



February 8, 2026

Abbey Thorne-Lyman
Director, Base Reuse and Economic Development
950 West Mall Square, 2nd Floor
Alameda, CA 94501

Dear Ms. Thorne-Lyman,

On behalf of the West Alameda Business Association Board of Directors, we're pleased to share WABA's 2025 Year-End Report and our 2026 Work Plan.

In 2025, WABA stayed focused on the things that make a business district work: bringing people to the corridor, giving them reasons to stay, helping businesses stand out, improving everyday conditions, and working in partnership to stretch what's possible. The payoff was tangible momentum for Webster Street, Alameda Landing and the surrounding district.

A few highlights from 2025:

- District-wide events and signature activations that drew regional visitors and helped local businesses capture foot traffic during key seasons.
- Marketing and communications upgrades that raised everyday performance and delivered major reach through coordinated storytelling and partner collaboration.
- The Webster 150 banner initiative—a year-long investment in visibility and identity that added beauty, strengthened the sense of arrival, and extended impact well beyond a single event.
- Ongoing advocacy and placemaking focused on cleanliness, safety, and the lived experience of being in the district.
- Steady fiscal management, maintaining required reserves while directing resources toward visible, high-impact work.

Looking ahead to 2026: The Discoverable District

In 2026, we'll build on what worked—moving toward a district that's easier to explore, more welcoming, and worth lingering in. Our Work Plan centers on repeatable programming, practical business support, and targeted public-realm improvements, aligned with the City's economic development and planning efforts. Where it makes sense, we'll use small-scale pilot projects to test ideas, learn quickly, and help inform future capital investment.

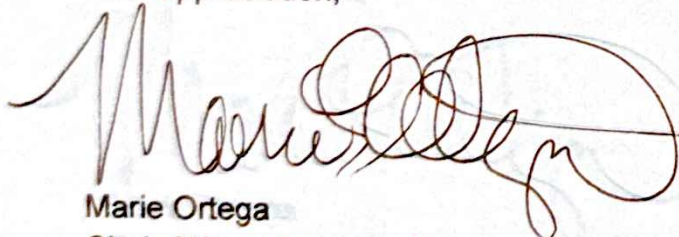
Key priorities include:

- Making the corridor easier to discover and navigate, through an exploratory streetscape committee, coordination with City and philanthropic partners, and groundwork for longer-term beautification and renewal.
- Keeping local businesses visible and top of mind, with consistent storytelling and shop-local campaigns that turn first-time visitors into regulars.
- Using district-wide programming to drive repeat visits, bringing people back to Webster Street and encouraging them to spend more time throughout the corridor.
- Supporting clean, safe, and well-run public spaces, in ongoing coordination with Public Works and public safety partners, with a focus on practical improvements that matter to merchants and visitors alike.

This report is both a look back and a look forward. The progress is real, the momentum is strong, and the opportunity ahead is clear: West Alameda is becoming a place people choose—because it feels active, welcoming, and worth returning to.

Thank you for continuing to support WABA by collaborating on programs, sharing our campaigns, sponsoring events, and showing up for the district. We value our partnership with the City and look forward to building what comes next, together.

With appreciation,



Marie Ortega
Chair, West Alameda Business Association



Elissa Glickman
Executive Director



West Alameda Business Association 2026 Work Plan

Theme: A District to Discover

In 2026, WABA will build on our theme—carrying consistent messaging across all platforms while strengthening partnerships, growing Webster Park as a community destination, and advocating for a safer, cleaner, more vibrant West Alameda business district.

1) Communications & Messaging

Goal

Maintain consistent “A District Designed to Discover” storytelling that highlights collaboration, local business, and community impact.

Key Actions

- Align event promotion, partner spotlights, and district updates under the 2026 theme
- Cross-promote partners and events through WABA channels (email, social, website, and district signage where applicable)
- Incorporate consistent district-friendly language
- Capture and share outcomes: attendance, partner participation, merchant impact, and community stories

Deliverables

- Unified 2026 messaging language for posts, newsletters, and event promotions
- Monthly/bi-monthly content rhythm featuring businesses, community partners, and upcoming activations

2) Support & Partner on Established “Events on Webster”

Goal

Grow attendance, visibility, and merchant participation for signature, West End—distinct events on Webster Street. WABA currently supports seven partner-led activations unique to the district—together drawing 25,000+ attendees—and will continue to expand their reach, strengthen cross-promotion, and increase the benefit to Webster Street merchants.

WABA Role

- Marketing support and district-wide amplification
- Financial support (through sponsorship funds raised to support events)
- Coordinate as needed on logistics, permitting, and community alignment

3) Grow Events in Webster Park

Goal

Expand Webster Park into a reliable home for inclusive, community-driven programming that supports local commerce and celebrates West Alameda culture.

Encouraged Program Types:

Live music and acoustic concerts; vintage and makers markets; chalk walks and kid art days; theatre performances; outdoor yoga and wellness; poetry, storytelling, and open mics; pet parades and mini movie nights; Pride pop-ups and Día de los Muertos activations; solstice celebrations; zine fests and record swaps; plant pop-ups; cultural dance nights; silent discos; art installations; and tabletop game meet-ups.

Large-Scale Webster Street Event

During 2026, WABA will research and develop an RFP to solicit experienced event producers to design and deliver a large-scale signature event on Webster Street (Taylor to Haight) with the potential to draw thousands to the district.

This effort is intended to launch mid-construction during the Oakland-Alameda Access Project, creating a positive, destination-worthy reason for island residents (and regional visitors) to come out, shop, dine, and gather in the West End.

4) Networking & Partnership Development

Goal

Strengthen collaboration among merchants and nonprofits to support shared community and commerce outcomes.

Key Actions

- Develop a committee of West End Business Leaders, to plan, organize and present quarterly networking meetings for businesses, nonprofit and community partners
- Use meetings to build cross-promotions, identify shared needs, and coordinate joint programming
- Track partnership outcomes (introductions, collaborations, sponsorships, shared campaigns)

Deliverables

- Four quarterly networking gatherings with notes and next steps
- A running partnership pipeline of collaborators and event/program leads

5) Advocacy & District Improvements

Goal

Represent district needs and advance improvements that support safety, access, beautification, and business vitality.

A) Oakland-Alameda Access Project

Key Actions

- Monitor updates, share information with district stakeholders, and advocate for access/business considerations
- Participate in meetings/communications as needed to ensure WABA voice is included

B) Urban Canopy & Public Health Partnership

Urban Canopy, Streetscape & Public Realm Improvements

Partner: 100K Trees Foundation — Planting Our Future initiative

Key Actions

- Support urban tree planting to increase canopy in under-treed and underserved West End areas
- Amplify public health education and community participation tied to planting efforts
- Establish an exploratory Streetscape Master Plan Committee to identify priority corridors, near-term wins, and long-term public realm goals (shade, seating, lighting, wayfinding, cleanliness, curb appeal)
- Partner with the City and foundation partners to identify funding sources for long-term urban landscape renewal projects (grants, sponsorships, capital planning), and connect these improvements to economic development outcomes—because **welcoming, well-designed public spaces help people feel safe, stay longer, and support local businesses**

C) Safety & Operations

Key Actions

- Continue coordination with law enforcement on safety issues, double parking enforcement, and business concerns
- Continue coordination with Public Works on street cleaning, beautification, and long-term planning priorities, aligning day-to-day maintenance with longer-range streetscape goals

D) Parking & EV Charging

Key Actions

- Advocate for practical parking solutions and clear communication around changes
- Support planning and implementation of electric charging stations in the district

E) Economic Development & Small Business Support

Key Actions

- Partner on programs that promote small business and build on successful collaborations
- Advocate for funding and support for façade improvements and infrastructure upgrades
- Strengthen communication and coordination with Planning, Building & Safety, and Finance

6) Social Media & Content Strategy

Goal

Strengthen WABA's digital presence with consistent district storytelling, higher-impact collaborations, and clear calls-to-action that convert awareness into participation (events, newsletter sign-ups, memberships, website visits).

A) District Member Content Readiness

Key Actions

- Build/maintain a District Member Media Kit intake (contact + photo request + collab permission)
- Make "collab-ready" guidance simple and repeatable for busy businesses (what to post, what to tag, what to send WABA)

B) Tools & Templates to Keep Us Consistent

Key Action (ongoing)

- Implement and share WABA's Style Guide and Best Practices Doc with members and partners to maintain consistent district messaging, encourage collaboration, and educate businesses on how to use these tools to promote their business across WABA channels and their own platforms.

Additional Key Actions

- Add Style Guide + templates into Canva and CapCut so content creation stays on-brand and fast
- Establish a basic "WABA post structure" so content feels cohesive across platforms

C) Collaboration System + What We Learned in 2025

Create a Collaboration Tracker and Track

- Partner/business, deliverables, post dates, reach/engagement, attendance impact, and follow-up opportunities.

Key Actions

- Use the tracker to identify repeat "high-performing" partners and build recurring collabs
- Create a lightweight collab menu: Spotlight Reel, Partner Giveaway, Event Preview, Day-Of Stories, Post-Event Recap

D) Content Capture & On-the-Ground Rhythm

Key Actions

- Twice per month: capture photos and short videos, coordinate easy collabs with business owners
- Prioritize “West End lifestyle” content: people & pets, candid moments, storefront energy, park life
- Continue West is Best Reel Spotlight and highlight parks and public spaces

E) Planning Ahead: Calendar + Pre-Built Assets

Key Actions

- Maintain a calendar of holidays and key district moments so WABA can pre-create Canva templates and copy
- Build a quarterly batch workflow: create templates/captions in advance, then customize per business and event

F) Website + Content Library

Key Actions

- Update the WABA website with photos and videos from events (a living portfolio of district energy)

G) Clear Calls-to-Action

Regularly invite people to:

- Bring your event to Webster Park
- Sign up for the newsletter
- Become a WABA member
- Follow WABA on Instagram
- Visit the WABA website for updates and event listings

H) Community Storytelling Series (Collabs)

Key Actions

- Monthly West End History post in collaboration with Alameda Post + History Museum
- **Spotlight series:** West End Pets (short videos/photos featuring local legends and “shop dogs”)
- Collabs & fundraisers for nonprofits (connect activations to community impact and shared values)



2026 Success Measures (Simple, Trackable)

- Increased event participation and stronger merchant tie-ins (specials, collaborations, cross-promos)
- More frequent, consistent programming in Webster Park (with repeatable series emerging)
- Stronger business/nonprofit collaboration via quarterly networking + resulting partnerships
 - Visible progress/ongoing coordination on safety, cleaning, beautification, access, parking, and EV infrastructure

**Sustained, consistent storytelling
across all channels**



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WEST ALAMEDA BUSINESS ASSOCIATION
YEAR END REPORT

25

Executive Summary

Who We Are

The West Alameda Business Association (WABA) champions the economic success and cultural vitality of the Webster Street corridor and surrounding neighborhoods. We serve as a convener, advocate, and resource hub for local businesses—helping foster a vibrant, inclusive, and welcoming district.

In 2025, WABA strengthened West Alameda through district-wide activations, direct business support, strategic partnerships with the City and community organizations, and ongoing advocacy for a cleaner, safer, more connected commercial corridor. Our work emphasized relationship-building, stronger visibility for local businesses, clearer communications, improved digital tools, and place-making that supports long-term economic resilience.



Webster 150 Street Banner Project

Challenge

Celebrate a major milestone while strengthening district identity and year-round visibility—without relying on one event or one paid campaign.

Approach

Turn the street into the celebration. WABA installed a cohesive banner series that made Webster Street feel “alive” all year, using bold color, West End–inspired imagery, and expressive typography.

Result

The banners functioned as both place-making and marketing—brightening the corridor, reinforcing brand consistency, and generating daily impressions. As a repeatable model, banners extend the life of campaigns and encourage organic sharing through everyday foot traffic.

2025

An Impactful Year

Activations

Drove regional visitation and strong time-in-district

Marketing

Raised baseline performance and delivered major spikes

Partnerships

- Connected merchants
- City partners
- Community organizations
- Sponsors

Advocacy & place-making

Improved the day-to-day district experience

Fiscal health

Maintained the mandated reserve and invested for measurable impact

Signature Activations & District Impact.

The District's Largest Activations—(Placer.ai & Economic Lift)

In 2025, WABA's largest activations functioned as both community experiences and economic drivers—bringing regional visitors into the district and supporting longer stays.

Farmers Market

Year-round draw
(Tue & Thur)

Sustained foot traffic with significant out-of-market visitation

Strong repeat visitation
(1.8 days in market)

A reliable weekly reason to visit, supporting retail, food, and services

Witchfest & Yule

Seasonal and regional draw

Strong out-of-market visitation

Extended time-in-district
(77–87 minutes on average)

Reinforced West Alameda as a destination for seasonal experiences and business discovery

Economic Lift

Benchmark based estimates

Witchfest + Yule Combined

\$0.8M–\$1.3M estimated direct spending (out-of-market visitors)

Farmers Market

Multi-million dollars in direct shopper spending over the season (benchmark-based)

The “outing” effect (what the data tells us)

Challenge

Move beyond “attendance” to understand whether activations create meaningful district activity that supports multiple businesses.

Approach

Use Placer.ai indicators—dwell time, visitor origins, and repeat visitation—to assess depth of engagement, not just volume.

Result

Average dwell times of 77–87 minutes typically signal “outing” behavior: strolling plus multiple stops across food, retail, and services. Visitor origins show a strong local core with regional reach—about 40% from Alameda (94501), with Oakland as a consistent secondary market and a broader East Bay mix beyond these communities. Finally, the Farmers Market's frequency operates as a weekly “heartbeat,” reinforcing habit-based visitation while seasonal peaks amplify destination visibility.

Additional Activations & Community Moments

These programs strengthened district identity, supported daytime visitation, and created high-share community moments.

Webster Wellness Walk

Recurring health & foot-traffic touchpoint.

Howl-O-Ween Pet Parade

Family/pet participation & high social sharing.

Small Business Saturday

Concentrated shop-local moment for merchants.

Webster 150 visibility moments

Banners and signage reinforcing district identity.

Communications & Marketing

What changed in 2025

Staffing

WABA formally engaged [AJ Leighton Creative](#) as our marketing and design arm, and Heidi Bennett as Social Media Specialist.

Content model

We shifted to collaboration-first publishing. Merchants, creators, and partners co-published content and shared to their own networks (distributed reach).

Howl-O-Ween Pet Parade

Challenge

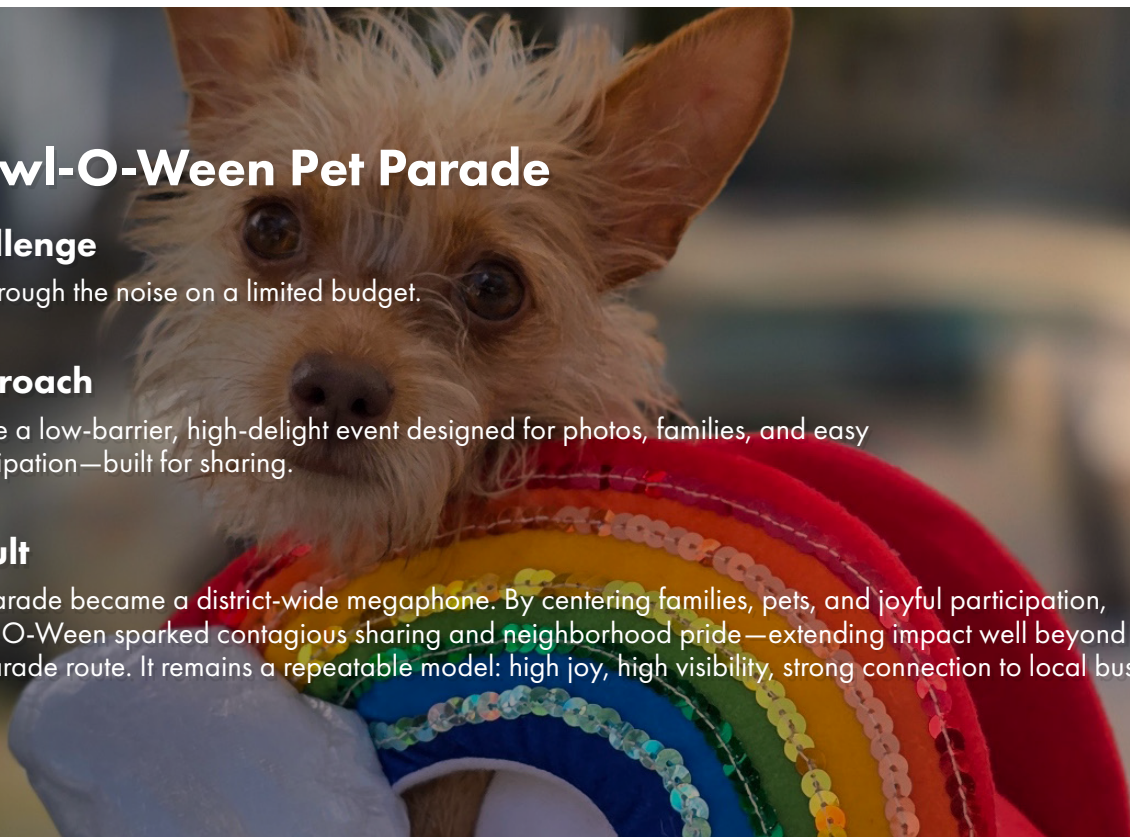
Cut through the noise on a limited budget.

Approach

Create a low-barrier, high-delight event designed for photos, families, and easy participation—built for sharing.

Result

The parade became a district-wide megaphone. By centering families, pets, and joyful participation, Howl-O-Ween sparked contagious sharing and neighborhood pride—extending impact well beyond the parade route. It remains a repeatable model: high joy, high visibility, strong connection to local businesses.



Marketing & Communications Deliverables

Newsletters

Event announcements, weekend guides, merchant spotlights, district updates, partner resources, and seasonal shop-local pushes.

Webster 150 banners

Year-long identity and visibility initiative.

12 Days of Alameda

A holiday “shop local” campaign that kept Webster Street top-of-mind throughout December with daily reasons to visit (features, specials, gift ideas, community moments) across social and newsletter content.

Website (Phase Two)

Improved access to district resources (directory, maps, resource pages, event listings).

12 Days of Alameda

Challenge

Drive island-wide holiday shopping momentum that translates into measurable action—while keeping participation simple for merchants and engaging for shoppers.

Approach

Partnered with the City of Alameda and Downtown Alameda Business Association on a theme-driven campaign (Nov. 29–Dec. 10). Daily themes highlighted business categories. A simple ticket mechanism encouraged discovery: shoppers collected tickets at participating businesses and entered to win one of 12 giveaway bundles featuring local gifts and experiences.

Result

The campaign delivered both scale and trackable engagement—112 participating businesses and 2,000 tickets redeemed—with strong island-wide visibility through coordinated storytelling. As a repeatable model, it shows how clear themes + low-barrier participation + built-in incentives can drive discovery, repeat visits, and tangible support for local business.

Nov 29: Wellness & Self-Care

Nov 30: Dining & Drink Alameda

Dec 1: 71+ (Bars, dispensaries, etc.)

Dec 2: Style & Fashion

Dec 3: Entertainment & Experiences

Business Support & Member Engagement

What we set out to do.

Provide consistent, practical support to member businesses through **communication, one-on-one assistance and promotion.**

What we accomplished

- Promoted businesses through newsletters, social content, and district-wide “what’s happening” posts.
- Increased visibility through collaboration posts and co-publishing.
- Supported onboarding and connection-making across the district.
- Served as a practical problem-solving and referral hub for day-to-day challenges.

High-performing examples

- Kitten Yoga with FAAS/Svastha — 12.5K views.
- Calafia EBT “come get a meal” reel with Calafia/Alameda Post — 16.7K views.
- Alameda Post Neptune Market new owners feature — 21.7K views.

Peak visibility moments (holiday season):

- Yule Midwinter Market — 61.7K views.
- Coven of Stitches Giving Tree carousel — 9,339 views.
- Friends of the Alameda Animal Shelter sponsored adoptions week — 8,263 views.

Repeatable pattern

When WABA amplifies authentic, community-forward stories with the right partners, the community extends district visibility far beyond our own channels.

Partnership Posts That Became a District Megaphone

Challenge

Grow reach without relying on paid media—while keeping content authentic, useful, and community-forward.

Approach

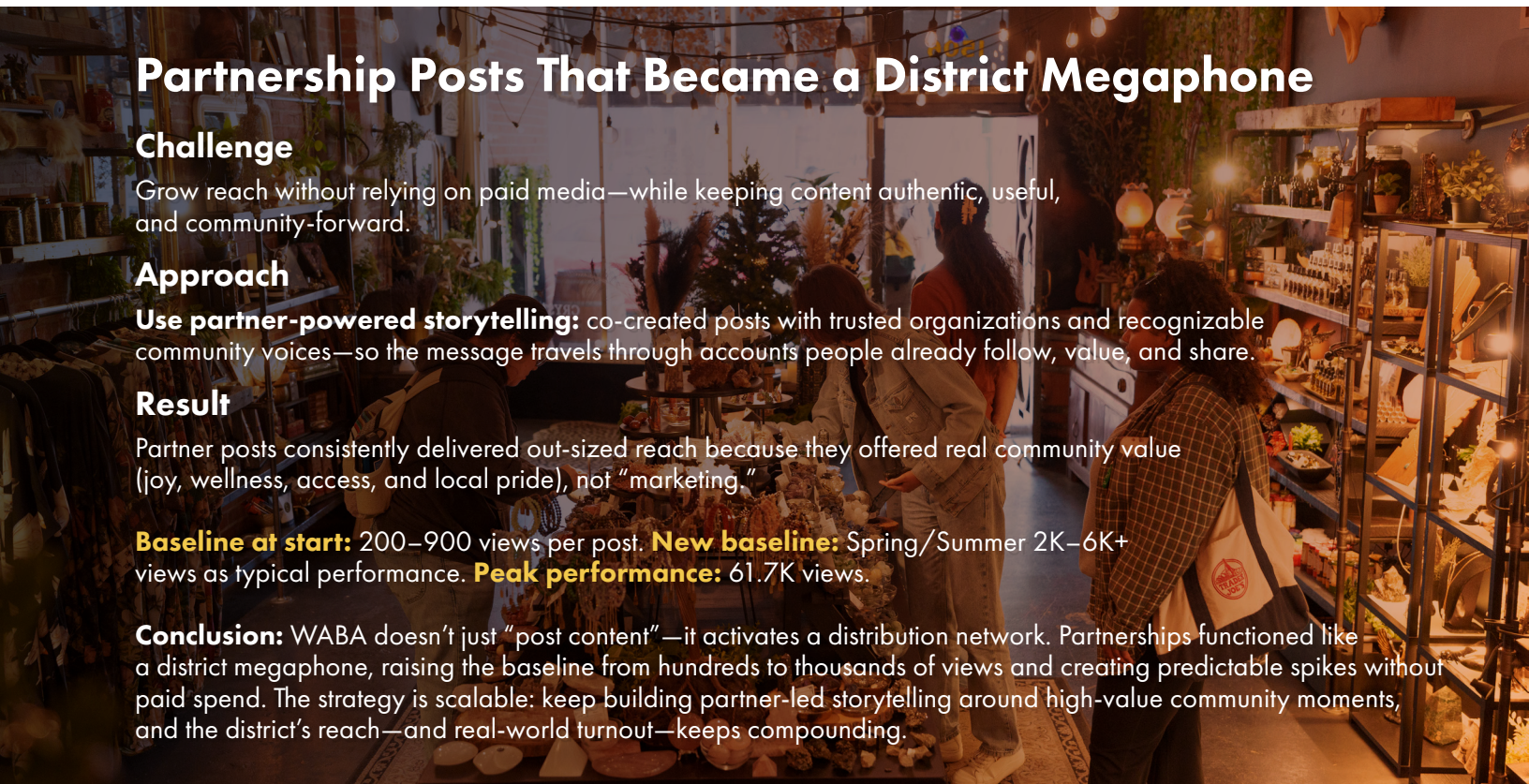
Use partner-powered storytelling: co-created posts with trusted organizations and recognizable community voices—so the message travels through accounts people already follow, value, and share.

Result

Partner posts consistently delivered out-sized reach because they offered real community value (joy, wellness, access, and local pride), not “marketing.”

Baseline at start: 200–900 views per post. **New baseline:** Spring/Summer 2K–6K+ views as typical performance. **Peak performance:** 61.7K views.

Conclusion: WABA doesn’t just “post content”—it activates a distribution network. Partnerships functioned like a district megaphone, raising the baseline from hundreds to thousands of views and creating predictable spikes without paid spend. The strategy is scalable: keep building partner-led storytelling around high-value community moments, and the district’s reach—and real-world turnout—keeps compounding.



District Improvements, Partnerships, Advocacy & Place-Making

District enhancements & place-making

- Activated public space (Webster Park, banners, seasonal identity moments).
- Coordinated beautification and maintenance to improve daily district experience.
- Delivered programming that reinforced pride, vibrancy, and a welcoming public realm.

Advocacy & civic engagement

- Represented member interests in City meetings and planning conversation.
- Elevated core concerns: parking, cleaning, safety, vacancies, and construction impacts.
- Advanced practical solutions through ongoing coordination.

Strategic partnerships

- Ongoing coordination with City departments and key stakeholders.
- Joint initiatives supporting events, communications, and district improvements.
- Sponsor and in-kind partner contributions that extended impact.

Oakland Alameda Access Project & Construction Overlap

Challenge

Overlapping infrastructure projects are creating a “stacking effect” that threatens access, visibility, and day-to-day commerce—especially as the OAAP enters a multi-year construction window.

Approach

WABA raised early concerns and stayed engaged in planning. We advocated for clear construction communications, pushed for public forums, and shared practical updates for businesses and residents. In parallel, we began shifting marketing and partnership investments to prepare for access and travel-pattern changes.

Result

WABA consistently advocates for district businesses with the City and project partners.

In 2026, WABA will work with the City, Caltrans, and Alameda County Transportation Commission to expand visibility strategies that keep local businesses top-of-mind during construction—and partner with the City to mitigate overlapping projects, minimizing impacts to access, parking, and daily operations.

Financial Overview

WABA's investments prioritized visibility, partnerships, and programming that generate economic activity far beyond the organization's operating budget.

Primary Revenue Sources

BID funds, Economic Development grants, Associate Member fees, and limited sponsorship support.

Fiscal Health

Maintained the mandated \$75,000 reserve.

Alignment

Investments directly supported sustained visibility gains, event performance, and broader economic development benefits.

Major Expense Categories

Marketing, communications, and partnership support (including vendor/contract services where applicable).



“Replenish Marketplace chose Webster Street because of its rich history and the district’s diverse, vibrant mix of residents and businesses. We love that people walk, bike, and take the bus to the West End—and that this community shows up for its local businesses with real loyalty.”

Laria & Stephen Phippen

Owners

Replenish Marketplace

2025

DISTRICT SNAPSHOT

OPENINGS

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CLOSURES

5

OCCUPANCY TREND

Stable

Cleanliness & Maintenance Vendor Transition

(AIM to Please)

Challenge

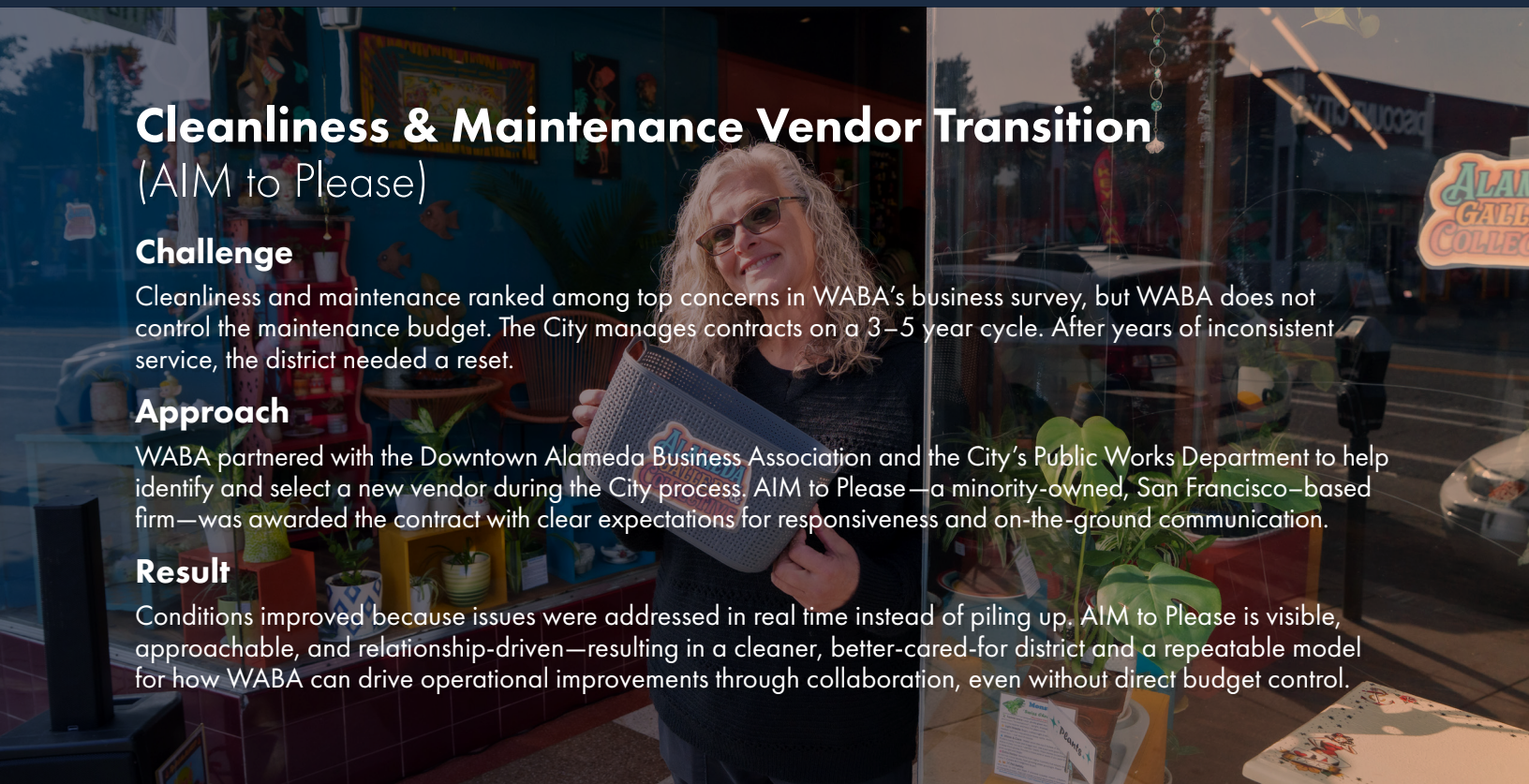
Cleanliness and maintenance ranked among top concerns in WABA's business survey, but WABA does not control the maintenance budget. The City manages contracts on a 3–5 year cycle. After years of inconsistent service, the district needed a reset.

Approach

WABA partnered with the Downtown Alameda Business Association and the City's Public Works Department to help identify and select a new vendor during the City process. AIM to Please—a minority-owned, San Francisco-based firm—was awarded the contract with clear expectations for responsiveness and on-the-ground communication.

Result

Conditions improved because issues were addressed in real time instead of piling up. AIM to Please is visible, approachable, and relationship-driven—resulting in a cleaner, better-cared-for district and a repeatable model for how WABA can drive operational improvements through collaboration, even without direct budget control.



Acknowledgments

WABA thanks the Alameda City Council, City Manager's Office, Economic Development and Community Services, Alameda Police, Public Works, Planning, and Finance for their ongoing support of the business community. This work is only possible through strong collaboration between the City, local businesses, and community partners—and we're grateful for the leadership and staff who help move this district forward.

As we move into 2026, WABA understands that strong districts require sustained partnership, clear communication, and shared commitment—and we look forward to continuing this work together.



Statement of Financial Position

West Alameda Business Association

As of December 31, 2025

DISTRIBUTION ACCOUNT	TOTAL
Assets	
Current Assets	
Bank Accounts	
DEACTIVATE? Beacon Bank - Operating Checking(7241)	0.00
Edward Jones - Checking (9718)	41,287.51
Edward Jones - Money Market (7911)	86,834.17
Edward Jones - Money Market(8018)	5,769.63
Petty Cash	300.00
Total for Bank Accounts	\$134,191.31
Accounts Receivable	
Accounts Receivable	0.00
Total for Accounts Receivable	\$0.00
Other Current Assets	
Undeposited Funds	0.00
Total for Other Current Assets	\$0.00
Total for Current Assets	\$134,191.31
Fixed Assets	
Accumulated Depreciation	-3,339.00
Furniture and Equipment	
Computer equipment	3,705.50
Total for Furniture and Equipment	\$3,705.50
Total for Fixed Assets	\$366.50
Other Assets	
Rent Deposit	1,000.00
Total for Other Assets	\$1,000.00
Total for Assets	\$135,557.81
Liabilities and Equity	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	\$541.63
Credit Cards	\$408.12
Other Current Liabilities	\$1,897.09
Total for Current Liabilities	\$2,846.84
Long-term Liabilities	
Grant - Sewald	10,000.00
Total for Long-term Liabilities	\$10,000.00
Total for Liabilities	\$12,846.84
Equity	
Opening Bal Equity	76,786.80
Unrestricted Net Assets	6,560.33
Net Income	39,363.84
Total for Equity	\$122,710.97

Statement of Financial Position

West Alameda Business Association

As of December 31, 2025

DISTRIBUTION ACCOUNT	TOTAL
Total for Liabilities and Equity	\$135,557.81