



For Immediate Release

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Mobile App Creates A New Way to Explore Albany's Neighborhoods and Historic Sites

ALBANY – A new, free mobile application is now available for iOS and Android that allows residents and visitors to explore Albany in a new way. Tour Albany is a new resource that allows users to identify and learn about area historic sites and buildings. The app locates a user by mobile GPS and maps out what historic sites are within the area to go explore. Its on-screen dashboard also allows the user to read information collected about each identified location.

The Tour Albany app's development was led by Samantha Toews of Columbia Development and Historic Albany Foundation. Funding its development and ongoing maintenance, the app was awarded a grant as part of the Amplify Albany Grant Program—a program made possible by the City of Albany's Capital Resource Corporation and Capitalize Albany Corporation. Additional support and funding for content development was provided by Renaissance Albany Hotel, Albany County Convention and Visitors Bureau Foundation, and Hudson River Valley Greenway.

The new app complements Albany Mayor Kathy Sheehan's Cultural Heritage and Tourism initiatives and is supported by the City of Albany's Cultural Heritage Tourism 2016-18 Plan.

"It's exciting to be able to offer residents and visitors of Albany an app that makes our City's remarkable cultural heritage more accessible," said Mayor Kathy M. Sheehan. "The Tour Albany app is a fantastic next step in promoting Albany's unique history and fulfills a goal within the Cultural Heritage and Tourism (CHAT) Partnership Plan. I want to thank Capitalize Albany, Historic Albany Foundation, Columbia Development Companies, Capital Resource Corporation and all the historical and cultural organizations involved in making this project a reality."

"For tourists, the app is a new way to discover a historically rich city. For locals, it's an opportunity to learn about a building they may have walked past countless times. It's only the beginning. We plan on adding more content and features over time," said Samantha Toews of Columbia Development.

Historic Albany Foundation's database of historic assets ensures accuracy of all the currently available information.

“The app is a great way for the public to explore fascinating history that hasn't before been easily accessible to the public,” said Historic Albany Foundation’s Executive Director Susan Holland. “We are thrilled to have been a part in populating the app with data from our plaque program which spans over 40 years and our new podcast tour series. We encourage everyone to check it out!”

“The app may take a user down a street they have never been down before in order to examine a historic site and they’ll possibly find a new restaurant or shop along the way,” said Capitalize Albany Corporation president Sarah Reginelli. “As the app continues to develop with more information added on sites throughout the City we hope to see it encourage and strengthen interest in the City's unique neighborhoods by providing residents and visitors a new resource to explore.”

New, and with content still being collected for display, the app initially focuses on sites within downtown Albany and will expand over time. The app currently features buildings, landmarks, historic districts, and more within the user’s proximity. The user will then be able to select a site. Each site includes a date, historical information and images when available.

Aimed at locals and visitors, informational materials on the Tour Albany app will be made available to local hotels and businesses.

The Amplify Albany Grant Program provides resources to businesses, non-profits and other organizations to strengthen the City of Albany’s various commercial districts through the creation and execution of short and medium term innovative, authentic, unique and buzz-worthy promotional projects, events and programming.

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