

Economic Development Strategic Plan For the City of Banks 2016

– DRAFT CONTENT AS OF JUNE 23, 2016 –

Background

In support of the first objective outlined in our charter from the Banks City Council, the Economic Development Commission purposes “to design, develop and promote an economic development strategic plan.”

In pursuit of our Purpose and Objectives we may:

Amend and/or approve statements from existing plans & reports for use in creating the Banks Economic Development Strategic Plan. The materials surveyed and cited include:

1. City of Banks Growth Management Plan, 1999
2. Banks Economic Opportunities Analysis and Economic Development Strategy Report, 2005
3. Main Street Revitalization Plan, 2014
4. Banks Economic Development Commission Ideas for Aspirations for the Future January 2016 (John Morgan)
5. Strategic Plan Summary and Analysis April 2012 (The Banks Library Expansion Team)
6. Banks Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan 2015
7. Parking Management Report 2015
8. Oregon Downtown Development Association Report 2002

NOTE: The draft content that follows features numbered citations that correspond to the list above.

Values¹

- **A rural, small-town quality of life**
- **Sense of safety and security**
- **Strong community spirit and sense of history**
- **Respect for the land – its resources and beauty**
- **A connection to surrounding urban and rural communities**

Banks' Comparative Advantages

Rural, small-town quality of life. Banks' primary comparative advantage is its small-town character and rural location combined with its proximity to the services, jobs, labor supply, and amenities available in metropolitan Portland.

As Banks grows, maintaining the local aspects of quality of life will be important in keeping this comparative advantage for economic development. Key aspects to Banks' quality of life include affordable housing, local schools, a traditional Main Street downtown, access to recreational opportunities, connections with surrounding rural areas,² and its identity as a diverse agricultural region with wine, timber and farmland. Its rural, small town image can be further enhanced and strengthened through elements of design (both public and private space) appropriate redevelopment, downtown business clustering and image development and marketing.⁸

Regional trail hub. The Banks-Vernonia State Trail, which originates at the north end of Main Street and extends 21 miles north to Vernonia, was recently completed. The trail draws cyclists, hikers, bird watchers and others from the Portland region and beyond. The trail offers a unique opportunity for Main Street redevelopment because the trailhead is located at the north end of Main Street. Banks is working with Washington County and the cities of Cornelius and Forest Grove to coordinate planning for a regional trails network that would connect the Banks-Vernonia Trail to a similar facility along Council Creek. Once completed, this network is likely to draw even more visitors to Banks and possibly make Main Street still more attractive to businesses and visitors.³

Mission¹

We, the people of Banks, want to actively plan for the future economic growth of our town. We intend to take advantage of the benefits that can come from growth, while ensuring that its demands are managed responsibly. We want to become a more vital and self-sufficient community by growing in a balanced manner, with new jobs, housing, products and services that attract locals and visitors alike. As we grow, we also want to retain and further develop the best qualities of our small-town character and quality of life.

Vision

SENSE OF PLACE¹

We aspire to be a **Distinct and livable rural community.**⁴

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. We will strive to maintain the sense of safety and wellbeing afforded by our small town.¹ The result: We will be a place of note, respected as a great place to visit, and a great place to live.⁴

VIBRANT MAIN STREET¹

We aspire to have a **Thriving downtown district** with prosperous merchants and professionals, commercial space in high demand, vibrancy in appearance, diversity of businesses, and overflowing patronage.⁴

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.¹ We will enhance the traditional Main Street downtown by encouraging uses which align with a patron-friendly commercial environment. We will also promote the development of industrial properties elsewhere within the city, also encouraging and aiding industrial businesses currently in downtown Banks to relocate to these areas.² 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 lining 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.⁵

DIVERSE JOBS¹

We aspire to be a community where residents have ample attractive **Opportunities for local employment.**⁴

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.¹ 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.⁵ 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.⁴

THRIVING TOURISM⁴

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.⁴ 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.⁵

WELL-DESIGNED NEIGHBORHOODS¹

We aspire to be a **Desirable hometown** for hundreds of families of all types.⁴ Therefore we will continue to develop walkable neighborhoods with clear centers, edges and connections that reinforce our small-town character. Neighborhoods will provide a range of¹ affordable² housing¹ including a retirement community and assisted living facility⁵ all with good access to parks, schools, and other community services.¹

ENGAGING COMMUNICATIONS²

We aspire to **Increase awareness of Banks** among locals, visitors and prospective businesses.²

Therefore we will create and communicate a distinct identity across print and digital communication channels. 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.⁵

ABUNDANT FUNDS

We aspire to increase the funds available to **Finance all improvement projects** we have planned.

Therefore we will do the research and legwork required to pursue grants, establish an urban renewable district, pass appropriate bond measures and attract private investment.

Initiative #1: Main Street Revitalization¹

Main Street is the heart of Banks and should become the focal point for the town's revitalization. The Town Plan is based on the following objectives, which will be implemented through changes to the city's zoning ordinance, development review, capital improvement planning, and coordination with other jurisdictions.¹

Main Street Zoning, including Design Guidelines.¹ The present-day nature of the street front in Banks is one of “missing teeth” with storefronts interspersed with open suburban-style parking lots. As infill occurs, it will be important to improve this aspect of the downtown with careful site planning using a traditional downtown model while preserving the necessary parking in convenient off-street facilities.⁸ Banks should develop a set of streamlined design standards and guidelines for Main Street that promote quality design and help communicate the city's eclectic, small town identity,¹ implementing a “country friendly” downtown theme with building facades and front porches.⁸ The guidelines should address both commercial and residential development to ensure quality and compatibility.¹

Main Street Public Improvements³

Streetscape Designs¹ and Furnishings To include intersection curb extensions, sidewalk repaving, crosswalk paving, street trees, landscaping.¹ Furnishings include pedestrian-scaled street lighting, gateway signage, benches, trash and recycling receptacles, banners, etc. There should also be ample bike parking along Main Street to attract trail users. Pedestrian-scaled street lighting, banners, benches,¹ water fountains and gathering locations^{BPP#22} should be added. Benches, trash and recycling receptacles and bike racks should be focused in the north end of the corridor.³

Gateway Treatments would announce the entries into Banks' old town, between Sunset Avenue and Banks Road.¹ Other improvements at the Banks Road and Highway 47 intersection could include a marked crosswalk to improve connections to the Banks-Vernonia Trail.³

Signage³ In addition to, or as part of, the recommended Beautification Plan, a comprehensive signage concept should be developed. This would help create an identity for Main Street, encourage foot traffic from the Banks-Vernonia Trail trailhead through town, and promote popular Banks' destinations such as the Sunset Speedway, Log Cabin Park, future Main Street plaza, Banks Public Library, and the Banks School District properties. Signs should be designed to serve three primary functions: 1) identity, 2) way finding/directions and 3) interpretation/education. Signage design should be consistent across all types and may incorporate themes that speak to Banks' history and culture to emphasize the city's identity. Themes might include milling, farming and/or the railroad. As part of the facade improvement program, businesses should be encouraged to utilize blade signage (signs mounted to the side of buildings perpendicular to the building face) to improve visibility from a distance. If Banks were to develop a historic walking tour, there will be an opportunity to include the community in designing a logo and signage as part of that effort.

From BPP:

- #13 Way-Finding kiosks at three locations: Main St./Hwy 6, Log Cabin Park, and Banks-Vernonia Trailhead

Town Square¹The slow deterioration of the downtown business district has left a need for the creation of a special focus for the community’s cultural and specialty retail area.⁸ Workshop attendees expressed interest in expanding Banks' events and traditions to other locations along Main Street, perhaps at a future plaza location on the north end of Main Street.¹ The viewshed to the coastal range from Banks is an overlooked feature that is highlighted in the plaza concept. The plaza would be surrounded by prime office and retail storefronts that will help ensure the space remains active and “alive” for daily use and special events. The public plaza is located to take advantage of the fantastic views and to re-connect the town to the Main Street shopping district.⁸ A plaza should be designed for flexible use so that it can be used during non-event days as well. For example, the space could also function as a shared parking area for commercial tenants. Surface treatment options include hardscape unit pavers, compacted gravel, and decomposed granite. The paving pattern of the plaza could be continued into the street to help denote this as a pedestrian zone.⁸ A Main Street plaza space could host such events as civic ceremonies, local farmers market, fundraising events, holiday bazaar, community potlucks, live music, and outdoor school choral performances - types of events that work best in a smaller, more intimate venue.³

Trailhead¹The addition of a new restaurant destination or local brew pub near the Banks-Vernonia Trailhead could allow Banks to capitalize on the trail's consistent ability to attract visitors. Currently, there are no dining destinations that truly cater to bicyclists and larger groups. The restaurant can be designed to offer ample bicycle parking, outdoor and group seating, and a menu with a range of offerings featuring locally produced meats, beer, and produce.³ Equestrian traffic could be encouraged by the inclusion of a corral and trailer parking. This would allow equestrian visitors to participate in the trail experience, corral their horses, and then eat in town, or shop. Natural uses of the complimentary facility could include a satellite bicycle shop, ice cream shop and outdoor outfitter.⁸

Gateways⁸ Upon arriving in Banks from the south, there is a transition into the downtown beginning at Sunset Avenue. Currently this space is an informal “arrival point.” A formalized entry will clearly provide a suitable introduction to the historic downtown. There are a number of alternatives to define this gateway into the original downtown, such as “Entering Historic Banks,” that would provide the needed differentiation between the new development and the original downtown. (See conceptual drawing).⁸ Also the Banks Road and Highway 47 intersection could include a signature gateway element and a marked crosswalk to improve connections to the Banks-Vernonia Trail.¹

Connectivity & Safety³

Westside Circulator Road³The Urban Growth Boundary expansion will bring construction of a new Westside Circulator Road that parallels Main Street with planned access at Cedar Canyon Road, Wilkes Street, and the perimeter of Sunset Park. With the UGB expansion, it will be possible to design a streetscape environment from the ground up that can support needed parallel bike facilities, house underground utilities, and also provide east-west connectivity to Main Street. Advance planning for the future design of the Westside Circulator Road will be necessary to ensure the road can meet Banks' current and future expectations. An additional Main Street connection at Depot Road could provide

better access to the north side of Banks. Some of the shortcomings of Main Street can be mitigated with the construction of the Westside Circulator Road.

Main Street Safety Improvements³ While the Westside Circulator Road could help address some challenges along Main Street, it is still essential that improvements to connectivity and safety be made in the short to medium term. Pedestrian crossings should, if possible, include full curb extensions, which make pedestrians more visible to drivers and also create space for additional furnishings and/or plantings. Crosswalks could be constructed of a contrasting material, either brick paving or patterned concrete, to create further visual cues to slow the driver and denote this area as a pedestrian zone at the following intersections: Depot & Main; Market & Main; Main & Sunset. In addition these same treatments could be extended east toward the Depot site. The Depot will ultimately provide additional parking and access to the State Trail. Expanding the streetscaping elements to this facility will enhance the facility's importance and expand upon visitor convenience.⁸ At the southwest corner of Banks Road and Highway 47, a new sidewalk and curb should be built at the Five Star complex to better delineate pedestrian and vehicle zones.

From BPP:

- #1 Main Street Sidewalk Infill near Sunset Park @ NW Oak Way
- #5 Enhanced NW Banks Road trailhead crossing with rapid flashing beacon
- #11 Main Street Crosswalk at Banks High School
- #15 Main Street Crosswalk at NW Trellis Way

Traffic Calming along Highway 47/Main Street³ Banks should also work with ODOT to determine ways to make drivers more aware of the speed reduction along Highway 47 from the north. This could entail a speed study along Highway 47. Redesign of the 0.5 mile northern approach to Banks along Highway 47 should be considered. A more prominent entry sign to announce arrival to Banks may be appropriate because the current sign 0.35 miles north of Banks Road to slow drivers. Another approach is the use of Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies (i.e. scheduling deliveries to the lumber yard at off-peak times, encouraging walking and biking for students and residents) in an effort to better disperse the number and type of trips throughout the day.

From BPP:

- #16 Dynamic Radar-Activated Speed Limit Sign (2)

Driveway Consolidation³ The pedestrian experience along Main Street is diminished by numerous curb cuts and driveways that provide access to parking areas dedicated to individual buildings. Some parking lots are served by two or three driveway access points. Driveway curb cuts create slope changes along the sidewalk that make it difficult for people with mobility issues to navigate. An access management study can look into the reconfiguration and consolidation of driveways to maintain access and improve the pedestrian experience. This will benefit pedestrian safety, improve Main Street's walkability, enhance visual aesthetics and maximize the capacity of the existing roadway configuration.

Redevelopment¹

Infill Vacant Lots. Downtown Banks has an urgent need to “tighten” its urban fabric and create stronger business synergy by infilling vacant commercial lots. There are a number of prime sites for redevelopment to enhance the “urban fabric” of downtown Banks and potential for a pedestrian-oriented shopping district. Site-specific plans for redevelopment should be created and disseminated to potential developers to encourage infill. The conceptual drawing of the Cop’s Towing site should be reduced and an entrepreneur found to develop the site. It has the potential to be an anchor site in downtown.⁸

Three Mainstreet Development Nodes.¹ Main Street has three main centers: The south, more modern commercial center, the central residential and school development and the northern, historic downtown district. Within the northern, historic downtown district there are three nodes cited for further development: Depot & Main (west) and two at Commerce & Main (east). The Depot & Main site (Cop’s Auto Repair) is identified for mixed retail/office/civic redevelopment with a town square. The Two sites at Commerce & Main show retail and office space clustered around a new intersection. The extension of Commerce Street would function as a shopping street and provide alternative circulation for downtown parking areas.¹

Market Feasibility Study.¹ A feasibility study would evaluate the revitalization concept in greater detail, identify potential markets for building space, and determine public-private investment opportunities and constraints.

Storefront Upgrades. There are a number of storefronts that we have treated to (conceptual) upgrades of various size and scope. Each of these redevelopment structures would be consistent with Banks’ historic elements but without creating an artificial “theme.” See Oregon Downtown Development Association Report 2002 p. 14 for images.⁸

Façade Improvement Program³ The Beautification Plan should be coordinated with a facade improvement program that provides design assistance, funding assistance and volunteer support to encourage property owners to invest in the appearance of their homes and storefronts. Elements such as blade signs and awnings can contribute to a consistent aesthetic along Main Street.

Initiative #2: Industry & Commerce Development

Location

Banks' location also has implications for the types of businesses that may be attracted to locate in the community. Its proximity to metropolitan Portland means that Banks can attract firms that are not tied to an urban location, such as back-office operations, call centers, and specialty manufacturing. In particular, industries that are clustered in the Portland area can generate or attract small, related businesses that may find Banks attractive. These industries include the manufacturing of high-tech electronics, industrial equipment, transportation equipment, recreation equipment and apparel, and specialty food packaging/processing.

Banks' location near forests and farmland can help attract businesses related to natural resources, such as wood products manufacturing, non-timber forest production, food packaging and processing, and businesses that supply farm and forest operations.

Transportation

Banks' location on Oregon Highway 6 near its junction with 26 allows businesses in Banks to have close access to major highways without substantial use of local roads. Banks location near these highways can be an advantage for businesses that rely on trucks to ship supplies and products, as well as those that need to attract workers from the larger labor force in metropolitan Portland.

Banks is also served by PNW, which provides connections to the Union Pacific and Burlington Northern Santa Fe systems for connections throughout the U.S. and Canada.

Total Employment Growth Rate

The City of Banks has expressed a desire for an improved balance between the number of jobs and population in Banks so that it can be less of a bedroom community for residents that work elsewhere and to provide a more robust tax base for funding services needed in the community.

To achieve this, employment must grow faster than population, which is expected to grow at an average annual rate of 4.7% over the next twenty years.

Yet, existing forecasts of employment growth in Banks anticipate total employment to grow at an average annual rate of 1.4% to 2.0% over 20 years.

So to achieve a number of jobs roughly equal to the number of working residents in 2024, Banks would need total employment to grow at an average annual rate of 7.0%

Applied to Banks' 2016 employment of 460, this range of growth rates result in total employment of 1,311 to 1,614 in 2025. This represents employment growth in Banks of 863 to 1,166 over the next twenty years.

Distribution of Total Employment

Data in Table 4-1 shows that the distribution of 2003 employment in Banks by land use type is 31% Commercial, 41% Industrial, and 28% Community Facilities.

Economic trends, the location of Banks, and local economic factors have several implications for the future distribution of employment by land use type. These implications include the following:

- Retail employment is likely to increase as a larger population base supports more specialized retail shops and services in Banks. However, future population in Banks is unlikely to support another supermarket, or a new discount store. Big-box retail uses are unlikely to locate in Banks because of its small population and location away from other urban centers or substantial levels of passing traffic. Thus, any increase in the share of Commercial uses from retail growth will likely be modest.
- Banks does have potential to attract some office uses, particularly small back-office operations, software development/support, or call centers. In addition, population growth in Banks should support a medical office and other services. These uses would contribute to an increase share of employment in Commercial uses. A few of these businesses could reuse or redevelop buildings and sites in downtown Banks. Some of these uses could also locate on land zoned for General Industrial use in Banks.
- Given the setting of Banks and the skills of the workforce in the surrounding region, small specialized manufacturing, research, and engineering uses have the most potential to generate employment growth in Banks. These uses would primarily locate on land zoned for Industrial use.
- The level of employment in activities that use land zoned for Community Facilities will grow with population growth, particularly employment in public schools and city government. Economies of scale, however, will allow employment in these activities to grow more slowly than total employment, lowering the share of employment by this land use type.

Types of Businesses

The combination of market conditions and local characteristics suggest several examples of businesses that might locate in Banks over the forecast period:

- Engineering or software design. The presence of high-tech firms in Washington County attracts many highly-skilled employees to the area. Some of these firms will spur development of spin-off or supplier businesses, and skilled employees frequently develop small start-up businesses using their skills. These businesses are numerous but tend to not have recognizable names because they do not produce products with a wide distribution.
- The Portland area has become a center for businesses engaged in the manufacture of knives and similar equipment. Examples of large firms include Leatherman Tool and Gerber Blades, but each of these started as small specialty firms and many other smaller businesses are located in the Portland area.
- The manufacture of RVs, truck trailers, and other transportation equipment in the Portland area creates the potential for small businesses that make specialty parts and supplies for these larger manufacturers.

- Oregon's timber industry creates the opportunities for related small businesses, such as those that manufacture or maintain industrial equipment, supply specialty glues and resins for wood manufacturing, or provide logging supplies.
- Agriculture and food manufacturing in Oregon also create an opportunity for specialty food processing. Oregon has a lively and diverse mix of food processors, including firms that make and package salsa, jam, mustard, pickles, potato chips, cheese and other dairy products, tortillas, granola, soy and rice milk, teas and herbs, beer, and roasted coffee.

The firms that locate in Banks are likely to be small because firms with a large level of employment are more likely to locate in more central and larger areas. All of these businesses tend to locate in flexible buildings that can accommodate office, light assembly/research, and distribution uses on sites of 0.5 to 5 acres. These sites must be relatively level, have public services, and a reasonable level of accessibility to major roadways. These uses should also be buffered from neighboring residential and commercial uses to reduce potential conflicts.

Other considerations

Most of the Industrial demand we expect in Banks will be for smaller and specialized uses that require 0.5-5 acres of land. To allow this development and respond to opportunities in the market, Banks must have Industrial sites in a suitable range of sizes or large parcels that can be divided.

- Several businesses on Main Street in downtown Banks have uses that are industrial in character but are on land zoned for commercial uses. Some of these businesses have expressed interest in moving to larger sites zoned for industrial uses. Such a move would create more room in downtown Banks for small retail and commercial uses that are more compatible and supportive of a downtown setting. In addition, some uses in downtown Banks have potential for reuse or redevelopment. These developments would decrease demand for Commercial land in Banks by 1-3 acres.

Banks' location can also be a limiting factor for some types of employment growth. Its relatively small population and location away from larger population center mean that Banks is unlikely to attract big-box retail or warehousing/distribution businesses. Banks' location away from I-5 also make it an unlikely location for most manufacturers that require high-volume shipments of inputs and products by truck.

Existing Anchors

Downtown Banks has a number of business anchors or other attractors that bring hundreds of people to town throughout the day. The hardware store serves numerous customers daily. The Banks School District schools are located immediately adjacent to the downtown core area. The businesses and services with strong and growing customer bases could be cross-marketed to encourage more traffic in the downtown. For instance, a yogurt shop/gift store in downtown could offer convenient shopping for school district employees and students. The vet clinic located downtown could be cross-marketed with a pet supply store.

Desired Downtown Business Mix

Downtown Banks has the capability to serve local full-time residents, part-time residents and visitors with a wide range of goods and services. The keys will be:

- Providing excellent service
- Offering unique, quality merchandise
- Targeting high dollar volumes per square foot for a business to succeed. In other words, smaller spaces, in-depth, high turnover inventory.
- Working with Banks' business community to provide complementary product lines.

Success will be achieved with stores that:

- Serve both area residents and visitors
- Aggressively market to these target customer groups – youth, residents and visitors
- Offer multiple, complementary product lines
- Start small and grow to fill niches
- Have focus, imagination and strive to meet the needs of the customer.

Retail and business standards are just as important as the types of businesses attracted to downtown Banks. Our goal should be to focus should on superior retail standards when qualifying and recruiting a prospective downtown business. They include:

Strong Business Values

- Planning
- Commitment
- Passion
- Tenacity
- Understanding

Strong Merchandising Elements

- Up to date point-of-sale practices
- Appropriate turnover of goods
- Interesting visual displays
- Emphasis on value over price

Superior Customer service

- Developing human relationships
- Determining customer needs
- Servicing customer needs
- After-sale contact

Appendix B of the Oregon Downtown Development Association Report 2002 contains a questionnaire for start-up or expanding businesses.

Visitor Development

At present there are only one or two businesses that may have visitor appeal.

Next Steps⁸

Strategy: Prepare a Property Development Game Plan

- Target key properties, such as Cop's Towing property.
- Recruit local developer and/or prepare and distribute professional developer prospectus.
- Create incentives for all downtown property owners to take action, such as a low interest loans/revolving loan fund, property tax freezes on improvements, façade improvement program.
- Consider organizational tactics that other communities have utilized to hurry up the property redevelopment process:
 - Local development consortiums
 - Public-private organizations
 - Urban renewal districts

Strategy: Business Development

- Organize a sub-committee of the Economic Development Committee, and call it the Banks Downtown Revitalization Committee. Include a group of interested and experienced volunteers on that committee exclusively focused on business development in the downtown. The purpose of the committee will be to market downtown properties, businesses and business opportunities. But the very first task is to address the issue of local government hurdles to doing business.
- A small working group should clarify the issues in writing and work with the City of Banks (and ultimately Washington County) to identify and adopt design review guidelines. Additionally review the planning process and fees, for example. If necessary, survey other small communities about how they address the development review process and recommend an approach that will not impede business development.
- Another task of the group is to develop a One Stop Business Shop for new and expanding businesses to ease the entire process of opening a business in Banks.
- Send several members of the Downtown Revitalization Committee to Oregon Downtown Development Association's workshops and trainings to learn more about the steps and process for business development.

In the meantime begin to develop a recruitment package including the highlights of the downtown resource team and the market analysis. This may include excerpts of the streetscape plan (which represents the long term vision) demographics and other market information, property information sheets for individual properties available for rent or sale and selected visuals from the design component of the resource team.⁸

Potential Economic Development Strategies (to develop industry and commerce):

- **Business Assistance** - Targeted assistance to businesses facing financial difficulty or thinking of moving out of the community.
- **Recruitment & Marketing** - Establish a program to market the community as a location for business in general, and target relocating firms. Take steps to provide readily available development sites, an efficient permitting process, well-trained workforce, and perception of high quality of life.
- **Development districts (enterprise zones, renewal districts, etc.)** - Establish districts with tax abatements, loans, subsidized infrastructure, reduced regulation, or other incentives available to businesses in the district that meet specified criteria.
- **Public/Private Partnerships** - Make public land or facilities available, public lease commitment in proposed development, provide parking, and other support services.
- **Financial Assistance** - Tax abatement, waivers, loans, grants, and financing for firms meeting specified criteria. Can be targeted as desired to support goal such as recruitment, retention, expansion, family-wage jobs, or sustainable industry.
- **Business Incubators** - Create low-cost space for use by new and expanding firms with shared office services, access to equipment, and networking opportunities.
- **Mentoring & Advice** - Provide low-cost mentors and advice for local small businesses in the area of management, marketing, accounting, financing, and other business skills.
- **Export Promotion** - Assist businesses in identifying new products and export markets; represent local firms at trade shows and missions.
- **Regional Collaboration** - Coordinate economic development efforts with the County and the State so that clear and consistent policies are developed.
- **Job Training** - Create opportunities for training in general or implement training programs for specific jobs or specific population groups (i.e. dislocated workers).
- **Job Access** - Provide transit/shuttle service to bring workers to job sites.
- **Regional Collaboration** - Coordinate economic development efforts with the County and the State so that clear and consistent policies are developed.
- **Quality of Life** - Maintain and enhance quality of life through good schools, cultural programs, recreational opportunities, adequate health care facilities, affordable housing, and environmental amenities.

Initiative #3: Marketing & Communications²

Trade Area⁸

Banks' primary customers are year-round trade area residents that shop there because of convenience, location, and selection. Below are current demographics for the Banks trade area market. (US Census 2000)

	Banks	Oregon
Population	1,286	3.4m
Median Household Income	\$52,870	\$39,843
Median Age	28.7	36.4
% Age 65 or over	4%	12.8%
% Age 19 and under	38%	27.5%

These numbers strongly reflect the young, family-oriented population of the Banks area. Also of significance is the high median household income compared to the state average. This figure is likely tied to families with dual incomes and the possibility that many Banks residents are employed in the well paying high tech industry in the Beaverton-Hillsboro area.

Other Target Markets⁸

Other potential markets for downtown Banks are tourists, second-home owners, visitors or attendees at the community's many special events, families of school children and pass-through traffic to the area. Below are data that illustrate the size of some of these market segments

Traffic volumes are very high on I-26 near Banks exit. Traffic on Highway 26 provides potential exposure for Banks and the chance to lure customers to businesses. The nearby North Plains' McDonalds reports serving approximately 1,500 customers daily, with Friday being the busiest day as people head to the coast.

Within Washington County, visitor spending rose from \$203 to \$360 million between 1991 and 2000, creating over 5,400 jobs countywide. About one-third of visitor spending can be tied to eating/drinking and food establishments; another third stems from retail spending. The visitor market has been characterized as golfers, bicycle riders and families.

Employees of Banks' businesses are another ready customer market and considered to be some of the best shoppers for convenience shopping/eating on a daily, year-round basis. A conservative estimate of Banks' employment base is 366 persons.

Lifestyle characteristics⁸

Psychographic data from the PRIZM Demographic Group through MSN's Home Advisor for the Banks trade area indicates the predominant groups for the Banks primary trade area are the Big Sky Families and Small Town Families. These clusters are characterized below:

Big Sky and Small Town Families:

- Closely profile US average demographics
- Enjoy small town family life and activities ranging from barbecues and baseball to cooking and entertaining
- Enjoy recreation & sports
- Nearly three quarters are homeowners and home improvement projects are an important activity
- Spend more on groceries and household goods than other lifestyle groups
- Own a powerboat
- Have a home improvement loan
- High school with some college
- Family-centered lifestyles are devoted to hobbies, hunting and boating
- Read Sports Afield, Country Living
- Go hiking and garden outdoors

Marketing to Locals & Visitors⁸

To succeed in increasing local and visitor spending, Banks will need to develop a well-organized, aggressive and ongoing marketing and promotional program. Local shoppers may need incentives and “reward programs” to shop locally. Visitors will need “hand holding” to direct them to attractions and keep them in town. Physical improvements from signage to beautification need to work hand in hand with an overall marketing program for maximum effect.

Visitor Attractions⁸

- Banks-Vernonia State Trail
- Sunset Park
- The Depot and Excursion Train
- Sunset Speedway
- Sporting Events
- Quail Valley Golf Course

Banks BBQ.⁸ Banks offers local residents and visitors an all-American event: The Banks Barbeque & Parade. This summer parade and town celebration is sponsored by the community and is widely attended. The parade passes right through the downtown business district to Sunset Park. The event provides potential exposure to hundreds of guests and potential shoppers.

Rails to Trails Attraction.⁸ The Banks-Vernonia Rails to Trails Linear Park offers a unique attraction to the area. According to park ranger reports in 200-01 the trail hosted 60,000 visitors. Visitors will be attracted to Banks’ downtown core for their retail or additional entertainment needs. The trail and the downtown should also be tied to the old train depot and the excursion train that runs in the summer. These two key attractions, the excursion and the trail, offer Banks untapped markets for its downtown services.

Market the Linear Trail.⁸ Capitalize on the Banks-Vernonia Trail! Combine your efforts with the Vernonia team and host a summer event focusing on the trail and promoting both communities. Develop marketing material on the trail with the focus on Banks, and what's here for visitors. Offer a shuttle service for cyclists or walkers who only want to walk or ride one way.

Historic Resources.⁸ Review the inventory by Washington County of historic sites in town, specifically within downtown. These structures offer an opportunity to both maintain and preserve Banks' history, while educating residents and visitors alike. If warranted, create and distribute brochures of Banks' historic sites for a walking tour.

Marketing to Businesses

Market Banks as a good place to work and live. While increasing the supply of buildable land will help attract firms to Banks, some marketing will be necessary to make sure that businesses know about Banks. Since Banks shares a workforce with surrounding communities and a tax base with the County, economic development in Banks is in the interest of the surrounding region as well. The City of Banks should coordinate its marketing efforts with other agencies and organizations already engaged in economic development activities to increase awareness of opportunities available in Banks.²

1. Coordinate with Washington County, the Oregon Economic and Community Development Department, and other organizations promoting economic development in Oregon and western Washington County.
2. Issue Press releases when the City takes substantial steps to increase the supply of buildable land and the services necessary to support development.²

Growing local population.⁸ The rapid growth of the prime target market together with its average income provides Banks a positive marketing angle for business development. Banks' growing potential customer base is its principal strategic advantage for downtown retail development.

Strong, untapped local market potential. Given the size of the local trade area market together with visitor market potential and the limited retail and restaurant offerings in town, Banks is losing millions of dollars of potential retail spending on an annual basis. This fact is a significant marketing hook for attracting developers or entrepreneurs and is supported through the recently completed Growth Management Study.

The Growth Management Plan analysis of Banks commercial retail, office and civic building space in the downtown indicated support for 2040,000 sq. ft. of new retail space. When space for financial, real estate and other services is included and other retail such as automotive goods and hardware not traditionally found in a neighborhood shopping center, then total space demand increases by another 10%. Banks has sufficient capacity to provide the infrastructure to support expansion, but needs to capitalize on that potential economic gain. When a retail base exists to support the residential base, there are intangible benefits as well including local pride, community connectivity and a sense of place, particularly in a historic downtown.

Strategy: Get aggressive with your marketing⁸

- Put on the downtown's best face in preparation for the Banks Barbeque and Parade—clean up, paint up, fix up, plant flowers.
 - Bring people downtown during the festival with special activities.
 - Create a simple brochure on 10 ways to spend the day in Banks
- Capture more local shopper spending in Banks
 - Get on the radar screen of target customer groups. Organize fun, community events, promotions and activities in downtown Banks to increase awareness.
 - Survey local residents asking them specifically what types of retail and merchandise they would support in Banks.
 - Promote the market opportunities to entice local entrepreneurs.
- Promote the community vision for downtown development. Put together a simple fact sheet and summary of the resource team report/graphics to let everyone know that downtown Banks knows where it's headed and they're invited to come along.
- Make extra copies of this report and distribute them widely to volunteers interested in helping.
- Develop a community identity or image campaign.⁸

Initiative #6: Bicycle Amenities & Infrastructure

Developing Bicycle and Pedestrian Amenities is an important aspect of economic development in Banks for a couple reasons, both of which enhance the comparative advantages already outlined:

1. Trail Hub – If Banks aims to set itself apart as a bicyclist destination and trail hub, developing proper infrastructure will be a critical part of “product development” for the city, helping the city develop and retain the identity as a bicycle and pedestrian-friendly destination.
2. Small town, rural quality of life – Being bicycle and pedestrian friendly is a key factor of livability as cited and quantified by real estate guides such as Zillow. Providing walking and biking trails which connect neighborhoods with the Main Street business district will also draw more people to this historic hub.

The following projects are outlined in detail in the 2015 Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.

Projects that Support Banks as a Trail Hub:

BPP #2: Main Street Bicycle Lanes. High Priority. Install bicycle lanes on Main Street between Banks High School and Sunset Avenue per City standards and conduct a pilot project to install bicycle lanes between Sunset Avenue and NW Banks Road.

BPP #7: UGB Expansion Area Overcrossing. High Priority. Conduct access to UGB expansion area feasibility study to identify the preferred location for a pedestrian/bicycle overcrossing of the railroad. This is a low priority until development occurs on the east side of the railroad tracks, at which point these become high priority.

BPP #8: Railroad Trail. High Priority. Develop a trail connecting the Banks Trailhead and Highway 6 on the Westside of the railroad, using the guidance in the City’s Public Works Design Standards.



BPP #9: Westside Multi-use Connection. High Priority. Install bicycle and pedestrian facilities on the west side of Banks per the Council Creek Regional Trail Master Plan along the planned westside circulator roadway (WCR) connecting NW Banks Road with planned trails to the south using the guidance in the City’s Public Works Design Standards.



Projects that Support Banks Quality of Life:

BPP #17: Bicycle Parking Along Main Street. Medium. Review opportunities to install bicycle parking along the Main Street corridor, particularly in the commercial areas and destinations. PMR#4 also recommends adding bike parking. This project is also listed under Main Street revitalization > Main Street Public Improvements³ > Streetscape Designs¹ and Furnishings

BPP #12: NW Oak Way Bicycle Lanes. High Priority. Extend bicycle lanes on NW Oak Way between the intersection of Main Street and existing bicycle lanes, using the guidance in the City's Public Works Design Standards.

BPP #18: Pedestrian/Bicycle Access between Wilkes St and Schools. Medium Priority. Provide north/south pedestrian/bicycle access between Wilkes Street and the schools to the south.

BPP #19: School Bicycle Parking. Medium Priority. Install bicycle parking at Banks elementary and high schools. The parking should be located in a convenient, accessible location and designed according to best practices.

~~**BPP #20: Site Distance & Lighting on NW Oak Way.** Medium Priority. Review sight distance and lighting on NW Oak Way at the post office entrance and address deficiencies.~~

BPP #29: Trail to Highway 6. Low Priority. Extend the existing private trail from the west side of Arbor Village from Oak to Highway 6, using the guidance in the City's Public Works Design Standards.



Enhancing Access to Main Street:

BPP #23: NW Banks Road Multimodal Improvement. Low Priority. Reconstruct NW Banks Road between Main Street and US 26 with bicycle lanes and sidewalks or a multi-use path, using the guidance in the City's Public Works Design Standards.

~~**BPP #24: NW Banks Road and NW Aerts Road Warning Signage.**~~ (Comment: Suggested for removal from Economic Development plan as this item pertains more to public safety.)

~~**BPP #28: Arbor Village Sight Improvements.**~~ (Comment: Suggested for removal from Economic Development plan as this item pertains more to public safety.)

BPP #30: Separated Trail on Main Street South of Town. Low Priority. Install a separated trail along Main Street, south of downtown, to the OR 6 undercrossing, using the guidance in the City's Public Works Design Standards.



BPP #31: Highway 6 Multiuse Path. Low Priority. Install a separated multi-use path parallel to Highway 6 between NW Main Street and railroad, using the guidance in the City's Public Works Design Standards.



Example from Orlando, FL

Existing and recommended multi-use routes from Banks Parks and Recreation Plan



Initiative #7: Parking

Current planning efforts and potential development changes are likely to have impacts on Banks' downtown. The role that automobile parking plays in supporting broader community goals for development, growth, vitality and alternative modes of access and mobility needs to be pursued strategically.

The appearance of Banks' parking system can be improved. Surface parking lots can, and often do affect a downtown's overall as well as visitors' first impression. When parking lots dominate the environment and are poorly designed or maintained, they undercut efforts to make downtown a lively, vibrant, attractive area. Work needs to be done to address the overall image – the presentation – of parking in Banks.

There is a lot of parking in Banks, if it were seen as a shared resource. Parking space is in private ownership/control and may only be used by specific businesses or institutions. Signs discourage the sharing of parking. In many cases signs communicate a negative message to potential customers. This leads to parking that is empty but unavailable, a situation that frustrates potential customers while causing stores to lose business. To the highest degree possible, existing parking planning in Banks should approach parking as a community resource.

Projects:

PMR #2: Establish a Downtown Parking Work Group. Schedule work group meetings routinely to advocate, shepherd, track and communicate plan. Establish a parking brand.

Public Off-street Parking. Develop parking on the vacant land north of Commerce Street. Providing this facility (50+ spaces) would allow employees to park away from storefronts.¹ (Also see **BPP #25: Resurface Commerce Street** for additional public parking recommendations)

BPP #6: Parking Management Study. High Priority. Conduct a Parking Management Study for the Banks-Vernonia Trailhead.

PMR #3: Make on-street parking more user friendly. Schedule

PMR #5: Initiate a data collection effort to better assess performance of the downtown parking supply.

PMR #6: Improve the appearance and quality of surface parking downtown to enhance the city's "front door."

PMR #7: Identify and establish a "model" public lot. Set the standard for parking lot design and presentation.

PMR #8: Create distinct public parking areas to distribute users through the downtown

PMR #9: Negotiate shared use and/or lease agreements with owners of private lots

PMR #11: Establish a business-to-business outreach effort

Assets¹

Residential Areas – Historically, housing developed between Market and Wilkes Streets, and along the south end of Main Street. Some of the houses built during the early 1900s still stand, including some good examples of Craftsman and Victorian architecture. More recently, a new neighborhood has developed in South Banks. “Arbor Village” contains 340 single family and 50 multiple family housing units oriented to a five acre park, Banks Elementary, and a shopping center at Oak Way. As of 2016, residential development comprises (XX acres, or XX percent of all developed land within the UGB.

(Add something about recently annexed land, zoned residential.)

Commercial Areas – The north end of Main Street contains a handful of historic commercial and civic buildings, as well as some newer buildings. Current land uses include a hardware store, market, auto repair, restaurants, City Hall, Fire Station, gas station, laundry, bus company and several small offices. The south end of Main Street contains a shopping center with a grocery store, post office, bank, professional offices and other neighborhood-oriented goods and services between Oak Way and Highway 6. Commercial development totals XX acres, or X percent of UGB development as of 2016. Approximately X acres of commercially-zoned land is vacant, and an additional 1-2 acres is potentially redevelopable.

Industrial Areas – Banks Lumber is the largest industrial use within the UGB, comprising approximately 17 acres. The mill contains a railroad spur and lumber storage yards on both sides of the railroad right-of-way. Banks Lumber receives access from Sunset Avenue and a private railroad grade crossing. Some smaller industrial uses are oriented to Sunset Avenue and Commerce Street, on the west side of the railroad. In total, Banks has 18.5 acres of industrial development.

Parks and Open Spaces – Banks has three parks and one linear open space area (drainage and trail adjacent to Arbor Village):

Boy Scout Park – The smallest park is the one-quarter-acre park at the northeast corner of Sunset Avenue and Main Street. The park was developed by local Boy Scouts and contains a small log museum.

Greenville Park – Greenville Park (5 acres) is located where Trellis Way meets Arbor Park Loop within Arbor Village. The neighborhood park contains an informal play field, benches, and gazebo oriented to the surrounding residential area.

Sunset Regional Park – Sunset Park contains approximately 25 acres with ballfields, group gathering and picnic areas, playgrounds, horseshoe pits, shooting range, and off-road jalopy racing arena. The park functions as a regional park, serving residents and organized sports groups from around the region. It is owned and operated by the Sunset Park Association, a private nont-for-profit, 501(c)3, organization. The park service area generally corresponds to the Washington County Citizen Participation Organization Area 14, which follows the Banks School District boundary. During 2016, the following organizations and events used the park (Source: Sunset Park Association)

- o Banks Gun Club

- Washington County Derby Drivers Association
- Banks Horseshoe Club
- Banks Soccer League
- Banks High School and Junior High School athletic programs
- Private party meeting hall rentals, including annual Banks BBQ and festival

In summary, the total area used for parks and open space equals XX acres, or XX percent of all developed land within the UGB. Banks currently does not have a community park to serve city residents, however, Banks School District grounds and Sunset Park have served this dual purpose for many years, as described above.

Other Public/Institutional Land Uses – Land use by Banks School District, Banks Community Library, TriCity Rural Fire Protection District, Banks City Hall, Methodist Episcopal Church and Dayspring Christian Fellowship comprises 38.3 acres, or XX percent of all developed land within the UGB as of 2016.

Vacant Lands – to be completed by City Staff

Redevelopable Lands – to be completed by City Staff

Rural Lands – to be completed by City Staff

Trails – to be completed by City Staff

Transportation System – to be completed by City Staff