

2023

Annual Report





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Great Neighborhoods

Great neighborhoods offer a diversity of housing styles and affordability and amenities such as parks, schools, shopping, and public transportation. They encourage connection and social interaction through cultural and recreational events and foster residents' sense of pride in their community.

Great neighborhoods provide well-maintained streets and infrastructure and provide opportunities for residents to engage in healthy, active lifestyles and provide access to natural, cultural, and historic resources.

Goal

1

Create and sustain a city of diverse neighborhoods where residents feel good about where they live.

Objectives:

Facilitate neighborhood beautification efforts to improve safety and engagement in our neighborhoods.

Encourage diversified housing options for households of all income levels and sizes.

Encourage pedestrian-oriented housing development options.

Enforce City ordinances when properties are neglected or abandoned to prevent erosion of property values and quality of life.

Consider amendments to the Albany Development Code standards that may hinder development rather than provide clear standards that promote healthy, sustainable, and affordable development and/or redevelopment.

Accomplishments

Community Development staff worked with the Affordable Housing Task Force to identify and begin removing barriers to diverse housing solutions leading to the adoption of the Housing Implementation Plan (HIP), which identifies specific strategies for removing barriers and incentivizing Housing Affordability.



Public Works staff revised system development charge (SDC) structures to create tiers or sliding rates that vary with residential structure size. This will reduce the total charge by the City for development and construction of smaller homes.



Development and adoption in 2023 of the East Albany Plan provided an opportunity to take a fresh, long-range look at land within the city's Urban Growth Boundary east of Interstate 5 and create a new plan focused on opportunities for connectivity, utility needs, transportation choices, housing variety, employment centers, and vibrant and walkable mixed-use areas, while protecting the area's natural resources and viewsheds.



Implementation of HB 2001 and SB 458 has led to changes in the Albany Development Code (ADC) that create opportunities for multiple resident housing in zones formerly restricted to single homes. Referred to as Middle Housing, these housing types (Duplexes, Triplexes, Fourplexes, Townhouses, and Cottage Clusters) are now allowed on lots within any residentially zoned property, with options for land division, creating additional options for home ownership.

The City implemented the first phases of state mandated Climate-Friendly and Equitable Community (CFEC) rules through amendments to the ADC repealing parking requirements and implementation of new parking lot standards.

Staff began development of a multi-unit property tax exemption program with a target of adoption in early 2024.

Goal

2

Provide an efficient transportation system with safe streets and alternative modes of transportation.

Objectives:

Improve mobility through the development of a connected and safe pedestrian network, creating walkable neighborhoods.

Work with local and regional partners to evaluate the feasibility of constructing an additional Willamette River crossing.

Ensure that public facilities, services, sidewalks, and public transportation are ADA accessible.

Utilize available street funding to maintain arterial and collector streets to a minimum Pavement Condition Index (PCI) score of 60, indicating fair or better condition. Address local street needs as funding allows.

Seek additional sources of funding for street maintenance.

Work as a cooperative partner of the Albany Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (AAMPO) for the funding of street and transit improvements.

When updated transit routes are implemented, monitor ridership trends and evaluate stop locations to increase ridership, and improve service frequency and overall system performance.

Accomplishments

The City received a Safe Routes to School grant from ODOT to design and construct sidewalks along Geary Street from 34th Avenue to Queen Avenue. This \$1.6 million project will provide needed improvements for safe pedestrian access along this major road that serves Lafayette Elementary and South Albany High School.



Public Works and Parks and Recreation staff completed a thorough ADA Self Evaluation and Transition Plan (SETP) for the public right-of-way and hard surface trails. The plan identified barriers to disabled access along the city's transportation network including needed improvements to sidewalk ramps, street crossing signals, and sidewalk repairs, among others. The projects will be addressed through dedicated funding for ADA improvements and included in future capital projects.

	Arterial	Collector	Local
Centerline miles	21	25	143
Avg. PCI Rating	71	71	59

The current average Pavement Condition Index rating of arterial and collector streets is 71. We have accomplished this through targeted investment of our limited street maintenance and capital funding at collector and arterial streets, and by providing routine maintenance treatments to reconstructed streets as they begin to decline.



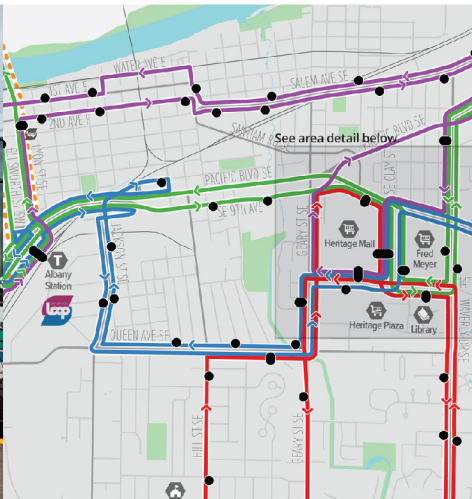
Staff recently began discussing the need for additional funding for street maintenance with the City Council to describe the current state of funding for streets and identify and describe the funding gap. Existing sources of funding are not adequate to maintain all city streets, especially local streets.

Accomplishments (continued)

Redevelopment of Monteith Park, three blocks of Water Avenue, and ten rail crossings will meet ADA requirements and recommendations and improve pedestrian access to the Dave Clark Riverfront Path and Monteith Park.



Staff and Council members continue to remain active and engaged in AAMPO boards and committees including the Policy Board and Technical Advisory Committee.



Albany Transit launched the first major improvement to bus routes in Albany in August 2023. This follows an earlier expansion of service for the Linn Benton Loop. Ridership and system performance will be evaluated to determine customer satisfaction, on-time performance, and effectiveness of the new service delivery.

Goal

3

Provide effective stewardship of Albany's significant natural, cultural, and historic resources.

Objectives:

Continue to partner and coordinate with community groups, such as the Calapooia Watershed Council, on watershed improvement programs and projects to meet Oregon's Statewide Planning Goal 5.

Accomplishments



In FY 2023, the Calapooia Watershed Council led several events in Albany including urban ecology field trips, snorkeling in local streams, Salmon Watch, and Splashy Science. Almost 1,200 students participated in these events.

Public Works continues to provide support and coordination with local watershed councils. In fiscal year (FY) 2023, the City provided \$2,500 to each of the three local watershed councils (Calapooia, South Santiam, North Santiam) to help fund outreach and restoration activities in their watershed.



Parks and Recreation worked with the Calapooia Watershed Council on grant-funded plantings along the Periwinkle Creek. Additionally, staff collaborated with the Public Works Environmental Services Division to help clean up invasive plants along Periwinkle Creek, replacing them with low-growing native plantings with better sightlines for safety.



Economic Development provides funding and support to organizations dedicated to historic preservation as well as to historic assets themselves including the Albany Downtown Association, the Historic Monteith House and Museum, the Albany Municipal Airport, and the Albany Visitors Association.

Parks and Recreation staff and volunteers discovered and identified four historic apple trees at the East Thornton Lake Natural Area, including a variety that was thought to be extinct. Staff and volunteers continue to maintain, prune, and protect the trees for the community's enjoyment in the years to come.

Parks and Recreation used the Oregon Department of Forestry's commercial tree plotter program to inventory all street trees in the city to better manage the urban forest and help identify heat islands.



Goal

4

Provide diverse recreational, educational, and cultural opportunities that enrich the lives of our citizens.

Objectives:

Increase the number of cultural events as resources permit.

Provide opportunities that promote healthy living, recreation, activities, and attractions for people of all ages and abilities.

Increase circulated items at the Albany Public Library.

Seek new funding to support library services.

Accomplishments



Parks and Recreation, in partnership with the Library, installed a story walk through Sunrise Park that features children's books for bilingual readers.

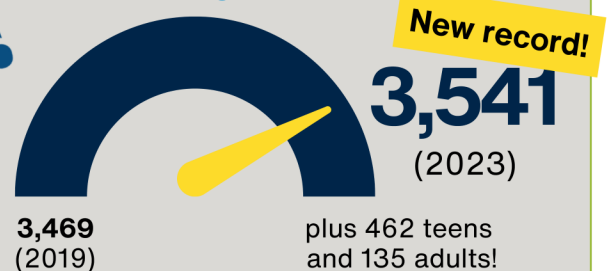
Parks and Recreation produces at least 15 large, free community events each year that attract visitors and community members of all ages to the parks.

Fun in the Park, River Rhythms, Summer Sounds, and the Northwest Art and Air Festival are Albany staples and continue to grow with additional sponsorships and partnerships.



The Albany Public Library Summer Reading program continues to have one of the highest participation rates in the state of Oregon. The Library hosted 385 programs with a total attendance of 6,969 (not including parents and guardians).

Children's Registrations:



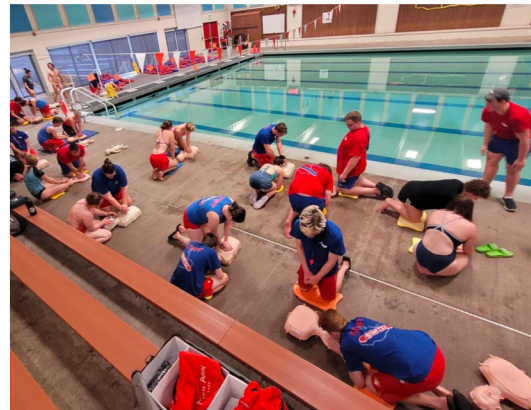
For context and comparison, the libraries of Eugene and Salem have less than half of the Summer Reading registrations that Albany does and in Corvallis registrations are about 40% less than Albany while all three have significantly higher budgets and staffing levels than Albany.



Accomplishments (continued)



In the last year, Parks and Recreation offered over 525 classes and programs for children, families, adults, and seniors between the Riverfront Community Center, Albany Community Pool, COOL! Pool, and Swanson Recreation Center.



The Library started a book delivery program for homebound patrons.

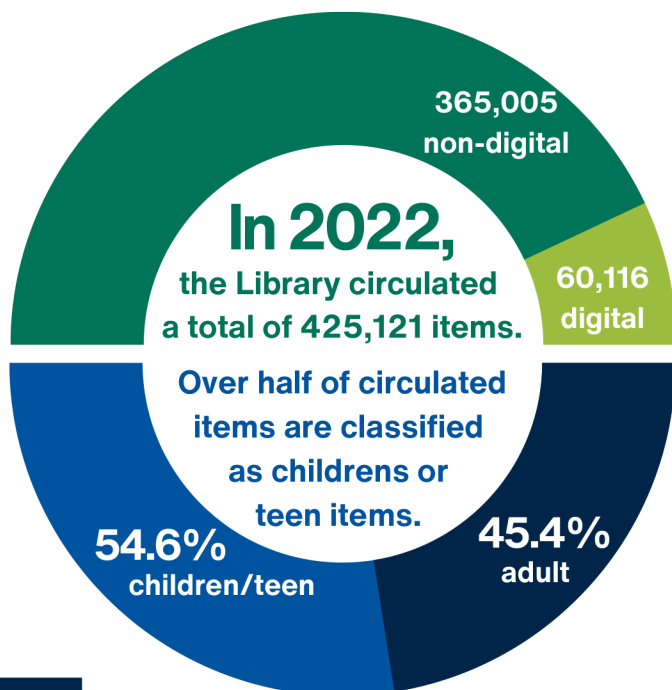
For adults, the Library hosted local authors and experts and basic computer skills classes for both English and Spanish speakers.



For children and teens, the Albany Public Library hosted well-attended bilingual programs for Day of the Dead (Día de los Muertos) and Day of Children and Books (El día de los niños / El día de los libros), daily story times and children's events, teen movie nights, teen game nights, and a variety of craft programs.



The Library continues to be dependent on outside funding sources for the purchasing of materials receiving supplemental funding from a grant established by the Scharpf Foundation, the Albany Public Library Foundation, and the Friends of the Library.



Goal

5

Identify and implement resource conservation and efficiencies where feasible.

Objectives:

Attract and promote green business development where possible.

Develop a fiscally responsible action plan that protects our natural environment and our limited resources.

Accomplishments



Public Works continues to pursue energy management projects that reduce energy consumption in the water and wastewater systems. Examples from the last year include the replacement of three return activated sludge pumps in Water Reclamation Facility clarifiers with smaller and more energy efficient pumps. This project resulted in a \$12,517 incentive from Energy Trust of Oregon. Additionally, staff replaced an air handling unit in the dewatering facility and a Variable Frequency Drive on a fan in the biosolids storage building. Those projects resulted in a \$31,801 incentive from Energy Trust of Oregon. In addition to the rebate, the anticipated energy savings will reduce expenditures for the Water Reclamation Facility by almost \$14,000 per year.

The conversion of Pacific Power (PP&L) streetlights in Albany to LED was completed in partnership with Energy Trust of Oregon, which provided a rebate to offset capital project costs.



2,800
streetlights converted.

1,800,000
kWh estimated in savings (PP&L)

\$100,000+
per year reduction in the City's cost for streetlights

The City submitted a federal grant application for electric charging network development in Albany using Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) funding. If successful, this grant will help the City develop a plan for electric vehicle charging infrastructure within the community and provide funding for charging facilities at up to four initial locations.



Facilities Maintenance staff are developing plans and funding strategies to replace all light fixtures in City Hall and upgrade heating and ventilation system controls at other city facilities to improve energy efficiency and conservation, taking advantage of directly allocated federal funds and other grant programs.

Business retention efforts prioritize forward-looking practices and sustainable industry clusters to bolster the existing business community and create more efficient business practices.





Safe City

In a safe city, people and their property are safeguarded through proactive efforts in community policing, fire safety, building and property maintenance codes, floodplain planning, and reliable public infrastructure.

Goal

1

Ensure a safe community by protecting people and property.

Objectives:

Explore options for crime prevention through environmental design in an effort to increase safety while reducing crime.

Participate in the FEMA National Flood Insurance Program and maintain the City's Community Rating System (CRS) rating.

Use Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to provide funding to community programs that assist the vulnerable children and families in our city.

Collaborate with neighboring communities to improve emergency response reliability and provide a consistent level of emergency response and life safety services.

Plan for equipment replacement and facilities maintenance to adequately address emergency equipment and vehicle needs and long-term maintenance of department facilities.

Reduce property code violations, substandard housing conditions, and inadequate infrastructure.

Pursue projects that eliminate blight and increase community safety. Continue to minimize the impact of fires on our community.

Plan for adequate staff for increasing calls for service, response times, and community growth.

Facilitate continued development of property surrounding Fire Station 12 as an emergency responder training center.

Accomplishments

Community Development staff maintained a FEMA National Flood Insurance Program Class 5 Community Rating. This rating results in a 25% premium reduction on flood insurance for properties within the city limits that require flood insurance.

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds helped vulnerable families in Albany by providing critical grant dollars to service providers in and around our community.

The police department received a four-year reaccreditation through the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA). CALEA-certified agencies voluntarily accept the challenge to meet the most rigorous set of standards for law enforcement in the United States. In 2019, the department was the third law enforcement agency in Oregon to achieve this status.



The police department added a mental health intervention specialist and a wellness K-9.



Parks and Recreation and the Albany Police Department jointly funded a new Park Service Officer position. This officer's primary duty is to provide improved safety and better service to community members in our parks.



Albany Police Department restored a second school resource officer in GAPS schools.

Accomplishments (continued)

Approximately 89% of all dispatch calls to the fire department are medical. To adequately respond, an additional ambulance was purchased for the fleet and the department will be “remounting” two additional ambulances in 2024.



Using Ground Emergency Medical Transport (GEMT) funds, the Albany Fire Department was able to reestablish a peak activity ambulance to address the increasing number of responses, assuring adequate response times.



The fire department implemented an AED loaner program, available to community groups, to improve survival of cardiac arrest.

Automated CPR devices were added to all ambulances to increase the effectiveness of CPR while in transport to the hospital.

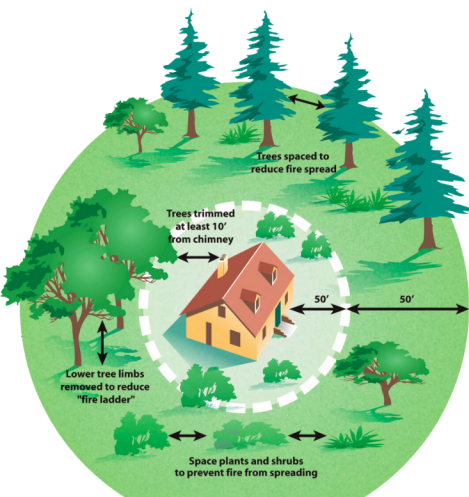
Albany Fire Department enhanced fire investigation capacity through the purchase of a new equipment trailer and additional assignment of current AFD staff to the fire investigation team.

Public Works secured a new bus facility which will allow the fire department to enhance training capabilities at Station 12.



All Linn County fire departments have received funding to replace the aging radio communication infrastructure. In preparation for this project, the department was able to purchase new handheld and mobile radios improving emergency scene communications using equipment replacement funds. Expected completion is 2024.

Albany Fire Department implemented a wildfire risk assessment program where community members can request staff recommendations on how to harden their home against wildfire.



Goal

2

Provide safe, sufficient, and reliable drinking water, sewage disposal, and drainage systems.

Objectives:

Optimize the operation and management of the Vine Street and Albany-Millersburg water treatment plants to meet regulatory requirements and system demand; efficiently manage energy consumption; and improve water system resilience.

Effectively manage biosolids waste at the Albany-Millersburg Water Reclamation Facility.

Accomplishments

Public Works successfully launched a biosolids composting program after completion of two major capital projects at the Water Reclamation Facility. The composting system is designed to treat 25% of the solids from the WRF and produces a Class A, Exceptional Quality biosolids compost suitable for unrestricted use by the public.

One result is a diversion of 819 tons of wastewater solids from disposal at the landfill, saving almost \$58,000 in just six months last fiscal year. Based on the success of this program to date, staff initiated a project to expand the compost facility to process more wastewater solids, further reducing our reliance on landfill disposal.

This project has won several awards and continues to serve as a model for other communities in productive use of this byproduct of the treatment process.



(Wastewater solids diverted from the landfill, saving almost \$58,000 in six months.)



Over the last two years, staff have implemented energy management projects for the Albany drinking water treatment plants, WRF, and Albany-Millersburg raw water pump station. One outcome is an agreement between the City and Pacific Power that compensates the City for reductions in power use during peak demand periods. When notified by Pacific Power of a large demand event, the City will receive an incentive based on our actual reduction in power consumption during the event. This program encourages large electric consumers such as the treatment facilities to manage power to reduce impact on the grid while still maintaining adequate water production and pumping.



Healthy Economy

A healthy economy is the bedrock of a livable community. The business landscape touches every aspect of life in Albany, from good-paying jobs to infrastructure and a sense of place. Simply put, a healthy economy improves quality of life. Economic development helps workers, entrepreneurs, industries, and communities to reach their full potential.

Goal

1

Enhance the value and diversity of Albany's economy by attracting, retaining, diversifying, and expanding local businesses.

Objectives:

Promote trades and vocational training.

Support business development in South and East Albany in order to provide more connectivity to services for existing and incoming residential development.

Provide a supportive environment for the development and expansion of businesses, especially those that are locally owned or provide living-wage jobs.

Identify the availability of commercial and industrial land in the Economic Opportunities Analysis. Facilitate development consistent with community goals.

Accomplishments

The City was awarded a Technical Assistance Grant from Oregon's Special Public Works Fund to complete feasibility studies of tax increment finance districts in East and South Albany.

Staff provided business support for new and existing businesses and continued to build relationships with landowners and developers to promote the highest and best use of available commercial and industrial lands in Albany.

Staff also provides ongoing management of an enterprise zone incentive to facilitate investment by 12 companies representing \$70 million in new investment in infrastructure, equipment, and facilities in Albany.

Goal

2

Strengthen the area's role as a leading regional economic center through local and regional coordination and collaboration on economic development planning and projects.

Objectives:

Create an economic development strategy.

Explore options for the future of the Albany Municipal Airport related to best use for the Albany community.

Collaborate with organizations focused on business retention, expansion, startup development, and entrepreneurship to establish new firms and strengthen existing local businesses.

Accomplishments

Public Works and Economic Development staff have initiated research into options to determine the highest and best use for underutilized portions of the airport property.



Economic Development staff continued collaboration with partners and resource organizations including the Oregon Economic Development Association, Community Lending Works, Albany Downtown Association, WorkSource Oregon, Albany Area Chamber of Commerce, Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments, Business Oregon, Cascades West Economic Development District, and the Governor's Regional Solutions Team.

Community Development staff established the Economic Development Advisory Committee comprised of experts in the fields of higher education, manufacturing, land development, finance and banking, and general business.

Economic Development staff has continued research into economic development strategies and formats.

Goal

3

Focus on living-wage jobs, training, and education opportunities for Albany residents.

Work to achieve a healthy balance of housing and jobs.

Objectives:

Focus on the creation and retention of living-wage jobs that support a healthy local economy and community.

Support the area's educational resources as vital to the social and economic well-being of the community.

Encourage opportunities for increasing skill levels of local workers and entrepreneurial development.

Accomplishments

Economic Development staff provided enterprise zone incentives to new or growing companies making investments in Albany and creating hundreds of new family wage jobs.



Staff also continued connecting industry with resources at Linn-Benton Community College, Albany Area Chamber of Commerce, and WorkSource Oregon to find and train the local workforce.



Goal

4

Create a readily identifiable downtown core that is unique and vibrant with a mixture of entertainment, housing, specialty shops, offices, and other commercial uses.

Objectives:

Attract a destination hotel in downtown Albany.

Support the development of the waterfront.

Leverage urban renewal dollars to maximize the total investment and development effort in Central Albany.

Create an increase in assessed value through public-private partnerships that encourage private investment through strategic public investment.

Recognize and support Albany's unique historic character as a major cultural and tourist-oriented economic resource.

Promote increased residential density in the downtown core.

Accomplishments

The Albany Waterfront Project is underway and has already spurred adjacent private development to further revitalize the riverfront corridor.



The City executed an option to purchase agreement with a reputable developer to construct a multi-use development in downtown consisting of a mix of commercial, residential, and hotel.



With strategic public investments through the Central Albany Revitalization Area (CARA), the redevelopment and construction of three new housing projects in the downtown core will preserve and revitalize our historic assets and contribute to the economic vitality of the area.



Effective Government

An effective government strives to go beyond a minimum standard of meeting legal requirements working instead toward thoughtful decision making that maximizes the use of limited resources. Through robust community engagement and communication with the residents, public officials and City staff work efficiently to balance the needs of the whole community while being mindful of resource constraints as good stewards of public funds.

Goal

1

Effectively and efficiently deliver the services that Albany's citizens need, want, and are willing to support.

Objectives:

Leverage technology to decrease costs and increase efficiencies.

Develop a cybersecurity plan to protect city data and information and maintain cybersecurity resilience for business continuity.

Develop and maintain plans for the management and replacement of public works assets and core infrastructure.

Monitor and apply for grants that further advance strategic plan goals and objectives.

Cooperate and partner with neighboring jurisdictions to provide assistance, maximize efficiencies, and meet common goals and objectives.

Ensure compliance with all federal and state regulations relating to municipal services.

Establish personnel succession planning for executive and other key leadership positions throughout the organization.

Provide responsive, efficient, customer-oriented service and meet mandated deadlines for project reviews.

Develop a full stormwater management program and identify a stable funding strategy for stormwater utility functions.

Participate in national performance benchmarking for comparison with other jurisdictions.

Implement process improvement projects that reduce processing time and costs or increase revenues.

Maintain annual audit results establishing conformance to requirements and generally accepted accounting principles.

Maintain or improve the City's bond ratings.

Maintain appropriate levels of Information Technology (IT) systems availability and services rating.

Accomplishments

An automated, less paper office in 2023

With help and guidance from the IT department, multiple departments have increased their use of technology to provide more efficient services within their means. Examples include:

Improvements to the Parks and Recreation program reservation software provides a better interface for the public and reduces staff time needed for the data entry for programs and reservations.

Finance is also improving the citywide employee portal page by providing information effectively and efficiently to save both Finance and internal customers time and effort.

Community Development implemented an online permit system allowing for complete online application processing anytime.

The fire department added the ability of ambulance service and FireMed users to pay their bill online.

The City Manager's Office streamlined the Citizens Advisory Group recruitment using technology to improve the process for councilors, staff, and applicants.

City Clerks started to digitize public records to improve the ability to track and search records, resulting in increased responsiveness to public records requests and staff inquiries. Likewise, Finance is digitizing all files and intends to eliminate the need to print paper forms by the end of the biennium. Finally, Human Resources transitioned most forms online and is finishing digitization of all employee records.

Public Works continues to expand and improve its use of Computerized Maintenance Management Software (CMMS) to manage public assets proactively by planning, organizing, and scheduling important preventive maintenance activities; responding to requests from citizens and internal city staff in a timely manner and track significant maintenance activity. This system also allows staff to identify critical assets and establish processes and procedures to minimize loss of those assets and mitigate our risks.

With the passage of the stormwater SDC in the fall of 2023, the City's stormwater utility will be more financially sound. The City will complete its first stormwater permit cycle in early 2024, and with continued funding will be able to begin to address the backlog of deficient infrastructure while also maintaining regulatory compliance.

Aa3+

**The City's
bond rating
remains *strong*.**

Accomplishments (continued)

Grants

Departments across the city search and apply for grant funding to maximize our financial resources. Successful grant applications include:

The fire department has secured grant funding for a new water tender (delivery Spring 2024), fire truck (delivery Summer 2024), and three additional firefighters.



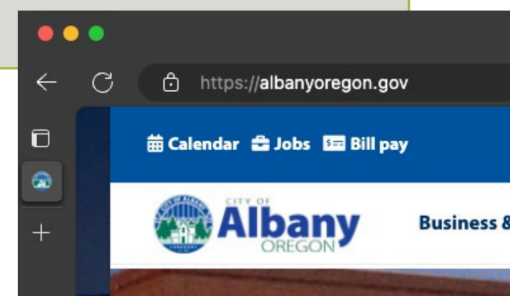
Using funding from the Office of the State Fire Marshal, the Fire Department was able to work with property owners on Scenic Drive to perform a wildfire fuel reduction project that covered multiple properties.

Since FY 2023, Parks and Recreation, in partnership with the Albany Parks and Recreation Foundation, has received 11 grants and gifts totaling over \$310,000. Granting agencies include Linn County Cultural Coalition, Council of Governments, Oregon Community Foundation, the Scharpf Foundation, Republic Services, and the InterCommunity Health Network CCO. The funds help to offset costs associated free/low-cost programming for seniors, the annual Water Safety Awareness program for all Albany fourth graders, three new ADA pool lifts, construction of the therapeutic spa at the Albany Community Pool, public art efforts, and preservation efforts for the Monteith House.



The fire department purchased new firefighting turnouts for all first responders, assuring the department is in National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) compliance with significant additional contributions to the Fire Department's equipment replacement fund.

IT and City Manager's Office staff started the migration of public City assets from cityofalbany.net to the albanyoregon.gov domain. The Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), sponsors the .gov domain and makes it available solely to U.S.-based government organizations and publicly controlled entities. Visitors can have confidence that the City's site is legitimate.

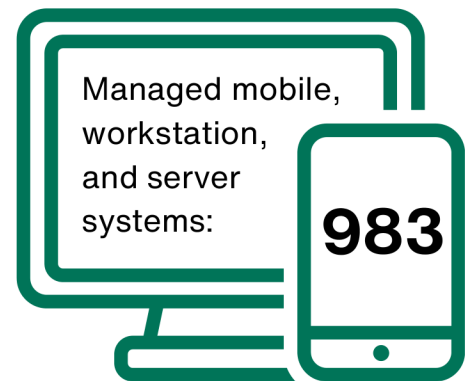


Accomplishments (continued)

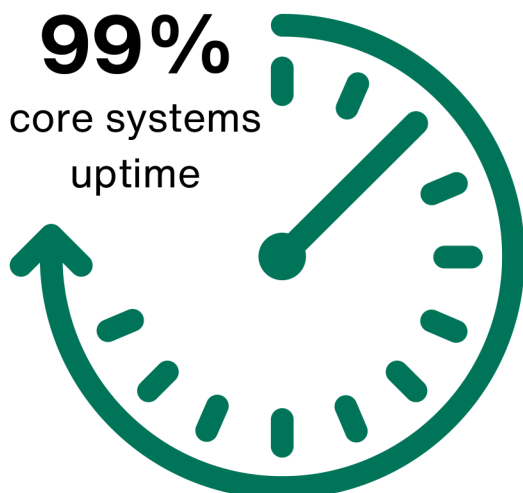
The IT Department provides a robust cybersecurity program that continually evolves with industry-standard best practices and security threats. A multi-faceted approach protects the City's assets, and its ability to conduct business using a combination of user training, extensive cybersecurity controls, vulnerability management, penetration testing, and systems monitoring. Disaster recovery infrastructure and incident response planning ensure continuity of operations in the event of a cybersecurity incident.



2.6
petabytes
of data managed



IT metrics over
the past year...



Goal

2

Develop a city communications and engagement strategy that will support an engaged and informed citizenry and build public trust.

Objectives:

Pursue effective ways to deal with misinformation.

Engage youth in local government.

Improve accessibility to local government.

Enhance efforts in diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Include communications and public engagement activities in all initiatives, programs, and major projects.

Accomplishments

An audiovisual upgrade project for the Council Chambers used new and existing equipment to improve sound quality for in-room and online participants, especially those using hearing assist technology. The improved audio quality and automatically switching cameras reduce staffing workload while providing more accurate automatic captioning and crisp 4K video for those who read lips.



City staff from all departments attended several local events such as OSU and LBCC job fairs, high school career days, and the Albany Business Extravaganza.

Community Development staff initiated the Albany Development Services Advisory Group (ADSAG), providing a unique format for users of the City's development services to discuss development services processes, experiences, and ideas in an informal conversational setting once a month.



The popular "If I Were Mayor Contest" continued for a second successful year and Albany's students continue to place well in the Oregon Mayor's Association state-wide competition.

Succession planning has been directly linked to employee satisfaction and engagement. The City Manager's Office has promoted employee engagement in several ways over the last few years, including:

- The City Manager's quarterly All-Hands meetings bring staff from around the City together virtually to hear from departments directly about current happenings. Participation continues to be more than double that of previously in-person meetings.
- The employee newsletter has proved to be popular. The return on investment in staff time and a very small budget has been exceptional, and we continue to hear good feedback from employees.

City Manager's Office staff also conducted an internal survey to assess current efforts for youth engagement in government. Staff will be meeting with teachers at West Albany and South Albany High Schools to improve communication and engagement with local leadership students.

Accomplishments (continued)

Training

Staff received media communications training to improve interactions with the media and techniques to address public misinformation. A session on plain language is planned for December 2023.

City Manager's Office staff provided and will continue to provide training to elected and appointed members on parliamentary procedure and effective meetings. Sharing this training in a public meeting can help the public understand processes that are often viewed as suspect because they can be confusing.

Efforts to improve accessibility in communications include a Plain Language initiative and a revision of the City's Limited English Proficiency Plan. Work is also underway for establishing policy and procedures for Accessibility Standards for all City communications, which will be informed by the ADA Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan (SETP) and input from ADA consultants and the community.



General City public outreach efforts have included:

A robust presence on social media on a variety of platforms with consistent increases in followers and engagement.

Increased Community Conversations events, other open houses, and an increased City presence at community events.



The City Manager's Friday message which is shared with elected leaders, staff, and public recipients.

City Council meetings now include regular presenters, invited by the Mayor, to share with a wider audience about non-profits or community-wide activities.

Monthly publication of the City Bridges digest, highlighting posts from the City's social media accounts from the previous month.

Adoption of the National Community Survey as a standard, benchmarked survey on a regular schedule.

Presentation of the first "Great Neighbor" Award to the organizers of the volunteer Giving A Hoot beautification effort.





