



Letter from the Executive Director

Calling All Visionaries

In 2021, we invited community members to be visionaries and to help shape Downtown Harrisonburg's future. Through various online and in-person engagement opportunities throughout our first downtown master planning process, we heard a variety of perspectives and made sure we had our finger on the pulse of the community.

By year's end we had a crowdsourced vision that calls for a walkable, welcoming community filled with independent businesses and retains all the things that make downtown unique and special. By adding a downtown park, reconfiguring our streets, bringing our local history to the forefront, and more, we have a plan for enhancing what we love and have new ideas so we become stronger and stronger each year.

With your vision and a new road map developed by our master planning consultants, we are ready for the future.

I know we will realize this vision and we will do it together! That's because volunteers, partners, and community members made 2021 another incredible year, even though things still felt unpredictable. We helped bring \$100,000 in funding for small businesses, launched downtown's first art walking tour, installed a new sculpture, hosted two wildly popular events, and kept our district moving full steam ahead.

Thank you for being a partner, supporter, downtown shopper, diner, master plan participant, and event-goer. You've been a big part of making downtown vibrant and I know will be a big part in achieving the 2040 vision!

Sincerely,

Andrea L. Dono

Harrisonburg Downtown Renaissance

Our Mission: To build a downtown destination where businesses thrive and people enjoy memorable experiences

Our How: Businesses assistance programs, destination marketing, special events & beautification projects

Our Why: We believe everyone deserves a special place that they consider the heart of their community



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2021 ANNUAL REPORT

Harrisonburg Downtown Renaissance

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DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN

Adopting Downtown's First Master Plan

HDR and the City of Harrisonburg teamed up on leading the development of downtown's first master plan with Interface Studios - a community planning consulting firm. HDR helped write the RFP, contributed funds, participated in consultant interviews and selection, and assisted with project management and public engagement during 2021. We are thrilled that City Council approved the plan in March 2022.

After extensive research, on-site visits, surveys, focus groups, public engagement, and interviews, the planning team used best practices and community input to draft our community's vision and make recommendations on ways we can achieve this vision. With our new downtown vision statement for 2040 and a road map to help us get there, we are excited to have a shared strategy for local government, businesses, organizations, property owners, and HDR can use to guide our efforts.

What's next? HDR and the City will convene partners and downtown stakeholders around conversations about collaborations that will lead to projects and initiatives recommended in this plan. We all have a role to play in making it happen!





330+ participants at 5 outdoor public engagement events





7 meetings with our 30-person community Steering Committee



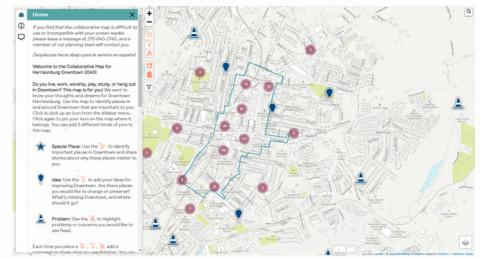
DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN

Public Engagement During the Pandemic

Covid derailed plans for extensive in-person engagement so we modified our approach to still get ideas and feedback from community members.

We convened a Steering Committee of 30 community members representing diverse perspectives over Zoom to provide feedback and guidance to our City-HDR-Consultant team, and incorporated creative virtual opportunities into the process - like the "Collaborative Map" (see image on right).

People used this tool to drop "pins" on a map of downtown to note the places they loved, areas for improvement, and ideas for the future. These pinned ideas were folded into our vision statement, informed our team about the community's priorities, and guided our consultants as they drafted recommendations.





 \bigcirc Almost 500 pins on the collaborative map



Almost 200 survey responses

Key Areas for Achieving Our 2040 Vision:













We heard loud and clear, over and over, that there are some things that the community really wants focus on. This includes:

- Do everything we can to make downtown "pedestrian-first." (Diverting truck traffic, jazzing up Federal Street's shared use path.)
- Continue adding in bicycle infrastructure (Reduce Liberty Street to a single lane for space for a two-way cycle track.)
- Make "greening" downtown a priority. (Building a downtown park, installing electric vehicle charging stations.)
- Support our small businesses. (Activate vacant spaces, increase marketing and assistance programs.)
- Activate public spaces with more art, personality, and activities. (This includes gateways & bringing local history into the public realm.)
- Focus on infrastructure. (Build mixed-use parking facilities and improve waste management.)

DESIGN PROJECTS

New Language of Love Sculpture

Last summer, we completed the installation of downtown's newest sculpture near the existing LOVEworks piece. HDR teamed with the Arts Council of the Valley to work with local artist and co-owner of The Mark-It, Jeffrey Guinn, to design a new work of art that celebrates our community's diversity. In his artist statement, Jeff says, "The shapes are meant to represent the physical geography of our area, as well as the movement of shared language and experiences among people. Language is not static."

Jeff spoke with Harrisonburg High School students and other community groups about the concepts around "Language of Love," and what is important to them. Their feedback lead him to create a variety of stencils that community members helped paint during Best. Weekend. Ever.

This sculpture has been a great addition - every time we walk by, someone is taking a selfie or children are playing on it, which is exactly what we were hoping would happen! A big thanks goes to 2018 Renaissance Night donors; sponsors F&M Bank, The Frame Factory, Mint Construction, Riner Rentals; Excel Steel and Shenandoah Paint Inc. for in-kind materials support; the Arts Council for an artist grant; and Friendly City Fortune raffle ticket holders for making this installation possible. Our gratitude goes to Jeff for his creativity and the many hours he poured into this project - along with the many, many friends and family he recruited for help.



Downtown's First Art Walk Tour

We were excited to work with volunteer Kyle Kirby to develop downtown's first art walking tour. We produced a brochure and virtual tour, which was perfectly timed for people looking for safe activities to do outside during the pandemic. Special thanks to Kyle for his hard work, the Gaines Group for sponsoring the project, and the Arts Council for awarding Kyle a grant!



http:// 1236 Page Views







DESIGN PROJECTS

Harrisonburg Zoning Re-write

HDR convened members of the board and our Design Committee to review each module associated with the zoning re-write lead by the City's Community Development team. We offered city staff and the consulting firm our feedback and perspective on zoning code that will impact downtown.



Denton Building - SAVED!

We were overjoyed to learn that the historic Denton Building on Court Square is not currently threatened for demolition for judicial expansion. HDR launched an advocacy campaign in 2020 to fight to protect this historic asset. Unfortunately, the beloved Larkin Arts business has closed, but the ground-level commercial space has been retained as well as the 20+ upper-floor apartments, which contribute to our vibrant downtown!



PROMOTION & MARKETING

Social Media, Newsletter, & Website Metrics

10.591

Facebook Likes in 2021

9.681

Facebook Likes in 2020

5.663

Instagram Followers

in 2021 N

Instagram Followers in 2020



Newsletter Subscribers

in 2021 N

3.085

Newsletter Subscribers in 2020



Website Pageviews

in 2021

191044

Website Pageviews in 2020



Reached through Posts

Example Downtown Insider Newsletter from 2021



A New Look for Marketing

In 2021 we rebranded the e-newsletter as the "Downtown Insider" and included new sections like the Downtown Dish and Thank You for Being a Friend to highlight supporting businesses, sponsors and volunteers more regularly.

We also rebranded and restructured the @downtownharrisonburg Instagram profile to better engage with our younger audience and to highlight events and promotions with the ICYMI highlight.



Upcoming Handmade Holidays Weekend Workshops Make a Money Clip at HUGO KOHL: Sat., Dec. 4, 10 am – 2 pm . Christmas Sime at OASIS: Sat., Dec. 4, 11 am - 3 pm DIY Macrame Ornaments at Rocktown Yam: Sat., Dec.

PROMOTION & MARKETING

#InternKate Takes Over National Main Street

#InternKate represented Downtown Harrisonburg in a takeover on the National Main Street Instagram account on July 13, 2021, highlighting 22 businesses.

Intern Takeovers Continue!

Takeovers have been so popular that we have decided to continue this content throughout the year! Follow HDR on @downtownharrisonburg on Instagram to see more!

















You Belong in Harrisonburg

From late August through September, we launched a media campaign welcoming the community back to downtown Harrisonburg with the message "You Belong in Harrisonburg."

Two 60-second ads ran on WSVF, ESVF, IWHSV (streaming), and WHSV premiered 295 times. An edited 15-second version of the commercial also appeared on VPM 60 times. A version of the video also played on the JMU Four-Winds electronic signage.

Version A

32.6K Facebook Reach

282 Likes & Reactions

15K Clicks

9 Shares

Version B

24.6K Facebook Reach

236 Likes & Reactions

11K Clicks

24 Shares

PROMOTION & MARKETING

Holiday Campaign & Gift Guide

Our holiday shopping campaign got a new look! We re-designed our digital and print gift guide, developed a window display on Main St featuring gift ideas, sent postcards to local households and had a successful gift card giveaway - all to promote shopping small!



18.000

reached with our Holiday Gift Guide Daily News Record insert





Gift Guide Window Display





14.000

households reached with our holiday postcards encouraging area residents to shop small



Small Business Saturday & Shop Small for the Holidays Giveaways

Again this year we served as community ambassador for American Express's Small Business Saturday event. Through this program, we distributed promotional items to over a dozen of our downtown businesses and encouraged patrons to shop small with eleven giveaways from November 30 - December 27, 2021.

Shop Small! (AND WIN BIG!)

\$1000 in Gift Cards & Downtown Dollars Given Away!

EVENTS & PROGRAMMING

New Format for Events

Although we had to cancel some events in 2021, we were able to host a few that brought the community together outdoors safely in small groups.

We reformatted our events to meet our goals of encouraging participant circulation throughout the entire downtown, not just clustering people at the Pavilion or Court Square, and boosting day-of sales at businesses. Expanding our event footprint helps people experience how walkable downtown is and to learn about amenities & businesses they may have missed before!

This new format was a hit! You asked that we make Best. Weekend. Ever. & Winter Wonderfest annual events - and we will!











Introducing "Sip & Stroll"

HDR holds a new ABC license that allows businesses in our district to sell adult beverages for consumption on-the-go within the event footprint. We spent a lot of time working with Harrisonburg police in planning for the safest application of this license. We plan to keep using Sip & Stroll to build a festive, yet responsible, atmosphere and boost sales at downtown establishments. We thank the city for its partnership in making Sip & Stroll happen, also Jacktown and Magpie Diner for helping us order supplies.

EVENTS & PROGRAMMING

LABOR DAY WEEKEND

Best. Weekend. Ever.

After spending over a year distancing from others and staying home, HDR created an event designed for safe gathering & showcasing downtown Harrisonburg. We filled the streets with music and fun for adults and kids alike and capped off the day with a muchanticipated fireworks display. BWE also debuted Sip & Stroll, which allowed attendees to take in live music on Court Square, explore downtown shops, capture a fun family photo in the photo booth, and so much more, all while enjoying an alcoholic beverage purchased from a downtown establishment.











BIGGER & BETTER









DECEMBER

Winter Wonderfest feat. Cookie Tour

The streets of downtown were filled with joy and wonder and multiple businesses saw one of their best sales days ever. Attendees enjoyed free horse & carriage rides; photos with Santa; encounters with Buddy the Elf, Frosty the Snowman, and the Grinch; holiday-themed Sip & Stroll beverages; a live nativity and petting zoo; a constant stream of holiday music filling the streets; and so much more.

Those lucky enough to snag a ticket to the sold-out Cookie Tour were able to enjoy a concurrent event on top of this flurry of activity.

Our first-ever "Gingerbread House Build-Off" competition with categories for individual and business entries were on display at Harrisonburg Homes and received votes from more than 700 people.

Cookie Tour SOLD OUT again this year!



VIRTUAL EVENTS & PROGRAMMING

MARCH

Taste of Downtown Restaurant Month

We celebrated downtown's Culinary District with a robust digital campaign, including chef and owner profiles and gift card giveaways.

Top Facebook Posts





21 Shares Click Here to





4734 Facebook Reach

4645 Facebook Reach

64 Likes & Reactions

65 Likes & Reactions

17 Shares

Click Here to View

OCTOBER

Virtual Skeleton Fest

This was our first time making Skeleton Fest a virtual event. We were able to keep some of our spooky favorites like the costume contest, dance performances, and ghost tour, also added in some new programming like our pumpkin decorating showdown!



http:// \ 1,194 Page Views

40 Costume Contest Entries

18 Pumpkin Carving Entries

Click

Here to

View





NOVEMBER

Virtual Veterans Day

This Veterans Day we honored those who served by sharing the stories of downtown veterans and some of the traditions observed by local organizations. By the end of the day we had shared a total of 11 different social media posts acknowledging and celebrating the men and women who have served. We decorated Court Square with even more American flags and added a "Thank You Veterans" sign to the display, livestreamed firing of the cannon, and published a blog post about the Liberty Statue.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Downtown Remains Strong

The uncertainty of 2020 spilled over into 2021, but once again, Harrisonburg persevered and emerged stronger than ever. We continued our unwavering support of downtown businesses through intentional marketing, "support small" campaigns, one-on-one assistance, grants, and connecting businesses with property owners to locate downtown. Once again, we had more business expansions and new openings than closures. The heart of our community remains strong! We were thrilled to help Horizon Gift's find a new space so it could relocate within downtown and to help the Natural Gardens and Friendly City Safe Spaces open here, too. Active, on-going assistance continues for several other businesses until we find them the perfect space!



8

new downtown businesses opened

3

downtown businesses closed



downtown businesses expanded their spaces and/or operations



Service Businesses Added to Online Directory

At long last, we started adding service businesses into our online directory. We'll continue to grow this resource to help you get what you need done downtown.



Downtown Dollars

Over \$20,000 more in certificates were sold than expected last year and we noticed an uptick in businesses, churches, schools and universities, and nonprofits buying them for staff and volunteer appreciation and holiday gifts. We are extremely grateful for our partnership with Pendleton Community Bank in helping us fill these orders & keeping money local!

Sold \$63,586 in Downtown Dollars & \$55,711 redeemed.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Bricks & Clicks Small Business Assistance & Grants

Twenty participants applied and were accepted into our Bricks & Clicks cohort in November and have been receiving customized one-on-one assistance in marketing, growing tourism connections, enhancing the customer experience, e-commerce, and more! This program focuses on making downtown businesses strong online & bricks-and-mortar locations. We are thankful to our partners on this program - the Shenandoah Valley Small Business Development Center and Harrisonburg Economic Development.

Snapshot of Some Bricks & Clicks Help

- Dinamic Cuts bookkeeping, creating their first Point of Sale system, digital marketing & launching a cool new tinsel hair extension service
- Latins Flavors social media & marketing assistance and restaurant operations consulting
- withSimplicity customer loyalty program development

- Rocktown Yarn business planning support to launch a new fabric-arts-tourism line of business
- Agora intensive branding and marketing assistance
- Pink Ambition new sign and a digital marketing boost
- Virginia Quilt Museum new gallery space for improved visitor experience

2021 is our most diverse cohort yet!



2 Co-ops with High % of Female Ownership

3 Husband & Wife Teams

HDR Secures \$100,000 DHCD Grant

HDR took the lead on writing a Virginia Dept of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) Resurgence Grant for \$100,000 to split between Bricks & Clicks - HDR's award-winning small business assistance and grant program - and B-Cubed (Black- and Brown-owned Business Growth Program) that we helped develop. We put \$45,000 from Friendly City Fortune proceeds into our 2021-22 program for a total of \$95,000 being invested in downtown businesses. B-Cubed serves the Harrisonburg-Rockingham area and we are thrilled three downtown businesses are participating in this program (plus 12 new businesses recently added into B-Cubed!).



ORGANIZATION

Awards

The Dept. of Housing and Community Development recognized HDR with a special "MVP" Best Pandemic Response Merit Award to recognize our leadership and multifaceted efforts in helping our downtown businesses see their way out of the pandemic. We also successfully nominated the Big L Tire Building for the state's Best Adaptive Reuse Project - congratulations to the Bismark LLC development team and Kirsten Moore!



"MVP" Best Pandemic Response













Friendly City Fortune 2021

Almost SOLD OUT!

We are so excited that we went into the 2021 raffle drawing with only 82 tickets left unsold! Last year, free raffle tickets of appreciation went to teachers and staff in area local schools and to Sentara critical care nurses. This FUNdraiser helps us bring in unrestricted income to put towards Bricks & Clicks business assistance and grants, our facade enhancement grant, special projects, upcoming bigger projects (like gateways at the entrances of downtown and public realm improvement projects as recommended in the master plan). This year, after paying for marketing, fees, and prizes, we have over \$200,000 to put towards projects in 2022 and beyond.

ORGANIZATION



Main Street America Accreditation

Each year, HDR gets reviewed by the Virginia Dept. of Housing and Community Development to confirm that we are meeting the highest standards of downtown revitalization. As a result, we have earned our annual accreditation as an official Designated Main Street AmericaTM community, which we have continually received since 2004.

Internships

We are committed to growing the experience and skills of area students and giving them real responsibility and projects through one for-credit and one paid internship each semester and over the summer. We worked with 2 interns in 2021 and even helped take InternKate's marketing skills to the national level.







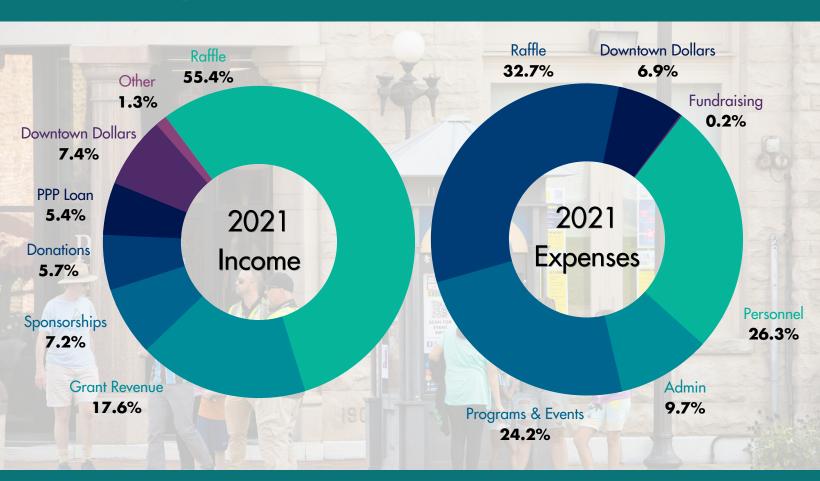




Internal Organization Wins

While it isn't exciting for most people, we are thrilled we have revised our organization's employee handbook and our financial policy. Keeping our organization's "infrastructure" strong is important to our on-going sustainability. We also completed a third-party financial review in 2021 as well.

FINANCIAL REVIEW



Funding

With the pandemic still a daily concern, we remained extremely cautious with our finances. We continue to diversify our funding streams each year.

We are grateful to have the community's strong support and appreciate receiving \$61,000 in sponsorships and \$49,000 in individual donations that fund our programs, events, and operations.



FINANCIAL REVIEW

Reinvestment Stats 2004-2021



\$100M Private Investments \$3M in 2021

Public Investments \$163,000 in 2021



Grants & Loans

PPP2 Loan (forgiven): \$46,600

Department of Housing & Community Development Grant: \$100,000 split between B-Cubed and Bricks & Clicks





Friends of Downtown

Thank you to our 140+ Friends of Downtown! Individual donations from community members and downtown businesses are among our biggest votes of confidence. We are so grateful for your continued support!







Media Partners

Thank you to our media partners Harrisonburg Radio Group, WHSV, and iHeart Radio.

SPONSORS & IN-KIND PARTNERS

Gifts of \$10,000+

City of Harrisonburg James Madison University iHeartRadio |









Gifts of \$1,000 - \$9,999

Appeal Harrisonburg Radio Group Matchbox Realty JMU Office of the President Ryan Homes Interchange HEC Island Wing Tropical Smoothie F&M Bank CrossKeys Studio Lantz & Gochenour Investment Group Digital Minerva F&M Mortgage Rockingham Insurance Harrisonburg Homes @ Kline May Valley Mall LD&B Insurance & Financial Services Eugene Stolzfus James McHone Jewelry Pendleton Community Bank Flora Pettit Larson Wealth Management Steven Toyota Glo Fiber BeARcade Music

Gravity Group

Gifts of \$500 - \$999

Sentara Sysco Spotless Cleaning & Restoration The Perch at Magpie Chik-fil-a Campus Cookies Razors Edge Orange Theory Fitness Horizons Edge Friendly City Food Co-op Massanutten Resort Gaines Group Brown Edwards CPA James River Equipment Allstate Insurance First Bank and Trust Blue Ridge Bank

Gifts Below \$500

Scotty's Homemade Italian Ice Crosslink Community Church Christ Presbyterian Reformed University Fellowship RISE **Buffalo Wild Wings** Sandy Martin Remax Realtor RS Monger and Sons Matt Leech Strite's Donuts Heritage Bakery ACE Hardware Tractor Supply Hugo Kohl Valley Playhouse

