



NEWS ADVISORY

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For immediate release

New Downtown Police Officer Hits the Streets April 1

Andy Roy, a 13-year veteran of the Missoula Police Department, starts his new job as Missoula's dedicated downtown police officer on Monday. His selection for the job was announced Wednesday morning at the Annual Downtown Business Improvement District of Missoula Ratepayer Breakfast.

"I love downtown," Roy said, "and I look forward to making a difference and keeping downtown safe and enjoyable for everyone."

The downtown police officer position is funded by the Police Department, the Downtown Business Improvement District of Missoula (BID) and the Missoula Parking Commission. The job runs April 1 through Dec. 31. The officer works closely with the summer downtown bicycle officers, the BID ambassadors, business owners, other police officers and the Poverello Center's Homeless Outreach Teams. The combination of approaches has improved safety and quality of life downtown greatly in the past few years.

"The downtown officer plays a vital role in ensuring the safety and security of the downtown business district," said Tim France, chairman of the BID and owner of Worden's Market. "We are looking forward to having Andy on the team helping to make downtown Missoula an even greater place to do business."

Roy worked eight years as a patrol officer and five years as a detective with the Missoula Police Department. Before that, he worked five years as a state boating officer in Utah. He'll spend his first couple of weeks downtown introducing himself to business owners. He'll work varied shifts. He approaches policing as a reasonable person, he said.

"I'm fair," he said. "But I am going to strictly enforce ordinances downtown."

Roy's Police Department supervisor is Quality of Life Officer Dustin Delridge. Delridge is dedicated to maintaining the improvement in downtown public safety of the past few years and continuing the movement forward.

“It’s important that downtown is safe and enjoyable for everyone,” Delridge said. “We want to do the best for everyone.”

Eran Fowler, executive director of the Poverello Center homeless shelter and soup kitchen, praised the downtown officer program and its collaboration with the Poverello’s Homeless Outreach Teams. The teams approach chronic homelessness one-on-one and attempt to bring people into services. In 2012, the teams made 466 face-to-face contacts with chronically homeless people living outdoors and responded to more than 50 hotline calls.

“It’s not a crime to be poor or homeless, but it’s also not acceptable to engage in criminal or unsafe behavior,” Fowler said. “Working together, we’ve had a tremendous impact on the quality of life for everyone downtown.”

Roy stresses that all people afraid for their safety should call 911 without hesitation. His work is supported by other officers and by the bicycle officers who start patrolling when the school year ends.

**To arrange an interview with Andy Roy, call:
Ginny Merriam, Communications Director
Office 552-6007
Cell 546-7692**

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