

**Downtown  
Modesto  
Partnership**

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**Annual  
Report**



# Welcome Downtown

In 2023, the Downtown Modesto Partnership (DMP) witnessed remarkable growth and revitalization within our urban center. While many downtowns struggled with the lingering effects of the pandemic, including high vacancy rates and dwindling foot traffic, downtown Modesto defied the odds, experiencing a welcomed surge in activity and prosperity.

Thanks to the relentless dedication of the DMP team and the unwavering support of our community partners, downtown Modesto achieved a workforce and visitor recovery rate of 105%. This impressive milestone is a testament to the collaborative spirit, a shared vision that drives our organization forward, and the understanding among downtown institutions that our community center and central business district thrives on in-person people power.

Moreover, I am proud to report that our efforts have yielded tangible results. Since 2019, vacancy rates have steadily declined, surpassing pre-pandemic levels, while rental rates have shown consistent growth, reflecting the increasing demand for space in our vibrant downtown.

Last year marked a significant transition in leadership at DMP, as I assumed the role of Interim CEO alongside my responsibilities as Executive Director of the Modesto Downtown Improvement District (DID). This alignment has enabled us to streamline operations, leverage synergies, and enhance our ability to serve the needs of downtown businesses and property owners more effectively. Both organizations had been syncing up efforts since 2022 when our boards began meeting jointly and adopted a shared Mission and Vision.

One notable addition to the downtown landscape was the opening of the Modesto Children’s Museum, affectionately known as “MoChiMu.” This innovative facility has quickly become a popular destination for families in Stanislaus County, thanks in part to the generous contribution of \$250,000 from Domo Partnership. The facility features 12,000 square feet of interactive exhibits designed to spark children’s imaginations and encourage hands-on learning.

DMP continued to bring beloved community events and activities like DoMo Walls, First Fridays, and our Back of House Food Tour (which boasts a 100% 5-star rating!). Last year, DMP and DID partnered to present Off The Air, an indie

music series bringing local and touring acts downtown. The shows became a must for indie music enthusiasts who have a knack for staying attuned to emerging artistic expressions. Off the Air allowed music lovers the “big city” experience of standing-room-only live bands.

DMP and DID also ushered in a new era for Mod Shop, a shopping institution lovingly built and nurtured by three community members since 2015. In addition to the makers, artisans, and crafters that the event highlighted since its inception, Mod Shop 2023 added brick-and-mortar retailers and restaurants, a shopping “passport” for patrons to get stamped, live music, a warming station, and more. The event brought over 3,000 shoppers downtown, filling our sidewalks with people of all ages throughout the day.

Furthermore, our commitment to inclusivity and social responsibility is evident in initiatives such as the installation of a solar-powered phone charging station at the homeless shelter. To complement this achievement, the City of Modesto also established a Day Center at the Salvation Army shelter, providing essential services to unhoused individuals in our community.

None of this would be possible without the dedication of our Downtown Ambassadors, whose tireless efforts ensure that downtown Modesto remains a safe, clean, and welcoming environment for all. We are deeply grateful for their invaluable contributions.

Looking ahead, I am committed to fostering collaboration, enhancing our streetscapes, and further enriching DMP’s event offerings. By harnessing the power of partnerships and working closely with the City of Modesto on grants to improve and beautify downtown, we can continue to unlock downtown Modesto’s full potential and create lasting positive change for our stakeholders and community.

As we embark on this journey together, I am reminded of the words of Helen Keller: “Alone, we can do so little; together, we can do so much.” Your continued investment in downtown Modesto is not only appreciated but vital to our shared success.

Downtown’s future looks bright. I look forward to getting to know many of you and to the opportunity to build community and coalitions.  
Sincerely,

Heidi Savage  
Interim CEO

## Board of Directors

**Heidi Savage | Interim CEO**

**Kathryn Davis | Board Chair**

Valley First Credit Union

**Charles Doll | Vice President**

Omega Pacific Insurance Solutions

**Gabriela Guerrini | Treasurer**

The State Theatre

**Blaine Cox | Secretary**

Berliner Cohen, LLP

**David Boring |** Never Boring Design

**Sue Zwahlen |** Mayor, City of Modesto

**Ann Endsley |** Greens on Tenth

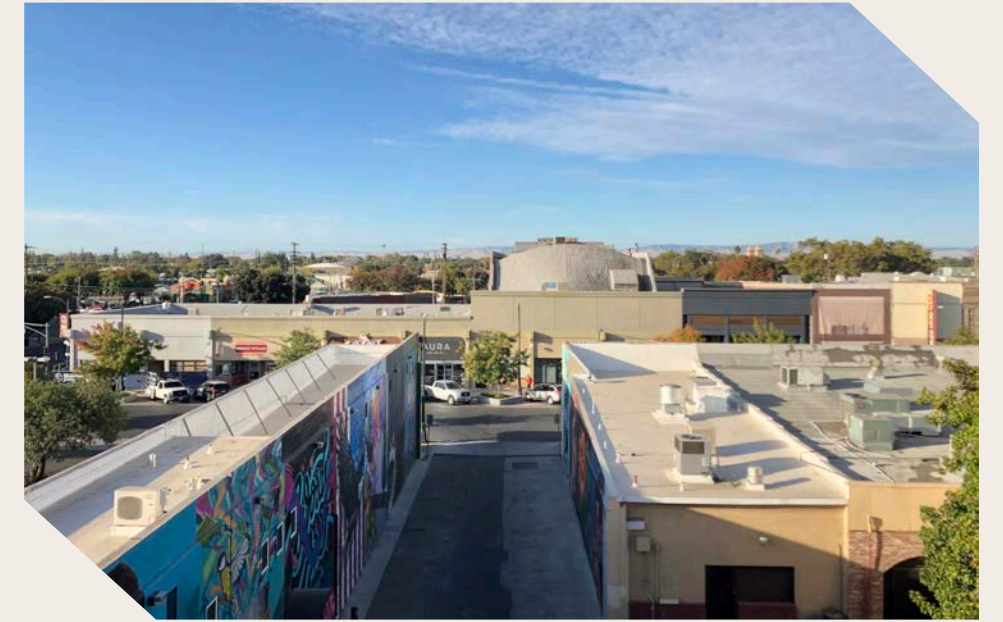
**Blake Humble |** Churchkey, Commonwealth

**Chad Hilligus |** Gallo Center for the Arts

## Mission Statement

**To create a vibrant community through activities and partnerships designed to improve the quantity of quality experiences in downtown Modesto.**

## 2023: DOWNTOWN MODESTO



The DoMo Partnership is a non-profit 501(c)(3) community benefit corporation that is managed by the DoMo Partnership staff and its eight-member, property owner-based board.

The DoMo Partnership provides special benefits to individual parcels located within the boundaries of the Downtown Modesto Community Benefit District (CBD). Focuses are district improvements and activities, including cleaning, security, beautification, district identity and branding in the public realm, and other special benefit programs.

The CBD serves to improve downtown by attracting new customers to businesses, increasing sales, increasing occupancies, and keeping downtown safe, clean orderly, attractive, and well-marketed with special events and programs.

# THE ESSENTIALS: SAFE & CLEAN SERVICES

## January 2023 - December 2023

Downtown Ambassadors made 9,840 citizen contacts last year, assisting with things such as giving directions, advice on dining, and even helping find resources for those in need. They also provided support to businesses with low-to-mid-level concerns which did not necessarily require law enforcement intervention.

The team worked closely with law enforcement, contracted security firms, and outreach specialists skilled with helping those with mental health, addiction, housing and employment needs.

What's more, Downtown Ambassadors are the friendly faces that greet downtown patrons, providing support to our community six days a week with everything from pressure washing, leaf removal, and community support.

Downtowns are the heart of every city, and Downtown Modesto is the County seat; hundreds of thousands of people visit downtown every year for leisure, entertainment, and business. Our work keeps trash receptacles from overflowing, streets from flooding, and businesses from leaving. Downtown is continually becoming a better place to live, work, and play, thanks to the Downtown Ambassador team.



1,850 graffiti spots removed

**DID YOU KNOW?**

Once a location becomes known for tagging, it may become a target for further vandalism and criminal activity. In addition to the negative impact on property values and safety concerns, graffiti can also have psychological effects on residents.

A study once found that "removing graffiti within 24 to 48 hours can prevent its recurrence by up to 90%." This highlights the importance of acting fast to remove tagging as soon as it appears, and not allowing it to ooze deeper. The Downtown Ambassadors act instantly to remove tagging.

The Downtown Ambassadors continue to collect HUNDREDS of THOUSANDS of pounds of trash per year, clear debris from storm drains and gutters, power wash downtown block-by-block, and keep landscaping tidy. This work fulfills our promise to keep downtown clean.

## FOSTERING A FRIENDLY AND SECURE ATMOSPHERE

|                               |       |
|-------------------------------|-------|
| calls for service             | 365   |
| unhoused engagements          | 2,044 |
| unhoused referred to services | 304   |
| patron assistance             | 5,781 |
| business community assistance | 1,854 |
| anti-social behavior abated   | 99    |
| safety escort                 | 21    |

# THE ESSENTIALS: SAFE & CLEAN SERVICES

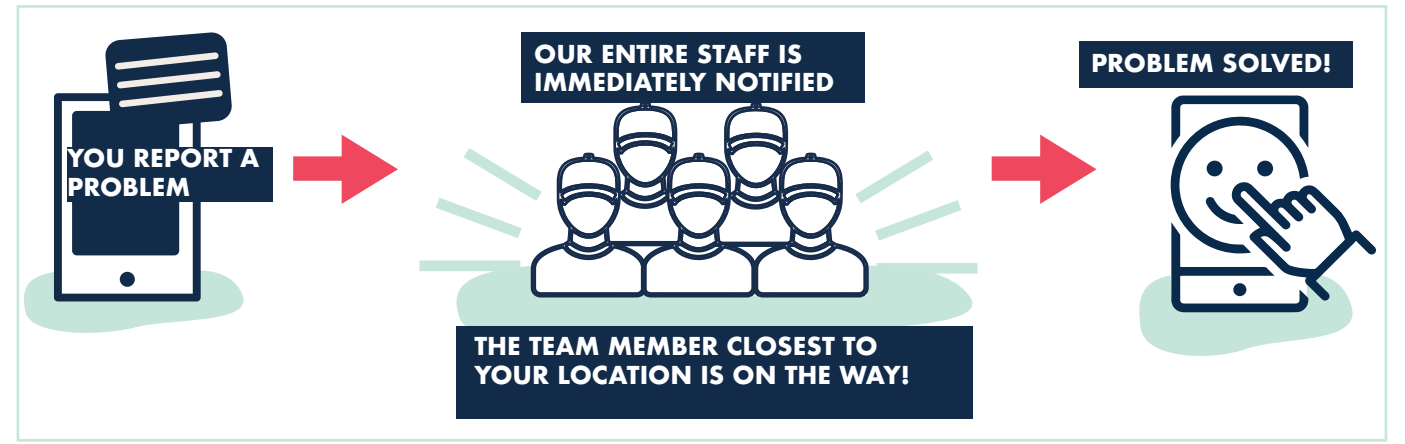
## January 2023 - December 2023

OUR DOWNTOWN AMBASSADORS ARE JUST A QUICK EMAIL AWAY!

[service@domopartnership.org](mailto:service@domopartnership.org)



|           |                  |
|-----------|------------------|
| Monday    | 5:00am - 6:30pm  |
| Tuesday   | 5:00am - 9:30pm  |
| Wednesday | 5:00am - 9:30pm  |
| Thursday  | 5:00am - 9:30pm  |
| Friday    | 5:00am - 9:30pm  |
| Saturday  | 12:30pm - 9:30pm |
| Sunday    | Sunday - closed  |



## DOWNTOWN IMAGE ENHANCEMENT

# Digital Media Makes Its Mark

# FOLLOW US

 @downtown-modesto  
 @domofirstfridays  
 @domowalls  
 @backofhousefoodtour  
 @offtheairmusic  
 downtown-modesto.com  
 domopartnership.org  
 backofhousefoodtour.com

The Downtown Modesto Partnership utilizes communication and marketing strategies to enhance the visibility of current programs, events, and opportunities within the downtown area for consumers. Additionally, it aims to keep stakeholders updated on relevant news and significant events.

**Social media followers increased: 38%**

**8,555 Facebook followers across all DoMo Partnership-managed accounts**

**Newsletter and Blog Recipients: 6,832**

**18,129 Instagram followers across all DoMo Partnership-managed accounts**

**Social media engagement: 38,096**

**Website views: 46,750**

## Follower Ages



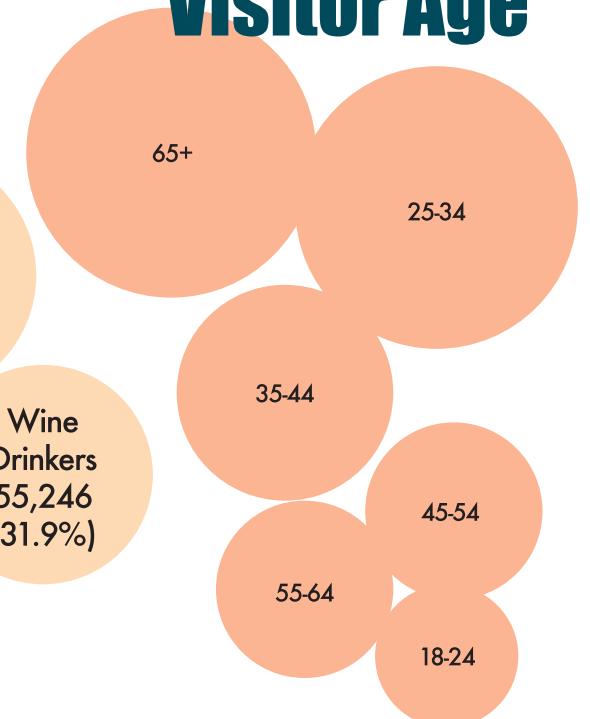
## DOWNTOWN IMAGE ENHANCEMENT

# Data Empowers Downtown Economy

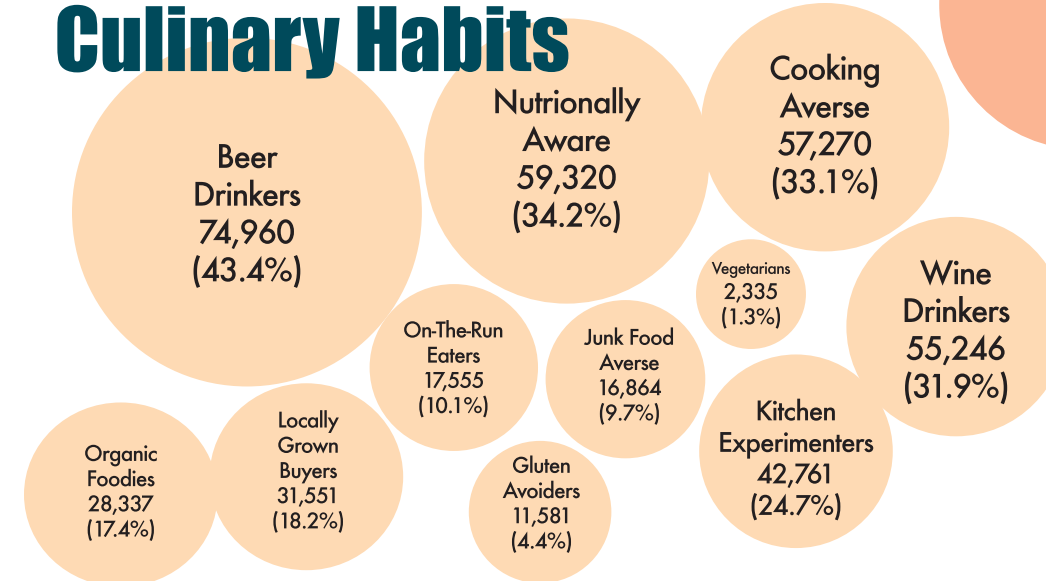
As urban place management professionals, our team actively studied and engaged the community to learn about its social makeup, habits, preferences, and identity.

Data empowers us to support our small business community so it can maintain a competitive edge.

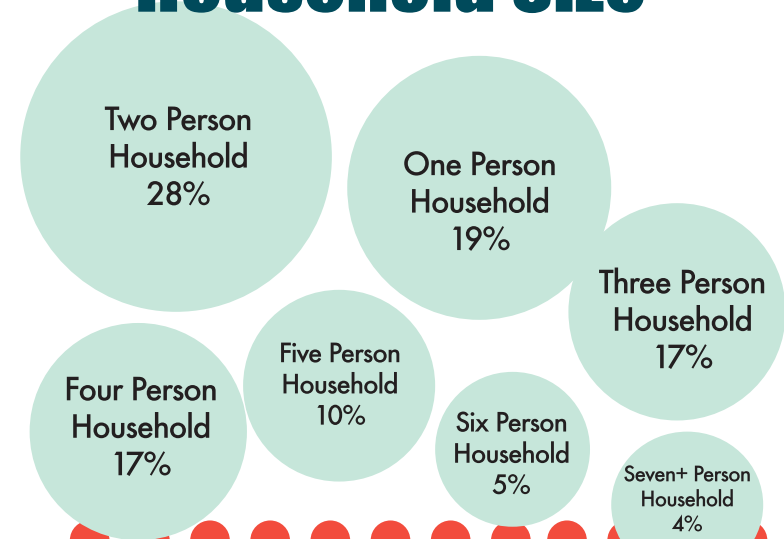
## Visitor Age



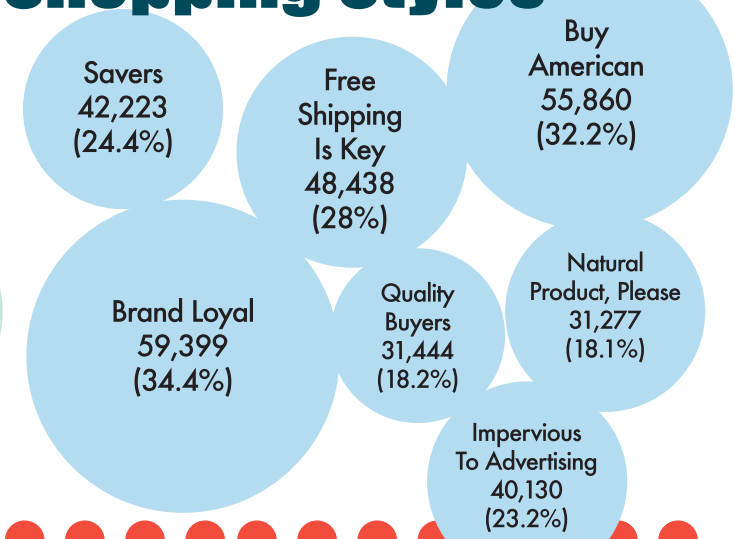
## Culinary Habits



## Household Size



## Shopping Styles

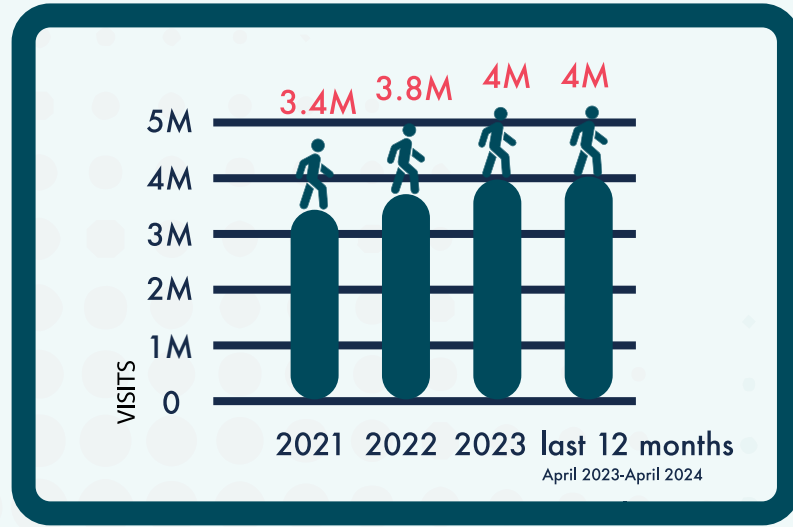


## DOWNTOWN VISITORS

### Using data to demonstrate growth

Across the nation, one of the most common key performance indicators of a successful downtown is how many visitors it gains each year. Downtown Modesto's post-COVID 19 visitor recovery rate is on an upward trajectory, nearing pre-pandemic numbers.

And, while downtowns across the nation grapple with the economic impact of recovering an average of 50% of their workforces who have transitioned to remote work, downtown Modesto is seeing a 105% workforce recovery.



Visits YOY: +10.5%

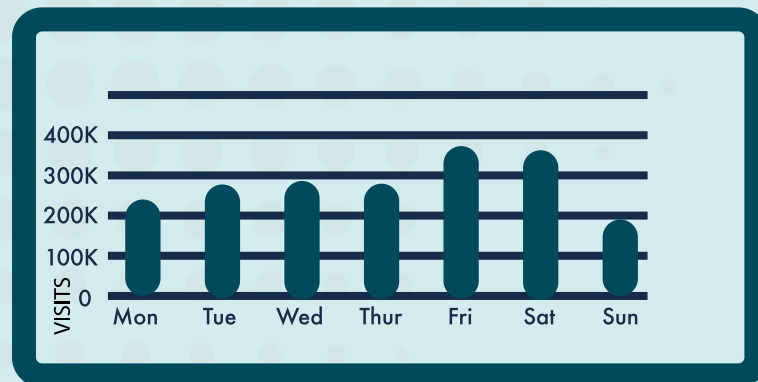
Visits YO2Y: +32.6%

## VISITOR HABITS

### From pattern to programming

In our ongoing efforts as place management professionals, the DoMo Partnership leverages data to glean insights from the organic patterns of activity in downtown. We recognize that humans inherently create paths of desirability, which serve as valuable indicators of programming needs and help us communicate to businesses which hours of operation will match consumer desire. We monitor the pulse of downtown life, informing strategic decisions and embracing the wisdom inherent in the movements of our community.

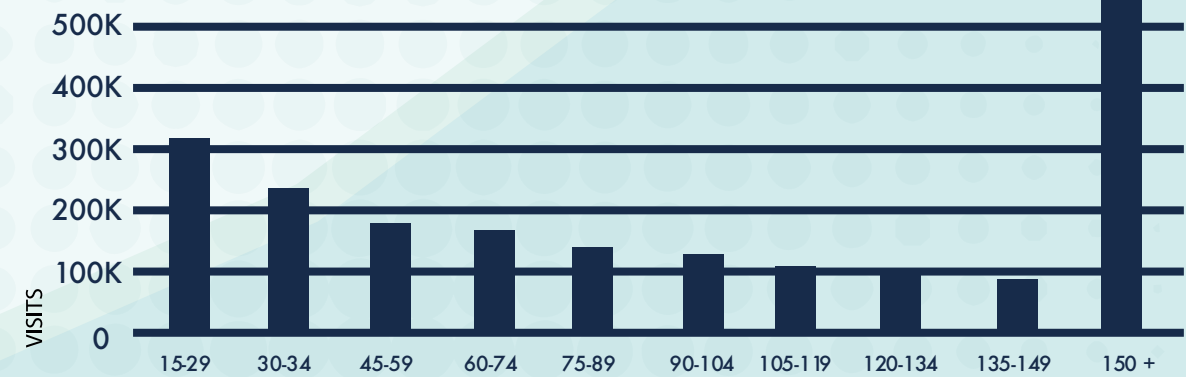
Daily Visit Patterns



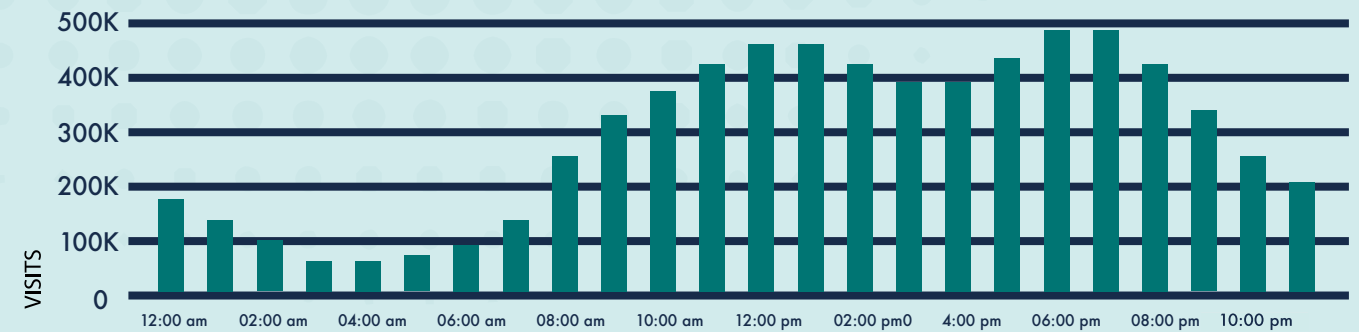
## VISITOR HABITS

### From pattern to programming

Length of stay data informs parking infrastructure opportunities



Hourly Visit Patterns



## SMALL BUSINESS SATURDAY

# Building On a Shop Small Tradition



After years of dedicated volunteer efforts, a Modesto community event planning team transitioned the management of Mod Shop, a cherished Small Business Saturday event established in 2013. Through strategic collaboration with the DoMo Partnership team, the event's production was seamlessly assumed, reinforcing ties with downtown brick-and-mortar establishments, extending its reach into the central business district, while preserving the essence of Mod Shop's brand identity.

The event garnered significant attendance, with thousands participating, resulting in substantial boosts in sales and foot traffic for local businesses. Its enduring popularity has solidified its place as a cherished holiday shopping tradition among families and friends across the region.

**3,690** attendees counted  
**59** pop-up vendors  
**21** brick-and-mortar retailers



**MOD SHOP**

A BOUTIQUE & HANDMADE MARKET



2,500 pamphlets were distributed, serving a gameified map experience that guided patrons throughout the entire business district

## WHY ARE DOWNTOWNS OFTEN THE BACKDROPS FOR SMALL ENTREPRENEURIAL VENDORS?

Downtown serves as a hub for fostering new ideas, innovation, and entrepreneurial endeavors. Events such as Mod Shop and DoMo First Fridays exemplify this ethos by actively embracing and encouraging pop-up vendors, providing them with a platform to test their concepts and creativity.

Remarkably, some of these vendors have transitioned into permanent brick-and-mortar establishments within our city, demonstrating tangible economic development.

The downtown area uniquely facilitates the integration of pop-up vendors, echoing the sentiments of renowned urbanist Jane Jacobs, who emphasized the indispensable role of old buildings in fostering vibrant streets and districts. Jacobs' assertion underscores the importance of preserving historical structures, which provide invaluable opportunities for experimentation and innovation, crucial for the evolution of urban landscapes.

**"Cities need old buildings so badly it is probably impossible for vigorous streets and districts to grow without them.... for really new ideas of any kind—no matter how ultimately profitable or otherwise successful some of them might prove to be—there is no leeway for such chancy trial, error and experimentation in the high-overhead economy of new construction. Old ideas can sometimes use new buildings. New ideas must use old buildings."**

**Jane Jacobs**

**PUBLIC ART FOR THE PEOPLE**  
**DoMo Walls Paints The Town**



Emily Ding, Artist, 2023  
Greg Reed, Property Owner  
1012 11th Street

**Every year, DoMo Partnership produces DoMo Walls, a mural event attracting artists from all over the globe.**

**In 2023, downtown Modesto gained three new beautiful murals, increasing the vibrancy of downtown by instilling a sense of pride, safety, beauty, and walkability.**

**Our partners continue to reinvest in downtown through generous donations that make this event possible, and our community is healthier because of it.**

**PUBLIC ART FOR THE PEOPLE**  
**DoMo Walls Paints The Town**



**25 MURALS**  
**24 ARTISTS**

- FROM**  
**ARGENTINA**  
**AUSTIN, TX**  
**BROOKLYN, NY**  
**CANADA**  
**DALLAS, TX**  
**GUATEMALA**  
**HOUSTON, TX**  
**LIVINGSTON, CA**  
**LOS ANGELES, CA**  
**MERCED, CA**  
**MEXICO**  
**MODESTO, CA**  
**NEW ZEALAND**  
**SACRAMENTO, CA**  
**SAN FRANCISCO, CA**  
**SOUTH KOREA**

**An alleyway is transformed with public art, transforming it into a place to greet students visiting the Modesto Children's Museum**

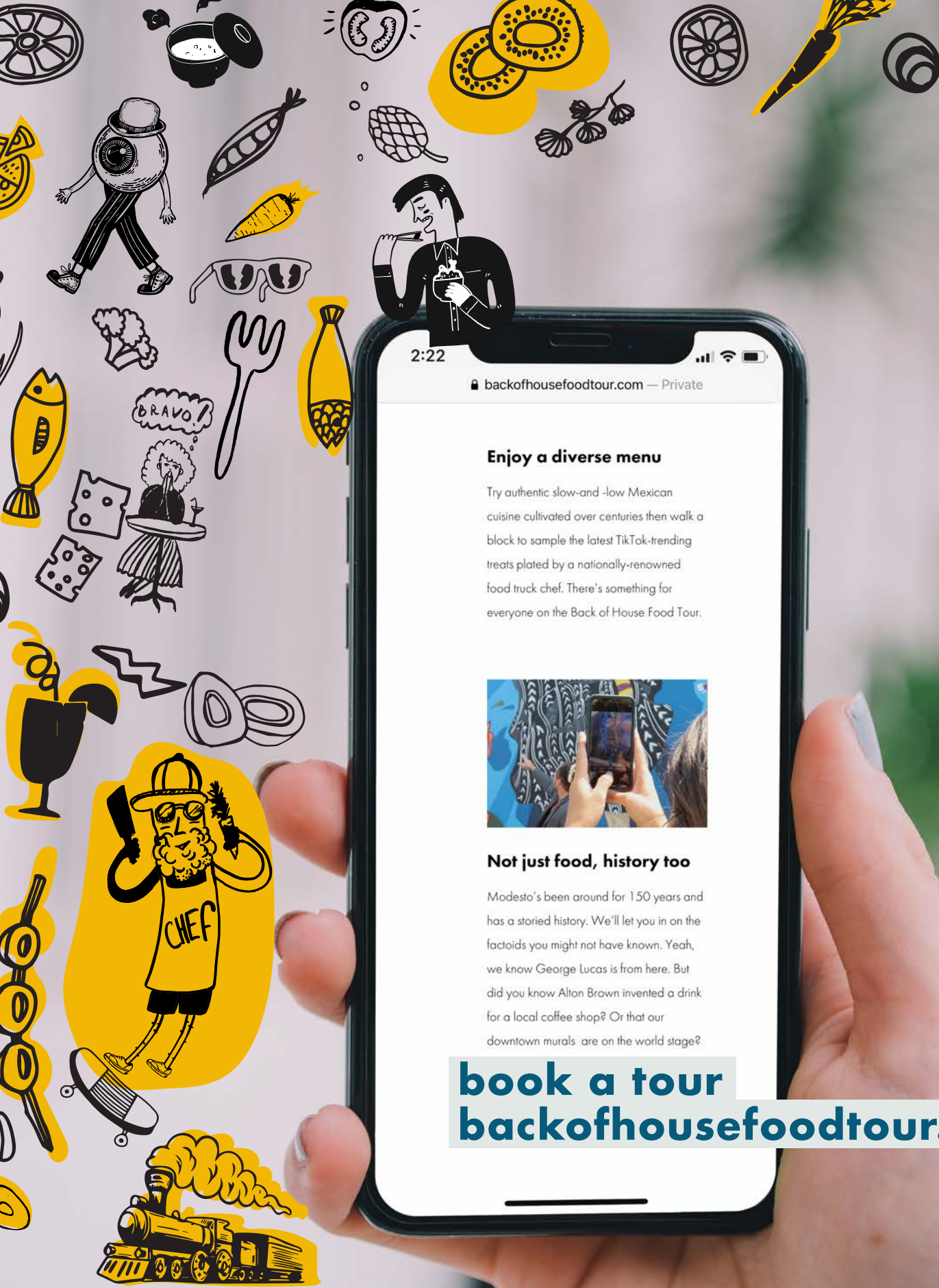
Ricky Watts and "Flylord",  
Artists, 2023  
Modesto Children's Museum,  
928 11th Street

**TAKE**  
**THE**  
**TOUR**

**DOWNTOWN-MODESTO/DOMOWALLS**

**DOWNTOWN**  
**MODESTO**





## BACK OF HOUSE TOURS A Street-Smart Tour Fit for a Foodie

The three-hour walking tour of the downtown Modesto food and culture scene

**progressive meal**

**1.5 miles**

**4-5 restaurants**

**5 days a week**

**craft beer, wine and  
cocktail tastings**

**legendary, historic  
storytelling**

**rotating  
destinations**

**diverse cuisine  
experiences**

**unique brand created  
and managed by DoMo**

**100% 5-STAR REVIEWS**

**BACK  
OF HOUSE**  
downtown modesto food tour

### Enjoy a diverse menu

Try authentic slow-and -low Mexican cuisine cultivated over centuries then walk a block to sample the latest TikTok-trending treats plated by a nationally-renowned food truck chef. There's something for everyone on the Back of House Food Tour.



### Not just food, history too

Modesto's been around for 150 years and has a storied history. We'll let you in on the factoids you might not have known. Yeah, we know George Lucas is from here. But did you know Alton Brown invented a drink for a local coffee shop? Or that our downtown murals are on the world stage?

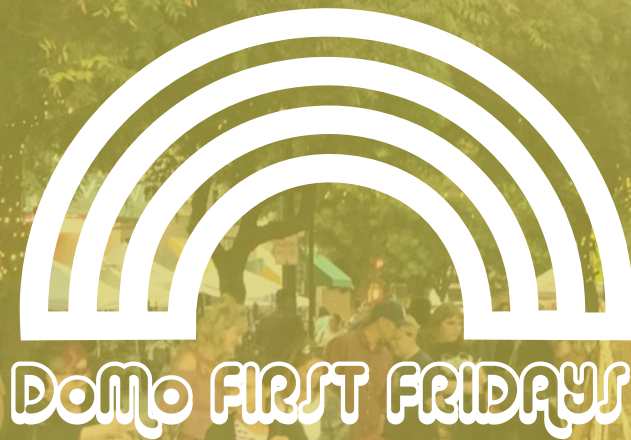
**book a tour**  
**backofhousefoodtour.com**

Back of House continues to attract explorers and the epicurious.

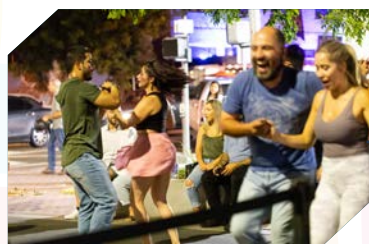
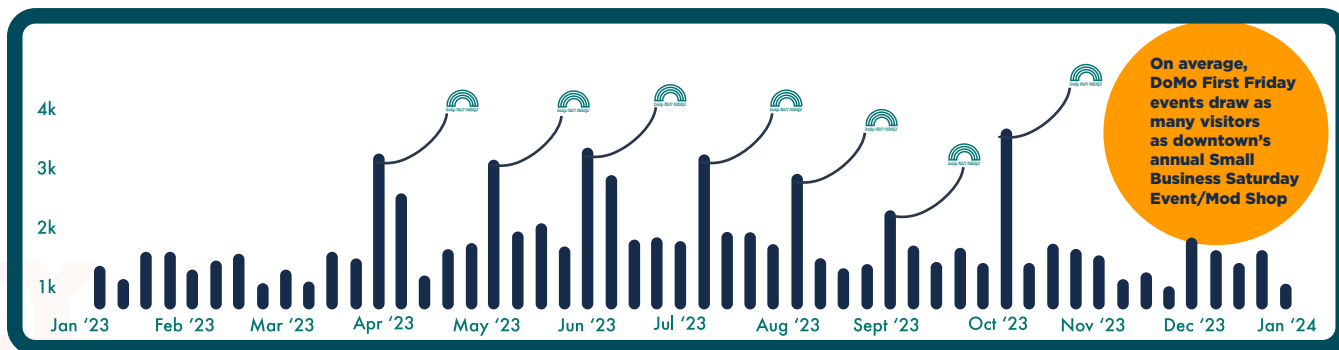
- Layering amenities
- Generating revenue
- Building the scene
- Improving downtown



# A COMMUNITY INSTITUTION CONTINUES



## DoMo First Fridays effect on 10th Street Visitor Traffic



The community welcomed DoMo First Fridays back with another increase in attendance. As always, the goal of First Fridays is threefold:

To paint downtown in a positive light



To expose new patrons to downtown businesses



To increase revenue at downtown businesses during the event

# OFF THE AIR LIVE MUSIC SERIES Retaining Our Innovative Community

Independent music scenes serve as incubators for the creative class, offering a fertile environment where individuals with diverse talents and backgrounds converge to collaborate and innovate. In the context of economic development, these scenes attract and retain the creative workforce by providing opportunities for artistic expression, professional growth, and community engagement.

Beyond artistic expression, they inject vitality into local economies through live performances, venue establishments, and tourism attraction. They serve as crucial platforms for skill development, networking, and mentorship, nurturing a pipeline of talent that fuels various industries beyond music, such as design, technology, education, and entertainment.

Furthermore, by fostering a supportive ecosystem that values experimentation and risk-taking, independent music scenes cultivate a mindset of entrepreneurship and resilience among participants, contributing to the overall dynamism and competitiveness of the local economy. As engines of creativity and cultural vitality, these scenes enrich urban landscapes and supply the workforce with the diverse skills and perspectives necessary for sustained innovation and prosperity.

For the second year, DoMo Partnership partnered with Off The Air Presents, a live independent music series that has become a local cultural institution since its inception 2005.



# OFF THE AIR

- 8 Off The Air Events
- 1,010 tickets sold
- 2 downtown venue partners
- 11 national acts
- 2 international acts
- ALL AGES
- California-wide audience

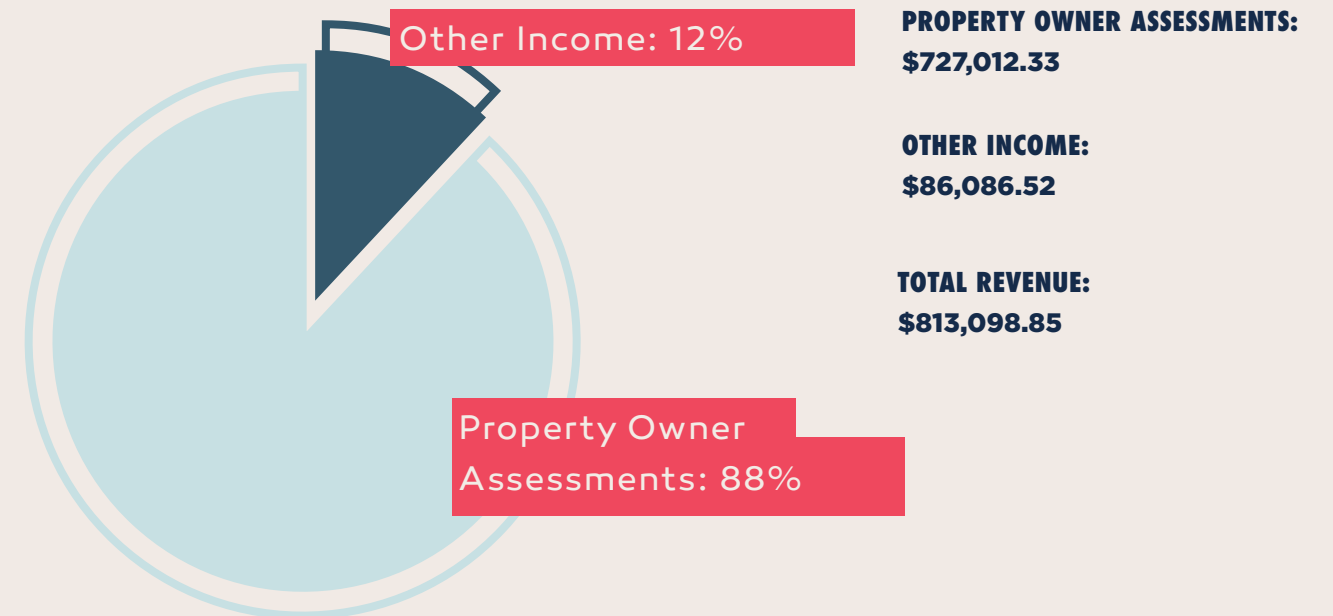




## FINANCIALS

# The Partnership is on Solid Financial Footing

## REVENUE



### METHOD OF FINANCING:

The financing of district services provided by the Downtown Modesto Partnership is based upon the levy of special assessments of properties that receive benefits from the improvements and activities provided. Funds are dedicated to special services that are proportional to the rate paid by property owners and are allocated to three areas: cleaning and safety programs, image enhancement services and administration. The Partnership is also funded by activities and events such as RAD Card, DoMo First Fridays and DoMo Walls, which pay for themselves and drive additional benefit to stakeholders and downtown patrons.



# EXPENDITURES\*



\*reflects property owner assessment expenditures only

# Statement of Financial Position\*

December 31, 2023 • End of Fiscal Year

## ASSETS:

### Current Assets

|                                       |    |                  |
|---------------------------------------|----|------------------|
| Cash and Cash Equivalents             | \$ | 385,565          |
| Cash and Cash Equivalents, Restricted |    | 481,074          |
| Contributions Receivable              |    | 28,771           |
| Prepaid Expenses                      |    | 1,291            |
| <b>Total Current Assets</b>           |    | <b>\$896,701</b> |

### NON CURRENT ASSETS:

|                  |  |       |
|------------------|--|-------|
| Security Deposit |  | 2,108 |
|------------------|--|-------|

**FIXED ASSETS: (Net of Accumulated Depreciation of \$136,357)**

14,457

### Total Assets

**\$913,266**

## LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS:

### Current Liabilities

|                                  |    |                  |
|----------------------------------|----|------------------|
| Accounts Payable                 | \$ | 1,041            |
| Credit Cards Payable             |    | 3,935            |
| Sales Tax Payable                |    | 272              |
| Accrued Wages and Benefits       |    | 7,110            |
| Accrued Compensated Absences     |    | 8,857            |
| Stanislaus County RAD Card       |    | 275,256          |
| <b>Total Current Liabilities</b> |    | <b>\$296,471</b> |

### NET ASSETS:

|                                       |                |
|---------------------------------------|----------------|
| Net Assets Without Donor Restrictions | 410,977        |
| Net Assets With Donor Restrictions    | 205,818        |
| <b>Total Net Assets</b>               | <b>616,795</b> |

### Total Liabilities and Net Assets

**\$913,266**

\*Unaudited as of this publication



# Downtown Modesto Partnership

## Administration

### Heidi Savage

Interim CEO  
heidi@domopartnership.org

### Stephanie Foster

Director of District Identity  
stephanie@domopartnership.org

### Elizabeth Buenrostro

District Program Manager  
elizabeth@domopartnership.org

### Sara Lowry-Dominguez

District Development Manager  
sara@domopartnership.org

### Phone:

209.303.0411

### Location and Mailing Address:

1003 10th Street Suite A  
Modesto, CA 95354

domopartnership.org

### Downtown Ambassadors

Safe and Clean Services  
service@domopartnership.org