



**2015-2019 Strategic Plan**

**Approved by the Board of Directors  
June 10, 2015**

## VISION

To be a catalyst for a thriving, vibrant, and livable downtown, nationally recognized for its diverse local businesses and authentic culture and known for being welcoming, accessible, clean, safe and environmentally conscious.

## MISSION

The Asheville Downtown Association is a leader and advocate for the vitality of downtown.

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- We generate fun and believe that it instills passion for and commitment to our vision.
- We value collaboration because through connection with other groups, we expand collective intelligence, develop solutions, increase buy-in and catalyze changes of which we alone are not capable.
- We value engagement and believe that it is key to creating a responsive, proactive and connected community.
- We value integrity and inclusivity; they are at the core of all we do.

## STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

The following strategic directions will guide the ADA's work:

- Strengthen Organizational Infrastructure** – ADA has the appropriate, sustainable structure to enable the organization to fully carry out its Vision and Mission
- Diversify Funding Sources and Revenue** – Double non-event income
- Build Advocacy Efforts and Relationships** – Be a leading voice for downtown and influence direction, budget and policy decisions with appropriate governmental entities and stakeholder groups
- Develop Effective Events** – Events are run in a way that provides benefit to the community and ADA's bottom line
- Communicate Strategically** – ADA is known in the community as an essential organization for the vitality of downtown

## STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS, GOALS, and OBJECTIVES

<b>A. STRENGTHEN ORGANIZATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE – ADA has the appropriate, sustainable structure to enable the organization to fully carry out its Vision and Mission</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Who Leads</b>	<b>By When</b>
<b>Key indicators of success</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Orderly board and leadership succession</li> <li>• Adequate staff capacity</li> </ul>			
<b>Goal 1: Shift from board-driven to staff-driven organization</b>			
Objective 1a: Clearly define board and staff expectations and roles		EC,ED	2016 Retreat
Objective 1b: Clarify communication and decision-making processes between Executive Director-board and staff-committees		EC, ED	Ongoing
Objective 1c: Train board on board best practices on an annual basis		ED, EC	Annual Retreat
<b>Goal 2: Ensure that ADA has strong board leadership</b>			
Objective 2a: Revise the by-laws to look at board structure, leadership succession, and term limits		Board	3Q 2015
Objective 2b: Strategically recruit board and committee members based on skills, characteristics and experience		Nom Comm	3Q &4Q 2016/Ongoing
Objective 2c: Restructure events committees to provide focus for specific events		ED, Event Comm	1Q 2016
Objective 2d: Restructure issues committee to formalize the ADA advocacy goals and process and explore the development of an Advisory Council		ED, Issues Comm	1Q 2016
Objective 2e: Refine board committees to provide additional governance (board development, finance, resource development, human resources)		EC, ED	Board Retreat 2016
<b>Goal 3: Ensure that ADA has strong staff leadership</b>			
Objective 3a: Evaluate staff capacity needed to effectively carry out programs		HR Comm	Ongoing
Objective 3b: Conduct annual staff evaluations		HR Comm	Ongoing
Objective 3c: Ensure that staff have adequate professional development opportunities		HR Comm	Ongoing
<b>Goal 4: Ensure that ADA has the necessary physical infrastructure</b>			
Objective 4a: Develop a long-term facility and storage plan		ED	1Q 2016
Objective 4b: Upgrade information technology		ED	1Q 2016

Goal 5: Review Strategic Plan progress annually			
Objective 5a: Maintain a dashboard of key indicators and present bi-annually to the board		ED	Bi-Annual
Objective 5b: Present key indicators to membership annually		ED	Annual

<b>B. DIVERSIFY FUNDING SOURCES AND REVENUE – Double non-event income</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Who Leads</b>	<b>By When</b>
<b>Key indicators of success</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Percentage breakdown by revenue source</li> <li>• Event profitability – attendance, sponsorship, beverage sales, vendor fees</li> <li>• Membership increases</li> </ul>			
<b>Goal 1: Create a consistent sponsorship/benefit structure</b>			
Objective 1a: Re-evaluate existing sponsorship arrangements		ED	1Q 2016
Objective 1b: Align all sponsorship contracts under 1 staff person		ED	Immediate
<b>Goal 2: Increase memberships and membership revenues</b>			
Objective 2a: Re-evaluate existing membership benefits		ED	1Q 2016
Objective 2b: Ensure that benefits are offered only to current members		ED, M&O	Ongoing
Objective 2c: Engage board to achieve membership growth		ED, M&O	Ongoing
<b>Goal 3: Increase board’s involvement with raising money</b>			
Objective 3a: Clarify expectations about board involvement with fundraising		EC, ED	2016 Board Retreat
Objective 3b: Train board members how to assist with fundraising			2016 Ongoing
<b>Goal 4: Seek grant opportunities when appropriate</b>			
Objective 4a: Find practical solutions to connect the Association and Foundation (Consult with a tax professional on Foundation-Association structure/relationship)		EC, ED	1Q 2016
Objective 4b: Field grant opportunities through Executive Director		ED	Ongoing
<b>Goal 5: Develop a 3 month cash operating reserve fund</b>			
<b>Goal 6: Develop a long-term facility and storage plan</b>			

<b>C. EXPAND ADVOCACY EFFORTS AND RELATIONSHIPS – Be a leading voice for downtown and influence direction, budget and policy decisions with appropriate governmental entities and stakeholder groups</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Who Leads</b>	<b>By When</b>
<b>Key indicators of success</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positive change in relevant downtown quality of life measures</li> <li>• Survey of Downtown resident/business awareness of and satisfaction with ADA</li> </ul>			
<b>Goal 1: Formalize the ADA advocacy agenda and process</b>			
Objective 1a: Shift to a staff-driven, member-supported advocacy structure		ED, Board	
Objective 1b: Create a policy decision-making rubric to determine priority issues and relevant partnerships		ED	1Q 2016
Objective 1c: Survey membership quarterly to determine policy priorities		M&O	Quarterly
Objective 1d: Conduct policy training for board and staff		ED, Board	2016 Retreat
Objective 1e: Have regular meetings with City of Asheville senior staff to discuss pertinent issues		EC, ED	Ongoing
<b>Goal 2: Collect and organize relevant data about downtown</b>			
Objective 2a: Research avenues for collecting business and residential data		ED	Ongoing
Objective 2b: Utilize downtown data and knowledge to demonstrate impact for policy and fundraising		ED, Board	Ongoing
<b>Goal 3: Collaborate with neighboring (e.g., Biltmore Village, River Arts District, West Asheville,) and allied (e.g., Asheville Independent Restaurants, Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Asheville Resident Neighbors) organizations to address common issues</b>			
Objective 3a: Continue to meet on a regular basis		ED	Ongoing
Objective 3b: Identify common needs, interests, and actions to take collaboratively		ED	Ongoing

<b>D. DEVELOP EFFECTIVE EVENTS – Events are run in a way that provides benefit to the community and ADA’s bottom line</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Who Leads</b>	<b>By When</b>
<b>Key indicators of success</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendance at events (by zip code when possible)</li> <li>• Favorable crowd surveys</li> <li>• Event profitability</li> <li>• Economic impact on downtown</li> <li>• Positive media reports</li> </ul>			
<b>Goal 1: Produce events that balance mission impact and profitability</b>			
Objective 1a: Evaluate events based on profitability and mission impact		ED, Events Comm	Quarterly
Objective 1b: Allocate resources to produce mission-oriented events that benefit the community (Pritchard Park and Spare Change)		Board	Ongoing
Objective 1c: Identify areas and opportunities for new efficient events and resources to support them		Events Comm	2016 w/ new events in 2017
<b>Goal 2: Drive support for community impact programs through pairing with bigger events</b>			
Objective 2a: Determine outlets for fundraising for Spare Change at profitable events (e.g., Downtown After Five, Oktoberfest)		Events Comm	1Q 2016
Objective 2b: Utilize profitable events to further promote community impact events		ED, Board	Ongoing
<b>Goal 3: Grow volunteer resources and recognition</b>			
Objective 3a: Increase volunteer labor pool for events		All	Ongoing
Objective 3b: Foster “Super Volunteers” to maintain high level of participation		VC, Events Comm	Ongoing
Objective 3c: Actively communicate relevant messages to volunteers to equip them to tell the ADA story		ED, VC	Ongoing, Vol Events

<b>E. COMMUNICATE STRATEGICALLY – ADA is known in the community as an essential organization for the vitality of downtown</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Who Leads</b>	<b>By When</b>
<b>Key indicators of success</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increases in membership, e-newsletter subscribers and website hits</li> <li>• Members/others complement ADA’s communication efforts</li> <li>• Increase number of ADA media hits</li> </ul>			
<b>Goal 1: Engage all stakeholder groups by sharing the ADA story, show the value of investments</b>			
Objective 1a: Develop annual organizational communications plan		ED	Annual
Objective 1b: Develop an annual report		ED	4Q 2016
Objective 1c: Produce video with our impact		ED	2016
Objective 1d: Clarify both the difference and collaborative overlap between ADA, BID, City of Asheville, Downtown Commission, etc.		ED, Board	Ongoing
<b>Goal 2: Become the local media’s reliable go-to source for all relevant downtown stories</b>			
Objective 2a: Reach out to all relevant media to shift ADA relationships from board to staff		ED	Ongoing
Objective 2b: Proactively build ADA’s credibility as knowledgeable source by pushing out op-eds, articles, social media, etc.		ED	Ongoing