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**DOWNTOWN HOLIDAY DÉCOR GOING UP
MDA & MDF STILL RAISING FUNDS FOR ELECTRICAL WIRING REPAIRS**

Santa’s Elves are hanging the holiday decorations in Downtown Missoula this week, as four employees from Missoula’s Urban Forestry Division spend the next several days sprucing up Downtown for the upcoming holidays.

For more than 25 years, the Missoula Downtown Association (MDA) and the City of Missoula have partnered together to decorate Downtown for the holidays. The MDA owns and maintains close to 150 decorations: candles, Christmas Trees, and white snowflakes. City Urban Forestry Division employees hang and take them down each year.

With the infrastructure nearly 30 years old, the MDA and the Missoula Downtown Foundation have partnered to raise funds for electrical upgrades for the last two years. Last year all the electrical outlets on the street lights were replaced at a cost of $20,000. This year’s goal is to replace all the electrical wiring between the street lights, which is expected to cost $35,000.

“We still have about $15,000 we need to raise in order for the wiring upgrades to be completed,” said Geoff Badenoch, President of the Missoula Downtown Foundation (MDF) Board of Directors. “If we meet our goals for this year’s Friends of Downtown Campaign,” we should have enough resources to see that project through.”

All Missoulians are encouraged to support the Friends of Downtown Campaign by sending a tax-deductible donation to the MDF at 218 East Main Street before the end of the year. More information can be found online at: <https://www.missouladowntown.com/about/mdf>.

Major contributors to funding holiday décor upgrades include the Downtown Business Improvement District, Dr. Steve Kempel, Point S Tire Factory, and many other individuals and businesses.

“When the Downtown decorations go up, it’s a sign that the holiday season is upon us,” said Aimee McQuilkin, President of the Missoula Downtown Association Board of Directors. “These decorations contribute significantly to the beautiful, vibrant and festive environment that makes Downtown such a special destination for all. We’re excited to kick off the holidays next week!”

Downtown Missoula will officially kick off the holiday shopping season with Small Business Saturday on November 26. Free horse-drawn carriage rides will be offered every Saturday and Sunday from 11am-4 pm November 26 through December 18. The 14th annual Parade of Lights will be Saturday, Dec. 3 with Santa’s Arrival at 1 pm.

For more information on all things Downtown, call the Downtown Missoula Partnership office at 543-4238.

*Downtown: Connecting Our Community!*