



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) of BIDS

What is a BID?

A Business Improvement District (BID) is a public/private partnership in which property and business owners elect to make a collective contribution to the maintenance, development and promotion of their commercial district.

Why Form a BID?

The purpose of a BID is to improve conditions for business in a specific area, attract and retain businesses, generate jobs and improve the quality of life for those who use the district. A BID enables stakeholders to decide which services to provide to meet the district's unique needs.

- Business development, resources, grants and retention programs
- Commercial vacancy reduction
- Crime reduction programs
- Marketing and advocacy programs
- Landscaping improvements and holiday decorations
- Street clean up ambassadors

I already pay taxes. Why should I pay more?

Unlike your current general tax assessment, BID funds will go exclusively to projects within the boundaries determined on the BID operating plan. The current boundary proposal is Lincoln Avenue between 10th and 16th Streets, including some commercial properties just north and south of Lincoln on 13th Street.

What are the benefits of having a BID?

- All property owners have a say so by voting on how the funds are spent based on input on the annual operating plan.
- The collective efforts are designed to improve the property value and safety of the district.
- It unifies all property owners to a common vision for the district.
- These funds can be leveraged to gain other City of Milwaukee and private grants for building and district improvements. Most notably, a BID allows access to Milwaukee's Business Development Funds and Main Street Milwaukee in which they will match funds up to \$25,000 for development projects.
- Accountability & Legitimacy. There is an annual audit process conducted by the City of Milwaukee to ensure all funds were used as outlined on the operating plan.
- The presence of a BID also allows a district to borrow against future assessments to do large scale projects such as streetscaping, not otherwise possible.

Who pays for the BID?

Only commercial property owners within the boundaries will have an additional assessment charged for the BID operating plan.

What will this cost me?

Under an initial scenario, commercial property owners would be charged an additional tax on the property tax bill which that will be set aside for the distinct spending based on the operating plan. The amount will be determined by the collections based on approval of the BID District. The equation used will be the same every year thereafter. Based on the agreed upon amount of additional assessment, the BID board will create a publicly approved operating plan to use the designated funds.

There is a great deal of flexibility on how to finance a BID; options include

- A flat fee or a percentage of the assessed value; which may include a floor and ceiling.
Lincoln Village is proposing a \$250 flat fee.

Where does the money go?

The funds are collected by the city and dispersed according to the operating plan of the district BID. Remember, these funds will only be used in the designated area.

When does it end?

The length of a BID is determined by each district. Lincoln Village is anticipating an initial five year schedule. At that time, cumulative data will be collected measuring the outcomes for a full review to determine the current and future value of the program. At that time, commercial property owners can vote to continue or end the project.

Are there other BID districts in Milwaukee?

Yes. There are currently more than 40 commercial districts in the city participating. Some of the districts include Mitchell St., Brady St., Downer Ave., Cesar Chavez Dr., Historic King Dr. and the downtown Milwaukee business district.

What are you asking me to do?

We are asking for your support to create a BID for our Lincoln Avenue District to ensure economic growth and increase neighborhood safety for the future. If it is determined we have the support, the Lincoln Village Business Association will create an operating plan with different funding options for your voting review. If a majority of commercial property owners agree to move forward, LVBA will submit a plan for approval to the City of Milwaukee.

We already have the Main Street program, why do we need this?

The Main Street program has generated very positive results in the past 8 years. However the funding for Main Street is not guaranteed annually, nor does it have the leverage to access other funding programs that BID districts in Milwaukee already have access to.

If you have further questions, and would like to discuss this in more detail. Feel free to contact the Lincoln Village Business Association office and Executive Director, Neil White

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