



DOWNTOWN COMMUNITY
IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

MYTHS VERSUS FACTS ABOUT THE DOWNTOWN COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

MYTH #1

Citizens for a Greater Downtown St. Louis is a local group of Downtown residents hoping to improve and redesign the Downtown Community Improvement District (CID).

FACT

Key leaders of the CID-opposition group live nowhere near Downtown St. Louis. In some cases, they live thousands of miles away. Three of the five group leaders live in New York, Southern California and Clayton respectively.

MYTH #2

The CID renewal doesn't address key priorities for Downtown residents and property owners.

FACT

The CID team engaged with members throughout the Downtown community for over nine months about their priorities for a CID renewal. As a result of that feedback, CID assessment rates will come down 23%, the board size will be reduced to 11 to 15 members representative of geography and various asset types, and political ex officio members will no longer have a vote on the Board. Additionally, the CID will no longer outsource management to a third party, and the sole focus of the CID will be on safety, beautification, and infrastructure, key topics universally supported by Downtown businesses, residents and property owners.

MYTH #3

The CID-opposition group wants to replace the current CID with a new-and-improved CID.

FACT

The CID-opposition group doesn't have a plan for a new CID, and their actions suggest they may attempt to kill the CID while putting nothing in its place. Clearly, the absence of a CID would have a profoundly negative impact on Downtown St. Louis residents, businesses and

infrastructure. The CID restructuring currently in process was developed in collaboration with local residents, property owners and business leaders, and is best suited to meet the needs of our current Downtown community today and provides the ability for Downtown to address challenges in the future.

MYTH #4

The CID is responsible for all law enforcement in Downtown St. Louis and does not work with the SLMPD or other city agencies to address crime.

FACT

The CID-opposition group likes to hold the CID wholly and solely responsible for safety, when in fact, the CID statute prohibits the City from transferring responsibility for City services to the CID. We supplement SLMPD resources with a secondary security unit (off-duty police officers) to patrol the Downtown neighborhood. The CID-opposition group continues to state that our secondary patrols are not working during peak crime hours, when in fact our secondary officers patrol from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 a.m. Monday through Thursday, and until 4:00 a.m. on Friday and Saturday nights, all tracked in real time with our service provider. This group also ignores that - in addition to this security presence - the current CID funds a dedicated Bike Unit of officers, the only neighborhood dedicated bike unit in the entire city. Without the CID, those two important security elements Downtown don't exist. And of course, all of this supplements the work done by the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department. In addition to the secondary detail, the CID has helped fund infrastructure that also keeps Downtown residents and businesses safe, including state-of-the-art lighting systems, security cameras, personal security apps, and radio systems that allow local businesses to engage directly with police officers.

MYTH #5

Trash and crumbling infrastructure is plaguing our Downtown neighborhood, and the current CID is doing nothing to address these problems.

FACT

The photo circulated by CID opponents to support this myth are photos of private property – private alleyways – outside of the CID’s ability to control. For many years, the Downtown CID has funded The Clean Team, a group of men and women hired to supplement city trash removal services Downtown. That Clean Team works in highly visible public spaces Downtown to eliminate trash, first-floor graffiti, and other problem spots on public property. If you ask Downtown residents, workers and property owners, they will tell you the Clean Team does amazing work but can’t clean up after absentee landlords or contractors.

MYTH #6

The CID-opposition group claims they are just trying to get us to the table so they can share their ideas.

FACT

During the nine-month process of engaging with Downtown stakeholders to identify key priorities, CID representatives and Board members repeatedly met with the leaders of the CID-opposition group, both individually and as a group. Our consultants interviewed them 1:1. The alderman sponsoring these petitions, and who participated on the committee to develop the petitions, has had numerous conversations with them. The truth is that many of the goals sought by the CID opposition — new management for the CID, a smaller, more representative board, more focus on safety — are materially represented in the CID renewal petition and board minutes.

MYTH #7

The petition for a renewed CID leaves out important provisions, such as having the CID be self-managed and completely independent.

FACT

In April we announced that upon renewal, the CID would be transitioning from being managed by Downtown STL, Inc., assuring independence. Additionally, marketing and economic development are removed from the restructured CID, increasing funding for safety and beautification while reducing the assessment by 23 percent. These facts are no secret, so the CID opposition continues to demonstrate a worrying lack of oversight and understanding on their part.

MYTH #8

The Management Plan is purposefully left unchanged in the current petition, allowing the CID to do whatever it wants with little oversight.

FACT

Upon approval, the management plan is superseded by the terms of the petitions. It is clearly delineated in the petitions that, if renewed, moving forward the funds collected by the CID would only be used for public safety, beautification and crime reduction efforts. Once again, the CID-opposition group either did not read or understand the petition or are intentionally misrepresenting the facts.

MYTH #9

CID opponents have a plan to improve upon the service already provided by the Downtown Bike Unit and the Clean Team.

FACT

Nothing in the CID-opposition group’s materials suggests how they will maintain these two vital pieces of Downtown St. Louis. Essentially, this small group of CID opponents says, “Trust us. We will figure it out.” The work of the bike officers and Clean Team is too important to take that chance.

MYTH #10

The CID is being extended for 20 years, and this is our only chance to make changes to it until 2040. The CID opposition group suggests that the next CID should be no more than 10 years.

FACT

The CID’s scope and property assessments will be reevaluated by all stakeholders on the same schedule as they always have — every 10 years – and the CID Board will have greater flexibility to respond to key issues as they arise. They’ve once again misunderstood the Petition, which states that while the term of the CID is being amended for 20 years, the new funding mechanism and special assessment is only for 10 years. If residents want to change (or eliminate) the assessment, services, purposes or other qualities of the CID, it can be amended at any time, just as it is now.

