

Present: Steve Poisson, Dan Fleishman, Aaro Frichtl, Jessica Butler, Linda Williams, Cooper Whitman, Sheri Stuart (OMS), Juli Bochsler and Kandi Schuff via Zoom

Revitalize Downtown Stayton

Board Action Plan

November 9, 2021



Background

Revitalize Downtown Stayton (formerly Friends of Old Town Stayton) was formed by a dedicated group of volunteers in 2016. RDS is currently a small but mighty group that has had a number of significant successes including:

- Recipient of two Oregon Main Street Revitalization grants to provide assistance to downtown business and property owners resulting in a new HVAC system for one building and a block of façade improvements to bring back the historic character on multiple properties.
- Placemaking projects like the parklet project, Walk of Hearts seasonal decorations, and the historic sign toppers.
- Community building events and activities like the Farmers' Market, Ghost Tour, Summer Concert Series, and Holiday Kickoff.
- Selected as one of two communities to pilot the new economic vitality assistance provided by Rural Development Initiatives.
- Selected by Oregon Main Street to receive a Main Street Refresh strategic planning service just prior to the pandemic which culminated in a written report, public presentation, and implementation plan.

Observation

The pandemic has been especially challenging for local main street efforts like RDS across Oregon. They have had to adapt programming and be creative while operating with limited volunteer and financial resources. This has taken a toll on morale but many organizations are starting to re-focus and re-build.

Action

The RDS board met with Sheri Stuart, state coordinator, Oregon Main Street, to discuss how to move forward with their efforts. The board decided to focus on the following actions and develop a timeline to implement:

- Strengthen working relationships with partners including the City of Stayton and the Chamber of Commerce. RDS board members will reach out to individual city council members to have conversations about what they would like to see happen downtown, as well as conversations with the interim city manager, and the finance director.
- Support activities to enhance the appearance and functionality of downtown including supporting building improvement projects by applying for the Oregon Main Street Revitalization Grant when funds are available, working towards streetscape improvement projects with the City, and continuing placemaking activities like the Walk of Hearts and new activities like a permanent stage in downtown for use by RDS and other community groups.
- Complete Economic Vitality planning process with RDI and support local entrepreneurs by connecting them with available resources through the National Main Street Center and other sources.
- Continue to build community through events and activities like the Ghost Tour, Treelighting, and Farmers Market (pausing for now the Summer Concert Series unless community members or partners develop to assist RDS with implementation).
- Enhance outreach efforts to increase the number of board members and then expand volunteer base. To support this effort RDS will prepare marketing information (e.g., an info piece like the Port Orford Main Street Association handout).