

Downtown Mesa Association

Efforts to Create a Thriving Downtown FY 2024-2025 Accomplishments FY 2025-2026 Work Plan

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Introduction

What is the DMA?

A non-profit organization formed in 1985 to deliver enhanced services, increase economic growth and champion downtown as a place to live, invest, work, spend time and enjoy.

Mission

We inspire those around us to celebrate local businesses, advance downtown Mesa as a destination and create moments of joy.

Vision

Downtown Mesa is where connection sparks, community thrives and unique experiences are made.



Introduction

About DMA

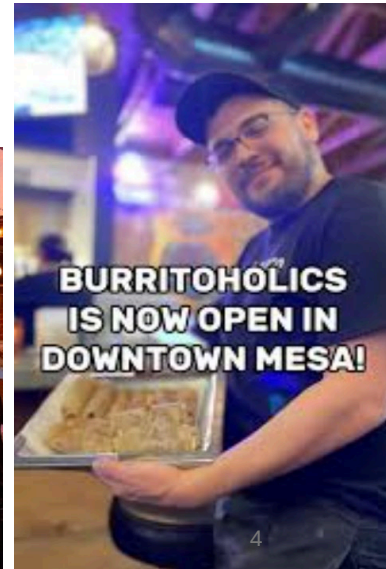
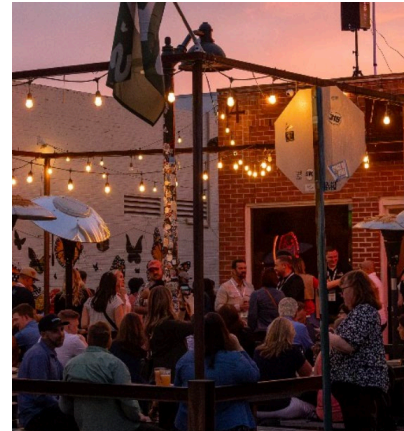
- Oversees a taxing district voted on by property owners
 - 1 sq mile
 - legally defined geographic boundary
- Delivers tangible enhanced services *above and beyond* general municipal services
- Produces a variety of events, promotions and placemaking activities
 - We are the “They” behind many activities
- Does *NOT* have a membership program



Introduction

Priorities of the District

- Improve the appearance and safety of the District
- Increase occupancy in residential and office buildings
- Help attract a variety of new businesses to fill vacant storefronts
- Secure continued investment
- Advocate for catalytic projects and policies as appropriate
- Advance walkability, experience, and placemaking
- Connect downtown residents, employees and visitors to existing businesses
- Continue to offer events and promotions: signature and smaller-scale
- Provide parking management and enforcement services

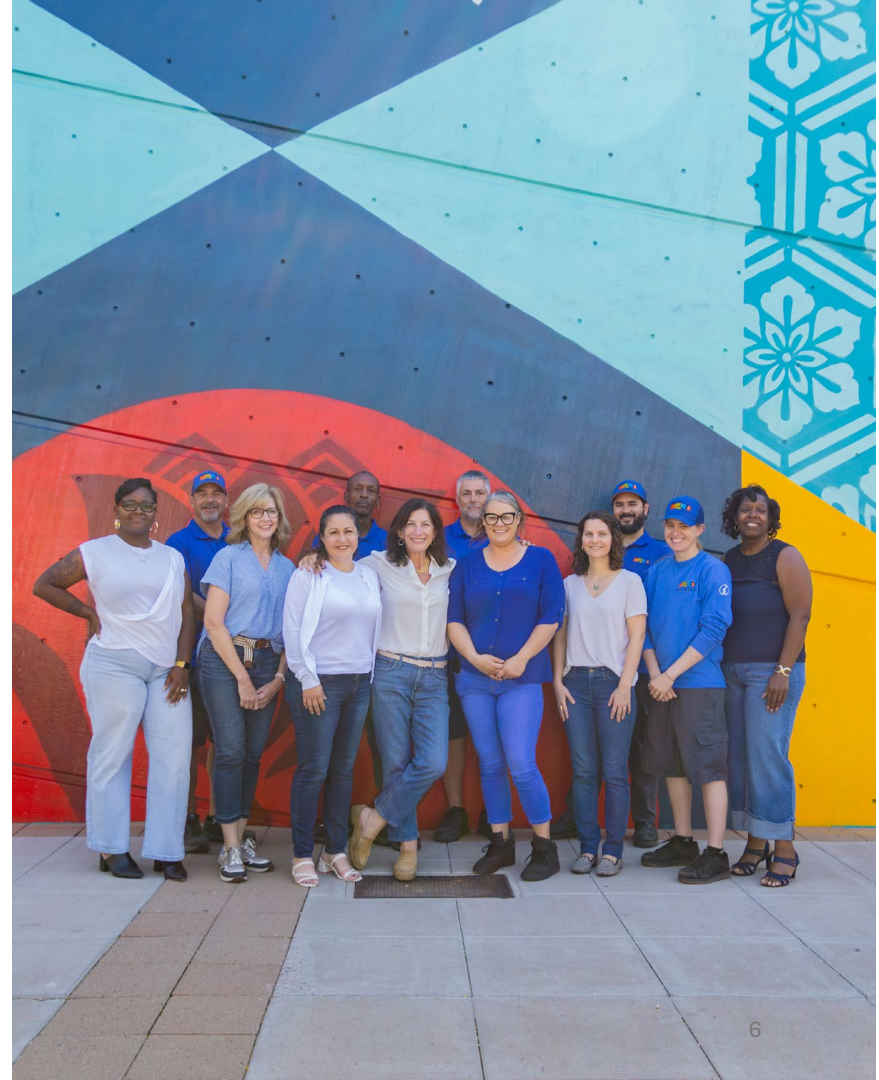


ADMINISTRATION

Administration

What was new in FY 2024:

- Implemented new internal controls, organizational policies and procedures
- Completed audit and restructured financial reporting
- Strengthened the relationship with partner organizations, including City, Chamber, Visit Mesa, ASU, Local First, etc.
- Rebuilt Clean Team with focus on increased service delivery – more efficient and better reflects zones



OPERATIONS:

**CLEAN, SAFE, PARKING &
BEAUTIFICATION INITIATIVES**

Clean Team Ambassadors

New Uniforms & Branding = Bright, Visible, Approachable



FLEETWRAP
HEADQUARTERS A



Clean Team Ambassadors

Team of 5 full-time, trained and uniformed employees that deliver service downtown 7 days a week

July 2024 – April 2025:

1375 Maintenance Calls Monthly

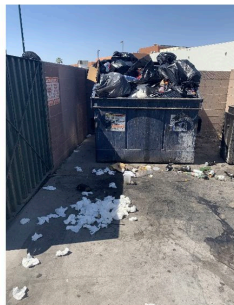
Bulky Items, Graffiti, Shopping Carts, Overflowing Dumpsters

- 16,000+ Year
- 2024 Logs in December Alone

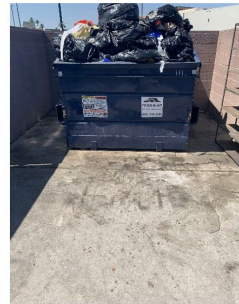
3 Tons Trash Removed Monthly

Daily Pressure Washing on Main

BEFORE



AFTER



Parking

- Brought Special Event Parking Management in-house and implemented new tracking and reporting system
- Added a Parking Ambassador to provide increased customer assistance and enforcement
- Worked with City staff to add **universal** BLUE parking signs so visitors can easily identify available parking
- Created Free Public Parking A-Frame Signage to assist the public locate free parking on weekends and events
- Managed parking for 73 special events at the MAC - helping support additional downtown investment



PROMOTIONAL & SIGNATURE EVENTS

Downtown Mesa Gift Card



\$14,580

More than **\$14,000**
sold providing a **direct**
benefit to downtown
businesses

41+

Participating **Downtown**
Mesa Merchants, including
Shopping, Dining and
Specialty

Building Community

Why Events Matter

Events are a vital [tool](#) for activating public spaces, encouraging economic activity, and building community identity.

- **Family-Friendly and Accessible:** Most DMA events are **free and family-friendly**, reflecting Mesa's reputation as a family-first city.
- **Driving Foot Traffic:** Events bring thousands of visitors to downtown, increasing visibility for local businesses and boosting the local economy.
- **Community Engagement:** Our programming encourages residents to explore and be part of downtown's evolution.
- **Inclusive Atmosphere:** Events are designed to be culturally diverse, safe, and welcoming for every generation.
- **Place-Based Experience:** Events transform everyday streets, plazas, alleyways and other public spaces into destinations of celebration, creativity, and connection.
- **Events Become Necessary:** Uncertainty leads to demand for more community-oriented, unique and either free or low-cost events and programming



Story Time

- Partnership with the MAC
- Small, but BELOVED by parents and kids
- Includes crafts, cookies and juice
- Due to demand - expanded from occasional to weekly series in December and the Spring
- Activating The Plaza at Mesa City Center
- Connects families to businesses mid-day, weekday



FREE

MESA ARTS CENTER **MESA**

LET'S PLAY DRAMA STORYTIME

A ZOOASTIC STORY ADVENTURE WITH
CREATURES GREAT AND SMALL!


INCLUDES:
STORY - CRAFT - SNACK


MARCH 6TH:
STORY: GIRAFFES CAN'T DANCE
CRAFT: POP UP GIRAFFES

MARCH 13TH:
STORY: BARK GEORGE
CRAFT: PUPPY PUPPETS

MARCH 20TH:
STORY: IF YOU GIVE A MOUSE A COOKIE
CRAFT: COOKIE CUT-OUTS


MARCH 27TH:
STORY: HOM TO PARTY LIKE A SNAIL
CRAFT: PARTY CROWNS



 @DOWNTOWNMESA
DOWNTOWNMESA.COM

**EVERY THURSDAY
IN MARCH
10AM**

**THE PLAZA
56 E. MAIN STREET
DOWNTOWN MESA**



Bar and Food Crawls

- Direct benefit to businesses – drives spending
- Well attended – increasing ticket sales
- Light lift for DMA and businesses
- Raises awareness for restaurants and bars





Baseball Block Party

- 2nd annual event – FREE!
- 2,500 attended
- Celebration of spring training and baseball
- Inflatables, crafts, live music, giveaways, look alike contests
- VIPs including elected officials, sports podcasters, Baxter, Sparky
- Made possible through sponsorship from Visit Mesa

Easter

- 4,000+ visitors throughout the event
- 16,000+ Easter eggs hidden at the City Plaza and along Main Street
- 20+ businesses participated in the egg hunt
- Free activities, arts and crafts, Easter Bunny photos, face painting and interactive entertainment



Haunting on Main Street

- 2,000+ visitors throughout the day
- 30 merchant & museum trick-or-treat stations
- Distributed over 10,000 pieces of candy to participants
- Continued Window Décor Contest, added participating businesses





BBQ Classic

- 2nd annual barbeque competition
- 5,000+ attendees
- 40+ teams made up of award-winning pitmasters from around the region
- All-ages, food trucks, barbeque, live music
- Made possible through sponsorship with Visit Mesa



Sunset Markets

- Monthly evening market with artisans, food and live music
- Attracts residents and downtown employees
- 30+ vendors



Merry Main Street

- Holiday night market on Main & Macdonald
- 40+ vendors
- 10,000+ attended the first weekend
- Princess parties
- Cookies & Cocoa with Santa SOLD OUT





Menorah Lighting

- Part of Merry Main Street
- Beloved tradition bringing hundreds into downtown
- Complimentary snacks and crafts inside The Post
- Led by Rabbi Blotner





Noon Years Eve

- Inaugural event – 5,000+ attended
- Free, family-friendly with crafts, live music, food trucks, crafts, photo booth
- Countdown to 12 noon includes Mesa's own Diving Lady and a colorful fireworks show
- Sparkling apple cider toast for a memorable new year
- Received proclamation as an official day
- Made possible through sponsorship from Visit Mesa

BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT

Business Engagement

- Partnered with OUT and Economic Development to host a broker tour highlighting downtown. +20 attended
- Supported business-to-business collaboration
- Began collecting information on downtown businesses to develop a better system for communication, understanding of current businesses, and opportunities to attract new businesses
- Organized promotional efforts to increase spending in businesses, including our holiday passport, bar and food crawls



Marketing & Communications

- Conducted a comprehensive audit of existing digital marketing efforts and developed strategy for growth and added engagement
 - 35% increase in engagement over FY 23-24
 - 20% increase in email open rates over FY 23-24
- Developed SOPs and implemented streamlined processes for social media and digital initiatives
- Developed graphics and new branding for seasonal messaging, signature and weekly events resulting in a more recognizable identify for DMA and downtown



GOALS & WORK PRIORITIES FY 2025 - 2026

Workplan & Goals FY 2025 - 2026

Guiding Principles:

- Position Downtown Mesa as a premier destination for investment, entertainment and visitation
- Provide value to business & property owners
- Measurable – track and report accomplishments
- Increase spending in businesses
- Ensure staff funding and capacity are in place to deliver expectations



WHAT'S WORKING

- Continued work of the Clean Team
- Free, family-friendly events & programming
- Collaboration with the City
- Parking Management and Enforcement
- Development, Increased Investment
- Community Interest in Downtown Mesa
- Special Event Parking Management



OPPORTUNITIES

- Continue to add programming that drives people downtown and increases spending in businesses
- Develop support for a collaborative marketing effort
- Partner more with MAC, Convention Center, Amphitheater, Visit Mesa, Co-Hoots, ASU, MIX
- Focus on connectivity, wayfinding and beautification efforts
- Grow sponsorship of DMA signature events
- Strengthen business attraction efforts and continue to work with existing businesses to ensure overall health
- Produce new parking collateral and continue to improve signage and messaging
- Collect data and report monthly



Priorities – A Look Ahead

Marketing & Business Engagement

- Lead a collaborative marketing / PR effort to tell the story of downtown as a premier destination***
- Refresh DMA branding and public-facing messaging
- Select new database that houses information on businesses and owners
- Restructure and launch a regular schedule of stakeholder meetings and communications methods
- Create Welcome Packets for new businesses and new residents
- Support retail recruitment efforts and business-to-business collaboration
- Offer a robust year-round event schedule

Operations

- Identify opportunities for improved maintenance of public spaces
- Develop new monthly reporting of Clean Team activities
- Launch new Mobile Information Kiosk to connect patrons to businesses
- Identify opportunities for beautification throughout downtown – trees / shade, public art, alley activation, lighting, kiosks, etc.
- Produce new collateral highlighting parking locations & identify potential for added parking inventory

Advocacy

- Support City-led studies looking at micro-mobility, retail and convention center / amphitheater
- Champion projects and policies that positively affect downtown



CITY PARTICIPATION

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT

- The DMA is contracted with the City of Mesa through a Professional Services Agreement
- The Professional Services Agreement includes the following services:

Baseline Services

Funded through the annual SID 228 assessment and City voluntary self-assessment

- Clean Team Ambassadors
- Pressure Washing
- Promotion / Marketing
- Weed Control / Graffiti Abatement
- Business Development

Enhanced Services

Funded through the Professional Services Agreement

- Parking management and enforcement
- Promotional programming
- Banner & kiosk program
- Special Event production – 3 per year minimum
- Enhanced public space management
- Maintenance of Plaza at Mesa City Center

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT

Funding for the Professional Services Agreement come from three primary sources:

- Annual SID 228 Assessment
- City-owned property voluntary contribution
- Enhanced Services

Annual SID 228 Assessment – Commercial Properties \$367,796.19	City Voluntary Self-Assessment – City-Owned Property \$240,763.36	Enhanced Services \$441,404.05
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PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT

2025 - 2026

DMA Annual Budget Amount

\$1,049,963.60

Special Event Parking Fund

Allotment

\$50,000

Thank you!

Questions? Comments?