

# The Uptown Downtown Oakland Community Benefit Districts

# 2025 ANNUAL REPORT

THE POWER OF  
PARTNERSHIP & INVESTMENT



# 2025 Year in Review

## THE POWER OF PARTNERSHIP & INVESTMENT

2025 marked a year of expansion, recalibration, and recommitment for the Uptown Downtown Oakland Community Benefit Districts (CBDs). Amid continued challenges and emerging opportunities for downtown Oakland, the CBDs and their partners took decisive action to strengthen the districts' recovery. The year centered on reaffirming the CBDs' mission, responding to evolving community needs, and refocusing efforts on a safer, cleaner, and more resilient downtown.

The most significant achievement of the year was the unprecedented investment in the CBDs' public safety and maintenance operations totalling \$3.5M, reflecting growing confidence in the organizations' capacity and leadership. These investments increased the CBDs' staffing to 63 full-time equivalents (FTEs)—more than double the number supported by assessment revenue alone and the largest team in the organizations' history. Assessment-funded baseline services supported 31 FTEs, providing essential daily cleaning, maintenance, hospitality, public realm management, and administrative leadership across the 83-block district. These teams remained the backbone of the CBDs' operations, ensuring consistent service, visibility, and hospitality throughout Uptown and Downtown.

At the heart of the CBDs is a firm belief that lasting progress is built through partnership. Our districts exemplify the power of

effective public-private collaboration, bringing together property owners, businesses, residents, cultural institutions, community-based organizations, philanthropic partners, and government agencies around shared goals. We serve as a trusted convener and implementer, translating collective investment into visible, on-the-ground results.

As 2025 came to a close, the Districts emerged stronger, more capable, and more deeply aligned with its stakeholders and partners, marking a critical turning point for the organization.

By refining our clean and safe strategy, strengthening our operational foundation, and reaffirming our commitment to the people and places we serve, we continue to build a downtown that is safer, more welcoming, economically resilient, and truly reflective of the community that makes downtown Oakland extraordinary.

In community,

**Steve Snider**, Chief Executive Officer

**Sara de la Riva**, Board President, Lake Merritt Uptown District Association

**Mike Guerra**, Board President, Downtown Oakland Association



*CBD Administrative Staff. Bottom row left to right: Tori Decker (Director of Finance and Operations), Andrew Jones (Chief Operations Officer), Emily Cervantes (Administrative Coordinator). Top row left to right: Tamiko Garner (Marketing and Events Manager), Charles Taylor (District Services Manager), Steve Snider (Chief Executive Officer).*

# Oakland Coffee Market





## MISSION

The jointly-managed Downtown Oakland Association and Lake Merritt Uptown District Association, collectively known as The Uptown Downtown Oakland Community Benefit Districts (CBDs), launched in 2008, are committed to revitalizing Oakland's historic downtown by maintaining cleanliness and order in the public rights-of-way, promoting district identity, building community, promoting business attraction, fostering cultural opportunities, and creating and maintaining new public spaces as well as advocating on behalf of the district stakeholders.

## VISION

The guiding vision of the Uptown Downtown CBDs is to create a thriving 24/7 business, retail, entertainment, and residential district in the heart of Oakland for the betterment of downtown Oakland and the greater Oakland community.

## VALUES



Enhance and support  
Oakland's diversity  
and charm



Celebrate Oakland's  
specific history and  
legacy of multiculturalism



Facilitate economic  
development and  
community building



# Leadership & Governance

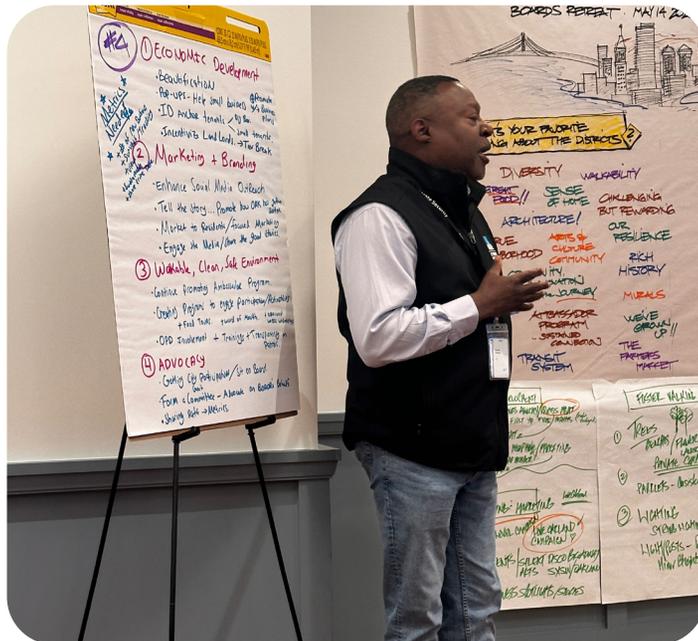
## GUIDING THE DISTRICT FORWARD

In May 2025, the boards of the Uptown and Downtown Oakland CBDs, along with staff, convened for a half-day strategic planning session to align on a shared, forward-looking vision for downtown Oakland and to prepare for the upcoming district renewal process.

Through guided reflection, data-informed discussion, and collaborative visioning, participants affirmed downtown's core strengths — its walkability, cultural richness, creativity, and strong sense of community — while candidly addressing current challenges and opportunities in a post-pandemic context.

The session resulted in a clear strategic direction, with the boards and staff collectively identifying four key focus areas to guide governance, investment, and advocacy efforts: promoting economic development; strengthening marketing and branding; fostering a walkable, clean, and safe environment; and amplifying advocacy to advance policy and regulatory change.

This alignment provides a strong foundation for cohesive leadership, disciplined investment, and a compelling renewal framework as the organizations advance toward their 2028 district renewals.



## LAKE MERRITT UPTOWN DISTRICT ASSOCIATION

**Sara de la Riva**  
Rubicon Point Partners,  
President

**Kim Bardakian**  
BarCom, Vice President

**Allison Davis**  
TMG Partners, Treasurer

**Nicole Price**  
Starwood Capital Group,  
Secretary

**Isaac Abid**  
180 Grand

**Puja Abid**  
Northlake

**Deborah Boyer**  
Community-at-Large

**Will Butilla**  
Pacific Gas & Electric  
(PG&E)

**Tederal Glover**  
Kaiser Permanente

**Seung-Yen Hong**  
BART

**Guy Jakub**  
Pacific Gas & Electric  
(PG&E)

**Denise Pinkston**  
TMG Partners

**Don Rogers**  
CIM Group

**Gregor Thibodeaux**  
Cathedral of Christ  
the Light

**John Wayland**  
Holland Partners

## DOWNTOWN OAKLAND ASSOCIATION

**Mike Guerra**  
Lincoln University,  
President

**Jamie Flaherty-Evans**  
Chromata Retail, Vice  
President

**Carmen Benjamin**  
City Center, Secretary

**Courtney Belanger**  
Shorenstein, Treasurer

**Adam Chall**  
TMG Partners

**Durell Coleman**  
Resident

**Cortt Dunlap**  
Business Owner,  
Awaken Cafe

**William Goodman**  
Strada Investment  
Group

**Matt Klimerman**  
Tidewater Capital

**Greg Pasquali**  
Carmel Partners

**Myles Roebuck**  
Rubicon Point Partners

**Anthony Severo**  
Property Owner, 1528  
CoWork

**Tamira Twilie**  
STG Asset Management

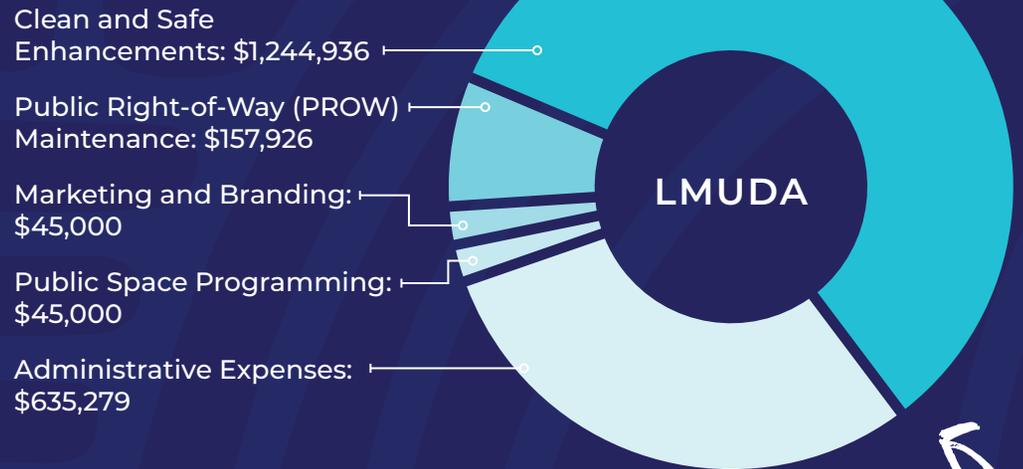
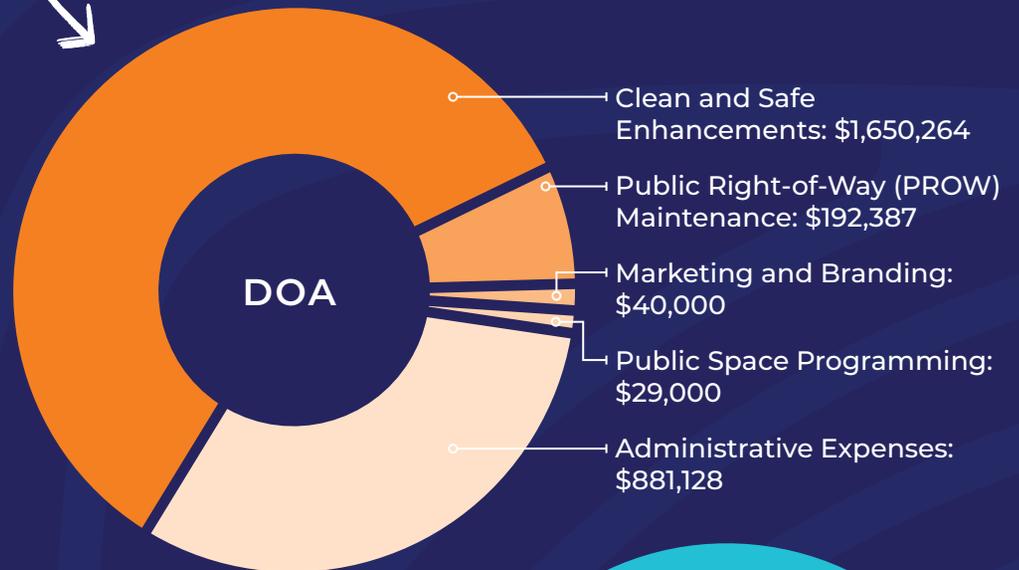
## FINANCIAL FOUNDATION

# Budget Overview

### INVESTING IN DOWNTOWN

Each year, our budget is aligned with our work plan to ensure resources are focused on delivering the greatest benefit to our stakeholders. All investments support our core purpose: creating a vibrant, welcoming, and economically strong downtown. Funding is concentrated in two primary areas: Clean and Safe, and Marketing and Economic Enhancements. Clean and Safe services provide the foundation by maintaining a clean, attractive, and welcoming downtown environment. Marketing and Economic investments build on that foundation by supporting local businesses, attracting new investment, activating downtown as a shared community “living room,” and promoting arts, culture, and downtown’s overall image. Together, these coordinated investments help strengthen downtown’s overall vitality—supporting businesses, enhancing the experience for employees, residents, and visitors, and reinforcing downtown Oakland as a place where people want to be.

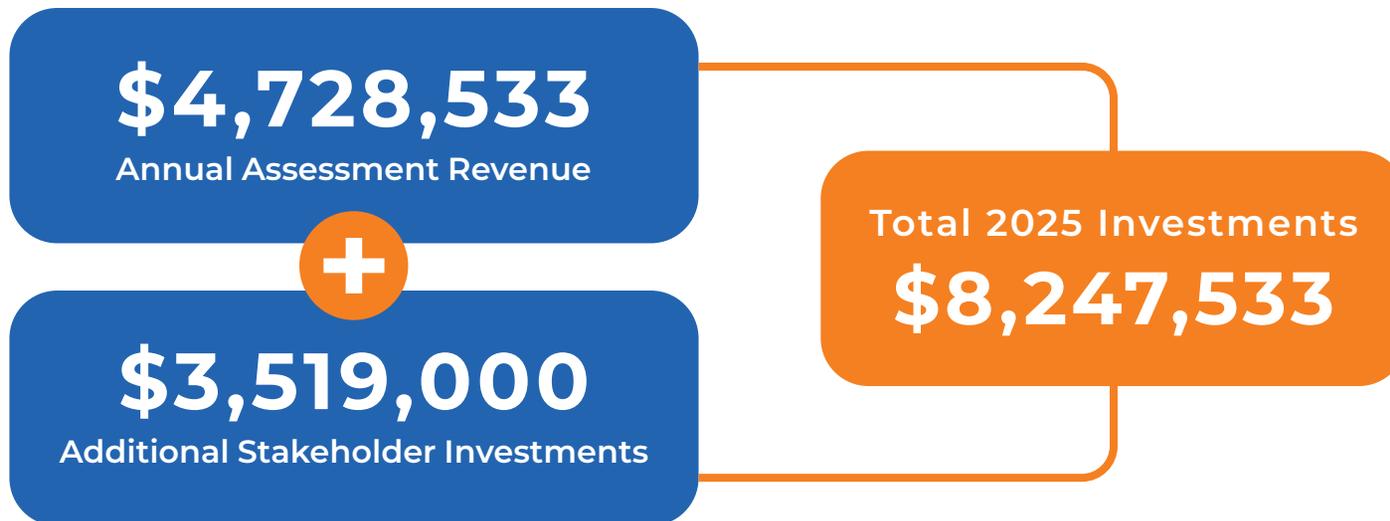
## Downtown Oakland Association \$2.6 Million



## Lake Merritt Uptown District Association \$2.1 Million

# 2025 Partnerships & Investments at Work

In 2025, a diverse group of public — and private-sector stakeholders, including Kaiser Permanente, PG&E, Blue Shield, Clorox, Rubicon Point Partners, East Bay Asian Local Development Corporation, 1111 Broadway, and Northlake District, made significant additional financial investments in the Uptown Downtown Oakland CBDs to advance shared priorities for downtown. These contributions reflect a collective commitment to creating a safer, more welcoming environment that supports employee confidence in public safety, encourages a return to office, and reinforces downtown as a place where people want to spend their time.



## CORE OPERATIONS

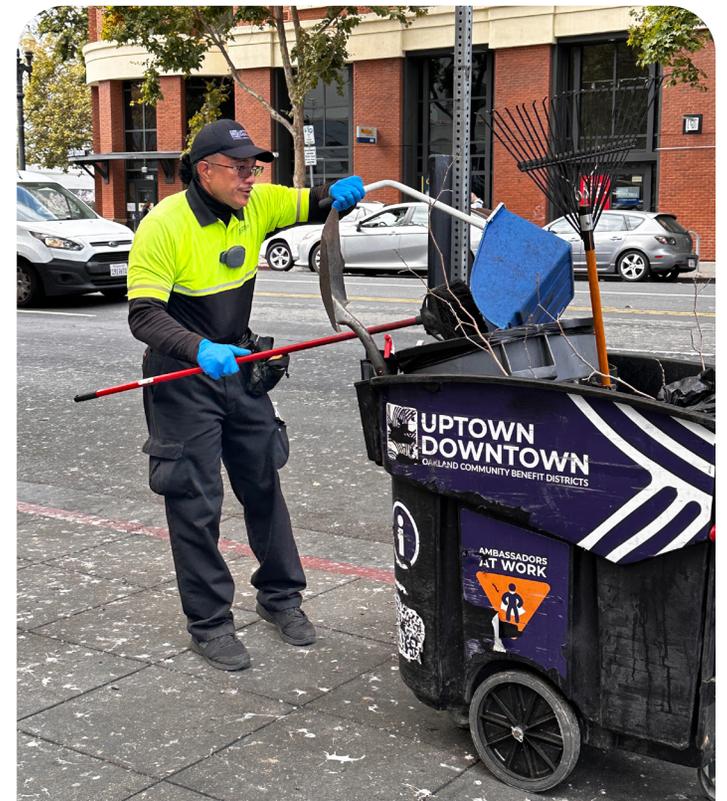
# Clean & Safe Program

## A STRONG FOUNDATION

The CBDs' Ambassador teams deliver the essential services that keep downtown Oakland clean, safe, and welcoming every day. Thanks to increased stakeholder investment, our Clean and Safe program expanded from 31 to 63 full-time staff, significantly strengthening our ability to serve the districts' needs.

Our Ambassador teams include maintenance and landscaping crews who care for streets and public spaces, outreach coordinators who connect individuals to resources, pressure washing teams who deep clean our sidewalks, public safety coordinators who provide visible patrols and real-time reporting, and dispatch technicians who coordinate daily operations across both districts.

Together, these teams work as a unified operation focused on revitalizing downtown Oakland, supporting local businesses, strengthening community, and advocating for the people and places that define the heart of the city.



## Clean & Safe Program cont.



118,560

Ambassador hours worked



128

Hanging plants installed and maintained



6,000 LF

Medians planted and maintained (linear feet)



19,984

Illegal dump sites abated



29,670

Graffiti instances abated



50,577 bags  
1,264,425 lbs

Trash collected

## HOSPITALITY OUTREACH STATS

- Business check-ins: 67,421
- Welfare checks and outreach: 12,557
- Hospitality engagements (30-second engagements and directions provided): 115,825

“Seeing two ambassadors walking the streets between the library and 19th & Broadway made such a difference for me walking home alone in the dark.”

*Lilly* Oakland School for Arts, Staff

As we enter 2026, our Ambassador teams hold a clear focus on excellence, accountability, and impact. Through strong leadership, rigorous training, and shared values, Ambassadors are delivering a more coordinated, confident, and visible presence throughout downtown Oakland. This disciplined approach allows teams to respond in real time, work seamlessly across functions, and engage the public with professionalism and care.

Guided by a commitment to Oakland’s diversity, history, and community, the Ambassador team is helping shape a vibrant 24/7 downtown where public spaces are well cared for, businesses are supported, and residents and visitors feel welcomed every day.



"Your staff — Alan, Rodrigo, Shay'anne, Kia, and KC — are so kind and professional, and our kids LOVE them. They have firefighter hero status, and a boy said to me yesterday, 'I am proud we have these heroes.'"

*Guthrie* St. Paul's Episcopal School, Staff

# Beautification & Environmental Stewardship

## 2025 OPERATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

In 2025, the CBDs completed 4,432 pressure-washing tasks with minimal equipment challenges and limited service disruption. This strong operational performance allowed our teams to respond quickly to property needs, including support for property tours, graffiti abatement, biohazard response, and hotspot mitigation — reinforcing the districts' commitment to clean, safe, and well-maintained public spaces.

Building on prior collaborations, the CBDs partnered with the Oakland-based ABC Art Group to implement an art-based strategy to disrupt repeated tagging. By introducing structured design patterns painted over existing graffiti, the approach reduced the blank-canvas effect that often leads to repeat incidents. This collaboration proved effective in deterring future tagging while maintaining a cleaner, more welcoming public realm. This demonstrates how partnership and innovation can support long-term district care.



4,432

Completed pressure-washing tasks

# Community Engagement & Events

## PARTNERSHIP IN PRACTICE

Community engagement remained a core focus in 2025, driven by strategic investment and partnership. Through events we hosted and programs we sponsored — including approximately \$42,000 in sponsorship support — the CBDs created opportunities for people to gather and experience downtown Oakland, while supporting local partners and community-based programming.

In March, the CBDs supported the launch of the Town Care Café, a Pop-Up Care Village developed in partnership with Oakland MACRO, Family Bridges, and Bay Area Community Services (BACS), and spearheaded by Downtown Oakland board member, Cortt Dunlap of Awaken Cafe. The initiative provided access to basic needs, housing support, and health resources in a welcoming downtown setting for our unhoused community.

Together, these sponsorships and activations strengthened community connections and demonstrated how care-centered partnerships and investment translate into meaningful impact.





# SPONSORSHIPS

Bandalooop	\$5,000
Old Oakland Stroll	\$4,000
Jazz on 9th Series	\$3,000
E14 Honoring Ancestors	\$3,000
Oakland Chinatown Night Market	\$10,000
Oaklash	\$1,500
Community Kitchen	\$5,000
CA for the Arts Community	\$500
Oakland Entrepreneur Retreat	\$2,500
Uptown Stroll	\$4,637
The Town Experience	\$1,500
Savor Oakland	\$500
African Restaurant Week	\$500
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>~\$42,000</b>

## PARTNERSHIPS

Mobile Assistance Community Responders of Oakland (MACRO)

Family Bridges

Bay Area Community Services (BACS)





# Marketing & Branding

## VISIBILITY & STORYTELLING

Our marketing and branding efforts focused on increasing visibility for district businesses and events. Through social media and a weekly e-newsletter, the CBDs promoted more than 400 events and highlighted nearly 200 businesses, expanding awareness and reach across the community.

Our annual **Summer on the Plaza** event series included a sold-out Sip & Paint and Silent Disco at Frank H. Ogawa Plaza on the steps of City Hall. The Sip & Paint event coincided with Mayor Barbara Lee's 100 Days in Office celebration, highlighting downtown as a place where culture, community, and public life intersect. The first annual **Oakland Coffee Holiday Market** took place in the beautiful, historic Rotunda Building, sponsored in part by the CBDs, and closed out the year by highlighting local businesses and the power of collaboration. Moving forward in 2026, marketing efforts will strengthen storytelling through an updated website, refined social media strategy, deeper engagement with residential buildings, and continued promotion of district businesses.

*Event Attendance*

**SOLD  
-OUT**

Summer on the  
Plaza Sip & Paint



**SOLD  
-OUT**

Summer on the  
Plaza Silent Disco

**1,000+**  
Oakland  
Coffee Market



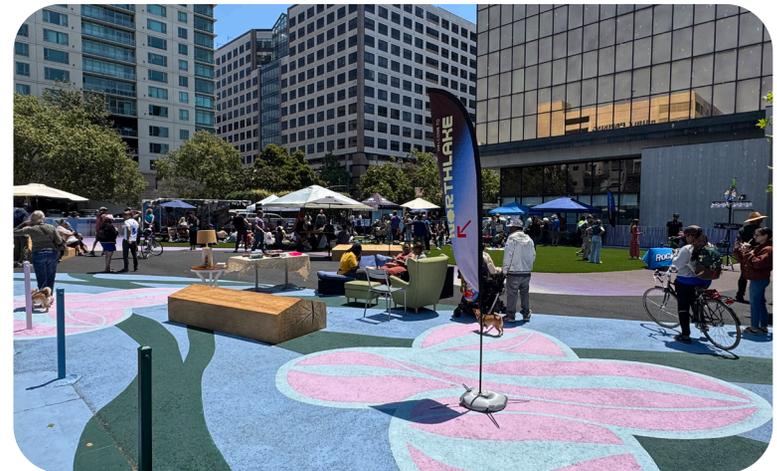
# Public Space Creation & Urban Design

## SHAPING DOWNTOWN PLACE

Public space activation supported economic development and neighborhood revitalization across downtown Oakland in 2025. Merchant-led initiatives such as the **Old Oakland Stroll** and the **Uptown Stroll** demonstrated how partnership and targeted investment can activate public spaces, strengthen commercial corridors, and encourage shared community experiences.

The Old Oakland Stroll ran monthly from June through October, while the Uptown Stroll ran from September through November, inviting visitors to explore restaurants, bars, and cultural spaces through a passport-style experience. The Uptown Downtown Oakland CBDs supported both efforts through planning assistance, ambassador services, permitting support, and financial investment — illustrating how partnership and investment can turn public spaces into engines for economic activity and district vitality.

In mid-2025, Northlake — a privately funded collaborative initiative led by local property owners — partnered with the CBDs and the City of Oakland to support long-term, positive change benefiting the broader city. In the Northlake area, Lot 2270 was transformed from a parking lot into an active plaza, now hosting a robust calendar of events including live music, yoga, and a Cardboard Drive-In Theater presented by State of Play.





## ADVOCACY & COLLABORATION

# Advocacy & Partnerships

### WORKING TOGETHER FOR DOWNTOWN

In 2025, our advocacy efforts built on the momentum of 2024, demonstrating that consistent, thoughtful engagement delivers results. Through regular dialogue with City staff and elected officials — including direct meetings with Oakland Mayor Barbara Lee, key members of the Economic and Workforce Development Department, and Congresswoman Lateefah Simon — our messages on safety, activation, and downtown vitality are being heard and addressed.

This progress is reflected in tangible outcomes, such as the approval of continued funding for the Public Safety Ambassador program and support for enhancements that encourage evening activity, including enhanced lighting and entertainment district management.

We played a critical convening and advisory role — helping align partners, remove barriers, and amplify locally led efforts that brought people together and strengthened downtown's sense of place.



# Strategy in Action

## OUR APPROACH

Deliver strong core services, activate public life, and drive long-term transformation by strengthening how we operate, deepening community relationships, and expanding our capacity to serve.

### STRATEGIC TIERS

### FOCUS AREAS

### 2025 TO 2028 OUTCOMES

#### CORE

Clean and Safe  
Public Realm

Clean, safe, and welcoming streets and public spaces delivered daily by highly trained Ambassador teams.

Focused on visibility, responsiveness, and accountability to support a walkable and inviting downtown.

- › Clean public realm
- › Safe and secure public spaces

#### ACTIVATION

Engaging Experiences  
and Vibrant Spaces

Ambassadors, outreach, events, and constituent services work together to animate downtown, support businesses, and strengthen district identity.

This work deepens trust, increases foot traffic, and reinforces Oakland's culture and character.

- › Events and activations
- › Constituent services
- › Streets and transportation support
- › Public realm engagement

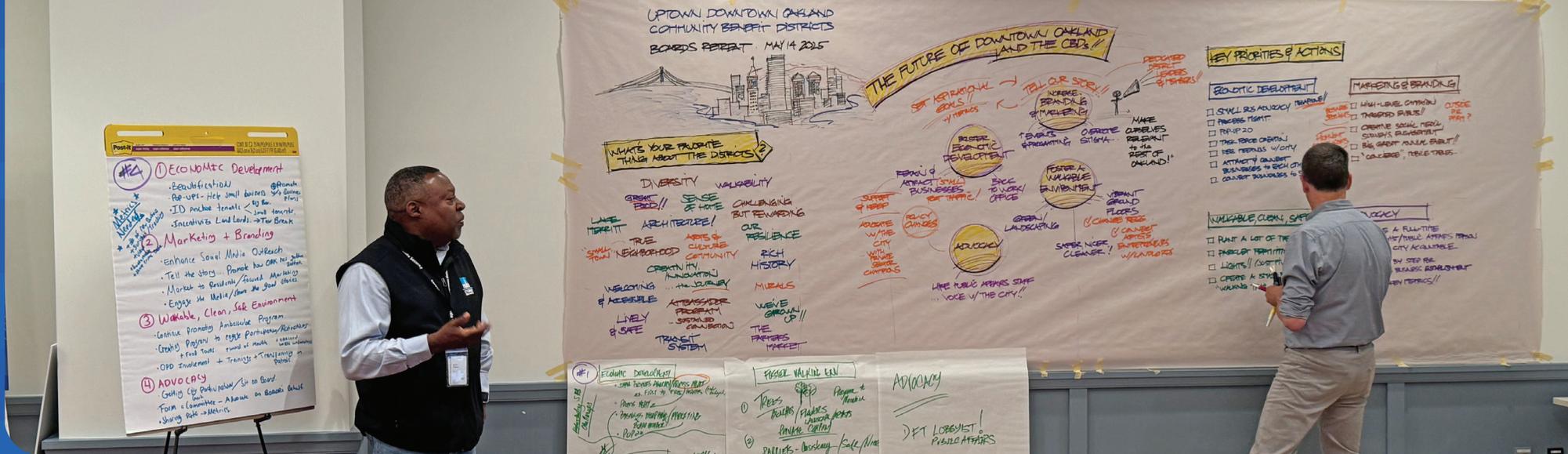
#### TRANSFORMATION

Economic Growth  
and Advocacy

Partnerships, collaboration, and advocacy that support small businesses, attract investment, and advance long-term resilience.

Focused on shaping policy, strengthening relationships, and driving collective action.

- › Diverse and resilient neighborhood
- › Stakeholder collaboration and collective action



# Looking Forward

## BUILDING ON MOMENTUM

### HOW WE ADVANCE THIS WORK:

#### STRENGTHEN

Training, leadership, communications, and operational excellence across all teams

#### DEEPEN

Community outreach, stakeholder engagement, and alignment with our 2028 district renewal strategy

#### INCREASE & DIVERSIFY

Capacity, partnerships, and opportunities that sustain and grow revenue and impact

### ACTION PLAN

Promote Economic Development

Increase Marketing and Branding

Foster a Walkable, Clean, and Safe Environment

Bolster Advocacy and Make Our Voices Heard



**UPTOWN  
DOWNTOWN**  
OAKLAND COMMUNITY BENEFIT DISTRICTS

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