

# Schnell's exit painful for BID, not terminal

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Bryan Schnell's resignation as head of the Downtown Development Corp. won't slow down Rapid City's business improvement district (BID) or stem the opposition to it.

"We've lost a significant, valuable asset, no question, but ... things are moving along," said BID board member Lee Geiger. Schnell, after 2½ years at the helm of the DDC, stepped down Monday night.

The BID, a tax district used to fund the DDC's promotions, marketing and management of the downtown area, has not been universally popular.

Attorney Walter Bradsky, representing the opposition group Committee for Fairness, said the drive to put the BID on a citywide ballot continues.

He said more than 1,000 signatures had been gathered in the first few weeks of the petition drive. If the required number of signatures, about 1,500, are gathered, voters will be asked whether they want to repeal city ordinances creating the district and imposing the tax.

Bradsky expects the issue to go before voters sometime in the fall.

"I wish Bryan Schnell success," Bradsky added. "I have nothing personal against him — we're just on

opposite sides of the fence."

Roger Heacock, second vice chairman and treasurer of the BID board, said Tuesday that the board wants a quick but careful search for Schnell's replacement.

"Bryan has done an outstanding job. He's a talented individual, and I wish him well in his other pursuits," said Heacock.

No decisions have been made about

finding a replacement for Schnell, who turned in his resignation at Monday night's meeting of the BID board of directors. The downtown development corporation is financed by the BID, a taxing district that includes the 40-square-block downtown area.

Schnell, in his resignation, offered to stay on two to four weeks while the board starts its search for a re-

placement.

"As far as we're concerned, we would welcome him to stay on (until a new person is on board)," Heacock said.

Board Chairman John Brewer said Schnell's resignation is unfortunate. "He's a skilled and talented director, but it's been a long drag for him ... I wish it had worked out for him," he said.