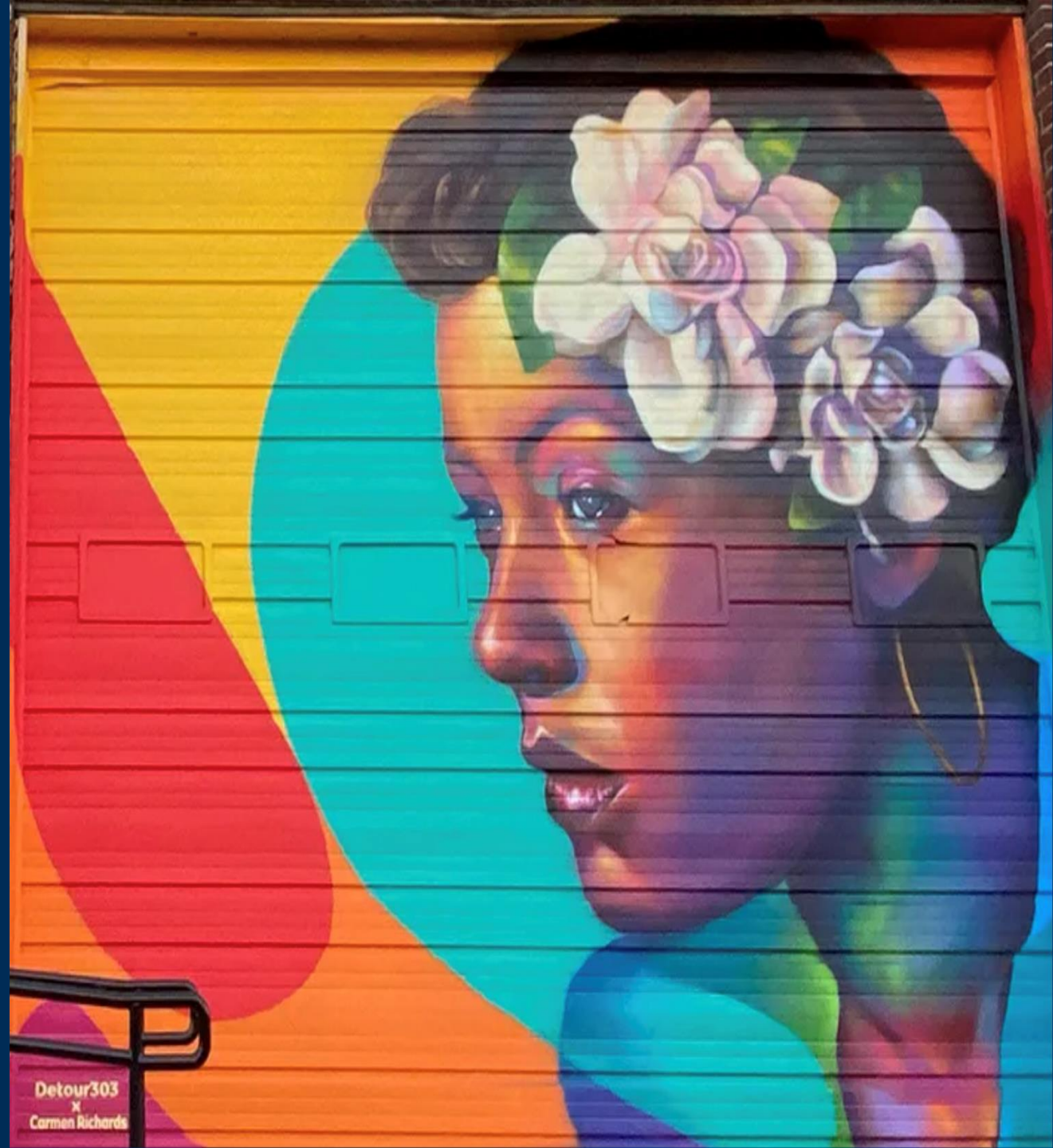
RiNo BID

(River North Business Improvement District)

10 YEAR RENEWAL

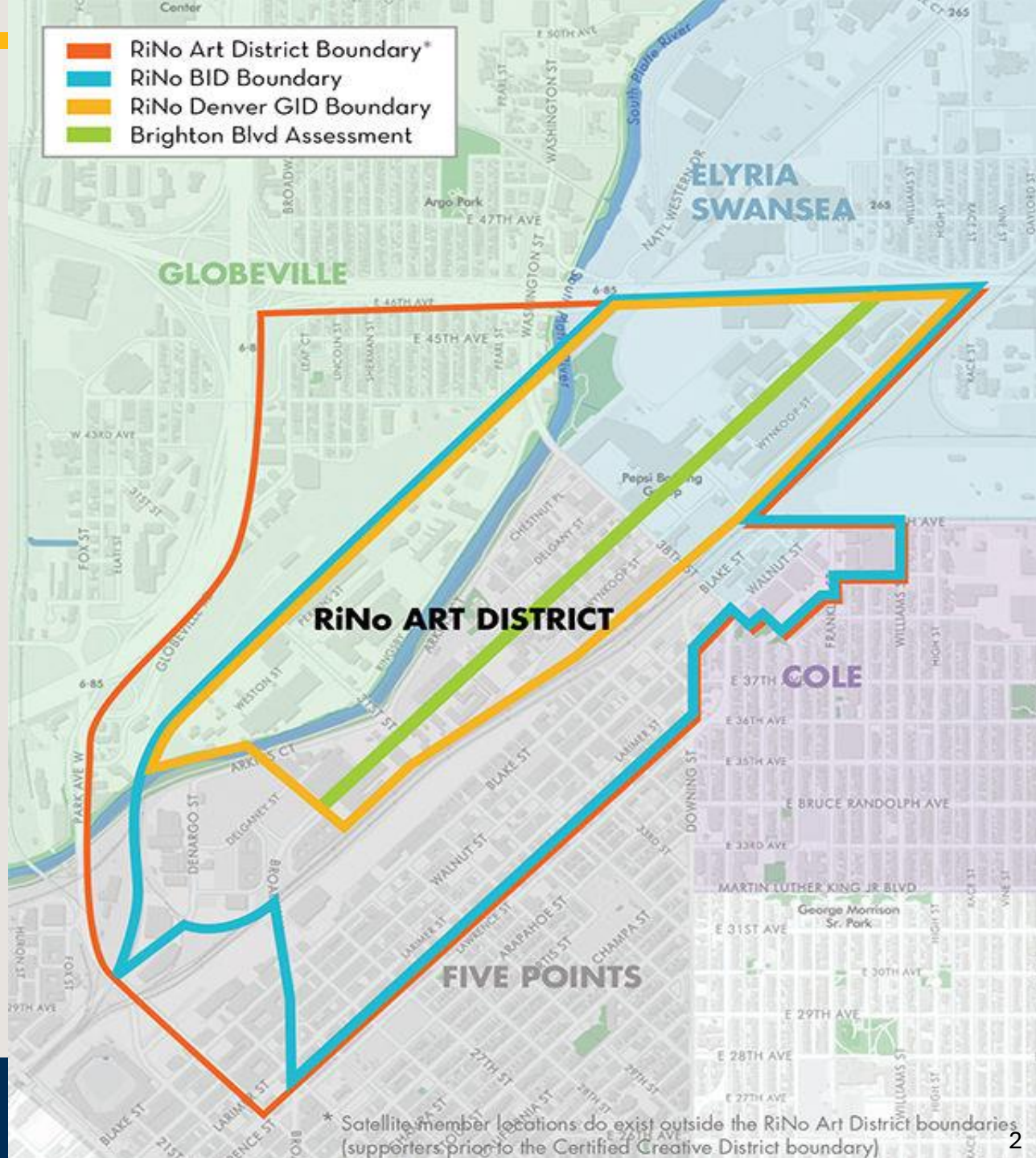
DENVER
DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE



BACKGROUND

The RiNo Business Improvement District (BID) was created in June 2015 as a special tax district to assess 4 mills to commercial property to generate funding in key areas.

1. Advocacy
2. Branding, Marketing and Activation
3. Placemaking
4. Business Support for Creatives and Entrepreneurs



10 YEAR RENEWAL

Ordinance No. 15-304, which created the RiNo BID, outlines the 10-year renewal process:

"**Section 16. Ten-Year Renewal**. The Board will provide notice and conduct a public hearing during the ninth year of the District's existence to obtain property owner comments on the District's effectiveness and success. If the District is deemed successful, the Board will request that the City Council renew the District by giving public notice, holding a hearing, and adopting an ordinance prior to the end of the ten-year initial term. If the District is not considered to be successful, it will sunset at the end of the Initial term and terminate after it has wound up its affairs. This process will repeat every ten (10) years."

TIMELINE

2005: Created RiNo Arts District (RAD)

June 2015: Created General Improvement District (GID)

June 2015: Created Business Improvement District with 4 Mills

June – Nov. 2024: Community Engagement for BID Renewal

Nov. 13, 2024: BID Renewal Public Hearing

Nov. 20, 2024: BID Renewal Board Approval

May 7, 2025: BIZ Committee

May 12, 2025: First Reading

May 19, 2025: Public Hearing and Second Reading of the RiNo BID Renewal

CITY COUNCIL ACTION

✓ **Approve Ordinance 25-0640**

An ordinance approving a resolution requesting the renewal and extension of the RiNo Business Improvement District for an additional ten-year period, in City Council District 9.

RiNo BID PRESENTATION

RiNo BID FINANCIAL IMPACT

$4.4M in Placemaking

$3.3M Supporting Artists & Businesses

$1.2M for Marketing & Branding

$1.1M in Advocacy & Outreach

- Raised $4M for RiNo ArtPark, a home to subsidized artist studios, a Denver Public Library, and the Comal Food Incubator.
- Awarded $225K in equity grants to BIPOC-led community organizations.
- Donated over $200,000 in microgrants to 170+ local businesses, artists, and creatives.
- Donated $147,500 to host the Denver Fringe Festival and support artists.
- Provided 70+ local artists with temporary studio space in vacant buildings.
- Distributed $10,000 in Guiry's gift cards to 100 artists for art supplies.
- Launched a new artist commission program paying over $286,000 to Denver creatives.

ADVOCACY

- Improved pedestrian safety and walkability, like 35th Street pedestrian bridge and stop signs at 27th & Walnut and 25th & Larimer.
- Formed the Unhoused Action Coalition to unite various BIDs, GIDs, and RNOs to support unhoused neighbors.
- Created the RiNo River Series, turning neighbors into champions for South Platte restoration and conservation.
- Turned three vacant city buildings into ArtPark, Denver's new green arts hub.
- Successfully advocated for making Walnut a 2-way street.
- Hosted free monthly workshops to provide skills and resources for creatives.

PLACEMAKING

- Established the RiNo Design Standards and Zoning overlays.
- Launched the Urban Forest Initiative to boost the district's tree canopy.
- Created and installed gateway signage to welcome and direct folks to key destinations
- Co-led RiNo MAPS with the City to build a data-driven plan for parking, biking, and transit.
- Supported beautification efforts with Denver Day Works, which provides jobs for people experiencing or at risk for homelessness.
- Launched a recycling and landfill program with 92 designer waste bins and job-creating clean-ups with Denver Day Works.
- Developed a bike-friendly culture with artist-made racks, lane markers, and 4 new miles of bike lanes.

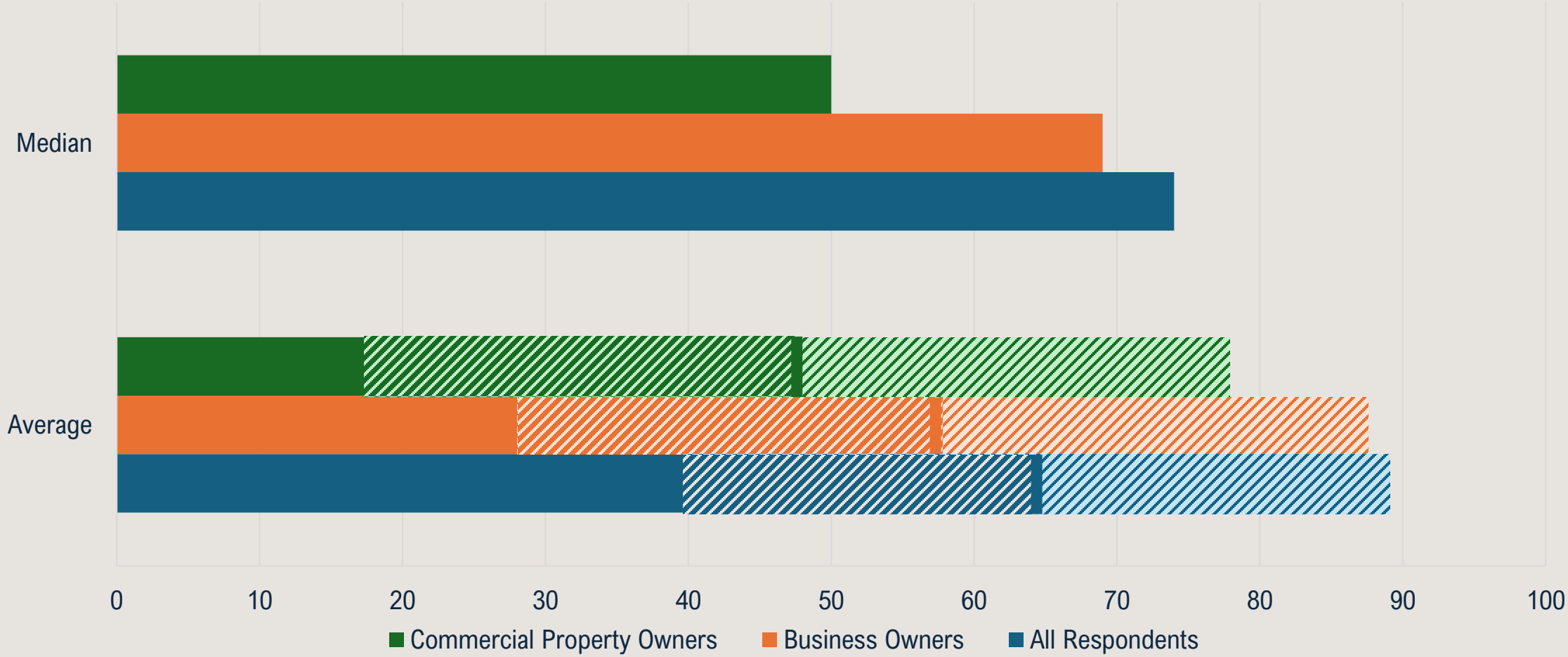
MARKETING & BUSINESS SUPPORT

- Energized First Fridays' media outreach and social campaigns that reached millions online.
- Landed headline coverage in outlets like The New York Times through proactive public relations.
- Rebuilt RiNo.org with an interactive mural map and event calendar, increasing traffic by 92%.
- Drew 100k+ visitors through marquee festivals and DENVER WALLS
- Launched NO VACANCY, an artist residency program that filled vacant buildings with 70+ local artists.
- Filled the calendar with family-friendly events like Camp RiNo, ArtPark Al Fresco, and Summer Art Markets.

BID RENEWAL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- **800+ property owners** received two direct mail calls to action.
- **5,600+ neighbors** got six info-packed BID renewal emails soliciting feedback.
- **63,000 social media impressions** from 69 posts kept the conversation moving.
- **497 bilingual survey responses** ensured diverse voices had a say.
- **104 people watched** the RiNo BID renewal public hearing.
- **18 one-on-one interviews** with stakeholders captured deep insights.
- **3 focus groups** surfaced location specific perspectives.
- **20 public comments** at the November public hearing rounded out the feedback.

ON A SCALE OF 0 – 100, HOW EFFECTIVE DO YOU FEEL THE BID HAS BEEN IN ACHIEVING ITS MISSION?



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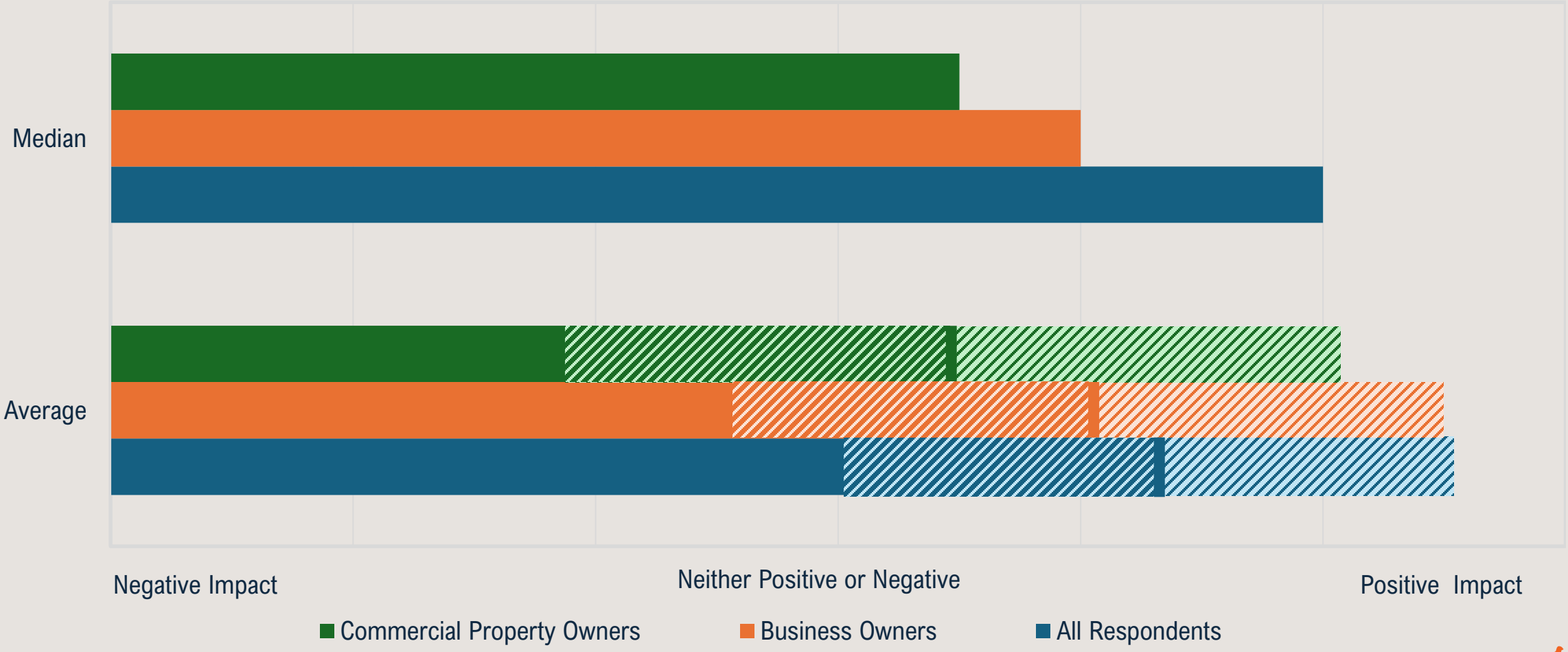
WHAT OVERALL IMPACT DO YOU FEEL THE BID HAS HAD?



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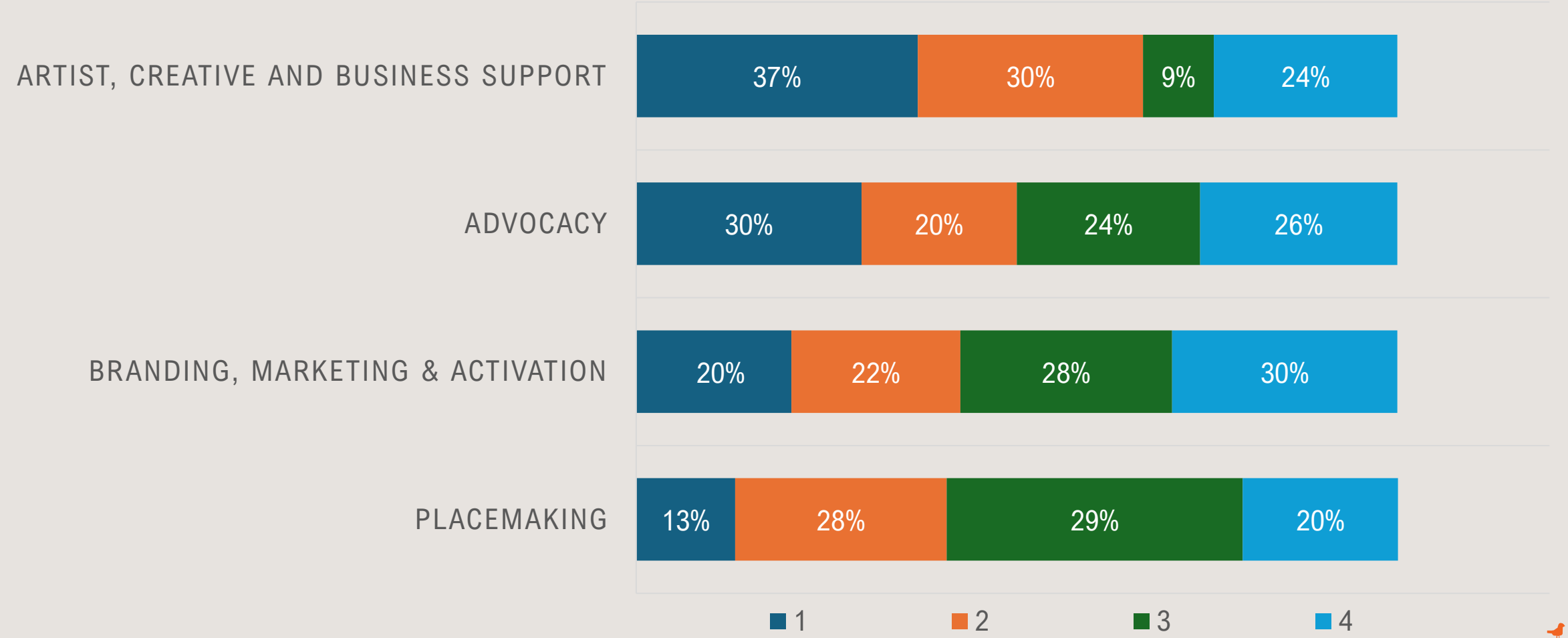
RANK THE BID'S PRIORITY SERVICE AREAS

COMMERCIAL PROPERTY OWNERS



RANKED 1 AS THE MOST IMPORTANT TO 4 AS THE LEAST IMPORTANT.

BID RENEWAL SURVEY RESPONSES

- **Great Initial Success:** By nearly all accounts, and from all stakeholder groups, the initial five or so years of the BID are universally viewed as immensely successful.
- **Streamline Complex Governance**: All involved in the process agree that the structure (RAD, BID, GID, KRW) is overly complicated and needs improvement.
- **Continue the Bid with Improvements**: The BID should continue with key adjustments, including more focus, discipline, and transparency.

NEW BID OPERATING MODEL

Streamline Roles and Responsibilities

- Reduce organizational overlap and confusion.
- Streamline reporting structures and governance oversight.
- Establish single-line board governance.
- Delineate direct lines of authority and reporting structure.

Drive Efficiency & Increase Transparency

- Minimize low-value administrative activities.
- Create more staff capacity for priority organizational projects.
- Develop clear reports and budgets on BID projects.
- Track and measure each organization's success in achieving its mission.

NEW BID OPERATING MODEL

Updated RiNo Business Improvement District (BID) Responsibilities

- Neighborhood Advocacy and Support.
- Neighborhood Maintenance and Cleanliness.
- Placemaking, Wayfinding, and Infrastructure.
- Business Marketing and Support.

New RiNo Art District (RAD) Responsibilities

- Continue 501c(6) model.
- Support and Advocacy for Artists and Creatives.
- Arts Programming.
- Neighborhood Branding.

ONGOING RiNo BID COMMITMENTS

Safety, Security & Cleanliness

- Launch the Clean Team App to report litter, graffiti, or repairs.
- Partner with police for visible, proactive patrols.
- Double the Clean Team for daily sweeps and graffiti removal.
- Invest $400k to keep the BID spotless and well lit.

Communication & Engagement

- Better utilize the BID email list with explicit action calls to 5,500+ subscribers.
- Launch an online forum with advisory groups.
- Offer more ways to comment, vote, and track projects in real time.
- Give residents more voice in long-term planning.

Business Support & Transparency

- Spotlight businesses in BID branding and social feeds.
- Let business and artist voices shape BID work.
- Transparently post budgets and audits online.
- Improve the shared service model so every dollar works harder.

RiNo BID BOARD

	Affiliation	Term
Adam Larkey (Chair)	3295 Blake, LLC	**2025**
Spencer Fronk (Treasurer)	Number 38	**2027**
Jason ZumBrunnen (Secretary)	Ratio Beerworks	**2027**
Carla Mestas	CIRCLE Organization	**2026**
Jevon Taylor	Green Space	**2027**
Alison Nestel-Patt	FORMATIV	**2027**
Danny Newman	Empire Collective	**2027**

Questions & Discussion