

# 2023 Annual Report



## BID BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2023/24

### President

**Terrance Thornton,**  
San Rafael Martial Arts

### Secretary

**Tobi Lessem,**  
Bodywise Massage

### Vice President

**Adam Dawson,**  
Mike's Bikes

**Joe McCallum,** Newmark  
Knight Frank

**Jeff Brusati,**  
T & B Sports

**Morgan Schaffler,**  
Youth in Arts

**Bishlam & Amy Bullock,**  
Salon B Style Lab

### Potential New Board Members for 2024:

**Kelly Phu,**  
Vin Antico

**Kaity Galvez,**  
Perry's Deli

### Committee Members:

**Jaime Ortiz,**  
Bank of Marin  
**Meg Reilly,**  
Marin Society of the Artists

**Valon Grajqevci,**  
Tam Commons

**Jana Fleming,**  
Friends Books

Dear fellow BID Members,

I would like to start by sharing our Thanks and Appreciation. Thank you for the hard work leading into this year and throughout the year. We appreciate you and your support in our mission to revitalize the downtown corridor and promote the common interests of Downtown businesses. Thank you for continuing to make Downtown a different, fun, and memorable experience for all. For being contributors and active participants in forging memories for all that visit.

- Whether it's strolling through the Art District for the **2nd Friday Art Walk Downtown.**
- Enjoying a unique dining experience with **Dining Under The Lights.**
- The next generations learn about classic cars at **May Madness.**
- Enjoying the Craft Beer and Premium Wines with friends with the **Hops and Vines Stroll.**
- Indoor or Outdoor, enjoy live music, food, activities, and more at the **West End Culture Crawl.**
- One of our newest events with families bonding while searching for **Holiday or Summer Elves.**

Along with many other memory-creating moments and events hosted in Downtown San Rafael. Building off the growth and better-than-projected revenue in 2023, the BID is projecting a profitable 2024. Thank you in advance for your continued support and may we all thrive together in 2024 and beyond.

*Terrance Thornton, President*

## Marketing, Promotions, Programming, Fundraising, & Collaborations

- In 2023 added a Social Media Manager Contractor** – The BID hired a part-time social media contractor to promote and showcase a different Downtown Business each day on IG & FB. Since this program began in April, we increased reach by 242% in the 1<sup>st</sup> month, added 100 followers a month in IG since then, and reached 2k per month. FB = 4,169 followers, IG = 2,707 followers

### Page Overview

Followers: 4,169

Last 28 days

[See more insights](#)

Post reach ⓘ

10,527

Post Engagement ⓘ

2,036

New Page likes ⓘ

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- Fundraising & Event Management** – The events committee with the help of the BID Board was able to raise over \$15k to support the BID.
- Downtown Eats Passport Program** – New this year, the BID developed a program to bring people Downtown to eat in the typically quiet month of August. Ten businesses signed up to participate and in the self-funded program. Over 100 community members participated and their feedback highlighted that they loved exploring “new” places in Downtown.
- Fe-BREW-ary** – New this year, the BID joined a promotional program called Fe-BREW-ary, where our breweries and taprooms were invited to list a special deal or discount on a BID webpage. This page was shared with an existing promotional program created by SMART where Petaluma and Santa Rosa breweries were also participating.
- Scavenger Hunts** – Our community requested more family-friendly activities in Downtown, so we developed 2 Elf Hunt Scavenger Hunts, one during the Summer Kick-Off in June and one during the December holidays.
- Website management** – The BID brought website management in-house in 2023 saving \$1200/year. The ED strives to provide clean, fun, relevant, and timely information on our Downtown San Rafael website.
- Downtown San Rafael Business Directory** – Our online directory serves as a current database of all businesses in the Downtown, complete with emails and contact info in the back end. The ED cleaned up the database and optimized the search tool. Directory searches have tripled since this significant improvement.
- Member emails, newsletters, and updates** – The BID upgraded software this year to increase contract reach and design capability for our monthly newsletters.
- Downtown News** – Member news and events can be displayed on our homepage and are also shared in the monthly newsletter.

- Beautification and Landscaping upgrades** - The BID added Phase 2 and 3 to the popular and successful Clean & Green Day on Earth Day. The BID organized a day in September and December for volunteers to help the BID and DPW add mulch to our intersections.
- Farmer’s Market** – Rebuilt our relationship with AIM to bring the Thursday Night Farmers Market back to Fourth St, moving the weekly DUTL to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday of the month to coincide with the 2nd Friday Art Walk.
- Engaged with the local Students** – Created a Back to School Night during the September Dining Under the Lights.
- Added new board members, committee members, and volunteers** – We welcomed 3 new Board members this year, 2 of whom work in the food/beverage industry which added a necessary and important voice to our group.
- Downtown San Rafael Arts District Collaboration** – The BID is on the DSRAD board to help increase the visibility of the Arts in our Downtown. DSRAD received a grant for \$671k and the BID will be working with the group to help the arts shine in Downtown San Rafael.
- Partnerships** – Continued and strengthened partnerships with the following organizations to bring more foot traffic to our Downtown Businesses: SR Chamber, Pacifics, Embassy Suites, California Film Institute, SMART, Marin Convention & Visitors Bureau.



**BEFORE**

**AFTER**



## BID Produced Events & Mixers

In 2023, we brought back many popular events and successfully raised money for the BID in the process.

### Fundraising Events:

- **33<sup>rd</sup> Annual May Madness** (May 6) – This Annual event produced by Rick Lewis, the volunteer BID Event Committee, and the ED of the BID brought roughly 5,000 people to Downtown. We raised over \$18k (a new record!) to be split between the BID and local non-profits.
  - Total Expenses = \$15,230
  - Total Income = \$33,815
  - Event Net Profit = \$18,584
  - **Net Profit for BID = \$9,232**
- **3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Hops & Vines Stroll** (Sept 30) – The Annual Hops & Vines Stroll traditionally brought nearly 300 people INTO Downtown Businesses. Even with the unseasonably rainy weather, we made a net profit for the BID.
  - Total Expenses = \$6,714
  - Total Income = \$11,260
  - **Net Profit for BID = \$4,545**
- **San Rafael Parade of Lights & Winter Wonderland on Shop Small Saturday 2022** – In 2022, the BID volunteer event committee kept a tradition alive by creating a paired down version of the 40-year-old event, that was once produced by a professional event company, the day after Thanksgiving. Our intimate version of this event was created to bring people to Downtown on Shop Small Saturday. We had a makers marketplace, snow machines, jumpies, food trucks, face painting, and lighted car cruise. The event brought approximately 1000 people to Downtown on Shop Small Saturday. We are currently planning a similar event in 2023 and will be making it bigger with more financial support from the City to hire an event contractor to support on the day of and produce a tree-lighting in the plaza. Below are our fundraising numbers from 2022.
  - Total expenses = \$12,798
  - Total Income = \$15,625
  - **Net Profit to BID = \$2,826**

## Events - Economic Drivers & More

- **Clean & Green Day, City of San Rafael & The BID** (April 21) – The City and BID join efforts every year on Earth Day to promote Clean and Green Day by inviting over 40 volunteers to help mulch, remove graffiti, pick up litter, and clean parking meters/poles.
- **Dining Under The Lights featuring Live Music, Outdoor Dining, and Kids Activities** (May-Oct) – This monthly event, held in conjunction with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday Art Walk, included 5 blocks and brought hundreds of people to our Downtown to enjoy Outdoor Dining, Live Music, and Kids Activities.
- **Friday Night Block Party in the West End** (June-Oct) – This popular event held in the West End, includes bands booked by the Pint Size Lounge. It drew hundreds of people to not just the West End, but to San Rafael. Past surveys showed that people came from all over Marin and the Bay Area to enjoy the exceptional atmosphere.
- **35<sup>th</sup> Annual Trick or Treat on 4<sup>th</sup> Street & Pet Costume Contest** (Oct. 28) – This Annual tradition brings hundreds of families to our Downtown and fills it with smiles and laughter!
- **Annual Menorah Lighting** (Dec. 10) - For the 2<sup>nd</sup> year, we will be working with Chabad of Marin to bring in a Giant Menorah to be lit for Hanukkah. We will offer latkes, hot chocolate, dancing, and a gelt drop!



## Future Marketing, Development, Events, & Operations

- **Public Art** – Work with Downtown San Rafael Arts District (DSRAD) and the City Library & Rec Director to identify opportunities to expand public art in Downtown.
- **Continue Landscaping upgrades** - Hardscape landscaping updates to intersections via volunteer coordination we are now calling the “Mulching Project”.
- **Hanging Flower Program** – Work with the City and DPW to review potential locations to start a hanging flower pilot program. Preliminary research completed.
- **Other Beautification options** – Work with the Economic Development Department & DPW to explore more opportunities for Downtown Beautification (power washing, business frontage grants, awning cleaning, and more)
- **Cleanliness** – Work with DPW and the City’s Economic Development Department to request a more proactive cleanliness plan for Downtown San Rafael.
- **Vacancies** – Work with the City’s Economic Development Department to assist with their strategy to fill vacancies.
- **Social Media Marketing Plan** – Continue to work with a social media contractor and showcase 3 businesses per week on Instagram and Facebook.
- **Thursday Night Summer Farmer’s Market growth**– Work with AIM to assist in better promotion and marketing to expand the weekly Thursday Night Summer Market. Possibly add a food truck experience in Downtown in conjunction, or on another night.
- **Create more culturally diverse events in Downtown**– Work with the City and volunteer BID event committee to bring more culturally diverse, relevant and inclusive events to our downtown.
- **Outdoor Movie Night** – Work with DSRAD and Parks & Rec to bring their successful outdoor movie night in the park program to our Downtown.
- **Fe-BREW-ary** – Continue the new February promotion and add more businesses to the SMART promotion.
- **Scavenger Hunts** – Continue to produce scavenger hunt-based promotions to get people INTO local businesses with this fun and affordable program.
- **Passport Program** – Increase participation with our 2nd annual passport program to get more people INTO our restaurants during the slower months.
- **Explore partnerships with local Schools** – Reach out to our local schools and see how we can partner together to support the students in our community.
- **Chamber Partnership to help BID Financial Stability & Review a PBID to increase our funding** - The City has contracted with the Chamber to support the BID. The Chamber will conduct outreach and host informational sessions with property owners and businesses to assist the City feasibility analysis of a property-based improvement district or modifications to the District business assessment rate structure to enhance economic vitality.
- **Partnership & Collaboration** – Continue to align the BID with DSRAD stakeholders, the SR Chamber, Pacifics, Embassy Suites, the City, SMART, SRPD, & and more.
- **Communicate with members/community outreach** – Continue engagement via website, email, newsletters, social media, marketing, advertising, and in person.
- **Events:** The BID has committed to continue events produced in 2023.
- **Add board members, committee members & volunteers** – Actively recruit committee members and engage prospective board members to build an inclusive environment for greater equity and diversity. If you are interested, please contact us!

*Dear BID Members,  
Coming into this role in 2022 was an exciting adventure, but also a challenge given that our Annual Assessments were down over \$25k since 2019. I worked diligently over the last 2 years to increase our funds by way of event fundraising and by decreasing our operational costs. Listening to our business community, I created fun programming and promotions to help increase foot traffic. By adding the Social Media contractor to our 2023 programming, the online visibility of our Downtown San Rafael businesses skyrocketed! None of this would be possible without the incredible teamwork, dedication, and passion of our BID Board. Each member's unique perspective and expertise have helped guide our decision-making and execute our goals. Working with our President, Terrance, has been an absolute pleasure. His leadership and commitment to our mission have been instrumental in driving our district's vision. I look forward to an exciting future of collaboration with the San Rafael Chamber in 2024 to continue this vision and make our Downtown shine!*

*-Sarah Tipple, Executive Director*