

Economic Development Action Plan

City of Banks

Strategy and Action

Using strategies identified in the earlier planning work plus new strategies specific to the current work, the following action plan is created to implement the vision.

This plan is specifically intended to guide the City Council, its advisory commissions and committees, the City staff, partner agencies and organizations, and the Banks citizens in carrying out deliberate planned work to create the future desired. This means giving focus to the work, leadership and action towards its accomplishment, and allocation of needed resources of money, talent, and time.

It is critical this action plan not only be followed, but be reviewed and updated regularly. The Economic Development Commission is tasked with monthly review and with giving the Council a report on progress at least quarterly. The Council must amend the plan as needed to reflect current needs and available resources.

The City Council has the responsibility to provide the resources of money, staff time, and their own time to accomplish this work. The Plan should guide the establishment of the Council's annual goals, budget preparation, and the Council's docket of work through the year.

This plan is definitely not intended to be set in concrete. That does not mean it can be set aside. Deliberate work on the currently identified action items must remain a high priority for the community.

Vision and Aspirations

Sense of Place (1) - We aspire to be a distinct and livable rural community. Therefore, we will continue to honor the historic character and small-town scale of Banks. We will protect the rural atmosphere of Banks and its surroundings. City growth plans will strive to protect hillside vistas, natural areas, prime farmland and working landscapes of agriculture. We will strive to maintain the sense of safety and wellbeing afforded by our small town.' The result: We will be a place of note, respected as a great place to visit, and a great place to live.

Main Street (2) - We aspire to have a thriving downtown district with prosperous merchants and professionals, commercial space in high demand, vibrancy in

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appearance, diversity of businesses, and overflowing patronage. Therefore, we will enhance the prominence and accessibility of Main Street as the heart of Banks. By planning for a mix of storefront businesses with pedestrian-oriented design, we will shape Main Street development to cater to area residents and businesses, as well as visitors. We will keep the traditional Main Street downtown by limiting commercial development elsewhere and encouraging industrial uses currently in downtown Banks to relocate to areas designated for industrial development. Residents and visitors alike will be drawn to the town's clean and beautiful Main Street, lined with one and two story building facades that follow the same architectural theme as some of the oldest buildings in town. The pedestrian-friendly downtown will be enhanced by trees, flower planters, garbage cans and benches that line the street. A town square will become an excellent outdoor gathering place, host to many of the town's events and festivals. Residents and visitors will appreciate seasonal decorations and banners that always make the town look festive.

Economic Diversity (3) - We aspire to be a community where residents have ample attractive opportunities for local employment. Therefore, we will encourage growth in local businesses while pursuing economic diversification. Light industry and "cottage industries," arts and crafts, secondary wood products, specialty foods, etc. will be encouraged because they draw upon Banks history, its natural resources, and human capital. New medical care, shopping, restaurants, entertainment, and other services are also desired to help meet the needs of area residents and improve the local economy. A new business park will attract many new businesses that employ numerous townspeople and residents from the surrounding areas. All will be facilitated through accommodating zoning rules, top-quality infrastructure, and a district of commercial and professional services providing for the needs of these small businesses.

Tourism (4) - We aspire to become a key hub and destination on the regional trail system. Therefore, we will provide appropriate services for users of the trails including restaurants, lodging, and needed services. Historic Railroad trips will draw people into town. Many visitors will come in for the day, eating and shopping before and after taking a train excursion and biking the trails. Others will stop in town on their way to and from the campground at Stub Stewart State Park. Visitors will often stay overnight in local lodging establishments. Both local residents and tourists will have a great knowledge of Banks' history due to the historic walking tours offered by the Historical Society.

Neighborhoods (5) - We aspire to be a desirable hometown for hundreds of families of all types. Therefore, we will continue to develop walkable neighborhoods with clear

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centers, edges and connections that reinforce our small-town character. Neighborhoods will provide a range of affordable housing including a retirement community and assisted living facility all with good access to parks, schools, and other community services.

Marketing & Communication (6) - We aspire to increase awareness of Banks among locals, visitors, and prospective businesses. Therefore, we will create and communicate a distinct identity. The result: Tourists come year round to use the Banks-Vernonia State trail, shop at the local stores, eat in the food establishments, and purchase goods from retail shops.

Abundant Funds (7) - We aspire to have available the financial resources needed to make the planned public investments that catalyze private investments and create great public spaces.

Action Plan - Economic Development Projects

Main Street Restriping (the Quick Win Project) - The ODOT permitting process is underway leading to a restriping of Main Street. This will create more parking spaces as well as delineate bicycle parking hubs.

Banks Brand Redesign - The “brand” for Banks is being redesigned to better reflect community vision and direction. The project includes creating a vision statement followed by creating a new logo and tagline. The new brand identity will be integrated into all city publications and signage.

Vision 2036 Master Plan - Work is underway on creating the 2036 Master Plan for the Main Street corridor. This urban design plan is addressing streetscape, wayfinding, parking especially trailhead parking, and business development. Also included is planning for a public plaza.

Economic Roadmap - Having a solid economic and market-based understanding of the community is the focus of this project. It will identify market potentials both within Banks, and coming from the region and beyond. It will give the community a solid foundation from which to make planning and budgeting decisions. Specific areas to be included will be commercial and industrial development and revitalization especially the Cannery, accelerator potential, and the economic impact of increased visitor activity

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especially from the proposed bike trails. The Roadmap will include initial identification of potential funding tools including tax increment financing.

Economic Strategic Planning and Implementation - With the Economic Roadmap completed, giving the Community and the Economic Development Commission solid economic information, a detailed strategic economic plan can be created. Such a plan will lay out a clear economic vision for Banks and the detailed action steps to achieve it. This will include public policy, codes, funding programs, relationships, and marketing among other topics.

Action Plan - Economic Outreach Initiatives

Regional Strategic Alliances - There are numerous public and private groups actively engaged in aspects of economic development in the Banks area. These include the Chamber of Commerce locally, Washington County's Visitors Association regionally, and Business Oregon on a state wide scale. The community must proactively engage with these groups in order to leverage outside resources to help assure the community's success and to contribute to these efforts on equal footing with other partners.

Business Outreach Program – The Economic Development Committee will develop and maintain working relationships with all Banks businesses. This starts with one-on-one contacts and includes surveying the businesses on their needs and ideas.

The work will also include creation of a three-pronged business inventory, including data on business property, business buildings, and businesses themselves. This will be constantly maintained in order to identify trends and opportunities, as well as serve as a marketing tool for attracting new businesses.

Parking Plan - Parking in the Main Street area is a key factor to economic success. This plan will examine options for both on-street and off-street parking working to create a strategy providing ample, convenient parking for customers and employees, and at the same time minimizing impacts of large parking areas. Particular attention will be given to tourist related parking especially related to bicycle tourism.

Community Outreach - The economic strategy must be based on community wants, needs, and ideas. The outreach program is critical to proactively gain public input into

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the economic planning and implementation process. The work will involve public meetings, outreach with information and surveys, and other involvement efforts.

This work starts immediately through City communications, and ramps up significantly after the Economic Roadmap is created as it will be the foundation for future planning work.

Marketing - After the full Economic Strategy is created, efforts will turn to marketing the Community. This involves marketing to both potential visitors, and at the same time having a focused marketing effort to encourage investment in new development and businesses.

Action Plan – Priorities, Tasks, and Funding

Following in a matrix with each of the action plan tasks laid out with general tasks and projected timing based on priorities. Also included are identification of responsibilities and identification of the sources of needed resources to accomplish each task.