

DOWNTOWN IN 2023

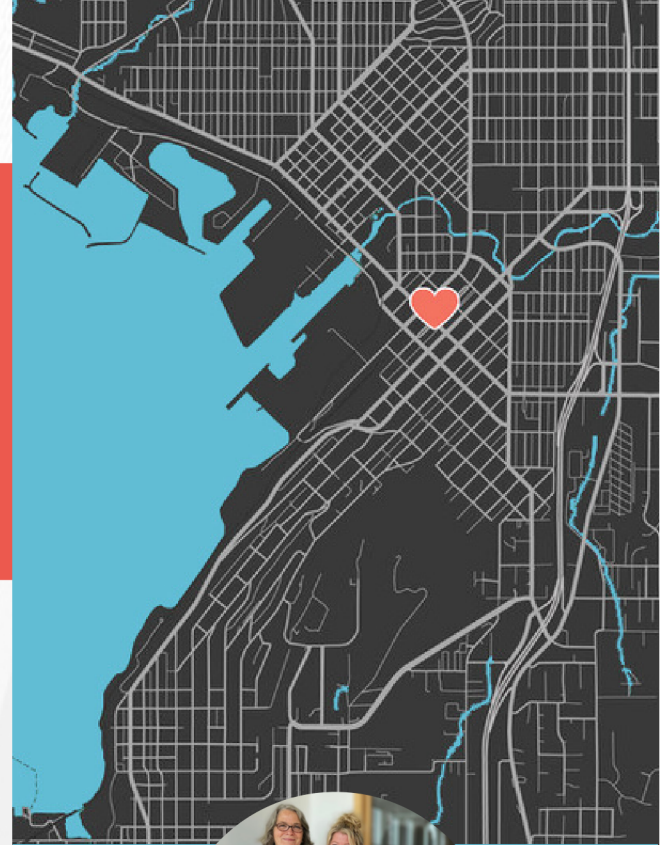
A year of evolution, recognition, and continued need.

LEADING THROUGH CHANGE

In 2023, the Downtown Bellingham Partnership has achieved significant milestones in its mission to revitalize and promote our vibrant downtown community. Under the dedicated leadership of Alice Clark for seven years, we have grown stronger as an organization and have become a formidable voice for downtown Bellingham. As we prepare for an upcoming change in executive leadership, we are confident in our ability to continue advocating for downtown's pivotal role in Bellingham's overall prosperity. With a history of successful initiatives and a passionate commitment to our city's heart, the Downtown Bellingham Partnership is poised for an even brighter future, working tirelessly to ensure downtown remains a thriving hub of culture, commerce, and community.

Lindsey Payne Johnstone, with 15 years in the organization, is poised to step up January 1, 2024 as Interim Executive Director. Additionally, Jenny Hagemann will assume the Development and Communications Manager role, serving as a conduit for donors, stakeholders, and leading our public voice.

David Sadowsky joins us as Finance and Operations Manager with nonprofit leadership experience. Amidst upcoming changes, our experienced team has delivered essential work in 2023. Join us in shaping the future with your voice and support.



CONTINUING LEGACY

"While my time as Executive Director is coming to a close, I am far from retiring. I am excited to continue my community involvement and contribute to its ongoing development in new and meaningful ways,"

Alice Clark

"I'm grateful for the invaluable lessons I've learned from Alice Clark during our years together. Now, I'm eager and excited to serve our wonderful community in this larger role, continuing the important work we've started."

Lindsey Payne Johnstone

AT A GLANCE

EVENT EXPANSION

- New! Shoulder Season Events
- 19 going on 20 years of Sounds!
- WWU Collaboration

CURB APPEAL

- New Plaza Mural
- Alleyway Improvements
- Flower Baskets Expand
- Graffiti Abatement Milestones

BUSINESS SUPPORT

- Bi-Annual Mayor Meetings
- Public Safety Campaign
- \$18K in Micro Grants Awarded
- Digital Marketing Seminars

EVENT EXPANSION

Spirits & Cider Stroll, Spring on State join the events roster. The spirited stroll expands Downtown's popular sip & stroll themed events like Wine Walk while Spring on State welcomed families along the State St corridor to hunt for eggs and enjoy a range of seasonal activities at the Time and Materials courtyard.

Downtown Sounds concludes its 19th season and plans for the 20th Anniversary. Nearly 30K attendees descended into the Arts District over the 5-week free concert series. DBP aims to increase the event footprint as we look ahead at the 20th milestone next summer.

Western Wednesdays adds weekly vitality and connection to businesses and student bodies. The program offers deals and discounts to students ranging from morning coffee to afternoon shopping to evening food and drink.

CURB APPEAL

Commercial Street Plaza gets new life with the City's Small & Simple grant, featuring artwork by Annabelle Barrett. DBP plans for ongoing activations in the Plaza to include food, games, live painting, and more.

Alleyway Improvement Pilot targets problem area with CPTED principles such as lighting, waste consolidation, and graffiti abatement. Murals and other activations will come next.

Flower Basket Services Expand to include State Street, extending the footprint of this highly-appreciated, seasonal addition to the district.

Graffiti Abatement Program leads to four prominent arrests of serial taggers responsible for \$400K in property damage. With over 4K tags covered or removed by DBP's team, the work has immediate, visible impact and we are proud to have secured contract extension to continue through 2024.

Spring on State
Egg Hunt



Downtown
Sounds
19th Season



Commercial
Street Plaza
Murals



Flower Baskets
Now Also On
State Street



BUSINESS SUPPORT

City Block Program engages business owners within the district through monthly meetings covering current challenges & opportunities, guest speakers, as well as advocacy and learning opportunities. The program was recently awarded an Organizational Excellence Award at the WA Main Street RevitalizeWA Conference in Vancouver, WA.

\$18K in Micro Grants distributed through the Storefront Improvement and Summer Activation Grants, providing funds for exterior enhancement and engaging activations.

Digital Marketing Seminars provided low cost training to small businesses ahead of holiday shopping season.

Downtown Mayoral Forum gave the community the opportunity to hear directly from the candidates about how they would support the Downtown Bellingham neighborhood.

ADVOCACY

Public Safety Campaign in collaboration with the Bellingham Regional Chamber of Commerce was created to raise awareness of the Downtown challenges experienced by the community, especially by business owners. A sign-on letter was initiated that conveyed the need for short term actions while longer term solutions are underway. Over 1,300 community members signed on and 700+ testimonials were collected and shared with local government representatives.

Meetings with the Mayor by the City Block Program leaders took place twice in 2023, with local business owners offered the opportunity to talk directly to the mayor about their concerns and challenges operating in the district. Topics ranged from the need for increased security to exploring the idea of creating a fund for business repairs related to vandalism and investments in lighting and other mitigations.

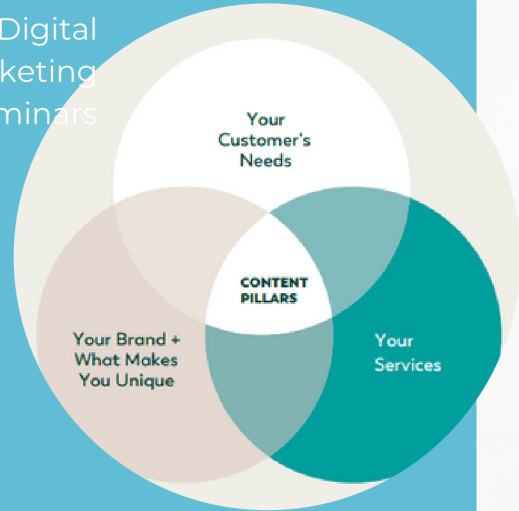
Mayoral Candidate Forum



Silent Disco Funded With Summer Activation Grant



Digital Marketing Seminars



City Block Leader Meeting

