

Downtown BID

Addressing fairness as related to areas and elections: When a sewer district is formed, the area to be affected votes and pays. When a fire district is formed, the area to be affected votes and pays. Shouldn't it follow that when a Downtown Improvement District is formed, the area to be affected votes and pays; rather than a vote taken in unrelated areas that will not be affected by either the vote or the assessment?

I'd be willing to wager that less than one-half of 1 percent of taxes paid in downtown Rapid City remain there for needed improvements and services.

The Business Improvement District improves that by taxing businesses in the area and spending the proceeds within the business district for much needed improvements and developments.

RAY PARKER
2414 Harney Drive
Rapid City

Downtown BID

How can the group promoting BID improve the downtown area by spending over \$95,000 on office expenses and salaries?

According to the Rapid City Finance Office, the first full year's assessment is only \$170,372.30. How much improvement can be done with \$70,000?

How can double taxation help the merchant? The cost of doing business will raise the cost of merchandise.

An added tax hurts the downtown merchant. Vote "yes" Dec. 4.
MRS. NATHELLE MOSES
2922 Lanark Road
Rapid City

Downtown BID

With the Business Improvement District election just around the corner, we want to share our views.

As owners of a downtown business, we would like to see BID remain in effect. There is so much potential downtown, and it could be such an inviting place to shop and do

business. We welcome new and different types of businesses. We not only want a strong core of the city for residents of Rapid City, but also for our visitors.

We feel we need full-time employees to promote our downtown. They would have the time and the professionalism to attract new businesses. In the past, we were members of the Downtown Association. It was strictly volunteers. Volunteers didn't have the time or the skills to do the job properly.

We are willing to pay our share to promote and strengthen our city.
JUNE HERMANSON
DIANE MEISENHOLDER
524 Seventh Street
Rapid City

Downtown BID

I stand behind the BID, seeing it as a needed vehicle to address the problems downtown faces. The ideals of the people who support the BID are not to line our pockets with gold. We do not see it as a tool to make ourselves rich; yet it will enrich the economic stability of the business community. It is in place to make sure the downtown can and will start the long upward struggle of revitalization for a wonderful portion of this city.

Let's keep this program that downtown business people have put together. Let the DDC board and staff look at ideas for change and make decisions vital to the growth of downtown.

If we throw out this program, who will start the work all over again? Who will spend countless hours, face the struggles and opposition, to help downtown?

Will it be the opponents, will it be the people who sit on the fence undecided, or will it be the people who have already given their time and effort?

Let's keep this program — vote "no"!
PEGGY BUSSE
The Top Drawer
608 St. Joseph Street
Rapid City

Downtown BID

In 1985 Mayor LaCroix asked me to serve as chairman of the Heart of the City Task Force. I have worked continuously for and along with many other volunteer business people to develop a strategy that would arrest the steady decline of our downtown.

With the "Malling of America," many downtowns are left with declining property values, vacancies, lack of pride and low rents. Apathy, distrust and negative attitudes become pervasive.

A Business Improvement District has been formed to reverse these trends downtown. Now we have an organization, a representative elected board, a plan of action and funding from fair assessments of all downtown businesses. Those who can benefit from the BID are paying for it instead of asking the taxpayers to pick up the tab.

Opponents to this progressive project have never suggested any other plan. And yet they are asking the whole community to kill the Business Improvement District. This special election, forced on us all, is costing taxpayers \$10,000 needlessly.

Please give your downtown a chance to contribute to our community's bright future.

Rescue the Business Improvement District; vote "no" on both issues
Tuesday, Dec. 4.
TOM LEE
720 St. Joseph Street
Rapid City

Downtown BID

Unauthorized by its directors, the Downtown Development Corporation used taxes, which the opponents were forced to pay, in a campaign against them.

BID proponents used exclusive

access to daily counts in the straw vote to get out the pro-BID vote. Their touted 76 percent voter turnout means they only enfranchised 350 businesses, but their records show over 430, and the finance office billed 472. Still their tactics only produced a bare majority of support.

Both sides share responsibility for costs of a special election. Opponents rushed initial efforts to combine with the already set garbage container vote. Proponents exploited that haste in court. Because of the vote delay, downtown businesses paid \$56,769 in taxes through September, with \$18,130 still due. Delaying until the next regular city election would cost them that much again. Once in the city coffers, if the BID ordinances are overturned, the city decides the money's disposition.

The opponents are exercising their only legally mandated voting option for relief from agents they mistrust by turning to the citizens. Support them by voting "yes" to abolish the BID.

JAMES A. GABEL
chairman
Legal and Finance Committee
Downtown Development Commission
Rapid City

Downtown BID

I understand the Downtown Development Commission has revised the Business Improvement District proposal to address the public review comments. The revised Business Improvement District provides an excellent opportunity to:

- Construct streetscape improvements throughout the district.
- Implement the Omaha Street corridor Improvements.
- Provide for professional

downtown management.

I fully support the proposed Business Improvement District for downtown Rapid City. This is a great opportunity to take charge of our future.

Please do your part — vote "no" on Dec. 4.
PATRICK H. WYSS
522 Seventh Street, 214
Rapid City

Downtown BID

On Tuesday, Dec. 4, Rapid City will hold a special election to determine the fate of the downtown Business Improvement District (BID). We urge you to vote "yes" to abolish BID. We are opposed to BID for many reasons. Some of our major objections are:

1. The tax imposed by BID is unfair. The tax is 10 cents per square foot, based on the total square footage of the businesses within the district. But, there is a \$2,000 cap on the tax. Therefore, a business with over 20,000 square feet is paying less than 10 cents a square foot. How would you feel if someone paid property taxes at a lower rate than you because his house was larger than yours?

2. A large portion of the taxes collected are earmarked for salaries and administrative expenses. We do not need another bureaucracy to "help" us.

3. Another portion of the taxes is for downtown promotion. As an independent business, we should be able to promote our business as we desire.

We could go on and on with our objections to BID and why we think it is unfair and should be abolished. We

encourage you to vote "yes" to abolish BID.

ARDELLE BERGLUND
JAY BERGLUND
owners, Party Stuff
830 Main Street
Rapid City

Downtown BID

Downtown Rapid City is the heart of this community. The health of our community is reflected in the vitality of downtown businesses. The Business Improvement District is an equitable means of funding and planning for our future success.

Downtown business owners are proud of our community and have strived to make downtown a prosperous business district. All promotions and improvements need planning, funding and implementation by a director responsible to a governing body.

As a downtown businessman and past president of the Downtown Association, I saw several voluntary programs initiated. Due to the nature of a completely voluntary organization, our promotional campaigns were limited. The Business Improvement District will allow comprehensive downtown promotion and development with the support and care of its investors.

As we plan for Rapid City's growth and success, we need a strong, decisive plan of action and adequate funding for our downtown business district. Frankly, I don't see any way to make this happen other than the Business Improvement District.

Your continued support of downtown is needed — vote "no" on Dec. 4.
TOM DIDIER
523 Sixth Street
Rapid City