

# 20 20



## ANNUAL REPORT



# A Letter from our Director



Dear Downtown Hopewell Devotees,

The story of the Hopewell Downtown Partnership started nearly ten years ago when a group of concerned citizens assembled for the purpose of restoring the integrity of the Downtown Historic District. Significant momentum and progress have been made through local business development, public and private investment and preservation-based renovations. Vacancy rates have dropped from over 50% to under 20% and news stories featuring young entrepreneurs, festivals, film crews and ribbon cuttings are becoming the norm. We recognize that relationships and collaboration are the key to the success of any development effort. None of this would be possible without our amazing community at large and the strength of our partnerships with local government, business owners, property owners and other local and regional organizations dedicated to strengthening Hopewell.

By coordinating and implementing Main Street America's preservation-based economic development programs with a grassroots touch, we are encouraging communal wealth and championing the idea that all community members deserve access to high caliber places that promote social interaction and elevate their quality of life. Instead of trying to "change" Hopewell, we invite you to celebrate its cultural and natural amenities with us and to simultaneously embrace its identity as a manufacturing hub. These elements are what make Downtown Hopewell unique - and businesses, organizations and young people from the Tri-Cities region (and beyond) are starting to take notice.

While our mission is to build a healthy, vibrant and prosperous central downtown district, the impact of our work radiates far beyond the geographic boundaries of Downtown. We champion small businesses and entrepreneurs as well as good design, rehabilitation, and adaptive reuse. We support and plan events that Hopewellians and visitors alike can enjoy so that you can walk, talk, shop, learn and be merry together. Our goal is to strengthen local capacity from within and to cultivate a sense of ownership and pride in place. Our work is about Downtown Hopewell and its bright, bright future. We hope that you can see it too!

Together in dreaming and doing,

**Heather Lyne**

*Executive Director*

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# HOPEWELL DOWNTOWN PARTNERSHIP (HDP)

**MISSION:** We are a grassroots, 501(c)3 nonprofit dedicated to building a healthy, vibrant and prosperous central downtown district for the Hopewell community.

In 2007, a group of citizens gathered together over a shared concern for the future of Downtown Hopewell which is a designated National Historic District. In 2011, we hired an Executive Director and became an accredited program of the National Main Street Center. For over a decade, we have worked in partnership with the City of Hopewell to sustain and develop Downtown as the heart of our community.

As a Main Street America™ Accredited program, HDP 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 strong communities through preservation-based economic development. All Main Street America™ Accredited programs meet a set of National Accreditation Standards of Performance as outlined by the National Main Street Center.

Our objectives are modelled after the Main Street Four Point Approach which includes the following components:

- Economic Vitality
- Design
- Promotion
- Organization



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Rita Joyner - President

Meredith Dean - VP

Betty Ware - Secretary

Kathy Ash

Crystal Benjamin

Janice Butterworth

Mary Calos

Mary French Elder

Patrice Gilliam

Virginia Gum

Christina Luman-Bailey

Brian Manning

Michael Moore

Rebecca Redling

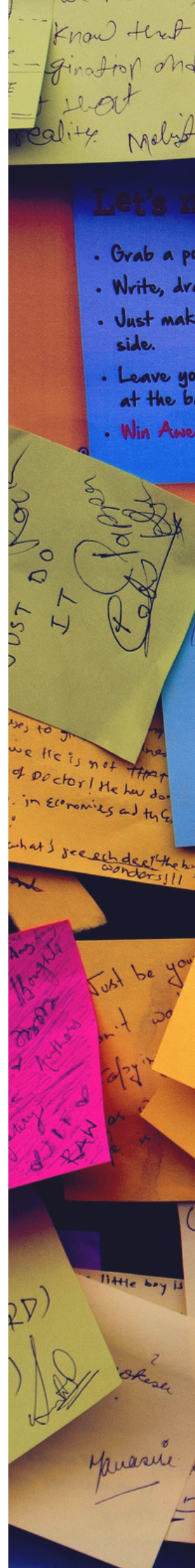


## 01

Economic  
Vitality**100% Retention Rate Downtown**

- Hopewell did not lose a single "brick and mortar" business in its Downtown Historic District as a result of COVID-19.
- We disbursed \$20,000 in COVID relief funds to 11 small businesses operating in downtown. HDP sourced these "Downtown Assistance Grants" with funds from Virginia Main Street in addition to its own funds. We also drafted numerous letters of support for businesses applying to other COVID-19 relief opportunities.
- In lieu of holding an in-person Merchant's Mixer in November, HDP sent out surveys to the major brick-and-mortar businesses operating in Downtown. HDP staff and Board Members reviewed these survey responses in December to ensure that programming for 2021 will be both informed and proactive.
- HDP was a key player in facilitating the reopening of Guncotton Coffee and Art Gallery which has huge economic potential for downtown. We liaised meetings between CAPUP and two local business owners and look forward to seeing this communal anchor back up and running in early 2021.
- We co-designed the "Small Business Marketing Program" with the City of Hopewell's Economic Development team. Using funding provided by the CARES Act, the program is providing local brick-and-mortar business owners with access to free marketing assistance. 27 businesses are currently participating in the program. 11 of these businesses are located in Downtown Hopewell. This pilot program will help business owners to better reach their individual goals.

***DID YOU KNOW?** The Economic Development Authority invited our Director to serve on their Proposal Review Committee for the old Luck's Barbershop building (246 E Broadway).*



## 02

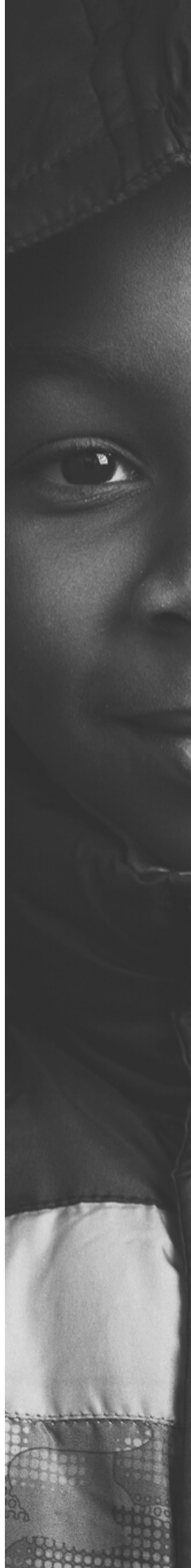
## Design

**(5) Creative Projects Implemented**

- With generous funding from CultureWorks, we were able to award mini-grants to (5) creative projects aimed at animating spaces in Downtown Hopewell and promoting CultureWorks' commitment to cultural equity by engaging underrepresented audiences in Hopewell's arts and culture and/or highlighting and promoting the art and culture of a particular community underrepresented in the region. Like CultureWorks, we believe that "thriving arts and culture are vital to community health and success". Congratulations to the grantees: David Bartlett, Emily DeCarlo, Savannah Helmer, Daniel Jones (photo featured at right), Eliza Lamb and Tom McCormack. These projects represent the diverse mediums of dance, spoken word, photography, visual art, screen printing and bluegrass music. The majority of these projects have already been implemented or are being showcased in Downtown.
- HDP is in the exploratory phases of spearheading the consolidation of all existing landscape and streetscape plans for downtown and the drafting of an updated plan in partnership with Land Planning and Design Associates (LPDA). The area enclosed by Randolph Rd., E Poythress, E City Point Rd. and Hopewell St. initially inspired this effort as many business owners in this area have asked for additional support. The City's Senior Planner joined us for the LPDA site visit. We forwarded a proposal from LPDA to the City Manager and the Director of Development for review.

**DID YOU KNOW?**

*Several HDP Board Members and staff serve or volunteer on the City's Downtown Design Review Committee (DDRC) which reviews projects related to exterior changes to properties that are individually designated landmarks or within the City's Downtown Historic District. When considering whether to recommend approval or disapproval of an application, the DDRC is guided by the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, the City of Hopewell's Development Code, and any additional design guidelines adopted by City Council.*



## 03

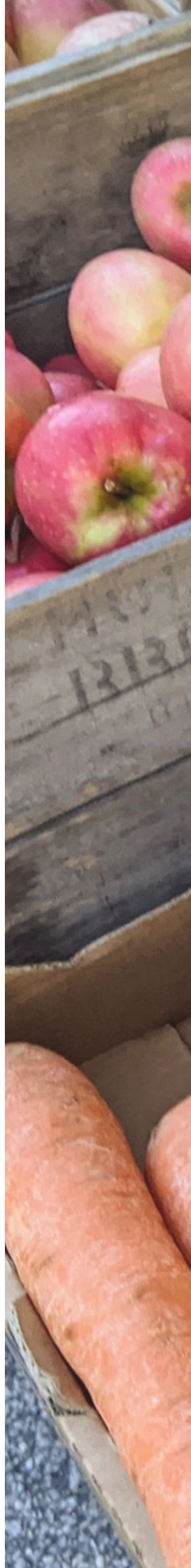
# Promotion & Events

## Making Downtown a Destination

- We received a small grant from the Virginia Tourism Corporation (VTC) to officially brand Route 5 and Route 10 as the "5 & Dime", a collaborative network and road trip. The goal of this project is to bolster Downtown Hopewell's reputation as a tourist destination, to strengthen regional relationships and to bring more attention (and foot traffic) to the unique assets and communities along Route 10 by building an active network and cross-promoting with highly regarded and popular destinations along Route 5. Our primary partner for launching this initiative is the H-PG Chamber and Visitor's Center.
- HDP coordinated and operated the Hopewell Farmers Market from August to November. Our SNAP/EBT eligible market grew to nearly 20 vendors prior to the end of the season and gave folks something to look forward to every week. We met our goals of encouraging foot-traffic in Downtown, providing a safe, open-air and family-friendly event, connecting our community to fresh produce and supporting local farmers, vendors and musicians who are vital to our regional economic ecosystem. We plan to seek grant funds to hire a Market Manager in 2021 and to continue to grow the market.
- We partnered with the H-PG Chamber of Commerce to film and produce (5) videos in honor of "Shop Small Saturday". We featured a range of businesses operating in Downtown and highlighted establishments with extensive retail or COVID-safe options such as drive-thrus and patios. All videos were shared widely on social media to encourage patrons to #ShopSmall throughout the entire holiday season.

### DID YOU KNOW?

*We sponsored Downtown Pups' inaugural "Fall Fur Fest" by obtaining an ABC License and selling beer which enabled patrons to consume beverages within the designated event area. We partnered with Paddy's Pub on this effort and donated all tips received to the Pub.*





## 04

# Organization

## Planning for the Future

- We completed a Strategic Planning Process (albeit virtually!) under the expertise of Matt Wagner, Vice President of Revitalization Programs for the National Main Street Center. Our entire Board and staff engaged in this process over a period of three weeks in late October and early November. Some of our goals for upcoming years include: diversifying revenue streams, developing special fundraising tools for downtown, planning promotional activities that encourage and highlight diverse participation, beautification of downtown, building and alleyway improvements, entrepreneurial programming, merchant and property owner cohesion, and accentuating the waterfront as our greatest natural asset.
- HDP met with City Staff on a bi-weekly basis to discuss current projects, upcoming plans and ideas with the shared goal of uplifting and strengthening Downtown Hopewell. We found these meetings extremely productive and appreciate this close collaboration with the City of Hopewell.
- If 2020 taught us anything, it's to take chances, to be creative, and to keep going - even when things are far beyond your control. While it was a difficult year to recruit new volunteers, our Board and staff doubled-down and chose to be extremely present and hands-on in Downtown despite the pandemic. We are thankful for all of the organizations and businesses who were right there beside us!

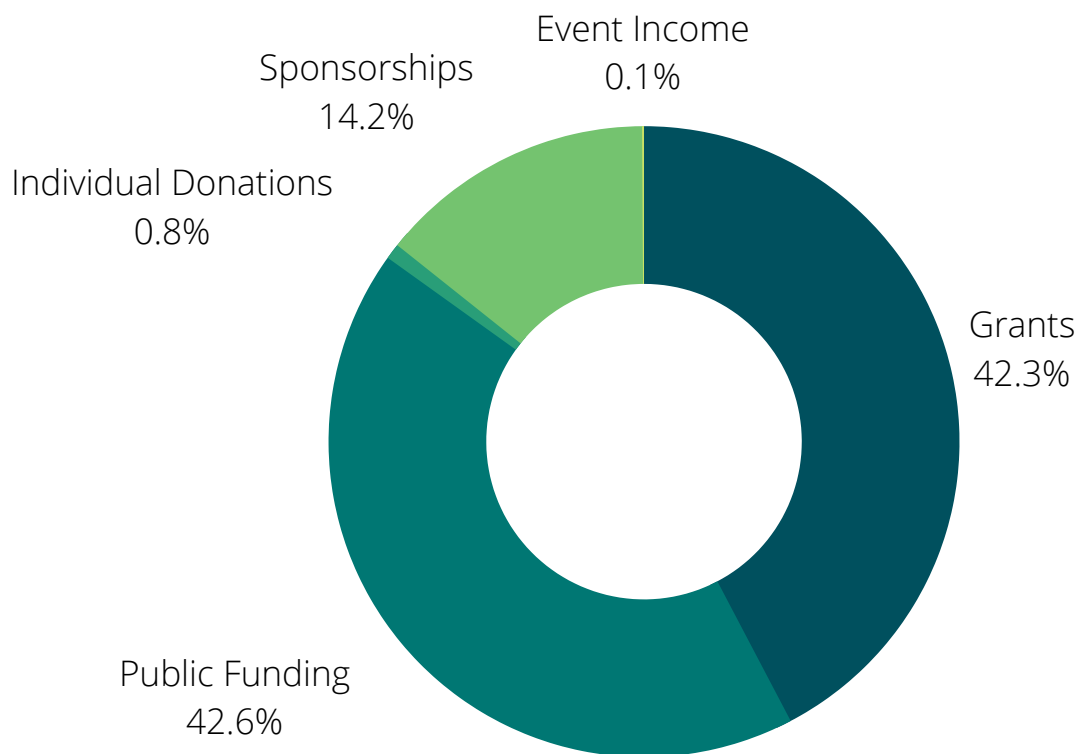
### DID YOU KNOW?

*The Virginia Main Street (VMS) program is coordinated by the Department of Housing and Community Development. HDP is fortunate to receive technical support from VMS and access to a wide range of funding opportunities that can help maintain momentum for the on-going revitalization efforts in downtown Hopewell.*



# Financial Review

Total 2019 & 2020 Income: \$246,233



## 2019 and 2020 Funding Sources

### Programmatic Funders

- Virginia Main Street - Downtown Assistance Grants (COVID Relief)
- Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD)
- Virginia Tourism Corporation
- CultureWorks
- Sponsors and Individual Donations

### General/Operational

- The Governor's Rebuild VA Grant Program
- City of Hopewell
- The Cameron Foundation
- Sponsors and Individual Donations



# 2019-2020 SUPPORTERS

## CORPORATE SPONSORS

AdvanSix  
Anthem  
Ashland Specialty Ingredients  
The Boathouse at City Point  
CareMore  
Columbia Gas of Virginia (NiSource)  
Container First Services  
CSX Corporation  
Dominion Energy  
Ellis Family Dentistry  
Insulation Specialties Inc  
JES Foundations  
John Randolph Medical Center  
Parr & Abernathy Realty  
State Farm - Stuart Hunsicker  
Trapezium Brewing Company  
Virginia Community Capital  
WestRock (Hopewell Mill)  
Woda Cooper Companies

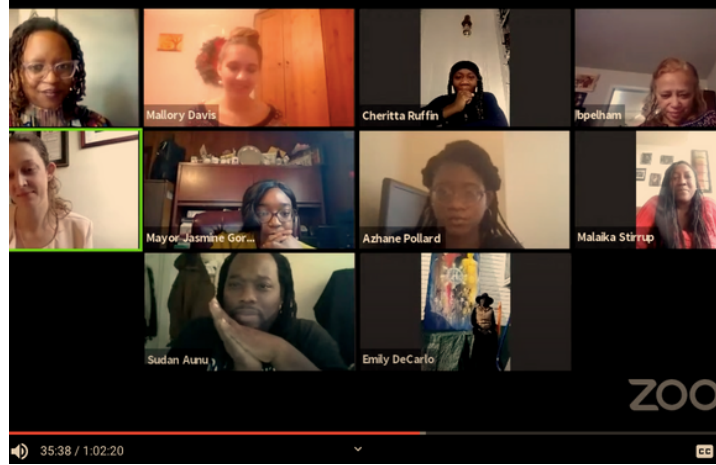
## INDIVIDUAL DONORS

Courtney Bujakowski	Scott McGuffie
Mary French Elder	James & Carol Megrail
Peter Eliades	Donna Martin
Nancy Flowers	Rita Joyner
Nicholas Forrest	Tony Seward
Eliza Lamb	Cassandra Walker
Charles Lamb	Clarence Whitlock
George McDowell	





Virtual Grand Opening



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