

New Mexico's Business Improvement District Act was created to "provide municipalities and entrepreneurs a more flexible and proactive vehicle to collaborate in the revitalization efforts of their downtowns, commercial districts and central business districts."

In enacting the Business Improvement District Act, New Mexico's legislature recognized that in many cases improvements and action are more quickly addressed through the private sector.

Gallup BID has enjoyed the ability to respond to capital proposals, event sponsorship requests, maintenance projects, marketing concepts, and other initiatives in a timely manner.

Gallup Business Improvement District is a partner with City of Gallup and Gallup MainStreet Arts & Cultural District for Alley Improvement Pilot Project in the block between 1st and 2nd Streets, Coal and Aztec Avenues. The project includes: Replacement of water and sewer lines and relocation of electric and communication cables. Replacement of commercial trash "herbies" with in-ground trash containers, user-friendly design to encourage pedestrian use. Upon completion, the design and engineering solutions will be used for additional alleys.

City of Gallup received a grant from New Mexico "Clean & Beautiful" program for a Downtown Walkway Improvement Project to make Walkway cleaner and more user friendly for families, individuals, both local residents and visitors. B.I.D. provided funds for new walkway lighting.

During 2016, BID managed and paid for a program to bring work of local artists to the general public. This program brought together dozens of excellent local artists who painted hundreds of fine images on approximately 80 concrete planters and receptacles for trash cans. This "open-air museum" artwork has delighted residents and attracted visitors.

Public spaces definitely require ongoing funding. It is important to note that research has shown that attractive and successful downtown public spaces can be maintained at low cost per visitor, producing an excellent “bang for the buck”.

Gallup BID will continue to fund downtown private security patrols from June through early September. This investment is Gallup BID’s largest annual expenditure.

Gallup BID continues its support for monthly downtown Arts Crawl events and its sponsorship of the Annual Route 66 Freedom Ride Flight and Cruise 3 day event. In 2016, this event brought nearly 5,000 people into the downtown area and produced $295,000 of economic activity in the City of Gallup.

Given its size, visibility and proximity to downtown retailers, one might anticipate that the downtown Courthouse Plaza and Walkway areas will have positive benefits for nearby merchants, restaurateurs’ as well as residents and visitors, who then become potential shoppers for local merchants.

Developing the downtown’s central social district functions, which include housing, food stores, restaurants, bars, entertainment and cultural venues, is a sound strategy for attracting these shoppers. For small downtown retailers, restaurants and public spaces are especially helpful because they are active when the merchants’ shops are open.

Outcomes of BID related projects:

Intergenerational connections though participation in the downtown district improvement projects

Reweaving community infrastructure and physical connections from roots in the historic downtown district

Reinvigorated awareness of community history, heritage and pride

Elevation of artists and creative work as one of the keys to community improvement

Strengthened cooperation among cultural, environmental, economic and civic leaders, sectors and institutions.

Emergence of new community leaders

Increased contact among community members in new public spaces, and in the organization of new or expanded activities taking place

Increased access to professional economic development technical assistance and to funding

Consumer spending in conjunction with downtown events

Indirect and Potential Impacts:

Enhanced tourism

Greater cooperation and planning among diverse economic sectors

Reinvigoration of local economy

New sense of ownership in the community, helping to retain youth

Once work has commenced on replacing existing infrastructure including alleys, water and sewer and broadband internet access, Gallup's downtown commercial district will be able to attract or create new businesses downtown that have a low carbon footprint, generate a high (taxable) profit and require/demand little in the way of cash incentives to start operating in Gallup. Internet based businesses; light artisanal manufacturing and work in the areas of creative economy are also appropriate businesses.

Gallup Business Improvement District and Gallup MainStreet Arts & Cultural District invite downtown business and property owners to utilize existing programs that provide loans, grants and rebates for work done to improve the appearance and safety and value of their locations.

Owners of buildings that are not currently in use are invited to work with Gallup B.I.D. and Gallup MainStreet Arts & Cultural District. State of New Mexico and U.S. government programs and consulting services are available to put unused buildings back into service.

Gallup's Downtown Commercial district produces 14% of total retail sales occurring within the City of Gallup, and most of these sales are related to non-food and beverage related activities. Even a small percent increase in downtown economic activity will produce substantial economic benefits for City of Gallup and its residents.

In addition to its efforts to help the continued success of Gallup's Downtown District, Gallup BID participates in meetings of Gallup Executive Directors Alliance and its Economic Development Sub-committee to assist analysis and planning for regional economic growth.

We invite and need your help in our efforts to keep Gallup's downtown district economically healthy with a vibrant culture. Please contact us if you wish to help your city, or to examine existing programs that may help your own businesses or property values.

By Francis Bee, Executive Director

Gallup Business Improvement District