

Order 257-13/14

Passage: 9-0 on 6/16/2014

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CITY OF PORTLAND
IN THE CITY COUNCIL

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**ORDER ADOPTING DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM FOR
THE PORTLAND DOWNTOWN DISTRICT
FOR FISCAL YEAR 2014-2015**

ORDERED, pursuant to 30-A M.R.S. Section 5224 (1), after public hearing, the City Council of the City of Portland hereby adopts the development program submitted by the City Manager, a copy of which is attached hereto, for the Portland Downtown District for fiscal year 2014-2015.



Mayor Brennan and City Councilors
May 2014

Board President
Michael Mastronardi

Executive Director
Steve Hewins

It has been a transformative year at Portland's Downtown District. Since this time last year we have turned over the entire full-time staff. We expanded our board to achieve more inclusiveness and to better represent the broad cross section of constituents within the District. Moreover, I am pleased to report that the assessment mil rate of .92 for Portland's Downtown District (PDD) remains flat again this year.

We continue to focus our funds and staff on our core mission:
Portland's Downtown District is in the business of maintaining a clean and safe downtown while building and promoting a vibrant business, residential and tourism destination.

More than ever we understand the value that visitors and residents bring to downtown businesses and property owners. Our vibrant restaurant, shopping, arts and entertainment scene is dependent upon maintaining and growing our residential, visitor and customer base.

PDD is a leader in this effort by focusing on maintaining a clean and safe downtown. In this effort we partner with the City of Portland through our Master, Baseline and Supplemental Service Agreements. For this year we plan to work even more closely with city staff to provide additional oversight and prioritization of work plans and projects. Our mutual goal is to create a downtown environment that exceeds our resident's expectations, allows our businesses to thrive and property owners to continue investing in Portland.

Through our collaboration with the city and local organizations, we market downtown Portland as a destination for visitors near and far. PDD produces free special events, including the Alive at Five concert series in Monument Square, the Christmas Tree Lightning and other Holiday events, Downtown Worker Appreciation Days and the Old Port Festival – this year expanded to three days for the first time in its 41 year history! In January 2015 we will launch a new event called Portland Winterfest!

Our popular police cadet patrol, funded by PDD and managed by the Portland Police Department, and our Downtown Visitor Guides will continue to assist and inform visitors and businesses throughout the peak tourism season. We are working with the Retail Association of Maine to launch Shop 2nd Saturday – a new marketing initiative to support local small businesses. We produce and distribute over 160,000 copies of our Visitor Guide book. Our website, Portlandmaine.com, is one of the most actively visited in the region.

We continue to work collaboratively with property owners, city departments and community organizations to address ongoing issues such as parking, transportation, graffiti removal, recycling, homelessness, open space, nuisance crimes and safety.

These efforts are needed to support residents and to encourage more people to come downtown or to stay after work. Perhaps more importantly these efforts support the Portland 'brand' – Yes, Life's Good Here. The attractiveness of the city, relative safety, accessibility to visitors for food, lodging, shopping, arts and entertainment are all important to the vibrancy of the city. We will continue to advocate for public policies that support these objectives.

Finally, we are very appreciative of our strong working relationship with the City of Portland, both staff and elected officials. We could not accomplish our mission without this cooperation and mutual support. We look forward to an exceptional 2014-15!

Sincerely,

Michael Mastronardi
Board Chair, Portland's Downtown District
Board President

