



City of Pittsburg, Kansas
Downtown Advisory Board
Strategic Planning
March 2023



Created for:
Downtown Advisory Board (DAB) of Pittsburg, KS

Created by:
The Center of Community Supports (CCS) at Greenbush

Contents

About the Project..... 2

Strategic Planning 3

What Do We Believe (Appendix A)..... 5

What Do We Want (Appendix B) 11

Prioritization of Board “Wants” (Appendix C) 14

Draft Action Plan (Appendix D) 16

About the Project

The Downtown Advisory Board (DAB) of Pittsburg, Kansas was created by Ordinance No. G-1243 with the purpose to “Inspire, Promote, and Attract” activity in Downtown’s District Overlay (DO) area. The membership is comprised of seven members. One represents the hospitality industry, one represents the retail industry, one represents property owners, one is a resident of the DO district, and three are designated as having a vested interest in Downtown.

The Board contracted with the Center of Community Supports at Greenbush (CCS) to conduct the following:

- Facilitate a “speed planning” strategic planning process.
- Complete a draft action plan for 2023 and 2024

The results from the speed planning process and the draft action plan are included in this report.

Strategic Planning

The Process

On March 20, 2023, seven board members and three city staff met with two members of the CCS Team to work through a “speed” strategic planning process to 1) Calibrate the Board and 2) Identify priorities and next steps.

To accomplish this, CCS staff provided the Board with a brief history and responsibilities of the DAB. This section of the strategic planning process is called “What do we know?” and is explained as follows:

1. What do we know?

Focuses on calibrating the knowledge base of all board members. Information gathered from city staff and board members was discussed. This discussion provided a collective knowledge base, allowing newer board members to catch up and older board members to check their historical knowledge. It also served as a factual point of conversation.

The remainder of the evening was spent answering three basic questions, and the process is as follows:

2. What do we believe?

Completed through a live survey link provided to each board and staff member. The unidentified responses of each group member were immediately produced on the screen in a word cloud and in lists. This allowed participants to calibrate again and offered a foundation for the rest of the session. This method is fast and provides all participants an equal opportunity to be heard. Organizational belief statements are often formed through this process.

3. What do we want?

Also completed through live survey links. During this portion of the planning process, participants identified three “wants” for their organization. These wants were shown to participants in a word cloud and in list form.

Once the “wants” were discussed, CCS staff conducted a thematic analysis of the responses and provide a condensed list to the participants that encompassed their “wants” for the organization. That list was then entered into another survey that allowed them to prioritize the collective list, ranking all choices from the most important to the least important.

The survey results were tabulated and results shown, allowing participants to quickly see the group priorities from which overarching goals were chosen.

4. What are we willing to do to get there?

The final part of the planning process was the development of a draft action plan based on the identified priorities. This was completed using flip chart paper on the wall.

To see individual responses from the Board Strategic Planning Process, please see Appendix A: What Do We Believe; Appendix B: What Do We Want; and Appendix C: Prioritization of Board Wants.

Identified Goals/Priorities

The following goals/priorities were identified and placed in the Draft Action Plan, which can be found in Appendix D.

- Improve Board/City Function
- Improve Infrastructure of DO
- Support Programming and Events

What Do We Believe (Appendix A)

The “What Do We Believe” portion of the strategic planning process included seven questions and the results are in this Appendix. All board members and staff who attended participated in the process.

Please Note: All responses in this and all following Appendices are unedited.

1. What is the purpose of the Downtown Advisory Board?

To serve as a liaison between the downtown business and residential community and the city of Pittsburg on matters of economic development, commerce, infrastructure, and more

To impact decisions that apply to all citizens in Pittsburg, KS. To improve our downtown environment and create more businesses, experiences and art.

The purpose of the DAB is to find ways to promote activity and foster support for not only the Downtown District but also its business owners.

Assist downtown businesses and property owners in matters related to downtown. Also, assist the City Commission in making decisions related to downtown.

To act as a champion for the DO district, encouraging economic growth, residential expansion, and destination travel

Help the city by focusing interested parties attention on the many issues facing the downtown community.

To help drive people to the downtown area to support downtown businesses and the local economy and to support downtown residents.

Start conversation among startholders

To help advise, guide, market, promote and complete tasks with any and all things that the downtown encompasses.

To provide ideas and plans from invested best interest individuals living and working in our downtown

2. What problem are we trying to fix?

Preservation of our downtown as an entertainment and commercial district.

Lack of funding to implement all that we want to accomplish.

Giving downtown stakeholders a voice in city government and to enhance economic activity in our primary business district (downtown).

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| Any issues that impact the DO district, from residents to business owners to visitors. |
| Difficulties arising from growth. |
| Issues that downtown merchants, owners and residents have along with revitalizing and improving the downtown district and local economy. |
| ? |
| Any obstacle that arises dealing with the downtown district. |
| Missed opportunities that could help make downtown a better place for everyone |

3. What would happen if the Downtown Advisory Board didn't exist?

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| Buildings would be torn down, historic look disappear No cohesive vision or planning Lack of community culture |
| The City of Pittsburg would be at a loss without these 7 individuals working to better our downtown environment. We would be missing out on creative and innovative suggestions to better our community and downtown. |
| There would be little connection and collaboration downtown to accomplish larger goals. |
| Might not be as much growth happening downtown, would not be as many events. |
| The city would absorb the responsibilities of the board and the DO district would lose a way to input concerns and praise to the city. |
| Downtown development would be chaotic. |
| Downtown business owners and residents would lose their contacts to support their issues and there would be less events happening in the downtown which helps with the local economy. |
| No dialog among stakeholders |
| I think things would possibly be put on the "back burner", which would hinder growth. |
| Details and a voice to assist in making our downtown a better place would be missed |

4. What do we want to get done in 2023 and 2024?

A stronger board presence Clear guidelines on city/DAB relationship Partnership with Pittsburg Arts Council

Expanding the downtown overlay and supporting our streets and alleys while also providing support to our businesses, both new and existing.

I hope to see us increase our communication in the coming 18 months. There is little direct communication from the City to these Downtown stakeholders and I think that has caused us to take a few steps back in building relationships with downtown stakeholders

Continue to encourage downtown growth and events.

Prepare the DO district for upcoming challenges while remaining true to the historic preservation of the area.

Help with parking solution, host many downtown events and activities.

Grant applications, Meet and Mingles with Downtown business owners, Art Wall, Downtown banners, and other events.

Bigger role in bigger issues,

We would like to get a better understanding of the budget, so we can get some of our visions/goals accomplished.

grow downtown events

5. What should be "our cause" in 2023 and 2024?

Promote and assist our downtown businesses during upcoming economic shifts and bring more business downtown

Sourcing new initiatives to grow the downtown area, increase our impact on businesses and invite new people to downtown. Creating events and interaction among our community members in the downtown area.

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| Focus on placemaking and doing that by fostering a collaborative environment amongst stakeholders. |
| Assist in downtown revitalization |
| Address parking and public transportation, increase access to low/medium income housing, support new business owners and businesses in general, commit to being an art destination, unify streetscape in DO district |
| Parking |
| To be the liaisons between Downtown business owners and residents and the City Commission to help the downtown and local economy grow. |
| Unsure |
| To keep the momentum of the growth of the Downtown. |
| how can we make downtown a more thriving place to celebrate the community |

6. What can we reasonably accomplish in 2023 and 2024?

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| Better event planning More board member buy-in and participation Better board/city communication and input on decision making |
| Sourcing new ideas to bring events, art and new businesses to downtown. |
| Better events downtown Identify infrastructure issues Increase communication with our downtown email list |
| More events and growth downtown. |
| Lay groundwork for parking issues, create avenues for more artists to showcase their work, make connections with business owners |
| Formal recommendation regarding parking, a major event every month |
| One meet and mingle 1-2 grant applications Downtown Banners Plan a couple downtown shopping events |

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| Bigger voice in issues affecting DOD |
| Grow 620 day. Get lighting up throughout downtown. |
| improve communication |

7. How can I contribute?

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|--|
| Step into a leadership role Understand board responsibilities Participate in committees |
| I can source other communities to come up with fresh ideas! |
| Attend marketing events Provide input and support DAB efforts in the community Volunteer at events when needed |
| Continuing to participate in dab, marketing, other organizations |
| Put in the footwork and talk with downtown residents, owners, and visitors. |
| Organize events, engage in parking discussions, volunteer |
| Participate in meetings and downtown events either as an attendee or volunteer. |
| Experience in DOD |
| Donate as much time as I can. And continue to voice ideas. And help with solutions. |
| make best effort with follow through |

What Do We Want (Appendix B)

The “What Do We Want” portion of the strategic planning process asked each board and staff member to identify three “wants” or desires for the organization, and the results are in this Appendix. All board members and staff who attended participated in the process.

Want #1

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|---|
| Downtown Music Festival |
| Vibrant downtown, active 24 hours a day |
| Art Wall to be developed with grant monies |
| Actions that drive results |
| Dedicated city liaison(s) who are active in securing funding, opportunities, and promoting downtown, who communicate effectively with the board |
| Better understanding of grants and incentives available for downtown business and property owners |
| Increased Communication |
| Bigger voice in important discussions |
| Turn our ideas into action. |
| Improve events to bring more commerce downtown |

Want #2

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|---|
| Alley Activation |
| No empty buildings |
| New event that will encourage out of owners to attend |
| Plan for downtown business communication and support from both the city and the board members |
| A renewed sense of DAB's input on major developments occurring downtown |
| Expand downtown further south, lights, banners, urns, benches, etc. |
| More Decision Making |
| More historic preservation |

Be a valuable group that continues to help our city.

Improve channels of information to gain more attendance for downtown events

Want #3

Unify Broadway Streetscape

Many more residents

More parking

More involvement within the board to help with events

More direct support for downtown infrastructure and businesses

Hold downtown events more often and more variety of type of events

More Leadership from City Liaison

Vision for future growth

Help the downtown grow

Improve attendance for downtown events

Prioritization of Board “Wants” (Appendix C)

The “Prioritization of Board Wants” portion of the strategic planning process asked each board and staff member to prioritize the “wants” or desires that were collectively shared as priorities for the organization, and the results can be found in this Appendix. All board members and staff who attended participated in the process.

1. Please review the list of "wants" expressed by the Board in today's meeting. Once you've identified your priorities, rank the items by placing the choice that's most important to you at the top and the item that's least important to you at the bottom.

| Item | Overall Rank | Rank Distribution | Score | No. of Rankings |
|---|--------------|-------------------|-------|-----------------|
| Set expectations between the DAB/ City Staff/ City Commission (establish communication plan) | 1 | | 68 | 10 |
| Review downtown design standards and streetscapes and make recommendations | 2 | | 52 | 10 |
| Infrastructure improvements- alleys, parking, empty buildings | 3 | | 51 | 10 |
| Develop recommendations regarding the use of allocated budget | 4 | | 51 | 10 |
| Increase the number of, and attendance of (local residents and out of town visitors), art and music events. (i.e. art wall) | 5 | | 47 | 10 |
| Increase communication awareness of downtown overlay- events/merchants | 6 | | 40 | 10 |
| Bring in grants/outside funding | 7 | | 30 | 10 |
| Increase commerce downtown | 8 | | 20 | 9 |



Draft Action Plan (Appendix D)

A draft action plan containing specific action items, responsible parties, due dates, and proof of completion was created by the Board and CCS staff, and is provided in this Appendix.

**Draft Action Plan
City of Pittsburg
Downtown Advisory Board**

Improve Board/City Function

| What? | Who? | By When? | How do we know it's done? | Comments |
|--|--------------------|-----------------|---|--|
| Reset roles and responsibilities of board members (by position) and city staff | Board/City Liaison | March 2024 | Document with roles and responsibilities outlined Sample | Is a facilitated process by an outside group possible? End product to be reviewed annually hereafter and should include roles of Liaison and other city staff. |
| Create an internal communication plan | Board/City Liaison | March 2024 | Document with a simple plan in place | |
| Formalize Board member onboarding and offboarding | City Liaison | March 2024 | Checklist and documents with a simple plan in place | This plan could include a simple survey created by CCS and an in-person or zoom meeting with the City Liaison. |
| Define a process for informal recommendations to City | Board/City Liaison | March 2024 | Written procedure in place | Does this exist for EDAC or PandZ? |
| Define the process for formal recommendations to City Commission | Board/City Liaison | March 2024 | Written procedure in place | Does this exist for EDAC or PandZ? |

Improve Infrastructure of DO

| What? | Who? | By When? | How do we know it's done? | Comments |
|---|--------------------|--------------------------------------|---|--|
| Participate in Traffic and Parking Study as individual members and as a Board | Board/City Liaison | (Olsson Planning Sessions Apr & May) | Formal input on study process and findings | City Liaison ensures DAB is included in the study process at all levels. |
| Participate in any formal City studies commissioned in 2023 and 2024 | Board/City Liaison | (Olsson Planning Sessions Apr & May) | Formal input on study process and findings | City Liaison ensures DAB is included in the study process at all levels. |
| Define shared language regarding streetscape and infrastructure | City Liaison/Board | April 2024 | One-page document/common language Sample Definitions | |
| Define a process for supporting internal and external events Need to define "support" and levels of participation in events. | City Liaison/Board | April 2024 | One-page document with steps for internal and external support | Does this exist in other communities? End product--on the website--a quick guide for external project support. (ex. I'm the car show person and I want to host an event downtown) with the support of the DAB) |

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|--|--|--------------------------------------|---|--|
| Complete review of alley safety and potential for use in DO. | Two Board members/City Liaison/Director of Development/ Full Board | (Olsson Planning Sessions Apr & May) | Short document with status and recommendations. | |
|--|--|--------------------------------------|---|--|

Support Programming and Events

| What? | Who? | By When? | How do we know it's done? | Comments |
|---|--------------------|-----------------|--|------------------------------|
| Define a process for internal events including roles and responsibilities | Board/City Liaison | July 2024 | One-page checklist for typical internal sponsored event | Internal checklist for Board |
| Define a process for supporting external events and programming | Board/City Liaison | July 2024 | One-page checklist for outside audiences to be placed on website | |
| Determine use of \$10,000 budget and any supporting needs for 2023-2024. | Board/City Liaison | July 2024 | Document(s) showing budget and plans for use | |