# Renewed effort to establish Dundee Business Improvement District aims to boost city centre by 2026



Plans to establish a Business Improvement District (BID) in Dundee have been revived, signalling a renewed effort to enhance the city's commercial landscape. Previous attempts in 2015 and 2017 ended in failure, while another effort in 2019 stalled due to the onset of the coronavirus pandemic. However, the latest initiative aims to harness local business support to create a community-focused fund that will finance improvements in key areas, such as the city centre and high street.

A BID is typically led and funded by local businesses, which contribute a percentage of their rateable value—usually between 1% and 4%—to a communal pot. This fund is intended to bolster initiatives ranging from marketing campaigns to infrastructure improvements, including street furniture, landscaping, and community events that drive foot traffic to retail areas. The final decision on whether to approve the BID will rest with business owners in the proposed district, who will cast their votes in March 2026.

A steering committee has been formed to spearhead the initiative, chaired by Paul Mooney, the general manager of Apex City Quay. Mooney noted the positive outcomes of similar BIDs in other cities, stating, “A business improvement district is essentially an additional resource that’s going to be business led, that’s going to have strong transparency and a stakeholder voice.” He acknowledged concerns raised by business owners about issues such as anti-social behaviour, security, and the need for enhanced cleaning services beyond what the local council provides.

Mooney’s commitment to fostering a vibrant shopping environment is shared by many in the local business community. Plans include conducting surveys to gather input from businesses about their major concerns and preferences regarding initiatives that could potentially increase visitor numbers to the city centre. Reflecting on his own experiences, Mooney remarked, “I love it [Dundee]. There’s so much goodwill and collaborative working already in Dundee across businesses.”

This renewed focus on BID initiatives coincides with broader efforts to stimulate economic growth in Dundee. In November 2023, Dundee City Council announced a strategic partnership with the Scottish and UK Governments designed to bolster the city’s regeneration efforts and create high-quality jobs. This initiative builds on existing projects aimed at addressing economic challenges, including the Tay Cities Regional Deal and the Abertay cyberQuarter. Council leader John Alexander underscored the importance of this partnership in shaping Dundee’s future prospects.

Critics of BIDs, however, have raised concerns regarding their democratic legitimacy and transparency, suggesting that these schemes can sometimes favour larger businesses at the expense of smaller ones. Previous local endeavours have also faced setbacks, such as in 2015 when only a majority of businesses voted for a BID, but the rateable value did not meet necessary funding thresholds. Such challenges underline the precarious nature of establishing BIDs, especially amidst competition from other local economic initiatives and the evolving retail landscape.

As Dundee considers this latest BID proposal, the discussion opens up possibilities not just for local businesses, but also for enhancing the city’s overall attractiveness as a commercial destination. With community engagement and transparency at its core, this initiative aims to build upon the collaborative spirit of Dundee’s business environment.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.thecourier.co.uk/fp/business-environment/business/5265260/paul-mooney-dundee-apex-business-improvement-district/), [[4]](https://www.dailyherald.com/20230613/news/pocket-park-among-improvements-heading-to-downtown-west-dundee-this-summer)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.thecourier.co.uk/fp/business-environment/business/5265260/paul-mooney-dundee-apex-business-improvement-district/), [[2]](https://www.buildscotland.co.uk/construction-news/302581/new-partnership-to-continue-dundee-regeneration), [[5]](https://www.fingerlakesdailynews.com/local/yates-schuyler-steuben-tompkins/village-of-dundee-awarded-375k-main-street-grant)
* Paragraph 3 – [[3]](https://www.visitscotland.org/news/2023/dundee-angus-industry-update), [[6]](https://www.shawlocal.com/northwest-herald/news/local/2023/01/13/can-a-new-special-taxing-district-boost-spring-hill-mall-west-dundee-looking-at-option/)

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.thecourier.co.uk/fp/business-environment/business/5265260/paul-mooney-dundee-apex-business-improvement-district/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.buildscotland.co.uk/construction-news/302581/new-partnership-to-continue-dundee-regeneration> - In November 2023, Dundee City Council announced a strategic growth partnership with the Scottish and UK Governments to continue the city's regeneration. This initiative aims to drive economic growth, tackle poverty, and create new high-quality jobs. The partnership builds on existing projects like the Tay Cities Regional Deal and the Abertay cyberQuarter, with a business case and series of requests to be submitted ahead of the Autumn Statement. Council leader John Alexander highlighted the proactive approach to securing support for Dundee's future development.
3. <https://www.visitscotland.org/news/2023/dundee-angus-industry-update> - Between January and March 2023, VisitScotland focused on supporting tourism in Dundee and Angus. Activities included regional marketing, promoting local attractions on consumer social channels, and securing PR coverage for the area. Caroline Warburton, Destination Development Director, highlighted events like BBC Radio 1’s Big Weekend and the UCI World Cycling Championships Gran Fondo in August as opportunities to boost the region's profile. The organisation remains committed to attracting visitors and supporting the local tourism industry.
4. <https://www.dailyherald.com/20230613/news/pocket-park-among-improvements-heading-to-downtown-west-dundee-this-summer> - In June 2023, West Dundee announced a $2.3 million project to enhance its downtown area, including the creation of a pocket park at Lincoln Avenue and Washington Street. The project aims to beautify the area and foster community pride, with improvements such as signage, lighting, and upgraded crosswalks. Timothy Scott, the village's director of economic development, planning, zoning, and urban design, expressed hope that these enhancements would attract more visitors to the city centre.
5. <https://www.fingerlakesdailynews.com/local/yates-schuyler-steuben-tompkins/village-of-dundee-awarded-375k-main-street-grant> - In October 2024, the Finger Lakes Horizon Economic Development Corporation announced that Governor Kathy Hochul awarded a $375,000 New York Main Street Grant to support a comprehensive building renovation program in the Village of Dundee. The funding aims to assist mixed-use building owners with façade improvements, first-floor commercial space renovations, and the construction or renovation of upper-floor apartments in downtown Dundee. The initiative is part of efforts to preserve and invigorate downtown areas while fostering economic growth.
6. <https://www.shawlocal.com/northwest-herald/news/local/2023/01/13/can-a-new-special-taxing-district-boost-spring-hill-mall-west-dundee-looking-at-option/> - In January 2023, West Dundee officials considered establishing a new Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district to revitalise the Spring Hill Mall area, which had a 40% occupancy rate. The proposed TIF district would freeze property taxes at current levels for 23 years, with any additional taxes generated used to fund redevelopment costs. Village Manager Joseph Cavallaro stated that the TIF would provide necessary tools for long-term redevelopment, aiming to transform the mall into a mixed-use development with housing and retail spaces.
7. <https://www.3newsnow.com/central-omaha/dundee-working-toward-creative-arts-district-designation-from-nebraska-arts-council> - In 2024, the Dundee community in Omaha, Nebraska, worked towards obtaining Creative Arts District designation from the Nebraska Arts Council for 2025. A team of volunteers formed the Dundee Creative District Committee to oversee the grant application process. The initiative aims to elevate the visibility of local artists, inspire creativity, and forge collaborative partnerships that amplify Dundee's unique charm and cultural offerings. Town hall meetings were held to engage the community in the conversation.