



## STRATEGIC PLAN FOR A DOWNTOWN TULSA MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATION 2020

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Tulsa was one of the first U.S. cities to establish a business improvement district, creating the Downtown Tulsa Improvement District (DTID) in 1981 to provide enhanced improvements and maintenance beyond normal City services. The DTID was in place until 2009, when new challenges and conditions in Downtown prompted a re-evaluation of the district and ultimately the dissolution of the DTID and the formation of the Tulsa Stadium Improvement District (TSID).

The TSID covers the entirety of Downtown, a total of 1.4 square miles. TSID assessment revenue is used in two separate ways:

1. To provide enhanced services throughout the district, such as maintenance, cleaning, security, and marketing. Enhanced services are overseen by the Downtown Coordinating Council (DCC), a department within the City of Tulsa.
2. To repay bonds used to finance a ballpark in Downtown (ONEOK Field). These capital costs are overseen by the Tulsa Stadium Trust.

**This strategic plan seeks to create a new Downtown Management Organization for Tulsa to oversee the delivery of enhanced services, based on national best practices and community input.**

To assist in the strategic planning process, the City of Tulsa contracted Progressive Urban Management Associates (P.U.M.A.), a Denver-based consulting firm that specializes in downtown strategic planning and organizational development.

### COVID-19 IMPLICATIONS:

Mid-way through the strategic planning process, the COVID-19 pandemic began severely impacting health and economic conditions across the country. In addition to effects felt by all downtowns, Downtown Tulsa had the additional impact of a sharp decline in oil and gas prices, a staple sector of the local economy.

The strategic goals and objectives of this plan are intended to be long-term but some become more critical in the short-term as Tulsa begins its economic recovery. It is envisioned that **the new organization will be critical to the economic recovery and resiliency strategy for Downtown.**



# COMMUNITY INPUT

Throughout the strategic planning process, nearly **4,000 community stakeholders** were engaged, through one-on-one interviews, roundtable discussions, community forums, and an online survey. Collectively these voices represented a wide range of perspectives, including: property owners, businesses, residents, employees, civic and cultural partners, and adjacent neighborhood representatives.

Through the various forms of engagement, stakeholders were asked what improvements they desired for Downtown Tulsa. Common improvements, organized by topic, are list below:

## COMMON THEMES



### ECONOMIC VITALITY

- Recruit primary employers; diversify jobs
- Attract more retail and restaurants
- Invest in Greenwood; support Black-owned businesses
- New resident/employee amenities (e.g. grocery store)
- Increase housing at a variety of price points; esp. affordable



### CLEAN, SAFE, WELCOMING

- Increased services for the population experiencing homelessness
- Ensure Downtown is diverse and welcoming
- Enhance safety and security



### BEAUTIFICATION

- Invest in public art by local artists
- Continued greening of Downtown



### MOBILITY

- More walkable and accessible Downtown; connecting the Downtown districts
- Improve connections to adjacent neighborhoods
- Improve parking management and experience



### COMMUNICATIONS

- Create cohesive marketing
- Launch a new brand for Downtown

# DOWNTOWN TULSA PARTNERSHIP

## STRATEGIC PIVOTS

The new downtown management organization, the Downtown Tulsa Partnership (DTP), will be fundamentally different from the Downtown Coordinating Council in the following ways. The Downtown Tulsa Partnership will:

1. Be an independent, non-profit 501(c)(6) organization, with the ability to champion Downtown;
2. Establish a clear delineation between base-level services provided by the City and enhanced services provided by the organization;
3. Increase the value proposition to ratepayers by maximizing accountability, responsiveness, and reflecting myriad Downtown interests;
4. Diversify revenue beyond assessments to allow the organization to further expand and enhance the delivery of services; and
5. Provide unification and cohesion among Downtown districts and stakeholders and advocate for policies and investment that benefit Downtown.



### VISION:

Downtown Tulsa: Our Center of Commerce, Culture, and Community

### MISSION:

To champion a prosperous, vibrant, and inclusive Downtown Tulsa



# GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The organization's work program is organized around five key goals and supporting objectives. Each objective also has specific tactics, as well as best practices from other BID-based organizations nationally.

## GOAL 1

**Ensure Downtown Tulsa is consistently clean, safe, and appealing**

- A. Establish a new Clean, Safe, and Livability Program to bring Downtown in alignment with industry standards and to enhance its cleanliness, safety and livability
- B. Devise maintenance and beautification standards to improve the overall appearance of the physical environment in Downtown
- C. Partner with service providers on a holistic approach and solutions to Tulsans experiencing homelessness

**Example Tactic:** Introduce a highly visible, distinctly uniformed Ambassador team that will focus on the following three components: Cleaning/Maintenance, Hospitality, and Livability/Safety

## GOAL 2

**Foster a prosperous Downtown through investments and resources that seek to benefit all Tulsans**

- A. Work with property owners, real estate professionals, local government and economic development groups to retain and recruit major primary employers to Downtown Tulsa
- B. Develop and implement tools that support small businesses and housing to ensure Downtown is economically viable, diverse and welcoming
- C. Build on the legacy of Black Wall Street by supporting the Historic Greenwood District Main Street Program and community-led investment in the Greenwood District
- D. Encourage the attraction of services and amenities that improve the quality of life for Downtown residents and employees

**Example Tactic:** Work with partners to create a thriving storefront economy, with specific support for Black-owned businesses within the Historic Greenwood District Main Street District and throughout Downtown.

## GOAL 3

**Activate Downtown through programs and experiences that engage Tulsa's diverse community**

- A. Develop and produce events and programming that promote Downtown as everyone's neighborhood
- B. Enliven Downtown through public art and other place enhancing features

**Example Tactic:** Seek culturally diverse programming opportunities that engage the different communities represented in Downtown Tulsa and adjacent neighborhoods

## GOAL 4

**Enhance physical connections throughout Downtown and to adjacent neighborhoods**

- A. Improve mobility throughout Downtown and encourage options that are accessible, efficient, and people-centric
- B. Engage with the City and other partners to improve physical connections between Downtown and adjacent neighborhoods

**Example Tactic:** Initiate and advocate for continued on and off-street parking management advancements including real-time parking availability, parking reservations, signage, and loading zones

## GOAL 5

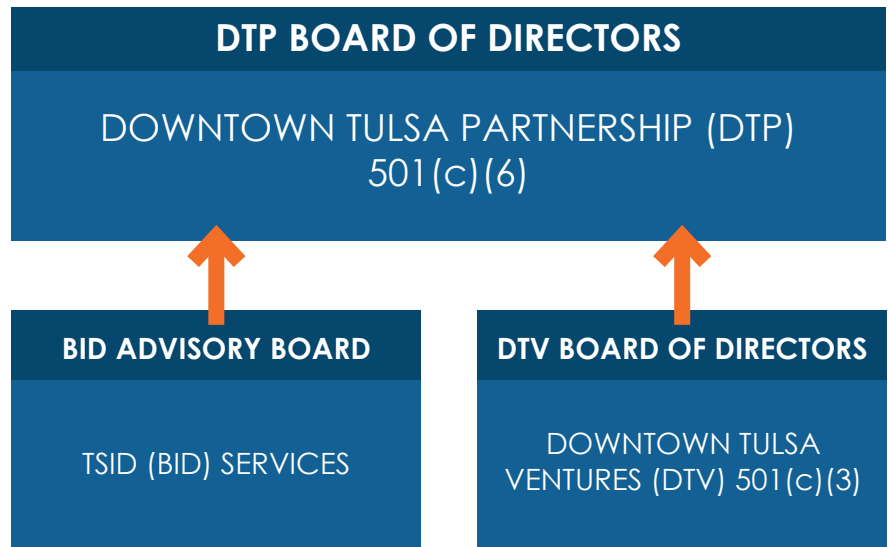
**Champion Downtown locally and throughout the region as everyone's neighborhood**

- A. Establish a new brand identity and messaging for Downtown and the Downtown Tulsa Partnership
- B. Regularly communicate with Downtown stakeholders to boost collaboration, buy-in, and engagement
- C. Develop and utilize new and existing tools for expanding awareness of Downtown's offerings and assets

**Example Tactic:** Convene conversations with stakeholders to collaborate on a shared agenda and stay in tune with community needs.

# ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Three organizational options were considered for the delivery of enhanced services in Downtown Tulsa. Nationally, the large majority of BIDs contract the delivery of enhanced services through a non-profit vs. city government. The preferred option, shown adjacent, brings Downtown Tulsa in line with best practices. The operating “umbrella” organization - the Downtown Tulsa Partnership - is a 501(c)(6), which is advantageous for advocacy, membership, and protection against liability from events, programming, etc. The 501(c)(3) affiliate - Downtown Tulsa Ventures - helps to diversify funding beyond assessment revenue, through grants, sponsorships, donations and other sources of revenue.



## GOVERNANCE

Each of the three entities will have its own discrete board, however, to promote coordination and collaboration, the chair and vice chair of the BID Advisory Board and the chair of the DTV Board will also sit on the DTP Board. As a general principle, the boards will represent diversity of age, race, gender, ability and stakeholder type in Downtown.

- The **Downtown Tulsa Partnership Board** is the largest of the governing bodies, with an estimated 15 to 19 members, and is responsible for overseeing the operations of the organization as a whole. This board has representation from different types of property owners, business owners, and key City representatives. A committee structure, aligned with the organization’s goals, is detailed in the strategic plan.
- The **BID Advisory Board**, an estimated 9 to 11 members, is composed exclusively of property owners representing a variety of property types, size and location within Downtown. This board approves the annual assessment budget for TSID services and advises how assessment dollars should be spent.
- The **Downtown Tulsa Ventures Board**, an estimated 9 to 11 members, represents interests and skill sets aligned with the pursuit and funding of special projects Downtown.

## OPERATIONS

To meet the organizational goals and objectives, the strategic plan recommends an optimal level of staffing and provides five-year financial projections, which include ways the organization can grow and diversify its budget to support a greater level of enhanced service throughout Downtown Tulsa.



*All photos in the Executive Summary credited to the Tulsa Communications Department*