

STAUNTON DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION

Work Plan 2014 ~ 2015

KEY

* Initiatives addressed in the City Contract

Bullets inspired by 5-Year Vision Statement from 2010 Stakeholder Survey/Board Retreat

New or modified objective for 2013-2014

New or modified objectives for 2014-2015

New or modified objectives for 2014-2015, pending funding

Mission Statement

The Staunton Downtown Development Association is a nonprofit association established to enhance Downtown Staunton's economic environment as a center of commerce while maintaining the character and integrity of the City's central business district as an attractive place to live, work and visit.

COMMITTEES

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

...works to develop a market strategy that will result in an improved retail mix, a stronger tax base, increased investor confidence and a stable role for the downtown as a major component of the city's economy.

- *Send press releases and e-mail blasts to the press, SDDA members, Downtown business and property owners about new business openings, internal accomplishments, awards, etc., once per month.
- *Work with city staff to coordinate recruitment efforts, incentives and define the Trade Area, facilitating leasing efforts that will reduce vacant, leasable storefronts by 50%.
- *Identify and contact local and regional entrepreneurs, within selected business groups positioned for location or expansion into leasable DSD storefronts.
- *Strengthen entrepreneurial development and business recruitment efforts by providing the following assistance.
 - Continue to maintain the New Business Packet with current information from Economic Development partners, City of Staunton, business partners and the SDDA.
 - #Identify and promote a path for emerging entrepreneurs, cooperatives and partnerships.
 - Market Staunton Downtown as a great place to open or relocate your business.
 - #Maintain communication with property owners to encourage for rent/for sale property listings on the SDDA website and any changes to their property status.
- Create a plan for public awareness of the committee's efforts to promote, recruit, and retain business opportunities in the DSD through the following:
 - Maintain relationship with Downtown Realtors.
 - #Market and promote SDDA website to encourage participation in the property and business listings.
 - #Utilize the website as a tool to create awareness for business opportunities and SDDA business services and accomplishments.
 - Add a template to the website for easier viewing on mobile phones, tablets, etc. Add QR code to new street maps.
- *Retain and support businesses through education and assistance by offering opportunities for convocation and create awareness of and partner with local resources.
 - Continue "Confessions of An Entrepreneur" series with the Staunton Creative Community Fund.
 - Assist with Innovate Live conference planning

- Find funding sources and maintain partnerships to support the BRIGHT Innovation Grants program and have the program ready by January 2016 with the intention of providing grant opportunities every other year.
- Create a menu of Business Succession resources that prepare and assist businesses for strategic planning, selling and retaining strong businesses in the DSD. Add to website resource list.
 - Market “for sale” businesses, as needed.
- Strengthen relationship between the SDDA and stakeholders by maintaining a program where businesses receive regular visits, at least once per year.
- Conduct surveys to determine market position, community perceptions and business status.
 - Survey Downtown Shoppers.
 - Survey Downtown businesses.
 - Conduct a Market Position survey with the community/region.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the 2014 Extended Hours program and replace with a different approach that encourages best practices for businesses, based in part on survey results.

PROMOTIONS

...primary responsibility is to market a unified, quality image of the business district as the center of activities, goods and services to retailers, shoppers, investors and tourists.

...educate and promote the unique qualities of the DSD through planned events,

local/regional/national advertising, public speaking, educational tools and a marketing plan.

- *Plan, organize and implement a minimum of three special events per year.
 - *Christmas Parade
 - Sparkles & Sweets
 - Others to be strategically planned.
 - *Report to city Manager 30 days after event. Attached.
- #Create and inspire events and activities that target different market segments and create awareness for different areas of the District.
 - Consider which business categories need additional support such as service or retail.
 - Implement Savor Staunton: Eat. Drink. Repeat, a local food event.
- Support community initiatives by assisting with event planning and promotion. Add an administrative fee to all liability accounts (third party events), per the by-laws.
- #Continue to educate DSD non-profits, cultural arts and businesses about linking to the tourism calendar on the Virginia Tourism website.
- Investigate and continue to pursue regional advertising, cooperative advertising and e-promotion opportunities for Downtown businesses.
 - Establish local media partnerships.
- Determine opportunities for securing sponsorship dollars and creative fundraising.
- *Update, produce and distribute 30,000 Shopping & Dining Guides and continue to update the digital version on website.
- 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.
- Reevaluate the promotional strategy for Store Extended Hours Program in 2014 ~ 2015. Consider a different approach to increasing evening traffic, store participation and different days or times to target for increasing after five business hours.
- #Utilize website and eBlast for business outreach and community awareness with Downtown promotional activities, information, events and SDDA branding.
 - Continue to promote the Downtown Lowdown and the Staunton Downtown Interest page to increase awareness and participation.

- Continue to expand Gift Card promotion and customer base with the goal of increasing Gift Card sales by 10%.
 - Provide satellite sellers with a square and a tablet to make credit card transactions secure.
 - Design a year-round Gift Card marketing campaign.
- *Conduct a shopper/customer service survey in conjunction with the Economic Development Committee.
- Develop a strategy for enhancing the connection between Downtown and Mary Baldwin College students and employees and area youth, increasing awareness for Downtown programs, activities and businesses.
- Continue to recognize business accomplishments and milestones through the Thumbs Up! Award to be presented to a different business each month and designated by the committee.

DESIGN

...foster an attractive, visually coordinated image of the Downtown by capitalizing on its unique physical assets and heritage.....a proactive agent for the implementation of design projects.

- *Facilitate the installation and maintenance of hanging flower baskets on light poles along Beverley Street from May until Labor Day, per City contract.
- Work with the Parks and Recreation Department to improve the wreath presentation with better preparation before they are installed.
- *Conduct two maintenance tours per year with committee members and Public Works and develop a strategy for tracking completed repairs and ongoing projects with consideration of the Streetscape Plan, adopted by City Council.
 - *Continue to improve communications with Public Works and the Downtown businesses regarding advance notice to SDDA of any capital improvements repairs, street closings, parking disruption or other city improvements that might have a substantial effect on DSD businesses.
- Provide feedback related to decorations, lighting, street furniture in the DSD when needed and as determined by the committee.
 - Implement trailblazer map placement and submit a proposal to Council.
 - Conduct public input meetings about trailblazer maps.
 - *Continue to update the Streetscape addendum with improvements.
- #Provide clear signage guidance and Façade Improvement Program information for property owners by maintaining web forms and city links on the website.
- Provide guidance for temporary public art and placemaking projects.
 - Create a catalogue of information and ideas for the website.
 - Communicate with the City and private property owners to get advance permission and define appropriate project locations.
 - Develop partnerships to encourage inclusion and community engagement.
- # Maintain photographic documentation of physical changes in the DSD.
- *Provide financial support of \$10,000 for the City trolley operation.
- Continue to provide input and approval for designs for trolley advertising to enhance the sponsorship inventory a signing program for the trolley.

ORGANIZATION

...deals with membership development, fund-raising and other organizational housekeeping chores.

- *Produce and distribute branded monthly e-newsletters and post on website.
- *Produce and distribute an Annual Report and post on website.
- Organize and conduct Annual Celebration, Volunteer Appreciation and board election.
- *Host a minimum of 2-3 Downtown Round Tables per year as a forum for stakeholder input.

- Evaluate membership structure and policies.
 - Retool the SDDA Member brochure, update benefits and include member feedback.
 - *Make member report to City Manager, as directed by the City Contract.
 - Pursue Member 2 Member offers.
 - Incentivize member response to outreach.
 - Offer a two-year membership rate.
- #Develop a process for volunteer recruitment.
 - Market volunteer opportunities and experiences.
 - Determine incentives and method of recognition.
 - Partner with local agencies for volunteer recruitment; hOUR Economy, etc.
 - Create a volunteer awareness piece and a gift card insert.
- Review the Organization section on website to include volunteer application, membership and daylight SDDA documents and services.
- Maintain the procedural contingency plan and Main Street member database.
- Continue to use the Main Street handbooks for Committee and Board education.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

- 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.
- Be the resource for information, particularly pertaining directly to Main Street, for SDDA members, downtown businesses and property owners and other Main Street organizations.
- Connect with other Main Street Managers interested in addressing the unique concerns for mature Main Street organizations and seasoned managers.
- 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.
- *Create 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 by January 15, 2015.
- *Make reports to the City Manager on the following:
 - *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 January 15, 2015, and July 1, 2015.
 - *A list of all members of SDDA as of January 15, 2015, as contained in the Annual Report.
 - *A monthly financial report.
- Conduct a Board Training
 - Educate new board about Main Street Board model and officer expectations.
 - Have the Board create at least one independent project and review the Work Plan.
- Involve Board in Membership Drive and volunteer recruitment.
- Consider and begin planning the SDDA's 20-Year Anniversary in 2016.
- Review and implement Main Street Technical Assistance recommendations.
 - SDDA global restructuring.
 - Strategic Work Plan review.
 - Committee and Board assignments and roles.
 - Staff and volunteer roles.

Revised 6/30/2014