

City Council Agenda Item Memo

From: Michael J Drake, Chief of Police

Council Meeting: June 25, 2024

Subject: Discussion / Presentation on Downtown Safety

Presenter: Samantha Beckman, Assistant to the City Manager
Kirsten Gjesdal, Executive Director Downtown Brookings
Michael J Drake, Chief of Police

Summary:

Council Member Wendell requested a discussion on public safety within the downtown corridor at a future City Council meeting. Beyond general discussion on public safety and the approach by the police department, the presentation will cover a statistical analysis of occurrences, impacts on the community, the response by the City of Brookings, and other impacts and entities involved in ensuring public safety.

Background:

The City of Brookings and Downtown Brookings have evaluated several aspects related to downtown safety, including data from previous years, peer community research, and future preventative actions that can be taken. Conversations with partner agencies, including the State Attorney, South Dakota State University, Businesses, Downtown Director, occurred. The Police department has accumulated data on the downtown area in recent years. In 2023, the department improved its data input method for accuracy and analysis for enhanced response for all community areas.

Item Details:

Since April 2023, Downtown Brookings has worked on several proactive safety measures, such as facilitating a grant for outdoor cameras, proactively reporting issues on Engage Brookings, placemaking & design improvements, and hosting several "Walk with Us" workshops. Downtown Brookings also worked with several South Dakota State University classes to facilitate shared responsibility for downtown safety with students.

An effort to increase foot patrol, community engagement, and proactive policing has occurred over the past year. The data presented will reflect this effort.

The Downtown organization will have sidewalks cleaned, continue implementing design safety improvements, and move forward with funding a grant that focuses on smaller lighting improvements and outdoor cameras.

The Downtown Brookings Master Plan is in its refining stages with a targeted completion date of September 2024. As a part of the 2025 budgeting process, the City

is exploring a variety of downtown incentive options for building improvements. The City will continue working with and building relationships with our community partners.

Legal Consideration:

None.

Strategic Plan Consideration:

Goal B: Safe, Inclusive & Connected - Safety in the Downtown Commercial District is important as the B-1 District is home to many businesses and residence. Downtown is also considered a third space for many community members.

Financial Consideration:

None.

Supporting Documentation:

Presentation / PPT