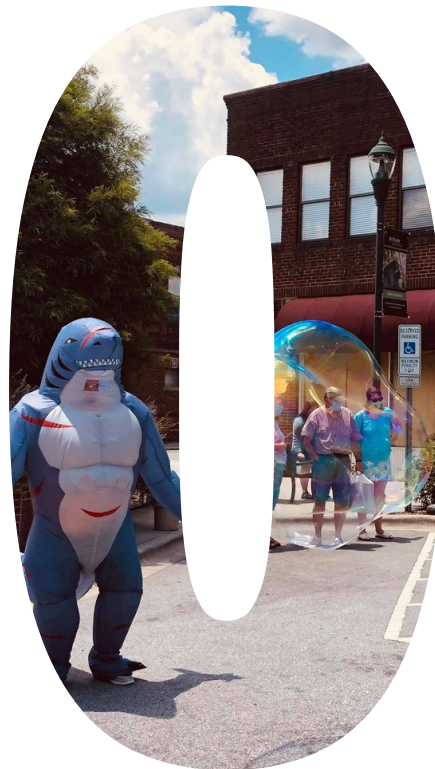
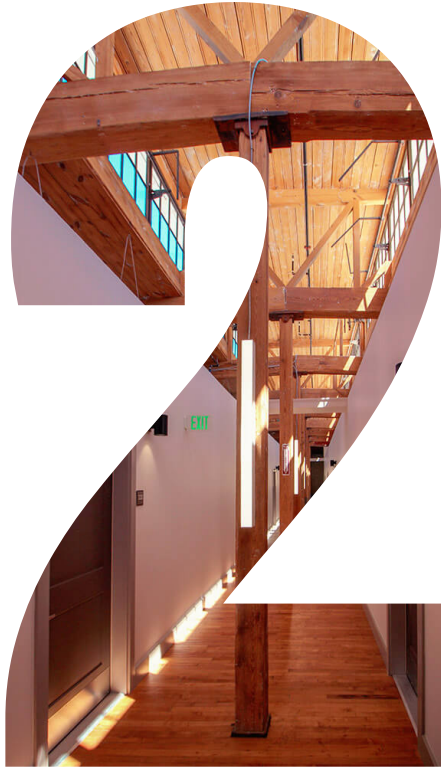




HISTORIC DOWNTOWN  
**HENDERSONVILLE**  
DOWNTOWNHENDERSONVILLE.ORG



**YEAR IN REVIEW**

Late in 2019 I had a conversation with a local event producer who had locked onto the concept of 2020 as a year of clear vision...20/20 vision. They were theming their approach to the new year and at the time I thought it was a catchy way to approach the new year...well we all now know how that turned out!

If 2020 taught us anything, it was that things don't always go according to plan and that our vision for what's ahead can get clouded rather unexpectedly. We were all required to recalculate, reassess and reorient our approach. Events were shifted to accommodate the new reality, postponed and then canceled, businesses adapted to a "Pick-Up" model, communication strategies shifted, we Zoomed, all while focusing on how to keep our families safe.

While we haven't completely cleared the hurdle that COVID-19 has presented our collective efforts to support a vibrant downtown, I look back on the efforts of the you, our community of supporters, our downtown merchants, our fantastic Friends of Downtown and downtown staff with a great deal of pride. Our underlying belief in our community and shared strength of response is a model of resilience.

We quickly and loudly broadcast that we "Love Hendo" through a marketing and positive support local effort, we enacted expanded outdoor dining, we kicked off the LoveHendo Saturdays and we moved forward with our inaugural Farmer's Market season. The report you hold details that and many of the other actions, strategies and ongoing projects that the downtown program engaged over the last twelve months. We hope you enjoy reading what I believe to be a very positive and productive response to a year that challenged all of us.

Moreover, I look forward to 2021 knowing that we have worked hard to weather the storm and remain a strong advocate for our vibrant downtown. There is much more to come and we look forward to continuing to work with you in support of our wonderful downtown!

# LEW HOLLOWAY

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR



# DOWNTOWN STAFF & BOARD

## **Staff**

Lew Holloway, Community Development Director

Jamie Carpenter, Downtown Manager

Meredith Friedheim, Downtown Events Coordinator

## **Main Street Advisory Committee (2019-2020)**

Michele Sparks, ArtMob Studios

Jared Bellmund, All Choice Insurance

Caroline Gunther, Wag! A Unique Pet Boutique

Matt Johnes, Hannah Flanagans

Carole Sitzer, Downtown Property Owner

Walt Slagel, Volunteer

## **7th Avenue Advisory Committee (2019-2020)**

Ron Kauffman, Stand T.A.L.L.

Dennis Dunlap, Dunlap Construction

Matthew Hickman, Underground Bakery

Chris Cormier, Carolina Specialties Construction

Becky Ayers, Triskelion Brewing

Sheryl Fortune, Western Carolina Community Action

John Ryan, Apple Valley Model Railroad (Depot)

Anthony McMinn, Rescue Mission



The Friends of Downtown Hendersonville is a 501c3 Nonprofit Organization that supports programs and events in Downtown Hendersonville

## **JANUARY**

Meredith Friedheim begins position as Downtown Events Coordinator

## **MARCH**

Covid-19 Pandemic causes statewide shutdown

## **MAY**

Bearfootin' Bear Reveal goes virtual

Rhythm & Brews canceled for 2020

Open Streets Pilot Event launches

#SafeHendo Pledge launches for businesses to market safe and healthy practices

## **SEPTEMBER**

Downtown Program merges with Planning Dept to form Community Development Department. Lew Holloway becomes Community Development Director, Jamie Carpenter becomes Downtown Manager

## **NOVEMBER**

First Holiday Farmers Market

## **FEBRUARY**

Jamie Carpenter begins position as Downtown Economic Development Coordinator

## **APRIL**

LoveHendo.com launches to support local businesses

Downtown Happy Hours hosted virtually for business peer to peer support weekly

## **JUNE**

Hendersonville Farmers Market opens on Maple Street

## **AUGUST**

Open Streets rebrands as LoveHendo Saturdays

Friends of Downtown Launches Pivot Grant Program

## **OCTOBER**

Bearfootin' Auction goes virtual and raises \$84,000

## **DECEMBER**

Merchants create "Who Loves Hendo" themed holiday promotion

# STATISTICS

FY 2019-2020

**\$8,843,212**

PRIVATE INVESTMENT

**\$890,000**

PUBLIC INVESTMENT

**2** FACADE  
IMPROVEMENTS

**2** BUILDING  
REHABS

**2** PUBLIC  
IMPROVEMENTS

**4** NET NEW  
BUSINESSES

## RECENT PROJECTS

Recent major accomplishments

**2013 RHYTHM & BREWS CONCERT SERIES LAUNCH**

**2015-2020 DOWNTOWN HOTEL RECRUITMENT**

**2018 MAPLE STREET IMPROVEMENTS**

**2019 DOWNTOWN PUBLIC RESTROOMS OPEN**

**2019 GREY HOSIERY MILL RENOVATION**

**2020 HENDERSONVILLE FARMERS MARKET LAUNCH**



# DOWNTOWN TEAMS

As a Main Street America™ Accredited program, Downtown Hendersonville is a recognized leading program among the national network of more than 1,200 neighborhoods and communities who share both a commitment to creating high-quality places and to building stronger communities through preservation-based economic development.



## ORGANIZATION

The guiding board of the Downtown Program are the 7th Avenue and Main Street Advisory Committees. The committees recommend budget items for the municipal service districts (Main Street and 7th Avenue). The Friends of Downtown (501c3) complements the advisory board with fundraising activities.

The Events Team promotes and supports the districts through branding events and promotions. The events team produces events in addition to supporting other event producers in the community.

Events under the downtown program include:  
Rhythm & Brews, Hendersonville Farmers Market, LoveHendo Saturdays, Bearfootin' Art Walk & Auction, Treat Street Carnival, Holiday Street lighting

## EVENTS

## COMMUNITY CHARACTER

The Community Character Team supports the visual and physical atmosphere of the downtown from street planters to historic facade improvements.

Current/Recent Projects: 7th Avenue Streetscape, Outdoor dining expansion

The Economic Vitality Team (Infrastructure), supports the business and economic climate of downtown. This includes recruitment of businesses, infrastructure improvements that support, and business retention efforts to support the vibrant downtown economy.

Current/Recent projects: Downtown Pivot Grants, wifi & parking improvements, Grey Mill Housing Project, public restroom

## ECONOMIC VITALITY

# COVID RESPONSE

## ORGANIZATION

The Downtown Hendersonville Covid-19 Strategic Response Plan shifted Downtown Hendersonville's 2020 workplan to a swift response action plan addressing the immediate needs for downtown businesses.

These strategies outlined a process for making on-going programs adapt or change to the new reality:



### Develop a "Safe to Shop" marketing message

In partnership with the Henderson County Chamber of Commerce, within two days of the shutdown, LoveHendo.com was launched to support businesses virtually. The logo and shareable images were quickly adopted throughout the county. To encourage safe practices while reopening, businesses took the #SafeHendo pledge, receiving a window decal and signage.

### Pivot Events: Hendersonville Farmers Market opened and Rhythm & Brews was replaced with Open Streets

Open Streets closed Main Street to vehicles and allowed businesses to spread onto the street for safe enjoyment. Sprinklers were set out for play and the addition of Adirondack chairs provided seating in what would normally be the main vehicle thoroughfare. Team ECCO, with its indoor aquarium closed to the public, used the outdoor space for exciting family activities. Evaluation and feedback led to holding the event once monthly, during which Open Streets was rebranded to "LoveHendo Saturday" encouraging shopping local. Outdoor dining was expanded on the sidewalk and parking spaces at all times.

### Evaluate grant programs to support downtown businesses

Friends of Downtown launched a microgrant for downtown businesses to adapt to the changing circumstances. Sales from #LoveHendo face masks and redirected sponsorship from canceled events funded creative projects for 5 businesses to date.

### Provide enhanced communications resources for downtown

A weekly business newsletter included information on government programs, downtown initiatives, and partner resources. In April, the Downtown Program started a weekly zoom call for businesses, including attorneys, insurance providers and local partners who have provided guidance to businesses.

#### Sponsors & Partners



# FARMERS MARKET



## EVENTS

**71**  
TOTAL  
VENDORS

**21** REGULAR  
MARKETS

**2** HOLIDAY  
MARKETS

**\$17,164**

CASH VALUE  
TOKENS DISPENSED  
VIA CREDIT/DEBIT

+

**\$9,246**

CASH VALUE  
TOKENS DISPENSED  
VIA DOUBLE SNAP

=

**\$26,410**

CASH VALUE  
TOKENS  
DISPENSED

**300** TOTAL VOLUNTEER HOURS



## AN AVERAGE SATURDAY AT HFM

**900** CUSTOMERS VISITING

**30** VENDORS SELLING

**\$25** SPENT BY EACH CUSTOMER

**36%** CUSTOMERS VISIT WEEKLY

**90%** CUSTOMERS LIVE WITHIN 15  
MILES OF DOWNTOWN

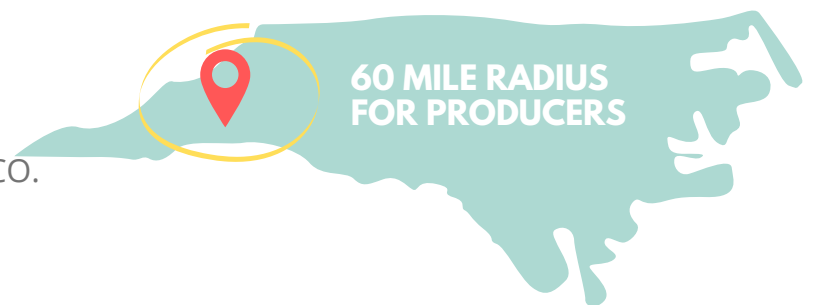
## VENDORS

As a producer-only market, everything sold at Hendersonville Farmers Market is offered by the farmers and artisans who help sustain the culture, economy, and environment of our region. If a vendor did not grow or produce their product, they cannot sell it here. This ensures the freshest and highest quality product for our consumers, who can find out exactly where their food came from and how it was grown or raised. More than 70 vendors participated in the 2020 Hendersonville Farmers Market, all of whom produce within a 60-mile radius of Hendersonville.

**14** FIRST-TIME FOOD VENDORS

**23** FULL SEASON VENDORS

**85%** VENDORS WITHIN HENDERSON CO.



## ACCESS TO HEALTHY FOODS

SNAP benefits are exchangeable at the market for tokens. Thanks to regional partner Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project, Hendersonville Farmers Market was able to offer a Double SNAP program to eligible customers.

**10** CUSTOMERS USED THE DOUBLE SNAP PROGRAM PER MARKET

**\$40** AVERAGE CASH VALUE DISPENSED PER TRANSACTION

**\$4,623** REIMBURSED BY ASAP FOR DOUBLE SNAP PROGRAM

Presenting Sponsor:



Sponsors & Partners:





# BEARFOOTIN' ART WALK

## EVENTS



**\$84,109** PROCEEDS RAISED

**72** BIDDERS **220** BIDS ON BEARS

The 18th annual Bearfootin' Bear Auction came to an exciting close with proceeds totals at \$26,700 more than the 2019 total and \$36,900 more than the 2018 total. Each of the 20 bears brought in at least \$2,000. The highest bid on any of the four-legged masterpieces was \$9,000 for "Thea" (pictured left), benefiting United Way of Henderson County. Three of the bears sold at a Buy Now option for \$7,500, which was available through the Thursday leading up to the auction.



*Half of the proceeds up to \$3,000 were split with the Friends of Downtown Hendersonville on each bear. Any amount above the first \$3,000 went entirely to the beneficiary.*

## OUTDOOR DINING

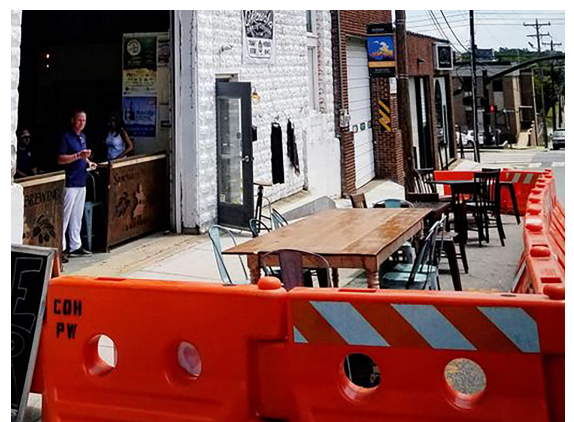
### COMMUNITY CHARACTER

To accommodate restaurants during the Covid-19 Pandemic, the City of Hendersonville allowed for expansion of outdoor dining and curbside pickup locations for easy carry out dining.

The increased need for outdoor dining allowed for creative semi-permanent solutions for food and beverage establishments that do not have outdoor dining.

Thanks to a partnership with UNC-Greensboro and the North Carolina Main Street Program, architecture fellows provided free renderings.

The Community Character team and downtown program plan to pilot projects for semi-permanent expanded outdoor dining in 2021



# THE GREY MILL

## ECONOMIC VITALITY

The Grey Hosiery Mill is an icon of early development in Hendersonville. Originally constructed between 1915 to 1918 with operations as a hosiery mill ceasing in 1967, the building has served a variety of uses before becoming vacant and falling into disrepair over the last 20 years.



In 2016, the City began what was widely seen as a final effort to recruit a developer to rehabilitate the Mill. Initially, the Grey Mill redevelopment was planned to be a boutique hotel. When it became clear that the historic rehabilitation of the mill for a hotel was not feasible, the local government team and developer pivoted to an apartment project.

**\$8.5 MILLION**

total investment

**\$3 MILLION**

historic tax credits leveraged

**\$500,000**

CDBG Grant

**\$1.5 MILLION**

public infrastructure improvements

**\$6 MILLION**

estimated tax value

**\$65,000**

estimated annual tax revenue



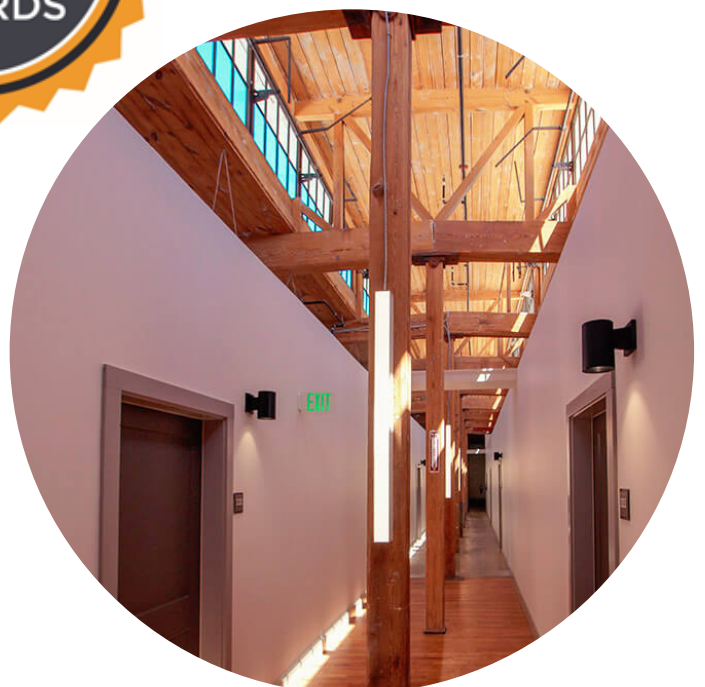
**28**

workforce  
housing units  
80-120% area  
median income



affordable  
housing units  
< 80% area  
median income

**7**



# PARKING

ECONOMIC VITALITY



**Parking Made Easy with**  
**Ⓟ ParkMobile®**

**Contactless Payments**  
**Parking Expiration Reminders**  
**Extend Time Remotely**

[www.hendersonvillenc.gov/parking](http://www.hendersonvillenc.gov/parking)

In December, 2020 the ParkMobile App launched for downtown parking services, allowing for pay by plate.

ParkMobile offers a contactless and convenient parking option. Instead of disrupting a meal or shopping experience to feed the parking meter, visitors can add time straight from their phone and enjoy downtown without interruption.

In 2021, the downtown parking garage will begin construction and meters on Main Street will be implemented using the ParkMobile App in conjunction with the garage opening in 2022.



# PUBLIC RESTROOMS

ECONOMIC VITALITY



In December 2019, the Downtown Public Restrooms opened to provide a free public restroom space for the northern end of Main Street.

New Downtown Program Offices are located above the restrooms with a meeting space.

The Henderson County TDA provided a \$325,000 grant to cover a significant portion of the building renovation.



# 2021-2022 WORK PLAN



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The Main Street Approach is centered around Transformation Strategies. A Transformation Strategy articulates a focused, deliberate path to revitalizing or strengthening a downtown or commercial district's economy

## economic positioning statement

Downtown Hendersonville offers an authentic small-town atmosphere with an unparalleled pedestrian experience, multiple options for urban living and a vibrant small business community.

## transformation strategies

**Downtown has a business mix that supports the needs of locals while providing tourists an authentic experience.**

GOAL: Reduce downtown vacancy with active store fronts and infill housing and office space.

OBJECTIVES:

- a. Recruit a Downtown Hotel
- b. Recruit businesses for street level and second floor vacant spaces with appropriate uses.

**Downtown is the “central park” of Hendersonville having urban amenities within the small town context.**

GOAL: Enhance the ease of use for downtown

OBJECTIVES:

- a. Increase available access to parking
- b. Improve downtown internet access and speed

GOAL: Improve events & projects support the downtown brand

OBJECTIVES:

- a. Establish a plan for 2021 events to fit within the Covid-19 guidelines
- b. Increase branding elements on 7th Avenue that reflect the districts unique qualities and mix with overall downtown branding.

# 2021-2022 WORK PLAN

## ORGANIZATION

1. Define the Roles of the Downtown Advisory Board and Friends of Downtown Hendersonville Nonprofit
2. Continue to enhance stakeholder communication
3. Pursue a Downtown Master Planning Process

## EVENTS

1. Evaluate and Adjust the Hendersonville Farmers Market for 2021
2. Establish plan for 2021 events with Covid-19 guidelines.
3. Enhance existing events to facilitate positive impacts on merchants.
4. Update Bearfootin' Auction to incorporate success of the online auction with an in-person event.

## COMMUNITY CHARACTER

1. Pilot Expanded Outdoor Dining
2. Establish Branding for the 7th Avenue to be incorporated in Streetscape
3. Evaluate pedestrian amenities to further connect the downtown districts.
4. Pursue design process for South Main / Ecusta Trailhead area

## ECONOMIC VITALITY

1. Build inventory of downtown properties
2. Conduct a market analysis of downtown business and housing needs
3. Provide support and enhanced communication for downtown businesses
4. Enhance Ease of Use for Downtown:
  - Launch Park Mobile parking app
  - Improve WiFi and cellular service
  - Increase signage for public restroom