Downtown Janesville Business Improvement District

Strategic Plan 2024-2027

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OUR LONG-TERM VISION

We envision Downtown Janesville as a vibrant hub of diverse, thriving businesses where owners actively invest in their properties and community. It's a downtown that attracts people to live, work, and spend time, driven by the BID's daily efforts to create solutions and advocate for growth. With a dedicated board, skilled staff, and strong partnerships, the BID delivers measurable impact, ensuring a prosperous and connected downtown.

OUR MISSION

The Business Improvement District supports and strengthens Downtown Janesville by promoting economic vitality, enhancing safety and walkability, and fostering a vibrant community where businesses and people thrive.

OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

1. Advocate and Connect for a Thriving Downtown

We will champion the needs of Downtown Janesville by advocating for improvements, fostering collaboration with city officials, and amplifying the voices of businesses. By building strong connections, facilitating mentorship, and supporting business growth, we will create a more unified and prosperous downtown community.

2. Drive Economic Vitality Through Business Recruitment and Retention

Drive economic growth by attracting new businesses, enhancing downtown properties and connecting entrepreneurs with the resources they need to succeed.

3. Market Downtown Janesville to Drive Growth and Engagement

Attract visitors to Downtown Janesville by showcasing its unique mix of retail, dining, vintage, and wellness experiences, while highlighting resources and opportunities for business and property owners to thrive.

4. Enhance Downtown Safety and Walkability

Promote a safe and walkable Downtown Janesville through collaborative safety initiates like LCA and P3tips, efficient snow removal, and strategic space activation that encourages positive engagement.

5. Grow Downtown Activation

Grow Downtown Janesville activation by collaborating on events, programs, and experiences that consistently draw visitors, energize public spaces, and showcase the heart of the community.

6. Ensure Operational Excellence and Financial Stewardship

Champion long-term success through strong operational and financial management, responsible stewardship funds, and proactive succession planning, while seeking diverse funding sources to support BID's growth.

ABOUT THIS PLAN

This three-year plan was developed by our Board and staff through a strategic planning process that included a survey and two half-day planning sessions. Serving as our roadmap for the next few years, this plan will guide our priorities, shape our budget, and help us measure progress. This plan was created with the assistance of Lynn Peters from C96) Consulting.

To execute this plan effectively, BID utilizes dedicated Task Forces that focus on key areas. Together these Task Forces will help us deliver measurable results and communicate our priorities to board members, community leaders, and potential sponsors.

Executing Our Strategic Priorities
To achieve our strategic goals, BID utilizes dedicated Task Forces that focus on key areas essential to Downtown Janesville's growth and vitality. Each Task Force aligns its activities with BID's mission to support, revitalize, and grow businesses within the district.

- **Walkability and Safety Task Force**
  Enhances downtown safety and accessibility through timely snow removal, improved lighting, expanded camera coverage (Lights, Camera, Action), and promoting P3tips for anonymous reporting.

- **Economic Vitality Task Force**
  Supports business retention and recruitment through outreach, educational resources, and property improvement grants.

- **Marketing Task Force**
  Builds awareness of Downtown Janesville by promoting its businesses and properties, coordinating co-op marketing, and maintaining a strong web and social media presence.

- **Finance and Operations Task Force**
  Ensures financial stewardship and operational efficiency through oversight, board governance, and standardized processes.

- **Special Project Task Force (as needed)**
  Every few years, BID allocates combined funds for a high-impact special project aimed at enhancing Downtown Janesville. In the designated project year, a dedicated Special Project Task Force is formed to research options, develop proposals, and oversee project execution, ensuring alignment with BID's mission and long-term goals.

Downtown Janesville Business Improvement District
WORK PLAN 2025-2028

PRIORITY 1: Advocate and Connect for a Thriving Downtown

We will champion the needs of Downtown Janesville by advocating for improvements, fostering collaboration with city officials, and amplifying the voices of businesses. By building strong connections, facilitating mentorship, and supporting business growth, we will create a more unified and prosperous downtown community.

	Taking the Lead	Timetable
STRATEGY: Operationalize advocacy for downtown businesses		
• Thoroughly research current and emerging issues and determine their effect on downtown • Establish ongoing process (SOP) to vet issues and craft positioning statements (engage city as appropriate) • Consistently engage downtown businesses regarding downtown issues and positions	Director Director Director	2025-2027 Ongoing 2025 Q3 2025-2027 Ongoing
STRATEGY: Build a strong network of business and property owners		
• Host mixers, consistent rounding, and providing communication tools • Share clear, data-driven updates on downtown developments and city decision • Maintain relationships and coordinate meetings with key partners, including COJ, FJ, DJI, AriseNow, real estate teams, and task forces.	Director/Economic Vitality Task Force Director/Economic Vitality Task Force Director/Economic Vitality Task Force	2025-2027 Ongoing 2025-2027 Ongoing 2025-2027 Ongoing
STRATEGY: Establish a mentorship program for new businesses and property owners		
• Develop a structured mentorship program that connects new businesses and property owners with experienced downtown stakeholders • Offer mentorship support in key areas such as navigating city regulations, accessing financial resources, and improving customer engagement • Provide orientation sessions and ongoing check-ins to ensure mentees have the tools and knowledge needed to succeed • Highlight mentorship success stories to encourage participation	Economic Vitality Task Force Director/Economic Vitality Task Force Economic Vitality Task Force Director	2025 Q2-Q3 2025-2027 Ongoing 2026-2027 Q1 & Q3 2026-2027 Ongoing

and showcase the program's impact		

PRIORITY 2: Drive Economic Vitality Through Business Recruitment and Retention

Drive economic growth by attracting new businesses, enhancing downtown properties and connecting entrepreneurs with the resources they need to succeed.

	Taking the Lead	Timetable
STRATEGY: Position the BID as the go-to source for downtown property information		
• Develop reliable system (SOP) to track available downtown spaces, including key property details • Make property information accessible (SOP) via the BID website, newsletters, and real estate partnerships • Establish and maintain program to showcase vacant buildings available with key info (window wraps, clings, "Your Business Could Be Here")	Economic Vitality Task Force Director Economic Vitality Task Force	2025 Q3 2025-2027 Ongoing 2026 Q1
STRATEGY: Enhance downtown properties through grants and visual improvements		
• Execute BID Facade and Recruitment/Retention Grant programs (SOP) • Research additional grant opportunities for property improvements and facade enhancements	Director Director/Economic Vitality Task Force	2025-2027 Ongoing 2025-2027 Ongoing
STRATEGY: Proactively recruit new businesses to downtown		
• Identify target business categories that align with downtown's character. • Actively promote Downtown Janesville in other downtowns, at local industry events, trade shows, and events. • Offer relocation resources and connect businesses with financial resources and mentorship programs.	Director/Economic Vitality Task Force Director/Economic Vitality Task Force Director	2025-2027 Ongoing 2025-2027 Ongoing 2025-2027 Ongoing
STRATEGY: Build connections between current and prospective businesses		
• Host meet-and-greet events to foster collaboration between current businesses and prospective tenants • Highlight success stories of businesses that have revitalized downtown spaces	Director/Economic Vitality Task Force Director	2025-2027 Q2 & Q4 2025-2027 Ongoing

PRIORITY 3: Market Downtown Janesville to Drive Growth and Engagement

Attract visitors to downtown Janesville by showcasing its unique mix of retail, dining, vintage, and wellness experiences while highlighting resources and opportunities for businesses and property owners to thrive.

	Taking the Lead	Timetable
STRATEGY: Strengthen and execute the BID marketing plan		
• Assess marketing plan to clearly define BID's message. Differentiate it from other downtown organizations and execute BID's strategic priorities	Director/Marketing Task Force	2025 Q3
STRATEGY: Enhance and execute the BID marketing program to drive activation and attract visitors downtown		
• Create a BID marketing manual outlining co-op advertising opportunities, marketing tools, and BID services • Highlight downtown's retail, dining, vintage, and wellness experiences through targeted campaigns • Provide marketing resources to help businesses promote themselves and participate in BID campaigns	Director/Marketing Task Force Director/Marketing Task Force Director/Marketing Task Force	2025 Q4 2025-2027 Ongoing 2025-2027 Ongoing
STRATEGY: Market Downtown Janesville as a premier place to own property or a business		
• Promote downtown as a thriving location for businesses and property investments • Showcase success stories of businesses that have flourished downtown • Send new releases announcing new businesses locating downtown	Director/Marketing Task Force Director/Marketing Task Force Director/Marketing Task Force	2025-2027 Ongoing 2025-2027 Ongoing 2025-2027 Ongoing

PRIORITY 4: Enhance Downtown Safety and Walkability

Promote a safe and walkable Downtown Janesville through collaborative safety initiatives like LCA and P3tips, efficient snow removal, and strategic space activation that encourages positive engagement.

	Taking the Lead	Timetable
STRATEGY: Strengthen safety through collaboration and technology		
• Maintain strong relationships with local law enforcement and fire departments, City of Janesville, Forward Janesville -integration of all downtown coverage • Fully implement the Lights Camera Action (LCA) initiative to maximize coverage and effectiveness • Promote P3tips as a tool for anonymously reporting safety concerns	Director Director/Safety & Walkability Task Force Director/Safety & Walkability Task Force	2025-2027 Ongoing 2025-2027 Ongoing 2025-2027 Ongoing
STRATEGY: Ensure safe and accessible public spaces year-round		
• Maintain timely, thorough snow removal with clear communication for businesses and visitors • Improve awareness of handicap parking availability through website information and signage	Director/Safety & Walkability Task Force Director/Safety & Walkability Task Force	2025-2027 Q1, Q2, Q4 2025-2027 Ongoing
STRATEGY: Activate public spaces to enhance walkability and community engagement		
• Develop marked walking routes with clear signage, including 1-mile and 2-mile options	Safety & Walkability Task Force	2026 Q1

PRIORITY 5: Grow Downtown Activation

Grow downtown activation by collaborating on events, programs, and experiences that consistently draw visitors, energize public spaces, and showcase the heart of the community

	Taking the Lead	Timetable
STRATEGY: Maximize Event Sponsorship Opportunities and Ensure Post-Event Accountability		
• Sponsor events that align with BID's mission and attract diverse audiences • Require event organizers to outline expected outcomes and submit post-event reports • Engage professional offices to participate in events and support local businesses	Director/Finance & Operations Task Force Director/Finance & Operations Task Force Marketing Task Force	2025-2027 Ongoing 2025-2027 Ongoing 2025-2027 Ongoing
STRATEGY: Enhance walkability and public space activation		
• Establish marked walking routes and highlight scenic landmarks • Introduce sidewalk features like hopscotch, interactive art, and seating areas to create a welcoming environment • Leverage the Ice Age Trail to attract visitors and connect them with downtown businesses	Safety & Walkability Task Force Safety & Walkability Task Force Safety & Walkability Task Force	2026 Q1 2026 Q2 & Q3 2026 Q2
STRATEGY: Facilitate consistent, small-scale activations to engage all downtown stakeholders		
• Support informal, recurring activities like "Lunch in the Park" and sidewalk music • Encourage restaurants to offer lunch specials and happy hours to attract office workers and event attendees	Safety & Walkability Task Force Marketing Task Force	2025-2027 Q2 & Q3 2025-2027 Q2 & Q3

PRIORITY 6: Ensure Operational Excellence and Financial Stewardship

Champion long-term success through strong operational and financial management, responsible stewardship of funds and proactive succession planning, while seeking diverse funding sources to support BID's growth.

	Taking the Lead	Timetable
STRATEGY: Strengthen BID's financial sustainability		
• Research innovative income-generating strategies used by other BID's • Seek grants from government agencies, nonprofits, and corporate partners • Explore established a 501(c)(3) affiliate to expand access to donations and grants • Ensure sustainable funding for the Executive Director position after the current grant ends	Director/Finance & Operations Task Force	2025 Q3 2025-2027 Ongoing 2026 Q1 2025 Q4
STRATEGY: Optimize organizational performance and governance		
• Develop job descriptions and role expectations for board members and task forces • Enhance board engagement through onboarding, ongoing education, and assigned tasks • Maintain a list of prospective board members to support long-term succession planning	Director/Finance & Operations Task Force	2025 Q2 2025-2027 Q1 2025-2027 Ongoing
STRATEGY: Improve operational efficiency and accountability		
• Document Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for essential BID functions • Develop a SOP to establish additional income through research, assessment and tracking • Establish regular key meetings to align on priorities and track progress • Continuously assess and optimize resource allocation to maximize impact	Director Director Director/Finance & Operations Task Force Director/Finance & Operations Task Force	2025 Q2 2025 Q2 2025 Q2 2025-2027 Ongoing