



STEVENS POINT DOWNTOWN

*Resource
Guide*



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Welcome to the Heart of the Community - Stevens Point Downtown

Stevens Point Downtown is the heart of our community – a place where entrepreneurs take bold steps, property owners invest in the future, neighbors gather, and visitors experience the spirit of our city. Thank you for being part of what makes this district vibrant and resilient.

As Executive Director of the Stevens Point Downtown Business Improvement District (BID), I am honored to work alongside you in strengthening and supporting this essential district. Our role is to foster economic vitality, encourage thoughtful investment, and cultivate meaningful connections that allow businesses and properties to succeed.

We are here to support you – whether you are launching a new venture, expanding your business, rehabilitating a historic building, or exploring new opportunities. The BID serves as a resource hub, connector, advocate, and partner. Through collaboration, strategic partnerships, design guidance, promotion, and access to financial and technical resources, our goal is to create an environment where entrepreneurship thrives and property investment is supported.

This Resource Guide is designed to be a practical, informative tool to help you navigate available programs, partnerships, and services. If you have questions, ideas, or challenges, we encourage you to reach out. Your success strengthens Stevens Point Downtown – and together, we ensure it remains the welcoming, thriving heart of our community for years to come.

Let's build something great together!



Karen Margelofsky

Stevens Point BIDs-Executive Director

"Stevens Point Downtown is the heart of our community – and every business, property owner, and partner plays a vital role in keeping that heart strong."



John Hartman - Contemporary Photography

About Downtown

MISSION

A thriving Downtown that engages diverse audiences and celebrates local businesses to foster a vibrant district.

VISION

Enhancing Downtown Stevens Point by collaboratively connecting property owners, businesses, residents, and visitors with resources and experiences.

HISTORY OF THE BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (BID)

In October 2022, a petition to create a Business Improvement District (BID) to support Stevens Point Downtown was received from downtown property owners representing the Stevens Point Alliance. In December 2022, the City of Stevens Point Common Council approved a Resolution establishing a Downtown BID as a tax assessment under the city and adopted the initial operating plan for the BID. In January 2023, the Common Council approved the appointments of members to the BID consistent with Article II, Section I of the BID Bylaws (Appendix B).

Additionally, and arguably the most critical to the success of the BID, is the intention to unite businesses, organizations, and local government through collaboration and partnership to achieve the main objectives discussed within the initial operating plan.



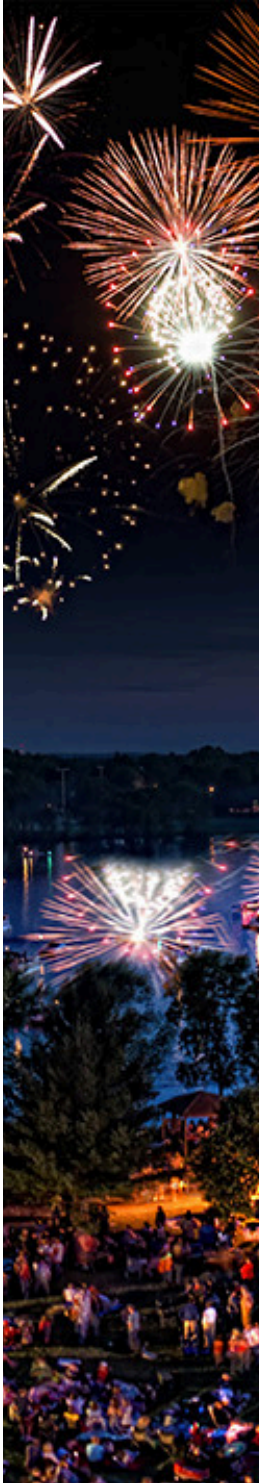
Stevens Point Downtown Business Improvement District Boundary

VALUES
Accountable
Thriving
Collaboration
Supportive
Innovative

**KEY
PARTNERS**



Business Development Resources



Portage County Business Council (PCBC-Chamber of Commerce)

- Free ribbon cuttings - Contact Karen at KarenM@portagecountybiz.com
- Membership - Contact Angie at AngieF@portagecountybiz.com

Small Business Development Center

Offers no cost, confidential advising and resources as well as fee based workshops/conferences to both startup and existing businesses.

City of Stevens Point

- Façade Grant for improvements to the exterior of downtown commercial or mixed-use buildings.
- Parklets or Sidewalk Café's can activate your outdoor spaces for customers. Contact Adam at akuhn@stevenspoint.com for more information.
- Obtain permits for any improvements to property or licenses to operate your business.

Stevens Point Area Convention and Visitors Bureau (SPACVB)

- Partnerships - Contact Taylor at taylor@stevenspointarea.com
- General Questions - Contact info@stevenspointarea.com
- Post your events through the calendar on their site, [linked HERE](#).

SCORE

Mentors for business planning - Contact Peter at Peter.Bushman@scorevolunteer.org

UWSP Pointer Connect Internship Program

This program provides wage reimbursement to small businesses and not-for-profits that hire UWSP student interns. Questions – Contact the ucolinternships@uwsp.edu.

STEVENS POINT DOWNTOWN BID (DBID) AND WISCONSIN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (WEDC) MAIN STREET RESOURCES ARE ON THE NEXT PAGE.

Wisconsin Main Street Program



BENEFITS OF MAIN STREET MEMBERSHIP

Our Downtown BID is a Main Street America Nationally Accredited Program. We have many services that are available to our district, municipality, property owners, and businesses. All these services are FREE, and many are uniquely available to *Main Street Programs*, prioritized because the community has made a commitment to their downtown district. Stevens Point Downtown BID utilizes the Four Point Approach, as designed by Main Street America, which uses four work groups to accelerate revitalization in the district. These are the pillars that our organization focuses on throughout the district.

ORGANIZATION



- Strategic Planning
- Business/District/Community Survey
- Fundraising Planning
- Organizational Structure Assessment
- Volunteer Engagement Planning
- Committee Development and Support
- Draft Infographic Content
- Proofreading of Grants

DESIGN



- Façade Renderings
- Rear Building Renderings
- Streetscape Renderings (lighting, furniture, sidewalks, street trees, planters)
- Public Space Planning
- Design Training
- Review of existing design guidelines.
- Review of signage regulation/zoning.

ECONOMIC VITALITY



- Local Market Profile
- Housing Market Analysis
- Business Mix Analysis
- Business & Property Inventory
- Building Redevelopment Assessment
- Entrepreneur/new business market information
- Review of financial projections for development project

PROMOTIONS



- Event Impact Assessment
- Destination Bootcamp Course
- Canva Template Development
- Social Media Calendar Planning
- Website or social media review/audit
- Geofencing reports



Financial Resources



Downtown Development Fund

The Redevelopment Authority of the City of Stevens Point established a revolving loan fund for business and commercial property owners to reinvest in their buildings and expand or improve their business operations. [Learn more.](#)



Kiva Loan Match Program

Through the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) and being in the Main Street district, you can leverage a Kiva match if you are a women, minority, or veteran-owned business up to \$5,000.

- Loans of up to \$15,000 at 0% interest for three years.



WWBIC

WWBIC offers business training, capital lending, small business loans (\$1,000 to \$350,000) and coaching available. Contact info@wwbic.com for more information.



CAP Services

Technical assistance is available at no charge to low-income individuals starting a business or to businesses committed to creating jobs that will be filled by low-income individuals.

- For micro and small business loans for start-up and expansion expenses, please contact loans@capmail.org.



Community Foundation of Central Wisconsin (CFCWI)

The CFCWI offers three competitive grant cycles annually to support emerging needs in Portage and Waushara counties, aligning with their values and five mission areas; Arts & Culture, Education, Environment, Helping People, and Wellness.



CWED: Central Wisconsin Economic Development Fund

CWED provides financing tools and two loan options; financial projections are required – meeting with CAP or the Small Business Development Center first is highly recommended.

- CWED Start-up Fund (\$5,000 - \$35,000, 3-year term, 0-3% interest) - Contact kristen@cwedfund.com
- Traditional loans



Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC)

WEDC has funding, resources, programs, and training to help both companies and communities bring their visions to life.

Downtown BID Events

New Pop-up Event

Saturday of Mother's Day Weekend



Halloween Trick-or-Treating

Saturday week before Halloween
3-5 pm



Notes @ Night

Weds, Late May – Early September
6-8:30 pm at the Square



Holiday Parade

Thursday before Thanksgiving at 6 pm



National Make Music Day

Always June 21



Shop Small Passport Week & Small Business Saturday

Starts Saturday after Thanksgiving
9 am - 4 pm Info Booth at the Square



Discover Downtown

Third Saturday in July
10 am - 4 pm on Main Street & the Square



Downtown Christmas

Second Saturday in Dec.
Live Reindeer at the Square & events throughout the downtown



Wine Walk

Second Friday in August
4- 8 pm



Follow Us: @StevensPointDowntown
USE THE HASHTAG: #STEVENSPOINTDOWNTOWN



Other Downtown Events

Easter Egg Hunt

Saturday of Easter weekend at 10 am in the Square

Farmers Market*

May 1st - October 31st
Saturdays from 7 am -12 pm (vendors may also be present M-F & may stay later than 12 pm)
*Stevens Point Farmers Market Association

Arts Walk*

Friday in May, July, & Sept., 5:00 - 8:00 pm
*Event by Riverfront Arts Center

City Band Concert Series*

Weds, Early June - Late July
7:00 pm at Pffnner Park Bandshell
*Event by the City of Stevens Point-Park & Rec Dept.

Levitt AMP Concert Series*

Thursdays starting early in June - Mid-August
6:00 - 8:30 pm at Pffnner Park Bandshell
*Event by CREATE Portage County

Riverfront Rendezvous & 4th of July Parade*

Fri - Sun. closest to Fourth of July - Free Event
Pffnner Park - 3 Stages with LIVE Music, Activities, Food, & Fireworks (Parade on Main St.)
*Event by the City of Stevens Point

Dozynki Downtown*

Third Saturday in September 10 am - 4 pm
*Event by Polish Heritage Awareness Society

Christmas Crawl*

Third Saturday in December
*Hosted by Downtown Taverns

Dates are when the events are traditionally held but always check the event website for actual dates & times each year.



John Hartman - Contemporary Photography

Networking Opportunities

Downtown Business and Property Owners Networking (Quarterly - Informal)

About: *A casual networking space to mingle and socialize with other Downtown businesses and property owners.*

When: Quarterly, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

Location: Changes every quarter (Hosting rotated by businesses)

Contact Karen at kamragelofsky@stevenspoint.com for attendance or hosting inquiry.

Downtown Collective (Monthly - Informal)

About: *These meetings are designed to bring business owners together to grow, collaborate, discuss solutions, and positively impact the district. Every month there is a business-supporting education section.*

When: Changes monthly - contact Karen at 715-496-0823 for next event.

Location: Stevens Point Area Convention and Visitors Bureau (1105 Main Street Suite A)

Business Improvement District (BID) Board Meetings (Monthly - Professional)

About: *The Downtown BID board of directors meeting. Our meetings are professional and open to the public.*

When: 1st Tuesday of every month at 2:30 p.m.

Location: Stevens Point Area Convention and Visitors Bureau (1105 Main Street Suite A)

Meetings and Agendas are posted here: <https://stevenspointwi.portal.civicclerk.com/>

Portage County Business Council - Business X-Change (Monthly - Registration Required)

About: *These roundtable meetings provide opportunities for small business owners and their employees to learn from each other. Complimentary for all member businesses and their employees.*

When: 2nd Wednesday of the month at 7:30 am

Location: Varies, contact Portage County Business Council to register:

<https://portagecountybiz.com/>

Founders Network

About: *Founders Network is a collective of entrepreneurs and executive directors that hosts social events that inspire creative thinking and build social capital in Northcentral Wisconsin.*

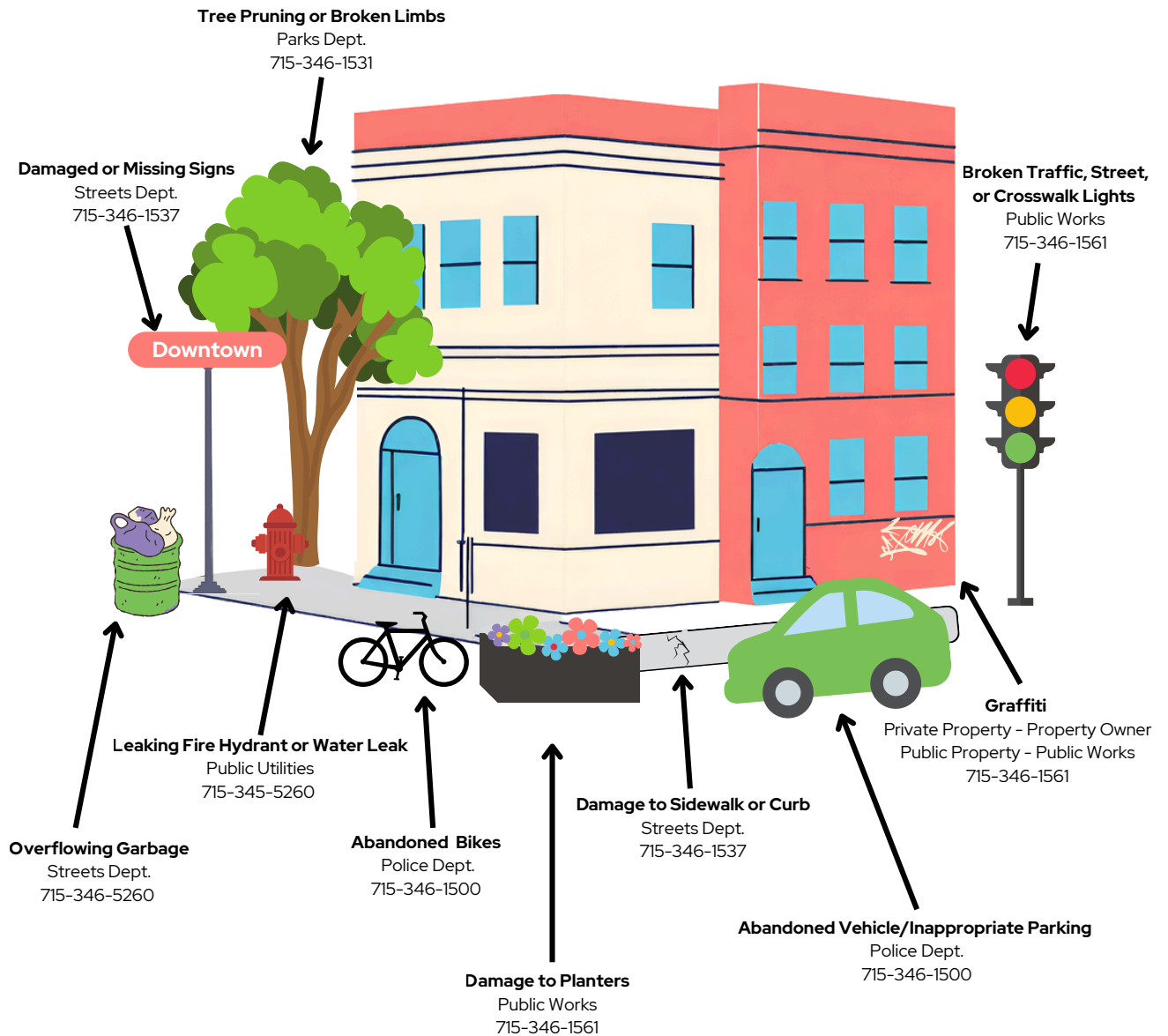
When: Follow "[Founders Network](#)" on Facebook to find event dates or email Chris at cklesmith@stevenspoint.com.



John Hartman - Contemporary Photography

Contacts for Maintenance

PLEASE REPORT AREAS NEEDING ATTENTION IN OUR DISTRICT TO KEEP IT CLEAN, WELCOMING, AND SAFE.



Sustainable Business Solutions

WANT YOUR BUSINESS TO BE MORE PLANET - FRIENDLY?

Zero Waste Event Supplies

Recycling Connections offers a near zero waste party supplies and services.

Composting Services

Bucket Ruckus provides weekly pick up services of food scraps for businesses and commercial services.

Renewable Energy Resources

Grow Solar is a program through Midwest Renewable Energy Association (MREA). This is a group buy program that reduces cost of buying solar.

Downtown Clean-up Initiatives

Quarterly the Downtown hosts a clean-up. Want to learn more on how to get involved? Contact Karen at kmargelofsky@stevenspoint.com.

Downtown Refillery

PROCESS is a general store offering sustainable, eco-friendly goods. Businesses can utilize their Refillery to reduce plastic waste. They also offer 25% off bulk cleaning supplies when you buy 64 ounces or more.

Focus on Energy

Energy efficiency effort incentives; new construction, renovations, equipment replacement, operations, and renewables for businesses.

[Learn more about incentives here.](#)

[Order a free energy-saving pack here.](#)

Recycle Electronics

PC Computer Recycling offers recycling of electronics. Please contact Patrick at pccomputerrecycling@gmail.com.



A summer time Downtown clean-up crew in 2024.

Historical Guidelines & Permits

HISTORICAL PRESERVATION

Historic preservation ordinances are in effect in the Downtown Historic District/Design Review District and the Clark Street Historic District to ensure new construction and remodeling projects are consistent with the historic character of the existing buildings. Please see the links below for more information or contact Adam at akuhn@stevenspoint.com.

[Historic Preservation Plan](#)
[Wisconsin Historical Society](#)
[National Register of Historic Places](#)

PERMITS

Not all commercial buildings are built the same, zoned for every use, and not all renovations need to meet the same standards. Building codes are designed to keep all users of a building – employees, customers, and residents – safe depending on the situation. If you have questions about opening a business in a particular building, make sure to contact the staff at the Community Development Department to ensure your building meets the requirements for your type of business.

Adam Kuhn (akuhn@stevenspoint.com) – Zoning Administrator
Scott Omernik (somernikn@stevenspoint.com) – Commercial Building Inspector, use and code verifications

Curious about open violations on a building? Search by address on this [online map](#).
If you need to report a property violation, violations can be submitted via the [online portal](#).

For a comprehensive list of work requiring permits in the City of Stevens Point, please access the [City's website](#) or contact Community Development Department at 715-346-1567.



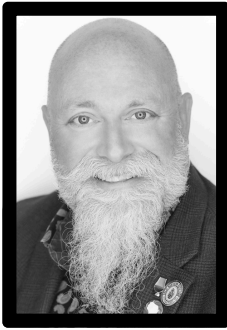
MAIN STREET + STEVENS POINT + JULY 2024



John Hartman - Contemporary Photography

Meet the 2026:

Downtown BID Board



Brian Cummins
Board Chair
Property & Business Owner
Great Northern Distilling



Hana Cutler
Vice Chair: Design Lead
Business Owner
Emy J's Coffee House



BJ Welling
Treasurer: Economic Vitality Lead
Property Owner



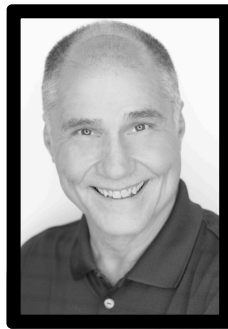
Craig Cook
Secretary
Property & Business Owner
Fall Line Outfillters



Tara Manzke
Promotions Lead
Business Owner
Bria Bella & Co.



Open Seat
Property Owner



Marc Christianson
Board Member
Aldersperson District 1



Downtown BID Team



Karen Margelofsky
Executive Director
kmargelofsky@stevenspoint.com
715-496-0823



Kris Carne
Event Coordinator
kristeencarne@yahoo.com
715-340-3259



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