

# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT REPORT

2021 - PREPARED BY HEART OF BREVARD



Artist Billy Smith Painting the W. Jordan Street Crosswalk



Downtown during spring.



Old Time Street Dances



[www.brevardnc.org](http://www.brevardnc.org) - 26 Times Arcade, Brevard, NC 28712



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Dear Heart of Brevard Supporters,

There's no doubt that the past 12 months have been unlike any period in recent history. The unprecedented challenges facing individuals and businesses here (and around the globe) required a response that embodied the resilient spirit of our city and demonstrated that Heart of Brevard remains a driving force behind the continued success of our community. 2020 has been a year of strategic goals, expanded partnerships, successful and safe events and increased community engagement. Under the direction of a dedicated Board of Directors, Heart of Brevard continues to pursue the goals of bringing positive, successful businesses to town, maintaining excellent design, preserving our history and creating a vibrant image for downtown.

For nearly three decades, our organization has worked to revitalize the Heart of Brevard district. Our work is guided by the proven Main Street Approach, a comprehensive framework described as the Four Points – Design, Promotion, Economic Vitality and Organization in addition to our newly adopted organizational pillars. Our efforts reflect a wide variety of tactics – including marketing, placemaking, community partnerships, economic development, events and historic preservation – that are designed to move Brevard forward in a meaningful, lasting manner that strengthens our community.

Throughout the pandemic we worked to shift our priorities to support the evolving needs of businesses. Our strategic and comprehensive approach to problem solving allowed us to respond to the needs of our small businesses, maintaining quality of life and ultimately support the vitality of the Heart of Brevard district. Not only are our businesses emerging from these crises stronger than before; Downtown Brevard is positioning itself as a leader among communities across the region.

Progress is always incremental and never complete. Our accomplishments from 2020 are outlined in the following report. We have made great strides in the last year and are excited to continue building on the momentum. We extend our sincere gratitude to City leadership, our board, volunteers, sponsors, partners, and the community for supporting us for nearly 30 years. Our vibrant, growing district would not be what it is without our dedicated businesses and loyal supporters. We are excited about the momentum that continues to build - and we hope you are too.

On behalf of Heart of Brevard and the businesses that constitute our iconic and vital downtown, thank you for your continued support of our organization and community.

Sincerely,

J. Nicole Bentley  
Executive Director



**NORTH CAROLINA  
STATISTICS**

**HEART OF BREVARD  
STATISTICS**

**\$453,839,965**

**267**  
BUILDINGS

**411**  
FACADES

**381**  
BUSINESSES

**1,829**  
JOBS

**101,194**  
HOURS  
(VALUED AT \$2,629,021)

**Public & Private  
Investment**

**Buildings  
Rehabbed/Expanded**

**Facades Improved**

**New Businesses**

**Gained Full-Time and  
Part-Time Jobs**

**Volunteer  
Hours**

**\$8,506,879**

**17**  
BUILDINGS

**3**  
FACADES

**14**  
BUSINESSES

**46**  
JOBS

**895**  
HOURS  
(VALUED AT \$23,252)



# A YEAR WITH HEART OF BREVARD 2021

PHOTO BY KAINE MCCALISTER

## JANUARY

- Finalized new organizational pillars, committee structure and work plans.
- Awarded final round of funding for Transylvania Tomorrow, resulting in \$249,250 granted to 111 businesses.
- Nicole celebrated one year anniversary as Executive Director.

## MARCH

- Attended North Carolina Main Street's Annual Conference, March 8-11.
- Presented the 3rd Annual Arts in March on March 27-28.
- Unveiled new crosswalk mural at the intersection of W. Jordan St. and Broad St.
- Sara celebrated one year anniversary as Community Engagement Manager.
- Contributed \$9,000 to new holiday lighting for downtown.

## MAY

- Introduced Think Local Transylvania marketing campaign with pole banners and a new street banner.
- Cancelled White Squirrel Festival for 2021.
- Awarded \$5,000 in small business grants to three businesses in the district.

## FEBRUARY

- Moved office to 26 Times Arcade Alley.
- Completed Walkability Assessment and Survey of downtown in partnership with the Downtown Master Plan Committee and Blue Zones Project.

## APRIL

- Launched website redesign.
- Celebrated Earth Day with a downtown clean-up day and educational marketing campaign.
- Coordinated pressure washing of downtown streets, businesses and awnings.
- Attended Main Street America's Main Street Now Conference, April 12-14.

## JUNE

- Introduced Art is in the Air, an inaugural en plein air arts festival, June 25-27.
- Presented Saturday Stroll Downtown Open House, in conjunction with Art is in the Air.



# A YEAR WITH HEART OF BREVARD 2021

PHOTO BY KAINE MCCALISTER

## JULY

- Brought Old Time Street Dances back to downtown Brevard.
- Received national accreditation as a designated Main Street Program for meeting rigorous performance standards.

## SEPTEMBER

- Submitted Annual Statistics to North Carolina Main Street.
- Presented final Saturday Stroll of the year on September 24-25.
- HOB Board approved reimbursement for commercial sidewalk and sidewalk dining permit fees.

## NOVEMBER

- Kickoff the holiday season with the 2nd Annual HeART of the Season Self-Guided Art Walk on November 20-21, held in conjunction with the unveiling of downtown's new holiday lighting.
- Launch Think Local, Shop Small, which runs through the holiday season, and promotes shopping local for the holidays
- Introduce Heart for the Holidays - a new holiday event series.

## AUGUST

- Attended NC Main Street's annual Manager's Conference.
- City Council approved subgrade trash dumpsters for W. Jordan Street's Waste Management Pilot Program.

## OCTOBER

- Brought Halloweenfest back to downtown Brevard and included a combination of virtual and safe in-person events and activities.
- Broke ground on the W. Jordan Street Waste Management Pilot Program, in partnership with the City of Brevard.
- Submitted two projects to NC Main Street award judging.

## DECEMBER

- Join us on the evening of December 4th for Light Up the Night Downtown Open House.
- Bring Downtown storefronts to life with the 2nd Holiday Windows Competition & Walking Tour, presented by Comporium.
- Submit annual Main Street America accreditation report.



# 2021 HIGHLIGHTS

## EVENTS



### Saturday Stroll

In June, Heart of Brevard launched a new event series. Saturday Stroll Downtown Open House, held on the last Saturday of the month (April-September), was created to provide a safety-focused way to experience art, live music and shopping in downtown Brevard, during a pandemic. This FREE event series featured 40 participating businesses that offered curated activities and business promotions.

### Art is in the Air

Heart of Brevard's Hub for the Arts Committee introduced a second new event in 2021, Art is in the Air: En Plein Air Festival. This event, organized in partnership with The Transylvania Community Arts Council (TCArts), was held the weekend of June 25-27. The event brought 25 artists to the Heart to practice their craft for two days and concluded with a sale of the work produced at the event. The sale benefited Heart of Brevard and TCArts. Heart of Brevard is currently working with TCArts to plan the festival for 2022.



### Downtown Clean-Up Day

This summer over 50 volunteers joined our Built Environment Committee for our first downtown clean-up day, to help pick up litter, clean sidewalks and pull weeds. The clean-up day provided an opportunity for the community to actively participate in making downtown more attractive. Improving the appearance of downtown not only fosters community pride, but makes downtown a more vibrant and attractive place for residents and visitors to enjoy. Heart of Brevard plans to hold these events bi-annually with a commitment to keeping downtown looking its best.



### Halloweenfest 2021

It's back! The event Count Dracula clears his schedule for every year returned to the Heart on October 30th. The 38th Halloweenfest & Spooky Stroll Downtown Open House was the trickiest, treatiest, most spooktacular celebration around!



This event closed downtown streets to traffic to allow for the annual costume competition and parade, pet costume competition and parade, live music, virtual pumpkin carving contest, a hula hoop dance party, food trucks, downtown trick or treating and more! Open streets allowed us to create a safe and fun environment for all participants and attendees, and ensured plenty of space for social distancing.

# 2021 HIGHLIGHTS

## PLACEMAKING

### Wayfinding Projects

Heart of Brevard worked closely with The City of Brevard and Transylvania County Tourism to design a creative approach for additional wayfinding in the district. The design integrates downtown business maps, photographs, educational awareness and a Think Local highlight to cover six existing utility boxes throughout downtown. Additionally, Heart of Brevard will update the full business directory kiosk located on North Broad Street this fall.

#### Benefits:

- Serves as wayfinding (with maps), placemaking, and storytelling tools
- Creates a visual pedestrian experience
- Transforms dingy metal boxes into public art
- Reduces blight and discourage graffiti, posters, stickers and vandalism



### Brook Trout Crosswalk Mural

In March, Heart of Brevard revealed the City's first crosswalk mural on W. Jordan and Broad Street. The mural was created in partnership with the City of Brevard, Transylvania County Tourism, Blue Zones Project and local artist, Billy Smith. Artistic crosswalks contribute to our overall placemaking efforts while increasing pedestrian safety. Heart of Brevard plans on additional crosswalk murals in downtown in 2021-22.

#### Benefits:

- Creates a more vibrant and well-recognized gateway to Jordan Street for visitors to downtown
- Increases bike and pedestrian safety
- Promotes a sense of community
- Expands public art scope



### Seasonal Design Elements

In 2020 Heart of Brevard collaborated with multiple partners to improve the district with seasonal decorations and enhancements. In spring of 2020 we worked with the City of Brevard, Transylvania County Tourism and 35 Degrees North to refresh and repurpose 30+ planters throughout downtown. In July we installed 57 pole banners in the district to spread awareness for our Think Local Transylvania program. By late November we will install our seasonal holiday tree lights and decor in addition to the new snowflake lights purchased in partnership with the City of Brevard and Transylvania County Tourism.





# 2021 HIGHLIGHTS INITIATIVES

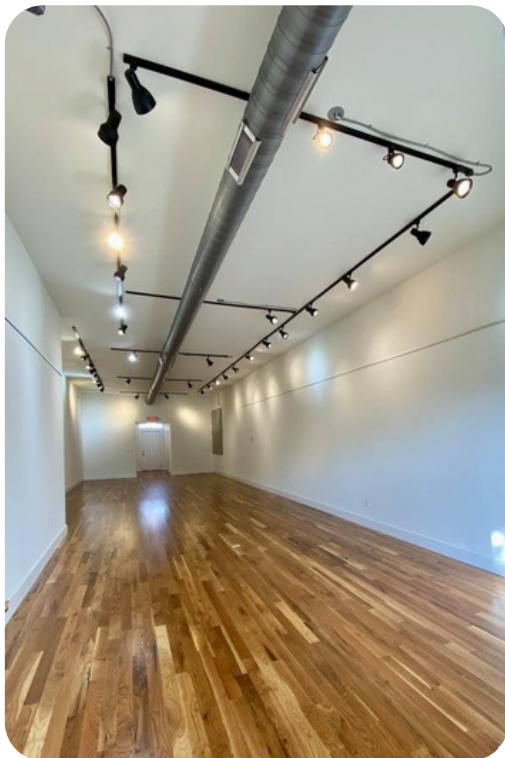
## W. Jordan Street Stakeholders

Heart of Brevard continues to work closely with the Downtown Master Plan Committee and W. Jordan Street business owners for inventive ways to create a more vibrant and a well-recognized gateway to W. Jordan Street - making it more inviting for business and property owners as well as visitors. Through a series of stakeholder meetings and surveys we identified the following as the top priorities.

- 1) Create a vibrant gateway/entrance to W. Jordan Street to increase foot traffic from Broad/Main Streets through public art, planters and wayfinding.
- 2) Relocate trash and recycling bins from W. Jordan Street to three sub-grade EnviroBIN units in the City parking lot. Construction on this project began on October 1st and is predicted to be completed by the end of November.
- 3) Create more public seating and public activation areas to increase foot traffic and overall safety of the street in conjunction with the newly approved Master Plan and Streetscape Plan.

## Heart of Brevard Small Grants Program

This local Heart of Brevard grant fund is designed to help property owners restore and improve their buildings within the Heart of Brevard. In 2021 we awarded \$5,000 in grants to three businesses in the district. In August, the Heart of Brevard board voted to expand this program to include reimbursements for businesses who obtain a commercial or sidewalk dining permit under the City of Brevard's newly adopted ordinance.



Blue Moon Gallery.



PLATT office.



Brevard Brewing Co.

# ADDITIONAL INITIATIVE UPDATES

## THINK LOCAL TRANSYLVANIA



### Think Local Transylvania Gains Momentum

Think Local Transylvania is a program initiated by the Heart of Brevard, that will work, in partnership with the Brevard/Transylvania Chamber of Commerce, to promote and unify businesses county-wide through a strong, unique and fresh marketing campaign.

Any business or nonprofit operating in Transylvania County with less than 200 employees is eligible to join, with special distinction given to those that are locally owned/operated and/or independent. For our first year, the focus has been on the following:

- Securing businesses and nonprofits to serve as ambassadors. More than 90 have signed up.
- Launching a website (thinktransylvania.com) and social media channels to gain new members and promote the initiative.
- Advertising and promoting the effort through downtown banners, posters and yard signs for participants, logo stickers and advertisements with local media.
- Infusing the Think Local Transylvania logo on any programs coordinated by the Chamber or the HOB that focus on buying and supporting our local businesses and nonprofits.

Visit [www.thinktransylvania.org](http://www.thinktransylvania.org)



[thinklocaltransylvania](https://www.thinklocaltransylvania.com)

## TRANSYLVANIA TOMORROW



### Transylvania Tomorrow Wrap Up

Following a successful Spring 2020 launch and a series of Fall and Winter funding starting in December 2020, Transylvania Tomorrow has supported 111 Transylvania County small businesses with \$249,250 in funding to date. 46 Businesses in the Heart of Brevard received \$103,750 in funding. The program's impact on our community has gone beyond simply a financial one. It has provided hope for so many businesses that were unsure of their future during and after the pandemic. The Transylvania Business Support Task Force is currently revising the grant criteria to provide ongoing support for businesses and nonprofits faced with emergency needs.



The Transylvania Business Support Task Force is made up of the Heart of Brevard, Brevard/Transylvania Chamber of Commerce, Transylvania County Tourism, Transylvania Economic Alliance, and Blue Ridge Community College Small Business Center.



**Carole and I really want to thank you for the generosity that the Transylvania Tomorrow relief fund provided for us.**

**During this rough time in history it's great to have a local organization help little businesses throughout the county.**

**-James and Carole Hargis of Blind Mule**

THE STATS	
	
TOTAL AWARDED \$249,250	# OF BUSINESSES AWARDED 111
TOTAL AWARDED TO HEART OF BREVARD BUSINESSES \$103,750	# OF HEART OF BREVARD BUSINESSES AWARDED 46
DOLLARS CONTRIBUTED BY HEART OF BREVARD \$15,000	IN KIND STAFF SUPPORT CONTRIBUTED BY HEART OF BREVARD \$10,000



# MAIN STREET AMERICA

## FOUR POINT APPROACH & ORGANIZATIONAL PILLARS

Heart of Brevard is responsible for fulfilling core North Carolina Main Street mandates that allow Brevard to be recognized as a North Carolina Main Street town and a Nationally Accredited Main Street town. The Main Street Four Point Approach® is a unique preservation-based economic development tool that enables communities to revitalize downtown and neighborhood business districts by leveraging local assets from cultural, historic, and architectural resources to local enterprises and community pride.

### **I. Downtown is an Outdoor Crossroads**

Brevard is surrounded by incredible outdoor assets, including national and state forests, trails, parks and rivers. These assets are drivers for growth, tourism and industry. Heart of Brevard is positioned to play a primary role in this outdoor economy.

### **II. Downtown is a Hub for the Arts**

Brevard is home to a thriving visual and performing arts and music scene. Heart of Brevard is adjacent to renowned performing arts venues that hosts artists from around the world. These venues attract visitors and support a vibrant arts-based economy. Heart of Brevard connects the community through arts initiatives and events, and is an advocate for its artists, galleries and venues.

### **III. Downtown is Local-Centric**

With a small town vibe anchored by local, independent businesses, Heart of Brevard will support local-centric efforts and preserve our small town experience through retention, expansion and recruitment of local, independent businesses. Heart of Brevard is dedicated to welcoming diverse business owners and fostering connections within the business community.

### **IV. Downtown is a Place for Community**

For generations, Brevard has been a highly desirable place to live and recreate because of its commitment to supporting quality of life, prioritizing wellness and outdoor amenities. Brevard is home to diverse groups of full-time and part-time residents, including multigenerational natives, long-time transplants, new residents, young families and retirees. Heart of Brevard supports optimizing the built environment to ensure downtown is a desirable place to live and work. With annual events and festivals, Heart of Brevard showcases downtown as a family-friendly destination year round. Brevard's restaurants, shops, and galleries are enjoyed by locals and visitors alike, as well as those who work downtown.

### **V. Authenticity Guides the Work of HOB**

From our natural outdoor assets to our locally owned businesses to our historic downtown, our community is unique and authentic. As Brevard's downtown development organization, Heart of Brevard actively encourages business support activities, new business development and building and infrastructure improvements that fit the character and context of the Brevard community. Our future directions will be forward-thinking, community-driven and inclusive, grounded in our commitment to the preservation of our historic and natural resources and anchored by our small town, small business character.



# GET TO KNOW US



**Nicole Bentley**  
Executive Director

Originally from Abingdon, VA, Nicole fell in love with western North Carolina while attending Rock Brook Camp; and after graduating from Hollins University, she moved back to the area. Nicole offers over a decade of experience in nonprofit leadership and downtown development. When not seen somewhere on Main Street, Nicole can be found cooking, backpacking or practicing yoga.



**Sara Jerome**  
Community Engagement Manager

Born and raised in Brevard, Sara always knew she'd make her way back to the mountains of her hometown. Her love for the area and her career in development and special events led her to her current role at the Heart of Brevard. When she isn't at the Heart, she's running in the forest or spending time with her partner and two dogs.

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## Board of Directors

### *Executive Committee*

**Billy Parrish** President, Brevard Resident

**Keavy McAbee** Vice President, WOLFBREW Bottle Shop

**Lucy Clark** 2nd Vice President, Lucy Clark Studio & Gallery

**Sarah Hysong** Secretary/Treasurer, Connestee Falls Realty

### *Directors*

**Mark Burrows** Blue Zones Project

**John Felty** Mountain Song Productions

**Curtis Greenwood** PLATT

**Jimmy Harris** Mayor, Harris Ace Hardware

**Clark Lovelace** Brevard/Transylvania Chamber of Commerce, Transylvania County Tourism Development Authority

**Brittany Marcum Cohn** United Community Bank

**John Nichols** Nichols Company

**Ryan Olson** Muddy Sneakers

**Brian Stretcher** PhD, Attorney and Counselor at Law





# BOARD COMMITTEES

## **Executive**

The Executive Committee ensures a focus on the organizational vision, actively manages the organization with the Executive Director, ensures a focus on the economic strategies outlined in the organizational work plans and ensures the organizational pillars and values inform the work planning and outcomes.

## **Marketing, Events & Promotions**

Guided by the organizational pillars the Marketing, Events and Promotions committee oversees organizational branding, promotions, events, marketing and the outdoor crossroads brand.

## **Built Environment**

The Built Environment committee manages the organization's programs for downtown urban design, walkability, connectivity, historic preservation and building design enhancements.

## **Hub for the Arts**

Hub for the Arts works to establish downtown Brevard as a vibrant hub for the art community. We strive to increase visibility for downtown artists and retail businesses that showcase local artists through a unique marketing plan, promotions and signature events.

PREPARED BY

**HEART OF BREVARD**

**2021**

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[www.brevardnc.org](http://www.brevardnc.org)