Downtown Banner Pole Program

Program Guidelines & Participation Criteria • Modesto Downtown Improvement District

Purpose of the Program

The Downtown Banner Pole Program exists to add color, vibrancy, and visual interest to downtown Modesto and to promote cultural, charitable, educational, and civic activity of general public interest. DID owns and manages the banner hardware and pole inventory throughout the district and makes it available to qualifying organizations under the criteria below. The banner poles are a curated streetscape amenity, not a public advertising forum.

Who May Participate

Participants must represent or promote nonprofit, cultural, charitable, educational, or civic organizations, events, or activities of general public interest. Examples include:

- Nonprofit and charitable organizations serving the Modesto community
- Cultural institutions, arts organizations, museums, and performance venues
- Educational institutions — universities, colleges, and public and private schools
- Public festivals, parades, exhibitions, and community events open to the public
- Civic campaigns and downtown district identity or wayfinding messaging

DID has sole authority over approval of participants, banner content, and placement. Approval is based on conformity with these criteria and on design quality.

Content Standards

Not permitted:

- **Commercial advertising** of any kind, including direct or indirect promotion of the sale of goods or services
- **Political messages**, candidate or ballot-measure advocacy, or public-issue advertising
- **Religious messages** or proselytizing content
- Profane language, personal attacks, or content that promotes or perpetuates unlawful discrimination
- Content advocating illegal activity, or infringing on copyrights or trademarks
- Wording or graphics that could create a traffic or safety hazard

Design expectations:

- Banner content should be generic in nature, graphically or symbolically representing the organization, event, or subject
- Bold, simple designs with high-contrast colors read best at street level. Keep copy short.
- All artwork must be in good taste and suitable for a general audience of all ages

Sponsor Recognition

Sponsor names and logos are permitted only within the **bottom 10 inches** of the banner. No sponsor content may appear anywhere above that area. Sponsor recognition may not become the dominant message of the banner, and this allowance does not permit commercial advertising by any other means.

Lease Fees

DID charges a flat lease fee of **$10 per pole** for use of the banner poles, regardless of the length of the placement. This fee is separate from and in addition to the cost of banner production and installation, which the participant pays directly.

Participant type	Term	Lease fee
Nonprofit organizations	Any term up to 12 consecutive months	**No fee**
All other eligible participants	Any term up to 12 consecutive months	**$10 per pole**

Lease fees are payable to DID and are due before installation is scheduled. Fees are non-refundable once banners are installed. Nonprofit participants must provide documentation of nonprofit status with their application.

Term and Renewal

- **No placement may run longer than 12 consecutive months** without a signed placement agreement with DID.
- Longer-term placements of one to three years are available to non-nonprofit participants by signed agreement. The agreement sets a firm expiration date and assigns responsibility for replacing banners that are damaged, faded, or worn.
- Nonprofit participants are exempt from the lease fee but remain subject to the 12-month consecutive limit. At the end of a 12-month placement, nonprofit banners come down and re-enter the rotation.
- Renewals and repeat annual placements are welcome and are handled through the rotation described below.

Quantity and Placement

- **Minimum of 10 poles** and a **maximum of 25 poles** per participant. The minimum keeps production costs reasonable and ensures a placement reads as a coordinated campaign; the maximum keeps pole inventory available to a range of organizations. Note that some downtown poles carry two banners, so the number of banners you order may exceed the number of poles assigned to you — Sierra Display will confirm the count when they quote your order.
- Pole locations are assigned at DID's discretion, based on availability and on grouping banners for visual impact. Specific poles cannot be guaranteed, though we will work with your preferences wherever we can.
- Certain poles are permanently reserved for DID district campaigns and for existing institutional partners and are not part of the general inventory.
- Availability shifts through the year as other partners' banners rotate on and off. Requests are handled on a first-come, first-served basis.

Storage and Rotation

Banners are stored at no charge while they are off the poles, and can be reinstalled on a recurring rotation so your organization has a predictable place in the downtown calendar year after year. For recurring placements we strongly recommend an **evergreen design** — artwork with no year or specific date on it — so the same banners can be reused season after season without reprinting.

Participant Responsibilities

- Placing the banner order directly with Sierra Display, DID's contracted vendor
- Paying for banner production and for installation and removal
- Paying the DID lease fee, where applicable
- Keeping banners in good condition. Banners that become faded, torn, or otherwise fall into disrepair must be replaced or removed. DID will notify the participant, who has 14 days to repair, replace, or authorize removal at their cost.

> **Why the hardware rule matters:** once banner hardware is mounted on a pole, a banner must remain on it. Empty hardware is damaged by wind and weather. Participants are responsible for keeping their assigned poles filled for the full duration of the placement.

DID is not responsible for loss, theft, or damage to banners while they are being installed, while on display, or while being removed.

Banner Specifications

Standard size	30" wide × 94" tall
Material	Vinyl with grommets
Pockets	4" pockets top and bottom — included in the overall banner size
Text placement	Graphics may bleed to all sides on vinyl, but keep text out of the 4" top and bottom pocket areas
Text size	Cap height of 3"–4" for best legibility at street level
Sponsor area	Bottom 10" only

Artwork File Requirements

Files that don't meet these specs may incur additional art charges or production delays.

- **Spot color banners:** vector art preferred — Adobe Illustrator CS6, EPS, InDesign CS6 (packaged), or press-quality PDF. All spot colors must be Pantone.
- **Full-color / digital banners:** Photoshop CS6 TIFF in CMYK at 100–150 dpi at full banner size. Avoid JPEG and GIF — compression degrades quality. Pantone Process colors strongly encouraged.
- **Newer Adobe CC files** should be saved back to CS6 legacy format.
- **Also:** build at full banner size, convert all text to outlines, send linked images separately. Large files can be sent free via Dropbox or WeTransfer to graphics@sierradisplay.com.

How to Apply and Order

1 **Contact DID**
Tell us who you are, how many banners you'd like, when you want them up, and for how long. We'll confirm eligibility and review current pole availability with you.

2 **Submit your design concept for approval**
Send a draft design — a rendering showing dimensions, wording, colors, graphics, and any logos — **before** having banners produced. DID reviews for conformity with these criteria. No substantial changes may be made after approval.

3 **Prepare production-ready artwork**
Once the concept is approved, have your designer build the final file at full size to the specifications above. Ask us for the printable 30" × 94" template and Sierra Display's full digital file guidelines.

4 **Place your order with Sierra Display**
All orders go through Sierra Display, our contracted vendor. Send Jennifer Schmidt your artwork and quantity, and she'll return a proof and a quote.

5 **Approve the proof and pay**
Production begins once your signed proof approval and sales order are back with Sierra Display. Banners are released for installation after the invoice is paid. Your DID lease fee, if applicable, is also due at this point.

6 **Installation**
DID schedules and coordinates installation on your assigned poles, and handles removal and storage at the end of your placement window.

Planning Your Timeline

Reach out at least **90 days** before your target installation date. Design approval, production, and shipping each take time, and poles cannot be held open without banners ready to install. Placements tied to a specific event or season should start even earlier.

Program questions, eligibility, pole locations, scheduling
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