve programming based on the community's needs, interests and survey data. We strive to create opportunities for people to learn, engage, and interact in ways that are positive, memorable, welcoming, and inclusive to all.

Due to the COVID-19 crisis the DCP hosted four in person events but created the opportunity to try new things!

## EXECUTED EVENTS IN 2020

**Coffee & Cocoa Crawl • Walk and Chalk**  
**Frostival Undie Run • Holiday Headquarters**

We look forward to resuming our celebrations and events as soon as it is safe to gather again. Watch for more new and exciting events in 2021.



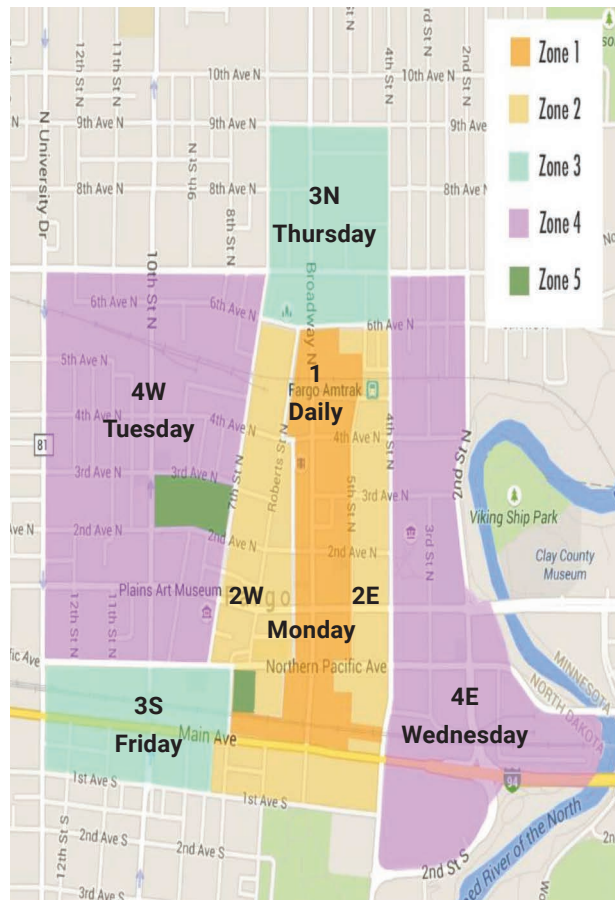


Downtown Fargo Business Improvement District

## Mission and Zones

The current BID structure was established in June 2016 on one simple principle: to improve and enhance the overall attractiveness and appeal of Downtown Fargo.

In order to accomplish this goal, the BID focuses on four key areas: cleaning, safety, maintenance, and hospitality.



The BID is funded through assessments approved by Downtown property owners. Each zone is tiered and receives different levels of service based upon revenue received by way of these assessments.

## Safety and Hospitality

Ordinances Enforced:	<b>274</b>	Motorist Assistance:	<b>17</b>
Panhandling Responses:	<b>51</b>	Hospitality Assistance:	<b>238</b>
Requests for Police, Fire, and Mobile Outreach:	<b>186</b>	Downtown Safety Escorts:	<b>19</b>
Business Contacts:	<b>214</b>		

In 2021, the BID team will increase its on street presence to help support merchant calls, provide resolution in conflictual situations, continue to connect people experiencing homelessness to resources, and assist the general public with a variety of needs and questions.





## Cleaning and Maintenance

Garbage Removed (lbs): **56,347**

Recycled Items (lbs): **4,155**

Blocks of Snow Removed: **289**

Graffiti Removed: **252**

## Note to Patrons

Another year has come and gone and 2020 was definitely a strange one. Between wiping amenities down daily and working more closely with local law enforcement, mobile outreach, and the homeless coalition, it was another productive and rewarding year for the BID.

Your BID staff remains steadfast in delivering the best possible services while continuing our ongoing mission of keeping our Downtown a great place to work, visit, live, and play! As I stated last year, we are fortunate to be a part of it all!

From all of us, thank you so much for your continued support. It's a driving force that motivates us in finding ways to better serve our Downtown community. Knowing that we have a direct and positive impact on our Downtown community is humbling. There isn't another place quite like Downtown Fargo, and we will continue doing our part in keeping this community clean, safe, and promoted.

Cheers!  
Chris Schlepp  
BID Operations Manager

### CONTACT INFORMATION

Ambassador Phone Line:

**701-212-0310**

Mon - Tues Hours:

**7:00am - 4:30pm**

BID Ops Manager:

**701-238-1051**

Wed - Sat Hours:

**7:00am - 10:00pm**



FargoBID



downtownfargobid.com

When you visit Downtown Fargo, admiring the blooming flowers or sparkling lit trees, enjoying an environment that is clean and welcoming, that's a sign the Business Improvement District (BID) has been hard at work. The Downtown Fargo BID ensures that Downtown is clean, engaging, welcoming, and walkable. The team undertakes daily cleaning and landscaping tasks and tends to the myriad needs that occur in a pedestrian-oriented environment – services above and beyond those provided by city government. Through BID's marketing efforts with the DCP, we invite patrons to enjoy the variety of shopping, dining, cultural, and recreational experiences for which our Downtown is renowned.





# Highlights

## ALFRESCO ISLANDS

During the spring of 2020, taking takeout to the streets of Downtown Fargo was an opportunity the DCP recognized for businesses to stay open during the pandemic. Two Alfresco Islands were created and placed strategically, encouraging patrons to take time to sit down and enjoy Downtown instead of taking their food home. With the financial support of Interstate Parking and partnerships with Fargo Parks and Great Northern Bicycle Company we were able to create socially distanced “islands” to encourage people to continue eating out Downtown. These two islands utilized on street parking spaces along with a map created for the community to find a listing of additional amenities Downtown such as parks and parklets.

## FM STRONG

During the initial days of COVID-19 the storm of overwhelming information and guidelines was hitting our community hard! Businesses of all sizes were challenged on where to find all of the latest and relevant information all in one spot. DCP stepped up and created a FMStrong Community Resource page, FMStrong.com. – a website devoted to reaching the public, educating them on how to best support their small business during the pandemic. While visiting this page you will also find links to small business resources, lists of who is open, ways to support small businesses, and COVID-19 business updates. The team worked with other entities around town to promote the site, conducted media interviews, and placed billboards to keep supporting local top of mind for FM residents.

## SUPPORT A MEMBER SCHOLARSHIP

Due to the financial impact of the pandemic, many members were unable to afford their dues for the year meaning they would miss out on valuable information and resources the DCP provides. US Bank stepped up and created a scholarship fund so that businesses in financial distress could remain a part of the DCP to stay in touch with our team and continue to utilize our support services during these challenging times.



## DCP RESOURCE HUB

The DCP team shifted the focus from executing events to virtual member meetings with an emphasis on COVID-19-related topics, featuring elected officials, business and nonprofit leaders, as well as city and health experts. We shared stories through the news and social media regarding the economic impact of COVID-19 on our Downtown and creative ways to continue to support these businesses. In addition we became a connection to our business community by learning the ins and outs on all the financial relief programs, new policies, grants, funding, and resources available. Motivation behind this was to allow our members to focus that energy on keeping their businesses open. We also added a COVID-19 section to our downtownfargo.com website to include the latest public health guidelines and all the fast changing information around recovery resources, support opportunities as well as tips neighboring businesses were successful with.

# Plans

Planning for the future is an essential strategic process for an organization as it sets the course for the future, embraces inevitable change, helps to keep the organization current and relevant, creating a proactive versus reactive organizational environment. In 2020, hundreds of community members, stakeholders, partners, local businesses, residents, and neighbors came together, participating in focus groups, surveys and working committees, collectively sharing their vision and needs for the future of the DCP to embrace. Through this process, residents and stakeholders identified key actions for change to help make that vision a reality for the community along with referencing the fiscally responsible goals noted in the 2016 InFocus Downtown Master Plan.

A focused strategic plan strengthens operations and ensures that employees, board members, stakeholders, and community partners are all working toward common goals. We desire to continue expanding Downtown's economic base to further these goals to influence direction, budget, and policy decisions with appropriate governmental entities and stakeholder groups for inclusive growth, development, and workforce development. These strategic priorities will begin to rollout starting early 2021.





# Board of Directors

The DCP is governed by a 15-member board of directors who are responsible for working directly with the DCP staff to carry out the mission and the purpose of the DCP. Board members are re-elected for three-year terms with a maximum of two terms and are able to serve as committee chairs that are created under the DCP’s strategic plan.

## 2020 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- Chair**  
Michael Erickson ..... Sanford Health
- BID Advisor/1st Chair**  
Adrienne Olson ..... Kilbourne Group
- Secretary**  
Josh Rohrer ..... Forum Communications  
Broadcasting
- Treasurer**  
Tami Norgard ..... Vogel Law Firm

## NON-VOTING

- Dave Piepkorn ..... City Commission
- Andi Thoreson ..... FM CVB
- Clara Counts ..... NDSU Student
- Matthew Friedmann ..... NDSU Student
- Dayna Del Val ..... The Arts Partnership

## 2020 BOARD MEMBERS

- Josie Danz ..... Zandbroz Variety
- Warren Ackley ..... Global Developments
- Austin Morris ..... Enclave Developments
- Jesse Helland ..... McGough Construction
- Ann Olson ..... Sandy’s Doughnuts
- Patrick McShane ..... American Federal Bank
- Taya Spelhaug ..... Microsoft
- Travis Koch ..... US Bank
- Tim Flakoll ..... Tri-College University



# Staff



**Melissa Brandt**  
President  
CEO



**Lora Larson**  
Development  
Coordinator



**Rachel Prazak**  
Community  
Relations  
Coordinator



**Chris Schlepp**  
BID Operations  
Manager

## Contact Us

207 4th Street North  
Fargo, ND 58102  
701-241-1570

[www.downtownfargo.com](http://www.downtownfargo.com)



# Special Thanks

The Downtown Community Partnership is continually focused on enhancing Downtown Fargo's quality of life in everything that we do. We know our work is far from over. With continued support and partnership from investors, advocates, and stakeholders just like you, we united, and are setting the stage for Downtown to be the most compelling place to live, work, play, and visit.

The DCP team has hope and confidence that we will emerge from this historic time stronger and more united as a community. Fargoans have time and again proven their ability to come together, lead the way, and show consistent resilience. Our path forward – economically and socially – will not be easy. We will commit that the team will work with our Board of Directors, community members, city partners, and other key organizations to continue to listen, convene, and advocate not just for a strong economic recovery, but for a Downtown and city that we are all proud to call home.

Members, sponsors, and community partners participate in a variety of ways to help the Downtown Community Partnership pursue its core purpose. Each year, hundreds of businesses of all sizes invest to create a positive impact for Downtown residents, businesses, employees, and visitors.

No investment is too small.

*Special thanks to you!*

# Investor Highlights

A huge thank you to our investors! Without their ongoing support, feedback, and investment we would not be able to carry out our mission of promoting and advocating for Downtown Fargo.

## ..... DOWNTOWN COMMUNITY BUILDERS .....



## ..... DOWNTOWN COMMUNITY PARTNERS .....



## ..... DOWNTOWN COMMUNITY SUPPORTERS .....



## ..... DOWNTOWN COMMUNITY ALLIES .....



If you are interested in supporting Downtown Fargo by helping to make it a premier destination for the community and visitors to live, work, and play, contact the DCP to discuss our Investor Menu!



Coming together is a beginning.

Keeping together is progress.

**Working together is success.**

**Share together.**

**Grow together.**

**Succeed together.**

**Learn together.**

**Laugh together.**

**Live together.**

**Work together.**

**Thrive together.**

**Dine together.**

**Shop together.**

**Celebrate together.**

**BETTER TOGETHER**

# Downtown

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

207 4th Street N, Fargo, ND 58102  
701-241-1570



Downtown Fargo



Downtown\_Fargo



[downtownfargo.com](http://downtownfargo.com)