



## Benefits Provided by the Birmingham Shopping District

Established in 1992 under Public Act 146, the mission of the Birmingham Shopping District is to “**strive to provide leadership in marketing, advertising and promotion of the Birmingham Shopping District. The BSD actively works to promote a district that is attractive, clean, safe and pedestrian-friendly and ensure that the district continues to serve as a center for business, service, social and community activities.**” To this end, the BSD provides many programs and services that assist businesses, property owners and the entire business district. These initiatives are funded through an assessment on properties within the district. For the past 10 years, the assessment rate has remained the same. Going into the upcoming renewal period for 2019 – 2022, the BSD Board of Directors conducted a thorough analysis of the assessment to include a history of the assessments, forecasted needs, and upcoming projects such as the reconstruction projects on Maple Road in 2020 and South Old Woodward in 2022. With these priorities in mind, the board established objectives for the next assessment period such as maintaining a healthy fund balance, funding upcoming construction initiatives in 2020 and 2022, better aligning the assessment rates for second floor and above with that of the first floor businesses, and not raising the assessment on first floor businesses. Furthermore, the BSD board implemented an operational cost reduction, reduced the amount of its desired fund balance, and accounted for the cost of construction initiatives in determining the new assessment rates. The new assessment rate for the next four years does align with the increase in the Detroit CPI index this past ten years.

A summary of the BSD services provided to assist all tenants includes:

- Business retention and attraction:
  - The BSD hosts regular merchant meetings with information and updates on initiatives and events occurring in downtown. Additionally, seminars and professional speakers present to merchants on important business topics to assist merchants with their business growth and expansion.
  - Business recruitment assistance: The BSD retains professional retail consultant services to help bring key national, regional, and local retailers to Birmingham. The BSD works closely with property owners, retailers and prospective businesses. We have successfully recruited national retailers including Paper Source, lululemon, francesca’s, Evereve, bluemercury, and west elm. Recent successful recruitments include Sara Campbell and Allen Edmonds. Between these businesses, an estimated \$8-10 Million in annual sales are coming to Birmingham. Since we began this effort in 2009, commercial property values, lease rates and occupancy rates have steadily increased. Currently, our retail occupancy rate is 96% and the office occupancy rate is 90%.
  - The BSD maintains an available property list highlighting available commercial office and retail space in the district. This list is maintained on our website and distributed to over 200 local commercial real estate professionals. The BSD maintains and provides free demographic information, maps and marketing collateral for prospective tenants.
- Marketing:
  - Marketing and advertising: The BSD promotes downtown as the premier place to shop, dine, work, and play. Executing advertising and marketing campaigns throughout the year, the BSD utilizes various tools such as network and cable television, radio, print ads and articles, social media, billboards, signs and other means.
  - Online and social media promotion: The BSD promotes all BSD businesses and their information on [www.ALLINBirmingham.com](http://www.ALLINBirmingham.com). With approximately 8,000 unique viewers per month, the BSD website is frequently viewed by people looking for business information. Additionally, the BSD markets on Facebook (8,000 followers), Instagram, and Twitter.

- Birmingham Magazine: This attractive, glossy, full color magazine showcases the best of Birmingham retailers, restaurants, salons and other businesses. The magazine reaches over 45,000 residents and businesses in Birmingham and surrounding communities three times a year. Recently the magazine published a professional guide, highlighting physicians, attorneys, and other professionals.
- Special Events:
  - The BSD hosts special events and activities throughout the year designed to introduce prospective shoppers and diners to the district and to enhance the overall appeal of the town for existing businesses. Special events include the Birmingham Farmers Market, Birmingham Restaurant Week, Day On The Town sale, Birmingham Cruise car show, holiday events such as Small Business Saturday, Tree Lighting, Santa House, free carriage rides and more. The successful Birmingham Winter Markt holiday market draws over 16,000 people over a three-day weekend in early December. Combined, BSD events bring over 150,000 people to Birmingham throughout the year.
- Maintenance and capital improvements:
  - Summer floral and holiday displays: The BSD strives to make Birmingham vibrant and attractive with summer floral displays and holiday lighting throughout the downtown area, and along East Maple and Adams Road in the Triangle District. We plant and maintain over 200 hanging floral baskets and large planters. For the holidays, the City and the BSD light over 400 trees with approximately 800,000 lights along the major streets and in Shain Park.
  - Sidewalk snow removal: The BSD clears snow on approximately 10 miles of sidewalks in the district after two inches or more of snow has fallen. This 4' path makes the sidewalks safe for shoppers and employees.
- Old Woodward reconstruction initiatives: During the summer of 2018, downtown Birmingham underwent a major reconstruction project of Old Woodward and Maple Road. The BSD played a major role in the process, acting as a liaison to businesses to mitigate the impact of the construction. The BSD executed several initiatives to help the downtown. This included the successful Birmingham Bonus Bucks campaign that dispersed \$50,000 in Bonus Bucks to customers and brought in \$1,047,691 in purchases at BSD stores. Furthermore, the BSD and City funded four valet parking stations that offered 2 hours of complimentary parking to approximately 15,300 visitors in the city. The BSD also implemented a public art program, provided merchant signs around the city making it easier for customers to navigate their way around downtown, and implemented a robust marketing campaign notifying customers that Birmingham businesses, stores, and restaurants were open for business despite the construction.

National experts say that a vibrant downtown like Birmingham creates a healthier community, giving residents and employees who work there a higher quality of life. Along with these high quality attributes, come higher property values for commercial and residential owners. The BSD works actively with the City of Birmingham on issues that are vital to the downtown district. BSD Board members sit on City committees like the Ad Hoc Parking Study Committee and the Multi Modal Board to make sure the concerns of the commercial district are heard.

If you are not familiar with the efforts of the BSD, please explore [www.ALLINBirmingham.com](http://www.ALLINBirmingham.com). The BSD Board meets monthly, on the first Thursday of every month. For a schedule of meetings, please visit [www.ALLINBirmingham.com](http://www.ALLINBirmingham.com). If you have questions about the Birmingham Shopping District, we are happy to explain BSD benefits, and how we can help your business, or your tenants make the most of the BSD. Contact our office at 248-530-1200 for more information.