



FLG. | DOWNTOWN
FLAGSTAFF

2024 RENEWAL FDBIRD

Flagstaff Downtown Business Improvement and Revitalization District

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ABOUT

The Flagstaff Downtown Business Improvement and Revitalization District (FDBIRD) was formed in 2014 after years of research, planning and outreach. Prior to the formation of the FDBIRD, downtown management was made up of a small group of volunteers. While the efforts were great, the results were often deficient.

The FDBIRD was envisioned, and ultimately supported, on 3 basic platforms; **Management**, **Parking** and **Advocacy**. The district has and continues to deliver on each of these goals. Nine years later, the value provided by the district has expanded to include activation of public spaces with free and family-friendly events, robust successful marketing positioning downtown as a premier destination, and support to more than 150 businesses. The result is a vibrant downtown, with property owner investment and a storefront economy crucial to the overall wellbeing of the City and the long-term health of the region.

The FDBIRD is the only self-imposed business taxing district in the City of Flagstaff, demonstrating the commitment of property owners to "have skin in the game" and advance the economic vitality of downtown. Property owners, businesses, employees, visitors, residents and The City of Flagstaff all benefit from the enhancements and programs funded by the FDBIRD.



BACKGROUND

Successful downtowns are generally considered a destination and generate a significant portion of sales tax revenue for a city. With this increased activity comes the need for and higher expectation of enhanced levels of services like public safety, maintenance, parking management, business attraction & retention, advocacy, beautification, strategic planning, marketing & business promotion, and planning & development.

There is one trait in common among successful downtowns: the formation of a taxing district that generates revenue and manages delivery of enhanced services in an equitable manner. Districts provide funding for professional staff, a unified voice advocating on behalf of downtown, and resources so downtown remains a priority.

The FDBIRD is governed by an elected board of five (5) property owners / directors, and is subject to open meeting and public records laws. The FDBIRD contracts with the Flagstaff Downtown Business Alliance (FDBA) to deliver services throughout the district. Per Arizona Revised Statute, the district has perpetual succession, except that after ten (10) years of the date of formation, the governing body (in this case the City of Flagstaff) may, by resolution, extend the district for an additional 10 years.

WHAT IS THE FDBIRD

The FDBIRD is a 20-block taxing district petitioned by property owners, and formally adopted by City Council in 2014, as enabled by Arizona Revised Statute. The district is a legally defined municipal subdivision of the State of Arizona, funded by a property tax on all parcels within the established geographic boundary. The FDBIRD helps fund programs that provide enhanced services above and beyond general municipal services, including: cleanliness, public safety, hospitality, placemaking, events, advocacy, business support, marketing/communications, and parking and infrastructure influence.

Over the past 10 years, the FDBIRD has worked on behalf of property owners to create a welcoming, creative, safe, clean, vibrant and economically healthy destination that benefits downtown property owners, businesses, residents, visitors, investors and other constituents.

DISTRICT MAP



ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

Assessments are calculated based on property value as determined by the Coconino County Assessor, specifically: the maximum rate authorized by a vote of property owners within the district is to not exceed \$2.39 per hundred dollars of the assessed value for all real property in the district (excluding any story above the second floor). The actual tax rate is set annually by the FDBIRD board of directors, calculated by the County Assessor, and paid as part of the property tax bill for each property in the district.

It is important to note that the FDBIRD board of directors have never elected to assess at the maximum amount. As a matter of fact, they have chosen to lower the actual tax rate 8 out of 10 years keeping the overall tax collection for the district mostly flat/level. The 2024 tax rate for the district is \$1.48 per hundred dollars of the assessed value, raising \$155,927 for the 2024 fiscal year. The assessments generated have resulted in a modest and mostly flat budget each year.

Although City and County participation in the tax assessment is not required by law, both have opted to participate and pay an amount equal to the assessment of the property they own within the district. This demonstrates the City's and County's commitment to and partnership in downtown.

THE FDBIRD AT A GLANCE

- Voted on and approved by downtown property owners and City Council in 2014.
- The FDBIRD is the ONLY self-imposed business taxing district in the City of Flagstaff.
- Managed by a 5-member Board comprised of property owners.
- Provides stable funding to support downtown priorities including clean & safe programs, activation of public spaces, increased advocacy, and influence on parking management and future parking supply.
- Assessed tax rates have been flat or lower in 8 out of 10 years.
- Contracts with the Flagstaff Downtown Business Alliance (FDBA) to deliver services.
- In 9 years, property owners have contributed more than \$1,293,000 towards downtown in the FDBIRD.



ACCOMPLISHMENTS

BEAUTIFICATION

As part of the infrastructure improvements required of revitalization districts in Arizona, FDBIRD funded facilitation and installation of 10 custom Downtown Flagstaff bike racks designed and built by local artists.

Other beautification improvements in Downtown, made possible by FDBA's advocacy and partnership with the City of Flagstaff, include seasonal efforts such as flower baskets and planters, a brick crosswalk on Aspen Avenue at a high pedestrian traffic location, Aspen Alley closure and activation, and electric box wraps.

CLEAN TEAM

The implementation of a Clean Team Ambassador program provides public space maintenance and hospitality services, above and beyond services provided elsewhere throughout the City. The team works daily to sweep sidewalks and alleys, remove graffiti and stickers, clean trash & recycle bin lids, and assist with snow removal at crosswalks and berms. The Clean Team members also serve as Downtown Ambassadors, delivering exceptional customer service while helping downtown visitors with parking questions, directions and business information.

BEFORE



AFTER



STAKEHOLDER RELATIONS

FDBA facilitates consistent communication with stakeholders, including monthly email updates and in-person meetings, ensures business and property owners remain informed about security, events, street closures, and other relevant updates. This regular, personalized outreach increases the level of engagement downtown stakeholders have with one another, events, promotions, and improvements within the taxing district.

ALLEY ACTIVATION

Efforts to increase public space activation include closing Aspen Alley, across from Heritage Square, to vehicle traffic during the summer months. This is intended to encourage pedestrian flow and visitation to additional businesses. Large planters with flowers are placed in the alley in a combination of beautification and functionality to block vehicle traffic. The FDBA works with adjoining businesses to encourage activity in the alley, and bistro tables and chairs are placed in the alley so patrons can sit, dine outdoors, and extend their stay downtown.



FIRST FRIDAY

At the request of downtown gallery owners, the FDBA was asked to take a more active role in the planning and management of First Friday ArtWalk. The FDBA team worked closely with downtown businesses to build support, engagement and routine participation. Improvements to the event include increased communication, elevated design of printed maps and marketing efforts, and a structured sign-up process through the FDBA's website. As a result, the event is flourishing with greater business participation and attendance since our involvement.



SAFETY & SECURITY

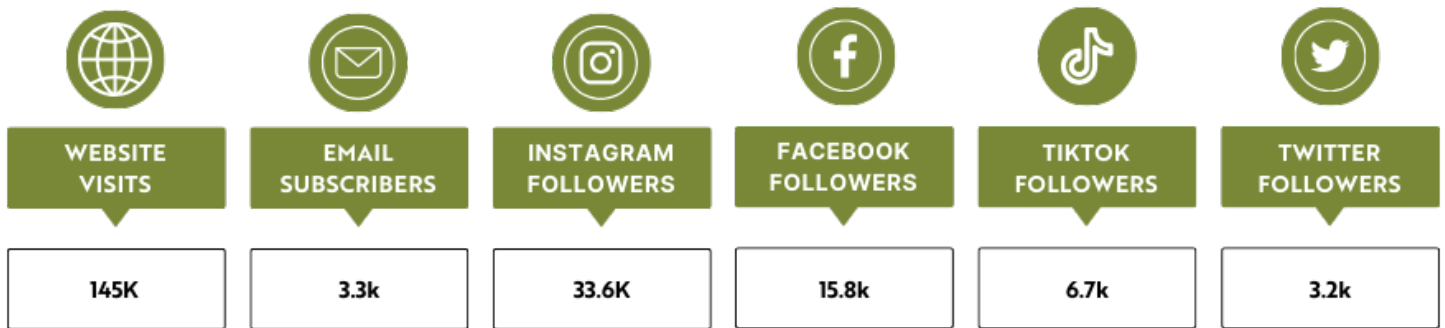
FDBA partners with the Flagstaff Police Department and supports the Downtown Walking Beat for added visibility and safety. Also, the FDBA created a closed security network connecting business owners, managers, police and FDBA staff to share real-time information.

BRANDING & MARKETING

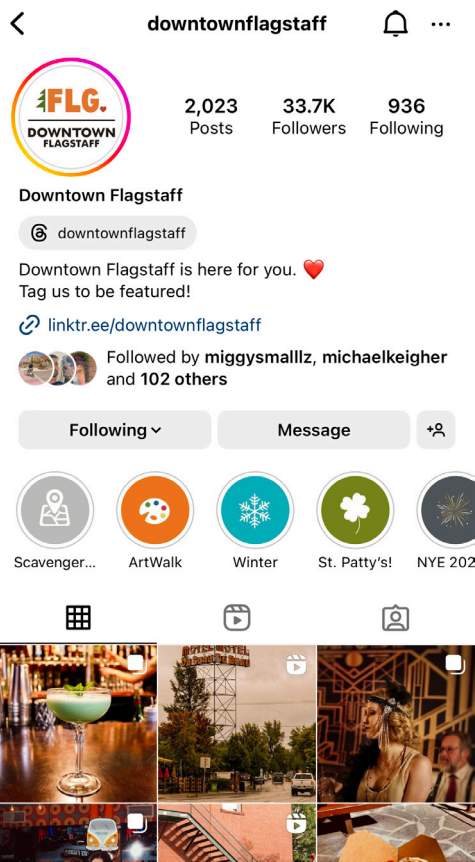
The FDBA led a community-based effort to develop the FLG brand, which continues to be used to increase awareness and elevate downtown as a premier destination to visit, work, dine, shop and invest.

The team developed and maintains an interactive website promoting both the north and southside of downtown (www.downtownflagstaff.org).

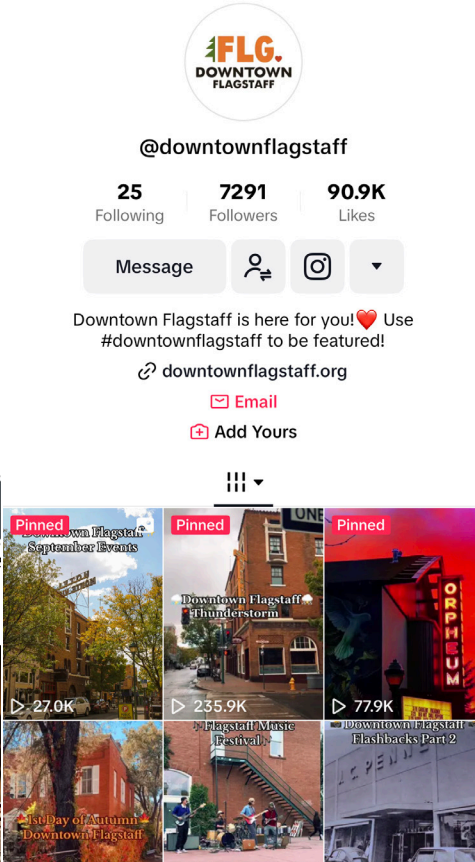
The FDBA staff manages a comprehensive public-facing digital media effort to inform residents, business owners, and visitors of the latest downtown news and happenings. Communications include a monthly calendar, newsletter and robust social media messaging.



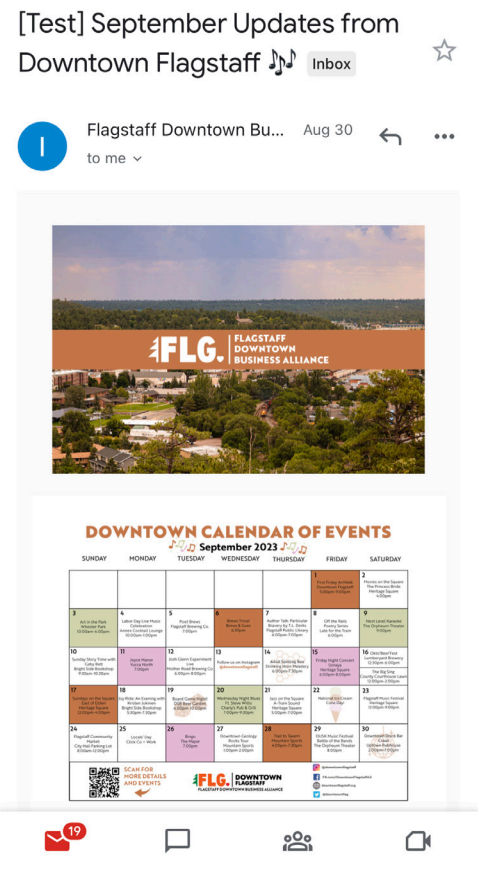
INSTAGRAM



TIKTOK



EMAIL



EVENTS

FDBA creates events and activation of public spaces to attract visitors and residents into downtown, resulting in increased foot traffic and spending in downtown businesses.

In 2015 the only event put on by the Flagstaff Downtown Business Alliance was Movies on the Square; 8 years later the FDBA has added programming adding up to over 165 individual days of free, family friendly events, filling months that have previously been slow.

1000% INCREASE SINCE 2015

- Movies on the Square • Kids Squared • Music on the Square •
- Halloween Trick or Treat Trail • Disco Bar Crawl • Shamrock Shuffle • Artwalk •
- Harry Potter Scavenger Hunt • Yoga on the Lawn • Spin on the Square •
- Flagstaff Fitness Festival • Flagstaff Music Festival • NAU Family Weekend •
- NAU Homecoming • Shopping Passport • Slack Friday • Breakfast with Santa •
- Winter Wonderland • 12 Bars of Christmas • Winter Movie Series •
- Howlidays • Santa Sightings • Noon Years Eve •

HOLIDAY PROGRAMMING & DECOR

The FDBA added holiday decor and events transforming downtown into Arizona's Winter Wonderland. FDBA led a coordinated effort to light street trees, building rooflines, decorate light poles, Wheeler Park, Heritage Square and more. In addition to decor, the FDBA has created events and activities almost every day in December resulting in tens of thousands of visitors, added vibrancy and increased spending in businesses.



PARKING

The lack of adequate parking in downtown has been a consistent challenge for decades. For years, downtown residents and visitors reported they didn't spend time downtown because there was no place to park, frequently growing frustrated circling and ultimately leaving due to inconvenience. This pattern and recognition that downtown Flagstaff is woefully short on parking supply was one of the deciding factors to form a district.



Helped design, secure stakeholder support and unanimous Council approval, and implement Flagstaff's Comprehensive Parking Management Program in 2017, accomplishing the following key objectives:

- Manage limited on-street parking and preserve convenient parking for customers.
- Identify options for employee parking on the perimeter of downtown.
- Create residential zones, allowing residents in surrounding areas the ability to "opt in."
- **Added 150 new parking spaces at two separate surface lots.**

FDDB leadership helped secure passage of City ordinances that FOR THE FIRST TIME EVER creates a funding source for additional parking:

- Setting aside a minimum of 20% of ParkFlag revenue for use only in creating additional parking supply.
- Establishing a Special Revenue Fund requiring revenue earned from paid parking be used for parking related purposes only and kept separate from the General Fund.

By managing parking, we achieve the following community goals:

- Better manage our existing – and limited – parking supply.
- Provide a dedicated funding source to acquire or build additional parking infrastructure
- Support Downtown Flagstaff as a viable economic center.
- Apply a comprehensive approach – addressing parking for residents, employees, business owners, visitors and customers.
- Offer a more convenient and positive experience for visitors, residents & employees
- Provide multi-modal options, including additional bike racks and FREE Mountain Line pass for all downtown employees.
- Parking Aides serve as Ambassadors – by providing education on parking options and positive parking behavior.

The FDDB continues to Influence and leadership related to ParkFlag policies and programs.

The FDDB helped support passage of a City of Flagstaff bond #412 in 2016 that commits to delivering a minimum of 200 structured parking spaces.



WHY IS MANAGED PARKING SO IMPORTANT

Adequate parking infrastructure and management is a fundamental need for a vibrant downtown. It supports the vibrancy and success of small businesses and future investment while providing a better experience for visitors and residents alike. Downtown is a premier destination and economic hub, yet the parking supply has not grown with demand, resulting in negative impacts to all stakeholders and visitors. ParkFlag provides a pathway to investment in additional parking supply and management of the existing limited supply for the benefit of all users.

ADVOCACY

The FDBA serves as the collective voice and liaison for hundreds of property and business owners, including:

Provides consistent representation of downtown's interests with City and County leaders and staff ensuring downtown is a priority.

Leads the Downtown Vision effort, creating a unified vision for the future of downtown, which includes catalytic opportunities for mutual – and public – benefit.

Works with City staff to ensure City services and infrastructure are maintained, including tree wells, lighting, trash removal, snow operations.

Played a key role throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

- The FDBA secured \$30,000 funding and administered microgrants to help support small businesses.
- Created expansion of outdoor dining areas along Aspen Ave., Heritage Square and Aspen Alley in partnership with the City of Flagstaff.
- Served as a primary resource for guidance on closures, modified hours, reopenings.
- Kept downtown businesses top-of-mind with industry-leading marketing and social media messaging.

MANAGEMENT + PARKING + ADVOCACY = VIBRANCY



FAQs

Why was the FDBIRD formed?

Property owners created a taxing district to fund services above and beyond what the City of Flagstaff provide and to create a unified voice advocating on behalf of downtown, and to leverage resources so downtown remains a priority.

Will the boundaries of the FDBIRD change?

No, the boundaries will remain the same upon renewal. If property owners in other areas of downtown or the City are interested in forming a district, it will require a separate formation and approval process.

How is the assessment calculated?

Assessments are calculated based on property value as determined by the County Assessor and included on the property tax bill.

How does the FDBA work with other organizations?

The FDBA works hand-in-hand with City and County staff, and partner organizations to leverage resources, and foster good communications and partnerships. The focus of the FDBA is to provide leadership and services that are complementary and additional to those already provided. A sampling of the organizations involved with the FDBA include: Creative Flagstaff, NAU, Flagstaff Shelter Services, Greater Flagstaff Chamber of Commerce, and more.

What is the difference between the FDBIRD and FDBA?

The FDBIRD (Flagstaff Downtown Business Improvement & Revitalization District) is a 20-block taxing district petitioned by and funded by property owners. **It is the only self-imposed business taxing district in the City of Flagstaff** and is focused on advancing the economic vitality of downtown. Specific goals include enhanced coordination and efforts around parking, management and advocacy. The FDBA (Flagstaff Downtown Business Alliance) is a non-profit 501(c)6 organization contracted by the FDBIRD to position downtown as a premier destination and delivers services such as public space maintenance, enhanced marketing and promotions, programming and activation, and small business support and communications.

What specific services does the FDBIRD fund:

- Maintenance / Safety - sidewalk and alley sweeping, assistance with snow clearing and operations, litter removal, graffiti removal, eyes and ears for Flagstaff Walking Beat, security network connecting business owners and managers with FDBA and Flagstaff Police.
- Marketing / Promotion - brochures, flyers, social media, website with interactive business directory.
- Parking advocacy and coordination with ParkFlag.
- Events and Public Space Activation - more than 160 free, family-friendly events to fill Heritage Square and drive traffic into downtown businesses.
- Holiday Decor and Activities - coordinate decorated light poles, as well as lit trees and rooflines throughout downtown; and program signature events that bring tens of thousands into downtown.

What if I don't want to pay the tax?

No one loves taxes but they are how we pay for shared and enhanced levels of services. All properties in downtown benefit from the work of the FDBIRD. This district allows the costs to be shared equitably.

WHY SHOULD I SUPPORT RENEWAL?

Downtown IS different.

Downtown Flagstaff is critical to the city's overall wellbeing. While less than 1% of the city's area, downtown has 11% of the city's employees, 18% of the city's restaurants, bars & shops, and 4% of the city's assessed property value. Downtown is a core attraction and is visited by millions annually. Downtown punches above its weight. FDBIRD is intrinsically tied to the vibrancy and economic health of our city's core.

Renewal of the FDBIRD means:

- Clean Team services will continue ensuring downtown is welcoming for residents and visitors.
- Activation at Heritage Square and other public spaces will continue bringing hundreds of thousands of people into the heart of downtown.
- Marketing efforts that position downtown as a premier destination will continue.
- Support of City divisions and their programs will continue, including Discover Flagstaff, Economic Vitality, PROSE, Sustainability, Public Works, Community Development and City leadership.
- Downtown businesses will continue to benefit from the efforts of the FDDBA.
- These services are above and beyond what the City provides and will help meet the needs of a growing downtown.

WHAT HAPPENS IF FDBIRD IS NOT RENEWED?

- Clean Team daily maintenance of public spaces would stop.
- Movies on the Square and many other downtown events would disappear.
- Marketing to position downtown as a premier destination would stop.
- Downtown will lose professional staff, management and a unified voice.
- Downtown property and business owners would lose representation of important interests in front of City Council and County Board of Supervisors.
- Coordination & communication with downtown business and property owners would stop.
- Parking advocacy and influence on the need for additional parking inventory would stop.
- Coordination with Flagstaff Police and other City and County departments would disappear.
- The premier destination in Flagstaff would not have professionally managed programs and services.

FDBIRD BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dave Stilley, Chairman, Stilley Properties
Steve Chatinsky, Peace Surplus
Patricia Ginsberg, The Ginsberg Group
Jerry McLaughlin, Aspen Consolidated
John VanLandingham, Old Town Shops

Clerk: Stacy Saltzburg, clerk@downtownflagstaff.org
Treasurer: Brandi Suda, treasurer@downtownflagstaff.org

FDBA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Kevin Heinonen (Chair); THAT Place Projects
Leslie Belsanti (Vice Chair); da Vinci Realty and Click Co + Work
Shane Shumway (Secretary); Marriott Residence Inn
Tim Dodt (Treasurer); Alliance Bank of Arizona
Rich Bowen; The GenTerra Group
Greg Clifton; City of Flagstaff, City Manager's Office
Whitney Cunningham; AWD Law
Maury Herman; Coast & Mountain Properties
Lisa Lamberson; Mountain Sports and Bright Side Bookshop
Steve Peru; Coconino County, County Manager's Office
David Stephens; Realty Executives
John VanLandingham; Old Town Shops
Dara Wong; Shift FLG and Oeno Wine Lounge

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Faith Manion, Marketing & Communications Manager
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Flagstaff, Arizona 86001

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FDBA BY THE NUMBERS

150,000+ **10,000**
ATTENDEES AT DOWNTOWN EVENTS MINUTES
OF LIVE MUSIC

160+ **150+**
FREE, FAMILY-FRIENDLY EVENTS & PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES
LOCALLY OWNED
BUSINESSES



CONNECT WITH US

4FLG.

**DOWNTOWN
FLAGSTAFF**

Flagstaff Downtown Business Alliance



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@downtownflagstaff



downtownflagstaff.org

HOTEL
MONTE
VISTA

ASPEN AVE

ASPEN AVE
100 E
Rendezvous
coffee & spirits

ONE WAY

OPEN
Rendezvous
ESPRESSO COLD BREW

