



HISTORIC BAKER CITY, INC.

Main Street™ Program Management Annual Work Plan Progress Report September 30, 2011

Based on the National Main Street™ Center's four points of downtown revitalization, our areas of focus are:

Organization
Design
Economic Restructuring
Promotion

Organization

Goal: Evaluate, educate, and strengthen the organizational structure of HBC; improve communications between the board, volunteers and membership.

Objectives:

1. Focus on improving EID District, improving communication with stakeholders, and enhancing social networking/internet venues.
Effective communication with stakeholders is accomplished via email lists on a daily and weekly basis. HBC implemented a promotional weekly electronic downtown events flyer. HBC also conducts surveys with property and business owners, as well as offers workshop, educational, and grant opportunity alerts. The Organization Committee hosted a property owners' brainstorming/planning session in 10/17/11 to renew discussions of current and future plans, as well as visions for the future. HBC plans to host more property and business owner meetings to strengthen stakeholder communication and address the needs of the downtown community.
2. Create a new web site via grant funding to link to social networking sites, with capability for posting current information.
Construction of the new HBC website is nearing completion.
3. Educate Board with workshop & Main Street training; strengthen Main Street committees.

The HBC board held a committee workshop and a board retreat in April 2011 to better educate the board of Main Street board roles and responsibilities. The HBC board understands the importance of functioning and active committees; this is the foundation of an effective Main Street program.

4. Improve HBC's visibility and recognition of successes.
Announcements and press releases that promote and recognize Baker City's historic downtown are released via eblast and press lists. HBC is an active partner in promoting Baker City through workshops, events, and conferences.
5. Secure adequate, stable, and diverse funding.
The organization committee has targeted fundraising and additional funding as a priority for 2011-2012.
6. Evaluate staff and review annually.
7. Oversee the preparation of annual budget, annual work plan and documents necessary for compliance with City of Baker City contract; review contract for current effectiveness and objectives.
The annual budget, work plan, and all compliance features for the City of Baker City contract, as well as Performing Main Street reporting, have been submitted in a timely manner.
8. Strengthen volunteer force, community sponsorship and key partnerships.
Committees and board members have been working to increase community partnerships.

Design

Goal: To work with business/property owners; city staff, city councilors; citizens, And the State Historic Preservation Office to promote and preserve downtown Baker City's historic commercial district, as well as work toward a contemporary goal of a usable and marketable downtown.

Objectives:

1. Develop additional funding sources for the Destination Downtown Historic Façade Renovation Program and develop financial incentives and solutions for building rehabilitation and business development.
In 2011 to date, grants of \$17,919 have been awarded to downtown property owners for façade improvement projects totaling \$46,742. These projects include façade remodeling, awnings, new windows and doors. Matching grant funds used for HBC Destination Downtown projects are grants received from Leo Adler Community Fund for this specific purpose.
2. Be an identifiable advocate for Central Park, Resort Street Improvements and Court Plaza; work with Baker City to improve communication, education, and opportunity for these significant new capital improvements.
Historic Baker City, Inc. is in full support of Baker City's desire to seek funding for Resort Street improvements, the Court Street Plaza, and for the extension of the Leo Adler Memorial. The Court Plaza project has been listed in Historic Baker City, Inc.'s 2009, 2010, and 2011 Annual Work Plans as a goal in assisting the City to create an important connection between our historic downtown, Central Park, the Powder River, and the Leo Adler Memorial Parkway. A public plaza of this nature is a fundamental design element of a well planned downtown, and serves as an important gathering spot, urban respite, and pedestrian breezeway. This particular plaza project is especially appealing in creating an important connecting corridor, as well as offering sitting areas and a public space downtown for small performances, craft or farmer markets, and a pocket park.

3. Improve Downtown Wayfinding signage.
4. Assess alleyways opportunities
5. Unify streetscape amenities and furnishings.
6. Coordinate repainting of crosswalks.
7. Improve appearance of vacant buildings and occupancy rates

Economic Restructuring

Goal: Improve downtown business environment and retention, provide assistance for recruitment efforts, and provide assistance and resources to new and existing businesses.

Objectives:

1. Implement a business retention, expansion and attraction plan.
2. Assess business needs and opportunities via a business needs survey.
A business survey has been conducted to assess number of employees, working hours, and most productive/lucrative days. Current work is under way to compile available downtown retail/office space, sq. footage of all downtown buildings, and existing vacancy.
3. Offer business education, assistance and resource workshops.
HBC partners with other organizations to offer low cost/no cost workshops and educational/training seminars.
4. Promote heritage assets and heritage tourism as Economic Development strategy.
In June HBC, Baker County Marketing, and the National Trust for Historic Preservation offered a public program to enhance cultural heritage tourism efforts in Baker County. The program renewed the basics of cultural heritage tourism as well as the benefits and challenges. Included was a discussion regarding coordination and connection among sites in Baker County, protection and stewardship, new opportunities and improvements, and other topics of interest
5. Reassess Shop Local efforts; determine local needs and market opportunities.
6. Address building occupancy issues as well as find new economic uses for traditional buildings.

Promotion:

Goal: To promote downtown Baker City to the local and regional markets

Objectives:

1. Improve image of downtown as a vibrant downtown.
HBC worked with Baker County Marketing and other organizations to host the Rand McNally Best of the Road judges. This included downtown cleanup efforts, flowerbox planting, and vacant building storefront clean-up. The HBC director also conducts personalized downtown walking tours for tour operators, trade magazines, regional landmark commissions, and historic preservationists.
2. Plan activities and events that promote downtown Baker City to the local community and out of town visitors, as well as have an economic impact to the community; reassess value and impact of current annual events.
Our downtown events are designed to showcase the historic commercial district and encourage local and regional visitors to explore Baker City and Baker County.
3. Clarify role of Retailers Roundtable in relation to Promotions Committee.
A separate promotions committee has been formed to address issues larger than those of Retailers Roundtable participants.

4. Foster good relationships, partnerships and communication in the community; cross promote and market with other organizations for maximum visibility and promotion.

HBC works closely with other organizations and non-profits, Baker County Marketing, and Baker County Economic Development to enhance existing programs, maximize advertising dollars, and underscore a united cooperative spirit in the community.

5. Promote downtown Baker City statewide and regionally through co-op advertising, outreach, media packaging, social networking, and conferencing; create an advertising campaign and budget.

The annual Oregon Main Street Conference was held Baker City this fall. This three-day conference attracted over attendees, most lodging two nights in Baker City. As host for this conference, HBC provided registration facilities, refreshments, walking tours, and workshop/keynote address and opening reception facilities.