Transformational development milestones, exciting new projects, and first-rate residential amenities made 2018 a stellar year for downtown Albany. Residential conversions continue to take center stage with the announcement of the sale and redevelopment of the Kenmore and Steuben buildings and full portfolio – the largest apartment project to date. Also, close to 100,000 square feet of vacant and underutilized space was taken off the market through residential conversions, adding to the million square feet removed over the past seven years. As these buildings come online, they experience an average value increase of 238%.

Last year our team focused on increasing our events and amenities to match those not only wanted but expected by our new residential population. That included a new slate of dog-related special events, Dog Days of Summer, as 50% of the apartment buildings in Downtown allow for dogs. We purchased outdoor games for Tri-centennial Park, planted over a dozen new trees throughout Downtown, and added new events for our growing neighborhood.

We closed out our Year of the Dog with our wildly popular Downtown is Pawsome Nipper exhibit and auction. With our largest ever application pool at 90+, we doubled the exhibit and displayed 20 painted pups throughout Downtown for two seasons that culminated with an auction in September that raised $63,000, with $30,000 going to local artists and over $7,000 donated to the Mohawk Hudson Humane Society.

Innovation will continue in 2019 with construction beginning on the Skyway, the awarding of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative funds, our Williams Street lighting project, and more. We invite you to be a part of this momentous change taking place in our Capital City.

Sincerely,

Georgette Steffens
Executive Director

It has been my honor to serve as President of the Downtown Albany BID Board for the past three years.

During that time, I have seen the incredible and continuous transformation of the heart of our Capital City first hand. Downtown is not only a place for business, but a thriving, growing neighborhood as well. With over $246 million invested in just the past two years and another $87 million under construction, we are stimulating an urban environment that is vibrant and engaging; a place for people to live, work and enjoy all the City has to offer.

During my term I became increasingly impressed with, and am so proud of, Georgette Steffens and the BID team. The vision they have developed and implemented has resulted in numerous high-impact projects and events. They are goal driven. They stay current on trends, track the market, and successfully manage the BID budget. This allows the Board to move forward with confidence when considering new projects and while continuing core services.

As I leave the Board, I do it with pride in all that we have accomplished together this past year and look forward to all this wonderful organization will continue to accomplish.

Sincerely,

Richard Rosen
President of the Board
A Changing Downtown

In the last two years, downtown Albany and the immediately adjacent areas have experienced $246 million of completed investments, with another $87 million under construction and $212 million in the pipeline*. The development taking place is attracting new offices, as shown in the **8.3% drop in commercial office vacancy in the District since 2014**.

Since 2012, 1.1 million square feet of commercial office space has come offline with most, if not all, converted into residential units. As Downtown continues to see formerly vacant or underutilized buildings being repurposed through residential conversions, they are experiencing an average property value increase of 238%.

In 2018, the BID welcomed:
- BeAti Acupuncture Wellness Clinic
- Berkshire Bank
- CMC-KUHNKE
- CoLab
- Cydney Gregware Goosehead Insurance
- Grant Thornton, CPA
- Loch & Quay
- Louis Berger
- NYSEG
- The Taverna

Commercial space in Capital District central business districts:

- **Albany:** 4,484,553 SF
  - **Schenectady:** 2,070,864 SF
  - **Troy:** 1,320,751 SF
  - **Saratoga:** 618,747 SF

*source: Capitalize Albany Corporation
**source: CBRE Albany
Residential on the Rise

Albany’s newest neighborhood remains strong, adding 67 new residential units to the inventory, all while Downtown’s residential market continues to experience a 97% occupancy rate.

Steuben and Kenmore Portfolio

Through the purchase of seven buildings and an investment of over $78 million, Redburn Development will close to double the number of residential units in the District as they create 350 mixed-income apartments while also adding more than 50,000 square feet of commercial and retail space.

Breathing life into a critical block on North Pearl Street, the development group grew their real estate portfolio following the 2018 purchase of the Kenmore Hotel, Steuben Athletic Club, 16 Sheridan Avenue (former headquarters of The Times Union/Knickerbocker News), 111 N. Pearl Street (Capital Repertory Theater and garage), 43 Columbia Street, and 55 Columbia Street; in 2019 Redburn purchased 39 Columbia Street as well.

Retail spaces in the Kenmore and Steuben buildings are expected to open by early fall this year, with a similar timeline set for the apartments at 16 Sheridan - to be called The Knick as a nod to the building’s history; the residential units in the remaining properties are slated for completion in fall 2020.

Maiden House
34 Maiden Lane

The building was renovated into 28 studio and 1-bedroom apartments. This $3 million conversion project is completely rented.

Residences at Capital Center
99 Pine Street

The $7 million conversion of the upper floors of this 100,000-square-foot building boasts 36 upscale residential units. The apartments were so successful another 9 units are currently under construction.

414 Broadway

As the first of four conversion projects to receive New York State Homes & Community Renewal Main Street Grant funds administered by the BID, this mixed-use development project includes three new apartment units above the recently opened Loch & Quay restaurant.

“We had multiple offers, but we could only accommodate half of them and the apartments were occupied less than a month from going online.”

– Frank O’Connor III, Co-owner of 414 Broadway
Addressing the Needs of Residents

As our neighborhood grows, the BID continues to provide amenities to meet the needs of our residents while also expanding outreach and engagement through events like game and trivia nights. Part of an ongoing effort to engage with Downtown residents, BID staff is also actively recruiting building ambassadors for each residential building, to help ensure those who live Downtown are up to date on all of the ways to enjoy our District.

Our website remains one of the top three Google search results for those seeking to live Downtown and is one of the top referral sites for those who reach out to rent an apartment.

Visits to downtownalbany.org/live and individual residential property pages has risen by 133% between 2014 and 2018.
In Fall 2018, the BID sold or auctioned off 17 Downtown is Pawsome Nipper statues after the popular pups spent two years throughout the District. Attendance at the event approached 150 people, including executives from RCA who purchased 4 statues to display in their NYC headquarters; proceeds from the event totaled $63,000, with over $29,000 going to the local artists who designed the statues and nearly $7,000 donated to the Mohawk Hudson Humane Society.
In 2017 the BID invested $100,000 in the construction of the Olde English Downtown Dog Park, expanding the high-end amenities in the District to include man’s best friend. Investment did not stop there, as 2018 brought the new “Dog Days” event series centered around dogs and their people who live in, work in, and visit Downtown.

Hounds of Halloween attendance increased from 77 dogs in its inaugural year in 2017 to 123 DOGS in 2018.

Paw-casso Painting drew 50 dogs and their people. Paws and Play movie night drew 40 dogs and their people.
Higher Impact, Lower Costs

In 2010 one third of the BID’s annual budget was spent on marketing. Through the staff’s effective use of social media tools, that number decreased from 34% to 20% in 2017, allowing for more BID funds to be directed toward high-impact brick and mortar projects and special events. The successful utilization of numerous social media platforms means the BID is able to directly engage with consumers and better track campaigns aimed at customer spending, event attendance, and everything in between. Our introduction of Facebook Live provided yet another tool to interact with people, introducing them to businesses, giving them front row seats at press conferences, and much more.

**Facebook Live Stats: 2016-2018**

- 69 videos
- 88,800 total views
- 1,200 average views per video

**Web Stats**

- 128,810 sessions in 2018
- 275,328 page views
- 2.15 pages per session
From 2013 to 2016 the BID held its special assessment rate steady followed by a rate decrease from 2017 to today, all the while keeping under the maximum allowed by New York State law. The BID continues to operate efficiently, mindful of the special assessment rate, while actively increasing the amount of new investments in infrastructure projects within the District.

Following a restructuring in 2014 the BID lowered our administrative costs from 14% to 10%, allowing for the creation of a Special Projects fund for high-impact projects, infrastructure investments and new events. To date, uses for the funds have included, but are not limited to, construction of the Olde English Downtown Dog Park, purchase of 40 new trash receptacles, 100-plus self-watering planters, and bistro tables and chairs, with a lighting project to begin construction in 2019.

In 2018, the BID invested in:
- Continuation of free night and weekend parking in Downtown in partnership with ParkAlbany.
- An additional 12 self-watering planters and 35 hanging baskets.
- Weather-resistant ping-pong and cornhole for Tricentennial Park.
- Replacing 16 dead and broken trees in the District.
- Free weekend trolley between Downtown and Lark Street, in partnership with CDTA.
- Partnered with the Central Avenue and Lark Street BIDs to implement a Give Real Change panhandling program.

In 2018, the BID invested in:

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**Funding of High-Impact Projects**

- 20% of total funds spent
- 10% of total funds spent
- 3% of total funds spent
- 0% spent

2014 2015 2016 2017
Building an Empire

The Albany Empire’s inaugural season was in 2018, and with Arena Football League-leading attendance and an all-star roster, we can continue to expect amazing things. Highlights of their first season include:

- **Season home opener was sold out with over 13,600 in attendance**
- **Highest average attendance per game in the league at just under 10,000 per game**
- **League MVP – Tommy Grady, Quarterback who was also the League’s Offensive Player of the Year (returned for 2019 season)**
- **League’s Defensive Player of the Year – Terence Moore, led the League in interceptions with six (returned for 2019 season)**
- **League’s Wide Receiver and Rookie of the Year – Malachi Jones (returned for 2019 season)**
- **Defensive Lineman of the Year – Joe Sykes (returned for 2019 season)**
- **Offensive Lineman of the Year – Hayworth Hicks (returned for 2019 season)**
- **12 players named to the All-Arena teams**

**Albany Capital Center**
160,906 people attended events (March 2017-December 2018)

From March 2017 through December 31, 2018, the Albany Capital Center hosted 338 events and generated $18.5 million in visitor spending.

**Capital Repertory Theatre**
36,500 people attended events

The 286-seat theatre employs professional actors and is the only member of the League of Resident Theatres within 14 counties of the Upper Hudson-Mohawk Valley.

**Palace Theatre**
180,000 people attended events

In 2018, the 2,800-seat venue experienced a 12% increase in revenue*, and finalized purchase of the property from the City, marking the beginning of the $35 million renovation.

**Times Union Center**
536,000 people attended events

The 17,500-seat venue ended 2018 with a net operating profit of $1,572,990, compared to $1,339,226 in 2017. In the first quarter of 2019, they hosted 42 events and brought 250,000 visitors to the arena for music, sports, and more.

“When booking agencies hear that you put $20 million to $30 million into a building, now they want to play it. In the last six months, we’ve had some of the biggest names in music play to sold out crowds. Metallica, Justin Timberlake, Elton John and Fleetwood Mac are just a sample of those names. We are already looking forward to John Mayer, Thomas Rhett and Celine Dion in 2019. Thanks to the renovations, I expect this trend to continue.”

- Bob Belber, SMG Regional General Manager and Northeast Booking Director, *New York Real Estate Journal*, May 7, 2019

*source: Albany Business Review
President and Chief Executive Officer of Hugh Johnson Advisors and co-owner of the Albany Empire, Dan Nolan exemplifies the community-building spirit of BID founding member and inaugural Chairman of the Board, James M. DiNapoli.

Inspired to give back to Albany by his family’s generosity and affinity for the area, Mr. Nolan has had a substantial impact on the area through his career, donations, and volunteering. Hugh Johnson Advisors manages nearly $1.5 billion and consults on $1 billion in assets for their clients, while the Albany Empire has meant the return of the Arena Football League to Downtown for the first time in nearly 20 years. The team, which easily surpassed its first-year attendance goal of 7,500 for each game, lead the four-team Arena Football League during the 2018 season with attendance at averaging just over 9,100 fans.

A lifelong sports fan, Mr. Nolan has fond memories of attending Albany Firebirds games and was excited to be among those who brought the Albany Empire to the Times Union Center. He has been generous to sports outside of Downtown as well, having donated $1 million to the athletics department of his alma mater, the University at Albany, a gift which benefits the school’s 18 varsity teams; Mr. Nolan also Chairs the advisory board for the university’s Great Dane Athletic Club. In addition, Mr. Nolan sits on the Center for Disability Services Endowment Board, and is a trustee at Albany Law School and The College of Saint Rose.

With a vision for a continuing renaissance for Downtown, Mr. Nolan is excited by the increase in residential and what he believes is the true sign of neighborhood growth – dog walkers. It’s a trend he sees continuing, with additional apartments coming online, merchants opening their doors, and events like Albany Empire games continuing to draw people to the heart of the Capital City.
Thank you to our 2018 sponsors

$10,000+
Remarkable Liquids

$5,000-$9,999
Gasko & Meyer
O’Connell & Aronowitz

$2,500-$4,999
ParkAlbany
Berkshire Bank
Fidelis Care
SEFCU
The Hollow Bar + Kitchen
Pearl Street Pub
D & D Power, Inc.
Albany Distilling Company

$1,000-$2,499
CDTA
John Ray & Sons
Lucky Strike Social
Anonymous
Blue 82

$500-$999
B95
Capitalize Albany Corporation
Hampton Inn & Suites Albany-Downtown
The Hot Yoga Spot
Jack’s Oyster House

$250-$499
B. Lodge & Company
Gasko & Meyer
Albany Distilling Company
The City Beer Hall
Johnny Rockets

$500-$999
B95
Capitalize Albany Corporation
Hampton Inn & Suites Albany-Downtown
The Hot Yoga Spot
Jack’s Oyster House

Up to $249
B. Lodge & Company
Gasko & Meyer
Albany Distilling Company
The City Beer Hall
The Enchanted Florist of Albany

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