

2025 ANNUAL REPORT





A note from Erin

As I look back on 2025, I am struck by how much this year asked of DECI and how much care and commitment people brought to the work. It was a year where we rebuilt in real time, carrying the full weight of our work while preparing for what comes next.

While DECI has served downtown Eau Claire for more than 20 years, 2025 was about strengthening the foundation needed to carry that work forward. Balancing the responsibilities of a long established organization with the realities of transition was not easy. Still, our board, staff, and partners leaned in and stayed engaged, adapting as needed and grounded in a shared belief in downtown and its future. I am incredibly grateful for the people who stayed steady and supportive through a year of change.

Even in a transition year, DECI continued to deliver the programming our community expects while also finding ways to grow. In 2025, we added new events, expanded opportunities for downtown businesses, and increased the value we provide to our members and the local economy. This progress reflects the dedication of a small but committed team and partners who believe in the importance of downtown Eau Claire.

Downtown has always been the heart of Eau Claire's economy and community life. It is where small businesses take risks, jobs are created, and local dollars stay local. When downtown is strong, it supports not just individual businesses, but the overall health of our city. That belief continues to guide DECI's work and shapes how we approach both opportunities and challenges.

We are ready to meet what lies ahead, adapt together, and continue building a strong and vibrant downtown. As we look ahead to 2026, I invite you to stay engaged with DECI and be part of shaping what comes next.

Thank you to everyone who supported DECI this year. Your trust and involvement make this work possible, and I am deeply grateful as we move forward together.

Erin Klaus

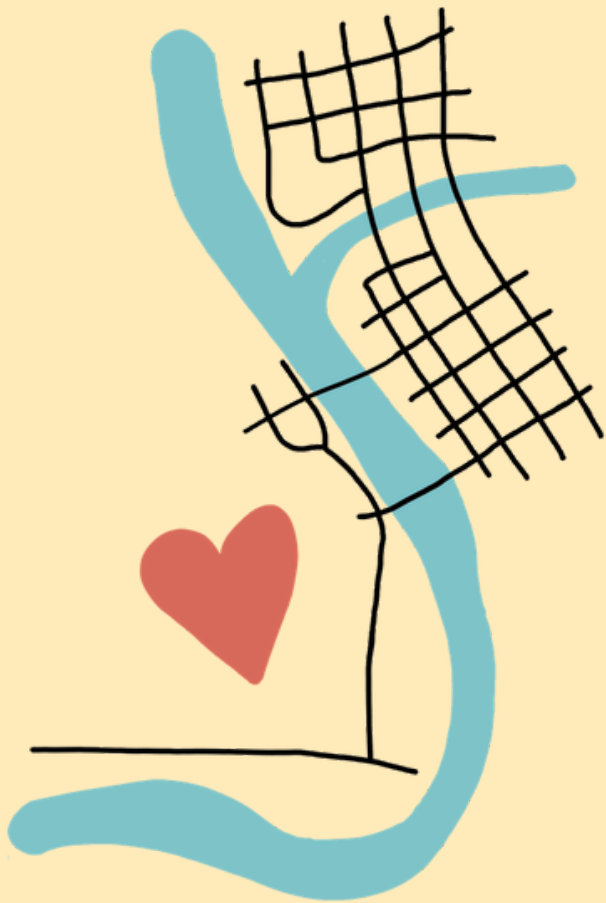
Erin Klaus
Executive Director
Downtown Eau Claire, Inc.

DECI DOWNTOWN
EAU
CLAIRE
INC



"THAT'S MY DOWNTOWN!"

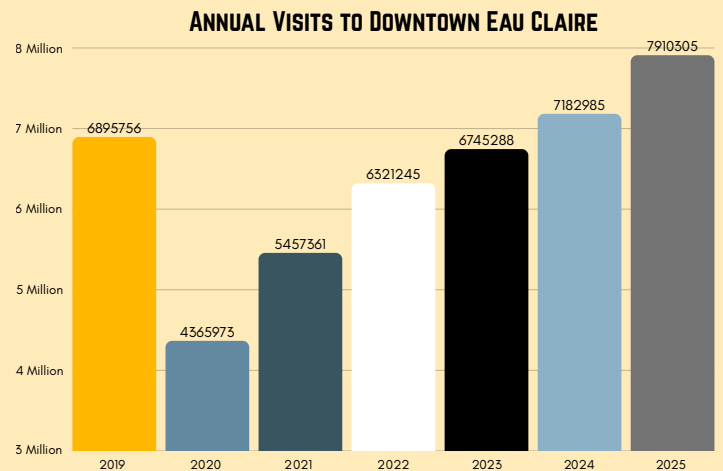
GETTING TO KNOW THE DOWNTOWN WE LOVE



With unique, locally owned businesses, ample public art, rich natural resources, historic buildings, and the best people in the world, downtown is the heartbeat of Eau Claire. It drives our culture and our economy like nowhere else in our city. After decades of love, hard work, and financial investment to revitalize downtown, we enjoy a vibrant city center that blends small-town warmth with big-city energy.

Downtown Eau Claire isn't just a place where people come to work, play, and visit, it's a place they find community and belonging.

DECI's mission is centered on preserving the magic we have built together -- to keep this love story going.



About
\$400K

generated annually by the business improvement districts, spent to beautify, promote, and improve downtown

\$282M

Assessed commercial tax value from downtown Eau Claire properties

12%

of Eau Claire's assessed commercial tax value downtown, despite downtown making up less than 2% of Eau Claire's land area

18%

of jobs in Eau Claire are located downtown, despite housing only 3% of Eau Claire's residents

2,400

People living in Downtown Eau Claire

Who Is DECI

DOWNTOWN EAU CLAIRE INC

DECI is a 501(c)6 nonprofit organization that brings people together around the shared goal of a strong, lively downtown. Through events, placemaking projects, and partnerships, DECI works behind the scenes to support local businesses and make downtown a welcoming, vibrant place for residents and visitors alike. If you've enjoyed a day spent wandering, shopping, or connecting downtown, chances are DECI helped make it happen.

Our Mission: To promote, advocate and strengthen business, quality of place, cultural resources, and activities within downtown Eau Claire.

14,000 PEOPLE AT FALL IN FEST 2025!

DECI EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SPEAKING TO CITY COUNCIL

BUSINESS OWNER NETWORKING EVENT

HAYMARKET CHRISTMAS TREE PROVIDED BY DECI

PROMOTION

Producing events that bring people downtown to build community and support downtown businesses

Marketing downtown to showcase everything we have to offer

Marketing DECI members to give them a leg up in a difficult economic environment

Telling the story of downtown

ECONOMIC VITALITY

Providing grants to businesses starting and expanding

Advocating for strong policies that support the vitality of downtown

Producing buy-local promotional events

Operationalizing Business Improvement District budgets

ORGANIZATION

Connecting business owners and downtown enthusiasts with each other and empowering them to lead downtown initiatives and advocacy

Disseminating important information about key downtown issues

Building partnerships that make us stronger than the sum of our parts

DESIGN

Funding and supporting public art downtown

Coordinating efforts to keep downtown clean and welcoming

Producing wayfinding resources

Coordinating seasonal decorations like tree lights, planters, banners, and more

Leading efforts to create unique identities within business improvement districts

PRESENTED BY DOWNTOWN EAU CLAIRE, INC.

2025 EVENTS



August 13, 2025

GRAND EVENING ON THE BRIDGE

A delightful meal overlooking one of Downtown Eau Claire's biggest assets - our rivers. Catered by local vendors and artisans



March 6, 2025

ANNUAL DECI AWARDS "THE DUCKYS"

A spoofy night when we celebrate Downtown's success without taking ourselves too seriously.



December 6, 2025

HAYMARKET HOLIDAY

Feel the holiday magic in downtown Eau Claire! Family visits with Santa, trolley rides throughout downtown, holiday crafts and treats!



Throughout 2025!

DOWNTOWN MEAT RAFFLE SERIES

A classic Wisconsin "dive bar" tradition! Meat raffles in your favorite Downtown Dive Bars!



MORE 2025 EVENTS

MIX N' MINGLE SERIES

A space for Downtown movers & shakers to connect, learn, and collaborate

DOWNTOWN SUMMER MARKET SERIES

DECI members showing off what they do at the Downtown Market in Phoenix Park

SIDEWALK SATURDAYS SERIES

Downtown businesses connecting with their customers right on the sidewalk

DOWNTOWN TRICK OR TREAT

Families meet downtown businesses for a spooky, festive day

HIGH BRIDGE HOWL

The community joining together for some silly, wholesome fun

SPOOKY STOREFRONT COMPETITION

The community votes on the best spooky decorations in downtown business windows

COZY NIGHT OUT

Extended hours for holiday shopping downtown. Enjoy the cozy winter vibe

WINTER WINDOW COMPETITION

The community votes on the best winter window decorations in downtown businesses



2025 GRAND PRIZE WINNER:
LEONA'S PIZZERIA
RUNNER UPS:
MR. KITTY'S CAT CAFE & BOUTIQUE
E.L. PILATES



2025 WINNER:
MOSS HAIR SALON



2025 WINNER:
E.L. PILATES

DOWNTOWN ENHANCEMENT GRANT



2025 WINNER:
**EASTSIDE HILL
NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION**
FOR THE MAIN ST BRIDGE MURAL

DECI DOWNTOWN EAU CLAIRE INC VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR



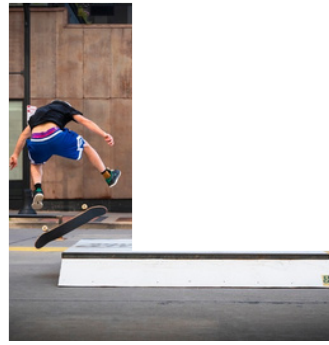
TRINITY WHITNEY

DECI DOWNTOWN EAU CLAIRE INC DOWNTOWN IMPACT AWARD



JOHN SEYBOLD

SEPTEMBER 13, 2025



DOWNTOWN EAU CLAIRE, INC.'S PREMIER ANNUAL EVENT

Fall Festival is a celebration of our community, showcasing the best of Eau Claire and highlighting all that we have to offer. Shop at our 162 vendor booths. Catch a comedy or drag show. Watch the local skating club land a kick flip. Enjoy music on the Main Stage. Gather with thousands of your neighbors and friends. Fall Fest is the best of us. Thank you for another successful year!

BY THE NUMBERS

14,000 → People in attendance

\$775K → Attendee spending community-wide

\$36K → Spent locally to produce the event

25 → Local groups featured in Experience Zones

75 → Volunteers to pull it all off



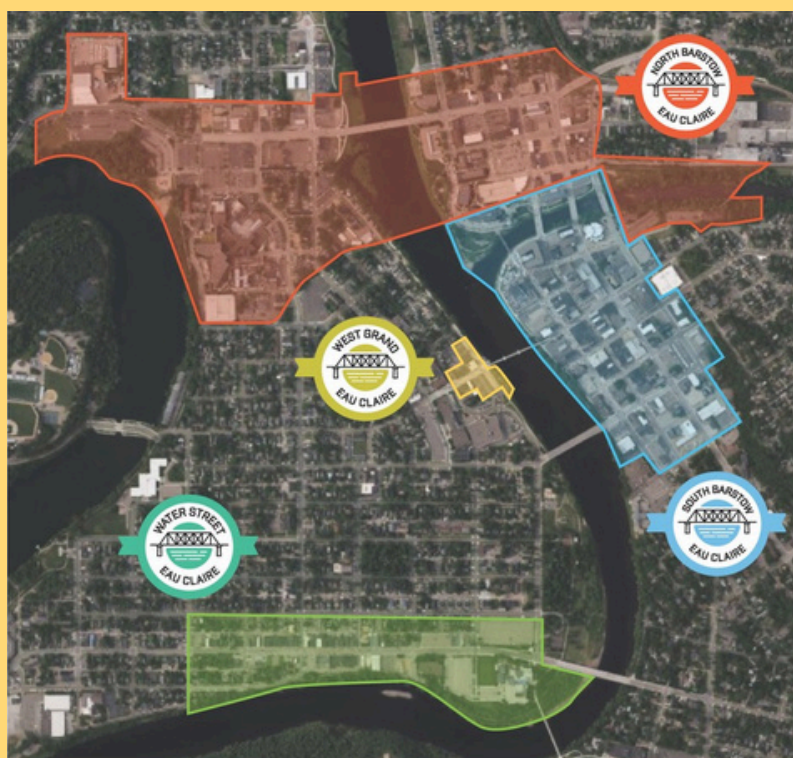
SEE YOU ON SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 12 FOR FALL FEST 2026!

www.eauclairefallfest.com

DID YOU KNOW?

Downtown is made up of 4 business improvement districts (BIDs)--a community of property owners that voluntarily tax themselves more to invest into their districts. Collectively, the BIDs of Eau Claire raise about \$400K per year to pay for things that make being downtown better for all of us!

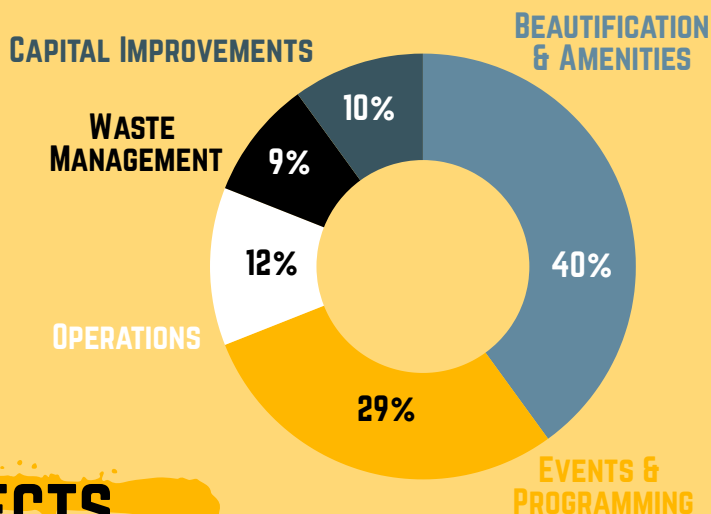
THE BIDS OF EAU CLAIRE



DECI DOWNTOWN EAU CLAIRE INC

In 2026, DECI will become the service provider for all of the business improvement districts to operationalize their budget, helping them to make sure their investment into downtown is well spent.

2025 BID SPENDING ~\$400K TOTAL



KEY PROJECTS

W GRAND BID

- ✓ Hanging flower pots
- ✓ Holiday Tree
- ✓ Fireworks sponsorship
- ✓ Business support grants
- ✓ Sidewalk garbage service

SOUTH BARSTOW BID

- ✓ Sidewalk garbage service
- ✓ Music in the streets
- ✓ Trees lit all year 'round
- ✓ Sidewalk flower pots
- ✓ Sponsorship for major events
- ✓ Snow removal

NORTH BARSTOW BID

- ✓ Sidewalk garbage service
- ✓ Revitalization grants
- ✓ Wayfinding kiosk at Phoenix Park
- ✓ Sidewalk flower pots
- ✓ Sponsorship for major events
- ✓ Snow removal

WATER ST BID

- ✓ Homecoming parade
- ✓ Placemaking
- ✓ Business support events
- ✓ Sidewalk garbage service

2025 BID PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS



MURAL AT THE 5TH AVE BRIDGE
FUNDED BY THE N BARSTOW BID BEAUTIFICATION GRANT



PLANTER PROGRAM
FUNDED BY S BARSTOW BID



LIVE CHRISTMAS TREE PLANTED
FUNDED BY THE WEST GRAND BID



BANNERS ON WATER ST FOR HOMECOMING
FUNDED BY THE WATER ST BID AND UWEC

BID TRIVIA

Question 1: What year did the BIDs bring music to the streets of Downtown?

Question 2: True or False? BIDs are the same as the City of Eau Claire?

Question 3: Which Eau Claire BID was the first to be established in the State of Wisconsin?

Question 4: How many planters does the BID pay to plant and manage downtown?

BID TRIVIA ANSWERS

Answer: 63!

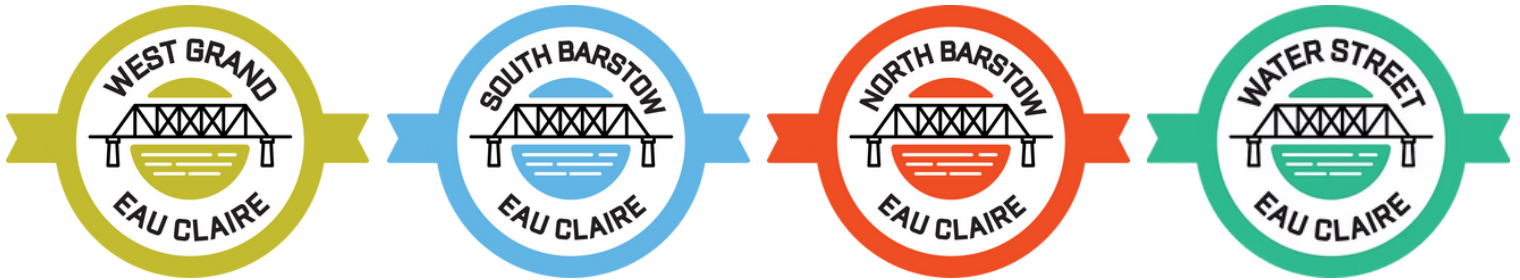
Answer: 3: South Barstow

Answer 2: Not quite. The BIDs are an independent board of the city of Eau Claire and the self-assessed tax dollars they collect are segregated from the city budget.

Answer 4: 2014

THANK YOU SPONSORS!

None of this work would be possible without the help of our generous sponsors who know that, as the heart of Eau Claire, downtown is worth investing in. A strong downtown means a strong community for all. Thank you sponsors!



CITY OF
**EAU
CLAIRE**



ROYAL
CREDIT
UNION

Ruder ♦ Ware
BUSINESS ATTORNEYS FOR BUSINESS SUCCESS®

 **Xcel** EnergySM

WESTconsin[®]
CREDIT UNION

REBOOT SOCIAL

NB
NORTHWESTERN
BANK

FASTSIGNS
Make Your Statement™

M3
SOUND | LIGHTING | STAGING



VISIT
**EAU
CLAIRE**



Pablo
CENTER AT THE CONFLUENCE



EAT-DRINK-PLAY
The Plus
EAU CLAIRE, WI

OLSON'S
ice cream
since 1944

 **ROYAL**
CONSTRUCTION



 **EARTHBOUND**
ENVIRONMENTAL SOLUTIONS



BECOME A MEMBER



We updated our membership program in 2025! DECI membership is now built around the benefits you receive, not around the number of employees you have. We hope that members find that the value they get far outweighs the cost of their membership. And on top of the value membership brings, we hope our business community sees the value in supporting an organization that fights every day to advocate for downtown, for downtown businesses, and for everyone who loves to come here! We believe a strong DECI builds a strong and resilient downtown!

ADVOCATE \$100	Support for a strong and vibrant downtown	✓	✓	✓
	Access to grant opportunities	✓	✓	✓
	Recognition on the DECI website	✓	✓	✓
	Early access to event registration	✓	✓	✓
	1 free Downtown Summer Market registration	✓	✓	✓
	1 free social media share	✓	✓	✓
	Board/committee/volunteer opportunities	✓	✓	✓
	Vendor contract preference	✓	✓	✓
	Access to DECI promotional events	✓	✓	✓
SUSTAINER \$250	Website listing with link & logo		✓	✓
	Discounted partnered content story in the Pipeline		✓	✓
	1 free Pipeline ad & discounted additional ads		✓	✓
	Access to Reels & Deals promo		✓	✓
	2 free social shares		✓	✓
	Discounted event registration		✓	✓
	2 free Downtown Summer Market registration		✓	✓
	Access to Chamber eBucks program		✓	✓
CATALYST \$500	2 free Pipeline ads & discounted additional ads			✓
	1 free partnered content story & discounted additional stories			✓
	1 free partnered content story on DECI social			✓
	Free DECI promo package for one of the member's events			✓
	Discounted Volume One advertising			✓
	Coven membership discount			✓
	Visit Eau Claire discounted marketing packages			✓
	Premier placement in DECI's online directory			✓
	Business listing in annual report			✓

NOT A BUSINESS? YOU CAN SUPPORT DECI WITH A DONATION!

DECI is a 501(c)6 nonprofit organization. Donations to DECI are not tax-deductible



SPECIAL SHOUTOUT TO OUR CATALYST MEMBERS!



AVRES



THANKS TO ALL OF OUR MEMBERS FOR JOINING US THIS YEAR! A UNITED DOWNTOWN IS A STRONG DOWNTOWN!

MEET THE TEAM



THANKS TO OUR
VOLUNTEERS
FOR BEING PART OF OUR TEAM!

WE COULDN'T DO IT
WITHOUT YOU!

2025 DECI BOARD

Jake Wrasse

Board President
UW-Eau Claire

Ann Sessions

Vice-President
Chippewa Valley Theatre Guild
West Grand BID Rep

Nikki Olson

Treasurer
Art Boxx
South Barstow BID Rep

Julia Johnson

Secretary
Pablo Group

Aaron Brewster

Eau Claire City Council

Emilu Larson

Ruder Ware

Jenn Linville

Lilly Beez

Gareth Shambeau

Ayres Associates

Dave Solberg

City of Eau Claire

Angela Eberhardt

Mayo Clinic

Jason Manz

Eau Claire Rentals
North Barstow BID Rep

Jed Hart

Pioneer Tavern
Water Street BID Rep

Cassie Heintz

The Oxbow Hotel

Angela Weiss

Main St Barber

Brian Maki

Volume One

DECI STAFF

Erin Klaus

Executive
Director



Kate Felton

Civic & Strategic
Comms Coordinator



Taya Wathke

Admin Partnership
Coordinator



Hannah Durham

Social Marketing
Coordinator



Austin Bower

Social Marketing
Consultant

Graham Barnes

Web Comms
Consultant

The DECI office is located at The Coven Workspace - 131 S Barstow St Suite 202
Find us online at www.downtowneauclaire.org

DECI DOWNTOWN
EAU
CLAIRE
INC