

**January 1, 2015 to December 31, 2024
Management Plan**

For The

Columbus Business Improvement District (BID)

Columbus, Georgia

*Prepared pursuant to the State of Georgia
City Business Improvement District Act
To renew a Business Improvement District in
Uptown Columbus for the BID property owners.*

MANAGEMENT PLAN INDEX

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SECTION 1

What is the Columbus Business Improvement District (BID)?

The International Downtown Association estimates that more than 1,500 property based Business Improvement Districts (BID) currently operate throughout the United States and Canada. In most states, all BIDs are fundamentally a legal mechanism to raise funds to enhance the management of a downtown area.

A BID is based upon the benefit assessment district concept, which provides for an assessment on real property to be raised within a specific geographic district with the proceeds going directly back into the district to provide enhanced services that benefit the district and properties located within the district boundaries. A BID provides a myriad of enhanced services and activities, including safety, maintenance, marketing, business recruitment and retention, and special events, in addition to those provided by local government.

The Columbus BID represents an important movement by property owners and business leaders to establish a well-funded, professional organization that continues to work to ensure the community maintains a positive perception of the Central Business District, supplements City services to raise the standard of excellence in the BID area, and promotes businesses, major attractions and events to respond to challenges from malls and other competitive developments.

Advantages of the Columbus BID are:

- Over thirteen years of experience providing a wide range of services to include safety, hospitality, maintenance, marketing, promotion, business recruitment and retention, and special events.
- The BID has been designed, created, and governed by those who pay the assessment through a Board of Directors of property owners that supervise operations, review monthly activity reports, and approve and monitor the annual budget.
- The Columbus BID continues to be implemented by those who pay through a 501(c)(6) non-profit, private sector, management organization of dedicated professionals that have received numerous awards of excellence.
- The Columbus BID, which was authorized for a 5-year term that is scheduled to end in December 2014, can now renew, according to a change in Georgia law, for 10 years beyond December 2014 through the petition support of the property owners. Of course, that same petition process can end the life of the BID early should property owners decide it is no longer needed.

SECTION 2

Why renew the Business Improvement District (BID)?

The Business Improvement District (BID) continues to play a major role in the absolutely exciting and remarkable growth in the Central Business District since operations started in January of 2000. This growth in the Central Business District includes new businesses, new restaurants, events, River Restoration, new residential living, and new visitors. To support these new facilities and the people they bring to the Uptown area makes the renewal of the BID absolutely critical in order to maintain the momentum, continue to attract new investment and expand our customer base.

A quality of life that is second to none makes the BID District a great place to start a business, enjoy the cultural and entertainment center of the region by attending the many fine art facilities, move into one of our new loft apartments, make a purchase in one of our unique shops, or dine in one of our many fine restaurants while enjoying the cleanest, safest, and friendliest environments in Columbus, Georgia. To keep this momentum, to attract new investment and to protect and maintain the existing investment, property owners will have to renew the current Business Improvement District (BID). The property owners will assess themselves in order to maintain the 501(c)(6) non-profit private sector management district, which under Georgia law is termed a City Business Improvement District. There are several reasons why Uptown property owners are taking this action:

- 1. To provide consistent funding for the services currently provided by the BID and maintain the extremely positive image the citizens of the community have for the Uptown area.**

The services the BID provides help make the Central Business District the place to visit in Columbus, Georgia. Just as important as this reality, is the fact that more and more citizens in this region are becoming our customer, investor or visitor due to the very positive image the Uptown area has developed as the cleanest, safest, most attractive and well-managed area in Columbus.

It is very important that we maintain this image in order to continue to compete with the shopping malls and office parks for customers, investors, and visitors. The value of a single piece of property is not determined solely by the investments made in that property. Rather, a major portion of that property value is derived from how investors, businesses, and visitors view the entire Uptown area as a business, retail and cultural center. The property owners want to extend the life of the BID in order to maintain the *positive image*.

- 2. Maintain Private Sector Management and Accountability.**

The non-profit, private sector corporation, the Columbus BID, will manage the organization. A board of directors that are representative of all the property owners paying

assessments will refine and approve annual work plans and budgets based upon this management plan. The board of directors who are accountable to those property owners paying into the district will ensure the services provided by the Columbus BID are subject to very high private sector performance standards and controls.

3. The Need to Market, Promote, and Attract new Business and Investment.

The Central Business District competes with the many shopping malls, office parks and managed downtown areas in the region that compete for tenants, visitors and investors. To remain competitive and viable as the place to go in the region, we must maintain and finance the BID to maintain a proactive strategy to retain businesses and tenants as well as attract new businesses and investments.

The events, programming, coordinated promotions, publication of promotional materials and friendly ambassadors providing customer service assistance all contribute significantly to the continued enhancement of the *Uptown Image*. The renewal of the BID will ensure we maintain these programs and services.

4. The Need to be Proactive in Determining the Future of Uptown.

To protect their investment, property owners want to renew the Business Improvement District (BID) in order to remain partners in the process that determines how the development of the Uptown area is implemented. The BID District provides the financial resources, professional staff and private sector management to ensure that the challenges faced by Uptown will be proactively addressed.

SECTION 3

Management Plan Summary

Developed by property owners in Uptown Columbus, the Columbus Business Improvement District Plan is designed to improve and convey special benefits to properties located within the boundaries of the BID. The Business Improvement District will provide enhanced improvements and activities, including maintenance, security, marketing, promotion, business recruitment and retention, and special event services above and beyond those currently provided by the City.

Location: Approximately 47 blocks, an area defined in Section 4 of this plan.
(See map on page 9)

Value of District: The total assessed value of the properties within the district is
\$105,651,600.00

Improvements, Activities, Services:

Enhanced Safety/Hospitality Programs

- Uptown Ambassadors Foot Patrol
- Night Safety Patrol
- Off Duty Police Weekend Night Patrol
- Uptown Ambassadors Bicycle Patrol
- Panhandler/Loiterer Removal

Enhanced Maintenance Programs

- Graffiti Removal
- Illegal Postings & Handbill Removal
- Sidewalk and Curb Cleaning
- Sidewalk Pressure Washing
- Sidewalk Weeding
- Trash and Debris Removal
- Report Broken Infrastructures (Streetlights and Pedestrian Lights, Sidewalks and Curbs, Pedestrian Lights, Water Meters, Storm Drains, Phone Booths, etc.)

Marketing/Communications

- Market Uptown Area
- Clean and Safe Promotions
- Retail Recruitment and Retention
- Office and Residential Recruitment
- Public Relations Services
- Special Events
- Newsletter, Visitor Map, Guides and Brochures
- Market Research and Data Collection

Method of Financing: A levy of assessments upon the real property and buildings which benefit from the improvements and activities.

Budget: Anticipated total district budget from assessments on assessable property for the year of 2013/2014 will be \$684,566.

Cost: Annual assessments are based upon an allocation of specific program costs by benefit zone. One property assessment variable, Assessed Value is used in the calculation. No assessments will be levied on the basis of personal property, business licenses or occupation fees.

The annual yearly assessments will not exceed the rates listed below during the first year of the BID.

| | | <u>Benefit Zone 1</u> | <u>Benefit Zone 2</u> | <u>Benefit Zone 3</u> |
|--------------------------------|-----------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Assessment Rate: | | \$0.00699 | \$0.00576 | \$0.00447 |
| (Per Dollar of Assessed Value) | Map Color | (Yellow) | (Orange/Blue) | (Purple) |

City Services: The City has agreed that existing City services will continue to be provided within the BID District at the same level as before the BID was created. BID services are in addition to existing City services.

District Formation: District formation requires submission of signed petitions from a group of property owners who either:

1. Collectively own at least fifty-one percent by assessed value of the real property within the district.
- or
2. Represent at least fifty one percent of all owners of real property within the district.

Duration: The district will have a 10-year life beginning January 1, 2015 and ending December 31, 2024. After 9 years, the petition process must be repeated for the district to continue beyond the 10th year.

Governance: The Business Improvement District budgets and policies will be refined annually, within the limitations set forth in the district management plan by a board of property owners representative of all the property owners paying assessments.

The private 501(c)(6) non-profit, Columbus Business Improvement District, will implement the improvements and activities defined by the District Management Plan.

SECTION 4

Columbus Business Improvement District Boundaries

An approximate 47-block area has been identified for the Columbus Business Improvement District. Within this 47-block area three (3) benefit zones have been established that will receive different levels of service, benefit and assessment. The map on page 9 of this report identifies district boundaries and benefit zone boundaries.

District Boundaries

The District includes all properties within a boundary of:

The Western boundary is:

- Front Avenue from 7th to 9th Street.
- Bay Avenue from 9th to 11th Street.
- The Chattahoochee River from 11th to 18th Street.

The Northern boundary is:

- 18th Street from the River to 2nd Avenue.
- From the west side of 2nd Ave. to the eastern property line of property on the eastern side of Veterans Parkway the boundary is the northern property line of property on the north side of 15th Street.

The Eastern boundary is:

- The Western side of 2nd Avenue from 18th Street to 15th Street.
- The Eastern property line of property on the east side of Veterans Parkway from the northern property line of property on 15th Street to the southern property line of property on 9th Street.
- Eastern property line of property on the Eastside of Broadway from 7th Street to 8th Street.
- Eastern property line of property on the Eastside of 1st Avenue from the Southern property line of property on the Southside of 8th Street to the Southern property line of property on the Southside of 9th Street.

The Southern boundary is:

- The Southern property line is the Northside of 7th Street from the west side of Front Avenue to the Eastern property line of property on the Eastside of Broadway.
- Southern property line of property on the Southside of 8th Street from the eastern property line of property on the east side of Broadway to the Eastern property line of property on the Eastside of 1st Avenue.
- From the Southern property line of property on the Southside of 9th Street from the Eastern property line of property on the Eastside of 1st Avenue to the Eastern property line of property on the Eastside of Veterans Parkway.

** The specific boundaries of the Columbus Business Improvement District are also shown on the map on page 9.

BENEFIT ZONE BOUNDARIES

Benefit Zone 1

- The Southern boundary of benefit zone 1 is the same as the Southern boundary of the district.
- The Western boundary of benefit zone 1 is the same as the Western boundary of the district from 7th Street to 12th Street. From 12th Street to 13th Street the Western boundary is the Middle of Front Avenue. From 13th Street to 14th Street the western boundary is the western property line of property on the west side of Broadway. From 14th the 15th Street the property line is the middle of 1st Avenue.
- The Northern boundary of benefit zone 1 is 12th Street from the River to Front Avenue. From Front Avenue to the Western property line of property on the west side of Broadway the northern boundary is 13th Street. From Broadway to the middle of 1st Avenue the boundary is the north side of 14th Street. From the middle of 1st Ave. to the west side of 2nd Ave. the northern boundary is the north side of 15th street. From the west side of 2nd Ave. to the eastern property line of property on the east side of 2nd Ave. the boundary is the northern property line of property on the North side of 15th Street.
- The eastern boundary of benefit zone 1 is the eastern property line of property facing on the eastern side of 2nd Avenue.

Benefit Zone 2

Benefit zone 2 is divided into two pieces zone 2a and zone 2b.

The boundary of benefit zone 2a is:

- The Western boundary of Zone 2a is the Eastern boundary of Zone 1.
- The Northern boundary of zone 2a is the Northern boundary of the district between the eastern property line of property on 2nd Avenue and the eastern property line of property on the eastern side of Veterans Parkway.
- The Eastern boundary of zone 2a is the Eastern boundary of the district between the northern property line of property on the north side of 15th Street and the southern property line of property on the southern side of 9th Street.
- The Southern boundary of Zone 2a is the Southern boundary of the district between the eastern property line of property on the east side of 2nd Avenue to the eastern property line of property on the Eastern side of Veterans Parkway.

The boundary of benefit zone 2b is:

- The western boundary is the western boundary of the district between 12th street and 14th Street.
- The north boundary is the north side of 14th Street from the River to Broadway.
- The eastern boundary is the western boundary of zone 1 between 14th Street and 12th Street.
- The southern boundary is the northern boundary of zone 1 along 12th Street, 13th Street, and 14th Street.

Benefit Zone 3

- The Western boundary of zone 3 is the Western boundary of the district from 14th Street to 18th Street.
- The Northern boundary is the Northern boundary of the district on 18th Street.
- The Eastern boundary is the Eastern boundary of the district from 18th Street to 15th Street plus the middle of 1st Avenue from 15th Street to 14th Street.
- The Southern boundary is the Northern boundary of Zone 2b from the River to Broadway along 14th Street and the Northern boundary of Zone 1 from Broadway to the middle of 1st Avenue along 14th Street and the northern boundary of Zone 1 from the middle of 1st Avenue to the west side of 2nd Ave. along the north side of 15th Street.

SECTION 5

Programs and Services Provided

1. PUBLIC SAFETY

Columbus BID Public Safety Program

The 47 block BID safety program mission is to support the police department, property owners and tenants in overall crime prevention efforts and reduction in neighborhood street disorder, while offering a customer service orientation to pedestrians. They provide highly visible neighborhood safety and hospitality service and are intended to supplement individual building security and the Columbus Police Department.

Integration with the Columbus Police Department

The BID safety program will continue to work closely with the Columbus Police Department and integrate the Uptown Columbus program with that of the Department.

Bicycle Patrol

The Bike Patrol deters aggressive panhandling and other unsuitable street behavior. Their presence is a deterrent to theft and burglary from motor vehicles, however the service does not completely prevent these crimes. They also deter and report illegal street vending, illegal dumping, and street code violations. They handle a myriad of quality-of-life problems including drinking in public, urinating in public, indecent exposure, trespassing, prostitution observations, scavenging and shopping cart confiscation. They perform goodwill gestures such as escorting employees, helping lost persons, assisting disabled motorists and conducting tours. Bike Patrols also assist with traffic control in the event of accidents, fires or unusual occurrences.

They patrol assigned routes, covering all zones in the district. They are professional, assertive, friendly, courteous, people oriented individuals in excellent physical condition. The Bike Patrol officers complete customized classroom district training and additional hours of field training.

Foot Patrol

The Foot Patrol will concentrate on the highest pedestrian use corridors such as Broadway. The Foot Patrol has the same mission and receives the same training as the bike patrol. Uniforms and equipment will be almost identical.

2. MAINTENANCE

BID Clean Team

In order to deal effectively and consistently with maintenance issues a BID Maintenance Program will continue to make the BID area one of the cleanest places in Columbus. A multi-dimensional approach has been developed consisting of the following elements:

Sidewalk Maintenance: Uniformed, sweep litter, debris and refuse from sidewalks and gutters of the district. Remove large illegal dumping in the district.

Alley Maintenance: The Clean Team and safety patrols each have responsibility in this area. Safety personnel address owner and tenant compliance with City code issues on cleanliness of sidewalks, alleys and illegal dumping. The Clean Team clears the alley of debris when a responsible party cannot be found for illegal dumping or other violations.

Graffiti Removal: The Clean Team remove graffiti, by using Graffiti Removal, cleaning solvent and pressure washing. The district will maintain a zero tolerance graffiti policy.

Sidewalk Cleaning: All sidewalks are cleaned on a rotating schedule. High pedestrian areas may be cleaned more frequently.

Landscape Maintenance: Public landscape areas, tree wells and planters will be maintained and kept free of litter and, to the extent deemed appropriate, enhanced by planting or replanting of trees and other vegetation and the installation of appropriate fencing.

Illegal Postings and Handbill Removal: Illegal signs and handbills scotch taped or glued on public property, utility boxes, poles and telephones are removed by hand or when necessary, by pressure washing.

Special Collections: The BID truck will be available to collect abandoned shopping carts and large bulky items illegally dumped in the district.

Maintenance Problems Requiring Third Party Intervention: Problems are monitored that create blighted or unsafe conditions in the district. Monthly and daily requests are made to the responsible city agencies for repair. Types of problems include broken infrastructures such as streetlights and pedestrian lights, sidewalks and curbs, water meters, storm drains, phone booths, etc.

Lighting Maintenance and Installation: Monitor streetlight levels and report outages to the appropriate authority. To the extent deemed appropriate in public areas, install decorative lights, security lights, fixtures, globes, or bulbs to illuminate the surrounding area.

3. MARKETING / COMMUNICATIONS / ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Tell the story...again and again and again. The program that will be developed to tell the story of change and improvement in Uptown Columbus is one of the most important parts of the improvement plan. The program that is developed by the property owners will include several tools to support the efforts of individual property owners and brokers to attract and retain tenants. Several types of communication elements could be used. Some of these elements are:

- Uptown Columbus website, www.uptowncolumbusga.com
- Business Directory
- Public and Media Relations
- Social Media
- Sponsoring, cosponsoring, or promoting events such as festivals and concerts which are designed to promote the District and increase pedestrian presence and activity.
- Others as needed

4. MANAGEMENT PERSONNEL

A professional staff that provides its own administrative support will manage the Columbus BID improvements and activities.

SECTION 6

Assessment Methodology

Columbus BID property owners and business owners have emphasized that the assessment formula for the Management District must be fair balanced and have a direct relationship between benefits received and costs.

Calculation of Assessments

The preceding methodology is applied to a database that has been constructed by the Columbus BID staff and approved by the property owners, and Board of Directors. The process for compiling the property database includes the following steps:

- Property data was first obtained from the City Assessor's Office.
- City assessor property data was crosschecked with reliable private sector data sources.
- A site survey was undertaken to verify selective data.

Based upon the methodology as set forth above, property data compiled by the Board of Directors, who represent the property owners, the BID budget will yield the following assessments for each benefit zone.

* The annual yearly assessments will not exceed the rates listed below during the first year of the BID.

| | <u>Benefit Zone 1</u> | <u>Benefit Zone 2</u> | <u>Benefit Zone 3</u> |
|--|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Assessment Rate (Per Dollar of Assessed Value) | \$0.00699 | \$0.00576 | \$0.00447 |

In future years, assessments may change, up or down, if assessed value information changes and/or BID budgets change pursuant to the Price Index Adjustment as detailed below. Assessments will in any event not exceed the limits described in the following section of this Plan. This assessment rate has not gone up since 1999 when we first started the BID.

Annual Assessment Adjustments

CPI Adjustments

Total program revenue may be adjusted each year to reflect the annual change in the Columbus Consumer Price Index (CPI) for all urban consumers. In no case will the annual increase due to CPI increases exceed 5%. Actual annual increases will range from 0% to 5%.

Budget Adjustments

Any annual budget surplus or deficit will be rolled into the following year's BID budget. Assessments will be set accordingly, within the constraints of the CPI, to adjust for surpluses or deficits that are carried forward.

Time and Manner for Collecting Assessments

As provided by state law, the Columbus BID assessment will appear as a separate line item on annual property tax bills. Existing laws for enforcement and appeal of property taxes apply to the BID assessments.

Government Assessments

The Columbus BID Management Plan does not assume that the City of Columbus will pay assessments for property owned within the boundaries of the BID.

It is the intent of the BID law to provide services only to those properties that pay assessments. BID services will not be provided to government properties that do not pay BID assessments. All reasonable efforts will be made to include government properties on a voluntary basis in the BID assessment.

Residential Assessments

Single-family residential property, including property classified as condominium units, that is used exclusively as a residence will not be assessed.

Non-Profit Assessments

Property held in a non-profit status that does not currently pay ad valorem taxes is not required to pay BID assessments. All reasonable efforts will be made to include non-profit properties on a voluntary basis in the BID assessment.

Current and Proposed Uses of the Land

The assessable land within the proposed district is currently being used primarily for commercial uses. No changes to land use are proposed.

SECTION 9

Governing the Business Improvement District

Consistent with business improvement district (BID) legislation throughout the nation, Georgia's BID law establishes a BID governance framework that allows property owners who pay assessments to determine how the assessments are used. The following components are required within a BID governing structure.

City Council

Following the submission of petitions from property owners representing more than 50% of the assessed value and/or more than 50% of the total property owners, the City Council holds a public hearing and then may form the BID. The BID is established by an ordinance of the Council, with the power to levy assessment on property.

Private Sector and the BID Management Organization

The BID District budgets and policies will be refined annually, within the limitations set forth in the district management plan, by the Columbus BID Corporation board of directors. The Board of the Columbus BID Corporation will be made up of property owners paying assessments within the district and will be structured to represent all of the property owners and reflect the assessments being paid.

The Columbus BID Corporation is a non-profit organization qualified as a tax-exempt organization under Section 501(c)(6) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986. The corporation is organized exclusively to implement the improvements and activities defined by the District Management Plan.

SECTION 9

Continuation of City Services

Throughout the process to establish the Columbus Business Improvement District, business and property owners have voiced concerns that the City of Columbus maintains existing services at verifiable "baseline" service levels. A formal baseline level of service policy ensures that existing City services are enhanced and not replaced by new BID improvements and activities.

SECTION 9

City Business Improvement District Rules

Contracting For Services

In order to supply the highest level of qualified services at the most reasonable cost the District may contract for services with public agencies, with non-profit public service agencies or with for-profit organizations.

Contracting Of Services

When it is determined to be in the best interest of the District, the District may contract with non-assessment paying property owners to provide District services to those owners.