



STAUNTON DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION

WORK PLAN

July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022

Mission Statement - *As a Virginia Main Street non-profit, the Staunton Downtown Development Association nurtures a culturally vibrant and economically robust Downtown.*

Vision Statement - *Downtown Staunton will be a genuine community hub connecting customers, entrepreneurs, residents and visitors.*

DESIGN ...fosters a walkable, sustainable and user-friendly Downtown by capitalizing on its unique physical assets and historic architecture and act as a proactive agent for implementation of the Streetscape Plan. *Committee will continue to actively review and update WORK PLAN as the needs of stakeholders have shifted in response to Covid-19.*

Streetscape Elements

- *Provide and maintain hanging flower baskets on each light pole along Beverley Street, from Lewis Street to Market Street, from May until September, weather permitting, or implement an alternative landscaping program in all or a portion of the DSD, at a comparable cost and subject to prior approval of the City. *Solicit feedback from stakeholders and community members regarding FY21 flower basket/planter program. Discuss/develop designs and/or expansion of coverage of flowers/planters in the district for FY22. Explore additional funding sources (grants/financial gifts) and partners.*
- Provide financial support of \$10,026 for the City trolley operation, by means of contributions to the Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission (CSPDC) (the regional agency responsible for management of transit services in the City), by payment of invoices received from CSPDC, with evidence of payment of invoices to be delivered to the City contemporaneously with payment of such invoices; provided, in the event the City instructs SDDA to provide such support in another manner, SDDA shall proceed as instructed by the City.
- Expand the transit advertising program, in conjunction with the CSPDC.
- Attend Transit Advisory Committee meetings.
- @~Maintain pedestrian signs and maps. (Public transit, bike racks, free parking) *Review and explore updates to design and production costs. Explore additional funding sources (grants).*
- @Pursue greenspace development.
- Support-events, activities and promotion of Public Art, alleyway clean-up, murals, etc.
- Support community cultural arts and education
- Continue to develop partnerships/collaborations with *Historic Staunton Foundation, Staunton Innovation Hub, Tourism Department, The Arcadia Project, etc.*

Streetscape Maintenance

- *Conduct two maintenance tours per year with committee members and Public Works and track completed repairs and ongoing projects with consideration of the Streetscape Plan, adopted by City Council.
- *Continue to improve communications between Public Works and the Downtown businesses regarding advance notice of any capital improvements, repairs, street closings, parking disruption or other streetscape projects that might have an effect on DSD businesses.
- Provide feedback related to decorations, lighting, street furniture in the DSD when needed and as determined by the committee.
- *Continue to update the Streetscape addendum with improvements

Education

- Provide clear signage guidance for property owners by maintaining city links on the website
- Promote the free design services and Façade Design grants through Virginia Main Street
- Maintain photographic documentation of physical changes in the DSD
- Provide support for businesses and property owners in the Central Avenue corridor to ease the construction burdens and interruptions associated with streetscape improvements

KEY - BLUE TEXT are proposed notes/additions for FY22.

* Initiatives addressed in the City Contract

Projects Continued from the previous Work Plan

~Projects supported by the 2016 Community Survey

█ Grant dependent

@ Transformational Strategy

ECONOMIC VITALITY ... focuses on business recruitment and retention, entrepreneurial and business development. *Committee will continue to actively review and update WORK PLAN as the needs of stakeholders have shifted in response to Covid-19.*

Awareness:

- *Send press releases and weekly e-mail blasts, social media to the press, SDDA members and stakeholders (downtown business and property owners), and the community at large, once per month.
- Establish a positive portrait of the Downtown business environment for increased investor confidence.
- Feature business openings and activities, anniversaries and expansions, new ownership, location or name change, property development, for sale and for rent, SDDA accomplishments, grants, programming and events, partnerships and accolades.
- Continue to establish new and/or rejuvenated connection with stakeholders and community partners. Continue to explore, develop and implement new in-person and online marketing strategies/methods.

Business Retention:

- Continue to update the business packet that contains general information about doing business in Downtown which includes: *Parking, store hours, storefront maintenance, window displays and cleaning, Façade and sign ordinance, refuse schedule, Facade Design Program, snow removal, SDDA event calendar, SDDA member benefits, SDDA programming, etc.*
- Partner with local and state resources to develop and promote educational and support programs that encourage business activity and entrepreneurial development - *City Departments, Staunton Creative Community Fund, Small Business Development Center, banks, Chamber of Commerce, Board of Realtors, educational institutions*
- Participate in on-going networking discussions, trainings, collaborations with Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development staff and other Virginia Main Street directors and managers, as a way to remain connected and to increase connections/resources for business owners.
- Maintain in-person/virtual connections with business owners
- Continue to recruit, reward and develop team of volunteers that visit/connect with SDDA members (in-person and/or through social media)
- Develop survey of stakeholders regarding Shop & Dine Out in Downtown FY21. Review completed surveys, comments, suggestions and compile into report to submit to City Manager. Determine if review/recommendation for Shop & Dine Out in Downtown to return in spring 2022.
- Work with SDDA Promotions Committee and City of Staunton officials for relaunch of Shop & Dine Out in Downtown 2022.

Business Recruitment:

- *Reduce the number of vacant and leasable first floor storefronts within the DSD, on Beverley Street, with a goal of increasing occupancy by 50% (total vacant and leasable spaces as of June 1, 2021, are two defining the SDDA leasing goal as one as of June 1, 2022, and deliver a list and addresses of vacant storefronts as of that date to the City Manager.
- *Identify types of new businesses that are needed in the DSD and look for opportunities to recruit local and regional businesses interested in locating and expanding in downtowns; distribute written material to and visit or schedule meetings with those prospects as a step in recruiting them to locate in the DSD; and make personal contact with at least 30 such identified prospects throughout the year to create relationships and a reputation for the SDDA that will establish the association as a reliable resource, develop business opportunities for entrepreneurs and foster leasing opportunities for property owners. Key business categories to recruit include, but are not limited to, specialty foods, clothing and soft-lines retail, and community-serving goods and services, to be reviewed annually.

KEY - BLUE TEXT are proposed notes/additions for FY22.

* Initiatives addressed in the City Contract

Projects Continued from the previous Work Plan

~Projects supported by the 2016 Community Survey

Grant dependent

@Transformational Strategy

- *SDDA will provide to the City Manager/designee a record of recruitment and retention/expansion activities that includes the address and owners of at least five of those prospects that have located in the DSD by July 1, 2022.
- Maintain communication with property owners to encourage for rent/for sale property listings on the SDDA website and any changes to their property status.
- Continue to add business development resources to the “Open a Business” tab.
- ~Expand residential listings to neighborhoods around Downtown.
- Expand the resources tab on the website to include service providers
- Focus on opportunities and new business development in the Central Avenue Area.
- Identify and promote a path for emerging entrepreneurs, cooperatives and partnerships.
- Market Staunton Downtown as a great place to open or relocate your business.
- ~Market Downtown as a great place to live.
- *Identify and contact local and regional entrepreneurs, within selected business groups positioned for location or expansion into leasable DSD storefronts.

@Property Owners and Residents:

- Determine ways to encourage upper floor development.
- Recommend review of guidelines to allow for upper floor business signage.
- Continue to work with City to determine ways to encourage property owners to rent vacant spaces.
- Develop a volunteer project for residential inventory and resident outreach.
- Organize resident and property owner online gatherings/group discussions (in-person or virtual)

KEY - BLUE TEXT are proposed notes/additions for FY22.

* Initiatives addressed in the City Contract

Projects Continued from the previous Work Plan

~Projects supported by the 2016 Community Survey

Grant dependent

@Transformational Strategy

ORGANIZATION...DEALS WITH MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT, FUNDRAISING AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONAL HOUSEKEEPING CHORES.

Committee will continue to actively review and update WORK PLAN as the needs of stakeholders continue to shift in response to Covid-19.

Housekeeping

- Organize an Annual Celebration, Volunteer Appreciation and board election.
- *Host a minimum of 2-3 Downtown Round Tables per year as a forum for stakeholder and Community input and education. Explore possibility of additional online/zoom meetings to allow for increased participation.
- Maintain and update the procedural contingency plan and member database.
- Continue to use the Main Street handbooks for Committee and Board education.

Membership

- Evaluate membership structure and policies.
- Establish clear boundaries for member vs. non-member services.
- Retool the SDDA Member brochure, update benefits and include member feedback
- *Make member report to City Manager in January 2022
- Explore new ways to engage the Board and Ambassadors in outreach
- Develop/improve upon Anniversary acknowledgement plan

Communication

- Create press releases and Facebook posts about SDDA accomplishments, services, volunteer opportunities, member benefits, etc.
- Develop consistent SDDA message and calendar for outreach.
- Connect with Media, stakeholders, City Council/Management and the community.
- *Produce eblasts for stakeholders and community members on an on-going basis.
- @Continue to administer/improve the functionality of the SDDA website.
- Post Annual Report, Work Plan and Budget to website.
- @Continue outreach to MBU, SHS, GCHS, SHS, etc.
- Develop NEW Student Intern Projects
- Explore potential green space development and implementation

#Fundraising

- Assist Board with creating a fundraising plan.
- Develop financial giving materials
- Pursue grant opportunities
- Expand campaign for Transit Sign sales

KEY - BLUE TEXT are proposed notes/additions for FY22.

* Initiatives addressed in the City Contract

Projects Continued from the previous Work Plan

~Projects supported by the 2016 Community Survey

Grant dependent

@ Transformational Strategy

PROMOTIONS ...creates awareness, loyalty and foot traffic through events, promotions, advertising and community and business engagement. *Committee will continue to actively review and update WORK PLAN as the needs of stakeholders continue to shift in response to Covid-19.*

Events and Promotions

- * Plan, organize, advertise and implement a minimum of three special events in the DSD to attract visitors and customers for DSD businesses, including but not limited to the Christmas parade, and report results to the City Manager/designee within 30 days of completion of the event
- Develop programming that responds to the needs of the community, based on the consumer survey results and creates a contiguous District.
- Survey stakeholders following events/happenings.
- Support community and business initiatives by assisting with event planning and promotion.
- Follow event support policy for merchant initiatives.
- Continue to evaluate, develop and promote Downtown Staunton Street Performance application/permit process.
- Continue to explore opportunities for securing sponsorship dollars and develop creative fundraising to support events and happenings.

Advertising, Marketing and Campaigns

- * Provide a minimum of 30,000 copies of a shopping and dining guide listing the retail shops and restaurants within the DSD, by June 1, 2022, or implement an alternative program, including a possible combination of print and online materials, at a comparable cost and subject to prior approval of the City.
- Investigate and continue to pursue regional advertising, cooperative advertising and social media opportunities for Downtown businesses.
- Continue to develop local media partnerships.
- Utilize website, eblasts and social media outlets for business outreach, education and community awareness with Downtown promotional activities, information, events
- Increase frequency of social medias posts through Facebook and Instagram, developing new, engaging content.
- ~ Continue to develop posters and distribute them to merchants, around town and display in kiosks.
- **Customer Loyalty**
- Support local gift card program. *Remain in communication with Mr. Darren Smith of TRAIPISE as "Local Token" gift card program is developed. Continue support and collaboration, with launch of pilot program in 2021.*
- Continue to develop and expand the Buy Locally campaign to increase community awareness about the benefits of buying from locally owned, independent businesses and develop customer loyalty.
- @ Develop a strategy for enhancing the connection between Downtown and Mary Baldwin University/Stuart Hall/Grace Christian Academy students and employees, increasing awareness for Downtown programs, activities and businesses.
- Explore opportunities for event and activity promotion through MBU TV and e-communication.
- Create intern project to define low-cost and free activities, products and services Downtown
- Continue to provide MBU welcome stickers as needed.
- Continue to recognize business accomplishments and milestones through the Thumbs Up! Award to be presented to a different business each month, as designated by the committee.
- Celebrate business Anniversaries as an SDDA member benefit.
- ~ # Determine the interest in continuing the Downtown Discount Card. *Survey stakeholders' interest of continuing/improving/building upon Downtown Discount Card*

KEY - BLUE TEXT are proposed notes/additions for FY22.

* Initiatives addressed in the City Contract

Projects Continued from the previous Work Plan

~ Projects supported by the 2016 Community Survey

Grant dependent

@ Transformational Strategy

BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Board of Directors and Executive Director will continue to actively review and update WORK PLAN as the needs of stakeholders continue to shift in response to Covid-19.

Main Street

- Assure that all requirements for remaining a Virginia and National Main Street Community are met.
- Attend all required Main Street trainings and other meetings/trainings pertinent to the efforts of the SDDA.
- Implement the Main Street America approach to the Four Points.
- Review Strategic Work Plan
- Board, Committee, Staff and volunteer assignments and roles

Reporting

- Submit Main Street quarterly and year-end data reports.
- *Provide the following reports and documentation to the City Manager/designee:
 - ✓ An annual plan of work that reflects SDDA's mission statement and the objectives of the DSD as reflected in Chapter 3.60 of the Staunton City Code, no later than January 15, 2022.
 - ✓ A progress report based on the work plan and SDDA's implementation of this Agreement in the four primary activity areas of economic development, design, promotions and organization, no later than July 1, 2022.
 - ✓ A summary of the results of a survey distributed to a random sample of a minimum of 100 people who shop in the DSD, soliciting their opinions as to the availability of goods and services, attractiveness and safety of the DSD and such other issues as SDDA deems appropriate, by July 1, 2022.
 - ✓ A copy of the annual report provided to SDDA members, which shall include a list of all members of SDDA as of January 1, 2022, no later than the date on which the annual report is provided to SDDA members.
 - ✓ A monthly financial report.
 - ✓ A monthly communications report, detailing communications activity of SDDA.
 - ✓ An updated list of the SDDA Board members with the address of their business and residence, on or before January 15, 2022, and July 1, 2022, documenting that at least 51 percent of the Board members are DSD property owners, business owners, or operators.

Public Relations and Ambassadorship

- Be the resource for information, particularly pertaining directly to Main Street, for SDDA members, downtown businesses and property owners and other Main Street organizations.
- Build relationships with other Main Street Directors and Communities
- Keep SDDA accomplishments and initiatives publicly visible by being the organization's main spokesperson/educator via television interviews, radio interviews, public speaking and press releases.
- Represent the SDDA at related Main Street and local community functions.
- Trainings, celebrations, Downtown events, etc.
- @Build relationships with City Council and management
- Permission for green space on public property
- Departmental support for greenspace: security, refuse, maintenance
- @Active role in establishing relationships with schools and universities: MBU, SHS, GCHS, LHS, etc.

Board Education

- Conduct a Board Orientation.
- Educate new board about Main Street refresh and officer expectations
- Have the Board create at least one independent project and create a corresponding work plan.
- Discuss District Expansion

KEY - BLUE TEXT are proposed notes/additions for FY22.

* Initiatives addressed in the City Contract

Projects Continued from the previous Work Plan

~Projects supported by the 2016 Community Survey

Grant dependent

@Transformational Strategy

- Explore Outdoor Greenspace
- Explore Upper Floor Development
- @~ Implement strategies from Community Survey/Top 25 List
- Implement strategic planning for a new Board President and Vice President
- Involve Board in Membership Drive and volunteer recruitment.
- Each Board member purchases an SDDA membership.
- Assist with constructing membership benefits and rates.

Fundraising

- Strategize a plan for fundraising that will support SDDA initiatives.
- Explore additional employee hours and benefits
- Technical review
- ~ Project funding

SDDA WORK PLAN Revised/Updated 06/2021

KEY - BLUE TEXT are proposed notes/additions for FY22.

* Initiatives addressed in the City Contract

Projects Continued from the previous Work Plan

~ Projects supported by the 2016 Community Survey

█ Grant dependent

@ Transformational Strategy