

## PLANNING

Everyone who has worked on community projects knows how much behind-the-scenes planning and hard work is required. Little can be accomplished without plans that include short-term and long-term objectives, effective communication at each step, financial backing and sweat equity. Forty-seven years ago Albany Community Betterment Organization (ACBO) members set their sights on building a nursing home in our town. They were successful in this venture as the doors to Colonial Manor Nursing Home opened in November 1964. It is still operating today and is a testament to the vision and persistence of our citizens.

In the past four years, collective outcomes from the 2005 MOCAPP plan, 2006 Town Hall meeting, 2007 Community Facilitation session and 2009 Town Hall meeting have been incorporated into our goals and objectives this year. Without active citizen participation during these sessions, we would wonder if our efforts were moving us toward results important to a majority of Albany residents. We intend to hold our annual city-wide planning session in October 2010.

### SHORT-TERM PLANS:

One town topic that consistently resurfaces is recycling. Over the years we have initiated projects encouraging citizens to reduce the amount of waste ending up in our landfill. In 2007 the City was awarded a \$16,200 grant from the Missouri Solid Waste Management District to help purchase a new commercial wood chipper, affectionately named "Woody Woodchipper". By the end of June 2010, the city work crew has diverted 2043 tons of wood and yard waste from the landfill. To efficiently use the mulch byproduct of the chipping process, we have established a program to provide free mulch to the community. An example would be the ten truckloads of mulch provided to the girl scout camp, Camp Woodland, to fill in muddy places at their horse corral. Between June 2007 and June 2010, citizens from our town and the surrounding area used more than 1920 tons of free mulch.

### LONG-TERM PLANS:

The economic vitality of Albany citizens, businesses and industries depends upon access to clean, fresh water and the ability to safely dispose of wastewater efficiently. The City Council developed a long-range plan to ensure adequate access, improve energy efficiency and upgrade systems to meet current standards. The first phase included replacement of the old "tin hat" water tower with a larger, modern design capable of holding 250,000 gallons of treated water supply. At the time of installation, adjacent water lines were replaced too.

We realize the importance of a great website in the business world today and are currently working to update the City of Albany website to more successfully utilize it as a marketing tool. We will be able to answer in real time many of the questions that industries ask and the website will allow residents to keep abreast of local current events and information.

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As demonstrated in feedback from MOCAPP, town hall meetings and strategic planning sessions, many members of our community are interested in recreational facilities that encourage healthy lifestyles. ACBO partners with Albany RIII school district, the City, Northwest Medical Center and local businesses to develop on-going activities to address targeted issues. In August 2006 we opened the doors to a new \$1.3 million community center, supported by a half-cent sales tax passed in 2004. The Albany Community Center (ACC) sponsors fitness & health education programs and hosts several civic groups. There are memberships available to utilize the fitness equipment, racquetball court, gymnasium and walking track through out the year.

In January 2010, the City of Albany was awarded a \$99,914 grant from the Missouri Department of Natural Resources to implement Phase I of the three phase project entitled "Connect and Keep Fit Trails Project". Plans have been designed to develop shared-use pathways connecting ACC with the Aquatic Center, two shelter houses, soccer fields and parking lots while encouraging more walking, bicycling and skating activities. Plans have been designed to develop shared-use pathways connecting ACC with the Aquatic Center, two shelter houses, soccer fields and parking lots while encouraging more walking, bicycling and skating activities. We continue to solicit additional funding via grants and donations to complete this long-term project.

Plans have begun to address other topics brought to the forefront during our planning sessions. Below is a short list of projects in the planning stages:

- Revitalize the downtown area: "DREAM" initiative & building renovation;
- Business recruitment & development in the Industrial Park;
- Expand recycling opportunities: local, county & state initiatives;
- Encourage healthy lifestyles: public education programs & activities;
- Develop safe transportation routes: "Connect and Keep Fit Trails Project", "Safe Routes to Schools", private, donations, state & federal \$;
- Support beautification efforts: clean-up efforts, landscaping, renovations;
- Address aging infrastructure concerns: streets, sewers, water, wastewater;
- Identify tourism opportunities: sports, outdoor attractions, historic values.

2011 projects will focus on segments included in the planning topics listed above as we continue to partner with the City, Chamber of Commerce, Albany RIII, Northwest Medical Center and other civic groups. Some activities have been so vital to our community, we believe we must continue to focus on these issues as on-going projects. Planning is a dynamic tool we utilize to continuously define and re-define goals and objectives.