



2023-2025

**STRATEGIC
PLAN**



**ALBANY
DOWNTOWN
ASSOCIATION**

INTRODUCTION

Process

The Albany Downtown Association (ADA) strategic plan will guide the work of the organization over the next three years (2023-2025). It will be a dynamic document with priorities updated annually and adaptation to changes in ADA's operating environment.

The plan was prepared under the leadership of a Strategic Planning Committee using the following methodology:

- Review of City of Albany plans and documents relevant to downtown. Key crossover issues and opportunities with ADA's work are: housing, walkability, crime, historic character, parking and business mix diversification.
- Meetings with City of Albany staff.
- Surveys of Downtown businesses, ADA members and the community-at-large.
- Review of Albany demographic trend data.
- Board and Executive Committee meetings to synthesize market/customer/business information and insights and to provide direction on the results.
- Guidance from the Oregon Main Street strategic planning workbook and the 4-point Main Street Approach.

Current Conditions

As context for the planning process, the Strategic Planning Committee identified key drivers of change for ADA and the nonprofit sector:

- Board member burnout and lack of enthusiasm.
- Volunteer participation is on the decline and ADA committees are small.
- Financial insecurity as the funding mix is changing. Ex: TLT funds are no longer guaranteed.
- Room for improvement in our overall focus and plan.

The Strategic Planning Committee also provided a high level assessment of ADA's current situation summarized below.

Assets

- The ADA is actively striving to align our work with the City of Albany's downtown priorities: waterfront redevelopment, beautification through flower baskets and street lights.
- Most Board members are actively engaged in committees.
- Visitors and locals enjoy our events and appreciate our beautification efforts.
- As a resource and collaborator, ADA is helping to catalyze and support downtown success by assisting with grants, holding mixers, etc.
 - Ex: Existing business expansion and retention and significant new investment-new property owners, businesses and building improvements.

Liabilities

- Lack of an Organization/Outreach Committee; need to build back from scratch.
- Volunteer base is limited/has been in decline.
- Community perceptions of Downtown issues (often erroneous) call out for a communication strategy.
 - Ex: perceptions of high vacancies, crime, downtown as expensive and lack of parking need to be addressed.
- City of Albany staff/partner changes make continuity of communication and work a challenge.
- Lack of organized Volunteer Appreciation efforts.
- Downtown-specific challenges include: Lack of diversity in our business mix; some properties have regular turnover.

Opportunities

- Actively engage and partner with the City of Albany on waterfront development and current City of Albany Strategic Plan.
- Clear direction from surveys on business development; focus on specialty shops, entertainment and grocery.

OUR MISSION & VALUES

Mission

To encourage the economic growth and vitality of Historic Downtown Albany by promoting it as the social, commercial, and cultural hub of the community.

Vision

Downtown Albany is a welcoming and active destination to work, live, visit, and play. It celebrates our community heritage and inspires business innovation and success.

Core Values

- We strive for a beautiful, clean, safe, and walkable historic Downtown.
- We believe that supporting small, local businesses builds a healthy economic environment and a stronger Downtown community.
- We appreciate the importance of revitalization and preservation of our historic Downtown buildings.
- We foster strong relationships with Downtown property owners and businesses, and create a supportive community for them to be a part of.
- We are committed to a high level of professionalism in the way we support and communicate with our members, and in the resources we provide.
- We value volunteers support, recognizing and honoring their time and energy on behalf of the Albany Downtown Association.

ORGANIZATION-WIDE GOALS

DESIGN

Enhances the physical and visual elements of downtown while capitalizing on the unique assets that set Downtown Albany apart.

ECONOMIC VITALITY

Encourages property development/improvement, and creates a supportive environment that grows the health of the Downtown economy.

PROMOTION

Works to promote a positive image of Downtown Albany that showcases the unique characteristics and promotes it as the hub of the community through marketing efforts and events.

OUTREACH

Builds a strong foundation for a sustainable revitalization effort, including cultivating partnerships, community involvement, and resources for the Albany Downtown Association.



OUR 2023-2025 STRATEGY

Design

- Expand beautification efforts to reach more of Downtown Albany.
 - Ex: Hanging baskets, snowflakes, clean ups, etc.
- Identify and beautify pocket parks and current parklets, consider additional parklets east of Lyon.
 - Ex: Burkhart Square, etc.
- Develop a systematic and organized plan for clean-ups that have longer-lasting benefits.
 - Ex: River rock instead of bark dust, laying ground cover, more frequent clean up events, program for adoption by landscaping companies, cigarette butts program, etc.
- Improve the exterior and interior of the Albany Downtown Association's office to be professional, organized, functional and welcoming to visitors.
 - Ex: Signage, maximizing the window through information and displays, organized storage, clean welcoming entry, coordinating with a professional if needed, etc.
- Initiate public art program.
 - Ex: Partner with building owners and local artists for murals or street art, etc.
- Implement an artist banner project.
 - Ex: Partner with local artists to create an annual juried banners program to be hung along Broadalbin.



OUR 2023-2025 STRATEGY

Economic Vitality

- Organize more frequent mixers for building owners and business owners to create a supportive community and foster closer relationships.
- Improve the appearance of storefronts Downtown as needed.
 - Ex: Working with the City on vacancy ordinances, building or business partnerships, providing a window/storefront beautification program, etc.
- Diversify the mixture of business downtown.
 - Ex: Recruit established businesses for a new or a second location, explore other opportunities for new businesses, use the survey results to strategize a plan, etc.
- Provide learning opportunities and community connections for members.
 - Ex: Technical support, business support, SBDC, City planning department regarding building improvements, etc.
- Conduct more regular surveys for customers and members and provide information to members and the Albany Downtown Association.
 - Share relevant survey results with applicable members.
 - Ex: Share the requested services or products, requested hours of operation, etc
- Survey, strategize and implement a plan on how to better support service based businesses.



OUR 2023-2025 STRATEGY

Promotion

- Evaluate the member benefits, staff work hours and volunteer time of current events organized by the Albany Downtown Association and narrow events down to a maximum of 6-8 per year.
 - Ex: Focus on events that encourage visiting multiple locations, get additional business input through surveys or meetings, evaluate impact and profitability of each event, conduct post-event surveys to evaluate the success.
- Consult branding experts and come up with a Downtown Albany marketing campaign to better promote Downtown Albany as a whole.
- Create and execute a quarterly mass mailer to the community.
 - Ex: Postcard with upcoming events happening in Downtown Albany, etc.
- Encourage more events that get visitors walking/visiting multiple businesses.
 - Ex: Evaluate the benefits of “walking tours” or “Pub Crawls” with a stamp book or special that gets customers visiting multiple locations.



OUR 2023-2025 STRATEGY

Outreach

- Rebuild Outreach Committee with a chairperson and committee members.
- Review current Downtown Parking Survey and if needed update and reevaluate the ticketing process to encourage better public relations.
- Create a volunteer recruitment and development plan.
 - Ex: Create a volunteer database that can be easily accessed and maintained by staff. Create a volunteer recruitment campaign and focus on volunteer appreciation.
- Create a board member recruitment process and identify potential board members, bring a list to the board and invite as advised.
- Expand the annual membership award ceremony.
 - Ex: Add additional awards, etc.
- Look into and initiate a plan to procure more grants on behalf of the Albany Downtown Association and members.
 - Ex: Publicize all Main Street grants to members, hold a pre-application process for all grants if needed, identify grants available to the ADA to fund strategic plan projects, etc.
- Look into holding fundraising opportunities and create a committee to organize events to minimize the impact on staff.
 - Ex: A fall wine walk fundraiser, etc.
 - Evaluate putting on the fundraiser Mixology Madness in 2023.

OUR 2023 OBJECTIVES

DESIGN

- Expand beautification efforts to the Hackleman district and Water Ave.
- Develop a systematic and organized plan for clean-ups that have longer-lasting benefits.
- Improve the exterior and interior to the Albany Downtown Associations office.

ECO

- Organize more frequent mixers for building owners and business owners.
- Improve the appearance of storefronts Downtown as needed.
- Provide learning opportunities and community connections for members.
- Conduct more regular surveys for customers and members and provide relevant results to members.

PROMO

- Evaluate the member benefits, staff work hours and volunteer time of current events.
- Create and execute a quarterly mass mailer to the community.
- Consult branding experts and come up with a Downtown Albany marketing campaign.

OUTREACH

- Rebuild Outreach Committee with a chairperson and committee members.
- Conduct new Parking Survey and evaluate ticketing process.
- Create a volunteer and board member recruitment and development plan.
- Evaluate putting on the fundraiser Mixology Madness in 2023.