



OCTOBER 2022 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT REPORT

SUBMITTED BY
HEART OF BREVARD

www.brevardnc.org

GET TO KNOW US

HEART OF BREVARD STAFF

Nicole Bentley

Executive Director

Nicole Bentley serves as Executive Director of Heart of Brevard, a role which she has held since 2020, after working for the Asheville Downtown Association for five years. Nicole joined the Heart of Brevard in the months before COVID-19 and spearheaded the Transylvania Tomorrow Emergency Relief fund, raising over \$249,000 for small business grants, which earned an NC Main Street Award for best economic recovery initiative. Since 2020, iconic downtown Brevard's Heart of Brevard District has received over \$15 million in new investment and introduced a wide variety of new events and programming focused on engaging and promoting downtown businesses without a traditional festival setting. Nicole is originally from Abingdon, VA and attended Hollins University where she studied public policy and communications. When she's not in downtown, Nicole can be found backpacking, traveling and enjoying live music.

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 husband and coonhound, Lee.



Desmond the Cattle Dog

Chief Bark-eting Officer/HOB's Official Mascot

Desmond has never met a treat he didn't enjoy. He loves spending his time downtown visiting local businesses for belly-rubs, chasing white squirrels and napping in the courtyard.

GET TO KNOW US

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Executive Committee

- Keavy McAbee** President, The Emmes Company
- Lucy Clark** Vice President, Lucy Clark Gallery & Studio
- Adam Perkins** Vice President, Rocky's Grill & Soda Shop, DD Bullwinkel's Outdoors
- Sarah Hysong** Secretary/Treasurer, Connestee Falls Realty
- Billy Parrish** Past President, Resident

Other Elected Directors

- Emrie Carlton**, Territory Brevard
- Carol Clay**, Number 7 Arts
- Brittany Marcum Cohn**, United Community Bank
- Curtis Greenwood**, PLATT
- John Nichols**, The Nichols Company, Inc.
- Taylor Singer**, Heart of Brevard Resident
- Brian Stretcher**, Attorney

Appointed Directors

- Maureen Copelof**, Mayor, City of Brevard
- Melissa Driver**, Brevard/Transylvania Chamber of Commerce & Visitor Center
- Jessica Whitmire**, Headwaters Outfitters, Transylvania County Representative



Photos by Jack Christfield and Alan Hunt



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 arts 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.

HEART OF BREVARD

Organizational Pillars and the Main Street America Four Point Approach



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 host 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.



A YEAR IN REVIEW

january

ANNOUNCE EVENTS ROSTER

march

ARTS IN MARCH + MADE BREVARD
NC MAIN STREET CONFERENCE

may

NATIONAL MAIN STREET CONFERENCE
WHITE SQUIRREL WEEKEND
COMPLETE ANNUAL ECONOMIC
IMPACT SURVEY OF HOB DISTRICT

july

TUESDAY NIGHT BLOCK PARTY SERIES
FEATURING OLD TIME STREET DANCES
START OF NEW FISCAL YEAR
JULY 4TH FIREWORKS EXTRAVAGANZA

september

ART IS IN THE AIR EN PLEIN AIR FESTIVAL

november

HEART OF THE SEASON
SHOP SMALL BUSINESS SATURDAY AND
THINK LOCAL KICKOFF
DISPLAY HOLIDAY LIGHTS + SEASONAL DECOR

february

OPEN EVENT APPLICATIONS
TO VENDORS

april

DOWNTOWN CLEAN UP DAY

june

MAIN STREET STATISTICS DUE
TUESDAY NIGHT BLOCK PARTY SERIES
FEATURING LEAF GLOBAL ARTS
HOB BOARD STRATEGIC PLANNING

august

NC MAIN STREET MANAGER'S MEETING
TUESDAY NIGHT BLOCK PARTY SERIES
FEATURING OLD TIME STREET DANCES

october

HALLOWEENFEST + SPOOKY STROLL

december

HOLIDAY WINDOWS COMPETITION
LIGHT UP THE NIGHT

HOB BY THE NUMBERS

A 2-YEAR REVIEW (2020-2022)

PHOTO BY KAINE MCCALISTER

\$13M

**Public & Private
Investment**



27

**Buildings
Rehabbed/Expanded**

2,215

Volunteer Hours



6

**Facades
Improved**



24

New Businesses



\$17,500

**Small Business
Grant Dollars
Awarded**



82

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



North Carolina Statistics

\$815M

**Public & Private
Investment**

509 Buildings Rehabbed/Expanded

411 Facades Improved

641 New Businesses

3,091 Gained Full-Time and Part-Time Jobs

101,194 Volunteer Hours

2022 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Organization

- Received 2022 Main Street America **national accreditation**.
- **Received a NC Main Street Award** for Best Economic Recovery Initiative for Transylvania Tomorrow.
- Secured a five-year **Community Development Contract** with the City of Brevard.
- Worked to **broaden relationships** with communities surrounding downtown by including new program and event partners, such as Biltmore Church, Transylvania Community Arts Council, LEAF Global Arts, Asheville Hoops, Get Set WNC, Four Seasons Hospice, Rosman Magic Book Bus and more.
- Executed **20+ events and programs** for 2022.
- **Grew board engagement** through community-building events, developed a board orientation and “onboarding” process and increased emphasis on financial reporting and management.
- Volunteers donated **1,483 hours, valued at \$40,975.29**.

Promotion

- Increased our newsletter, the Heart Beat, open rate to **40%**.
- **7.5k** Facebook Followers, **2.9k** Instagram Followers.
- Increased social media reach by **85.5%** (Facebook) and **167.4%** (Instagram) over the past year.
- Increased social media page visits **25.9%** (Facebook) and **50.4%** (Instagram) over the past year.
- Updated Downtown **Shopping & Dining Guide** quarterly and **distributed 6,000 guides** county-wide.
- **Secured in-kind sponsorships** from The Laurel of Asheville, WNCW, WSQL and Transylvania Times.
- Increased communication with downtown businesses through the **collection of event and program feedback** via online surveys.
- Planned Think Local, **12 days of shopping and supporting local businesses** as part of 2022 holiday marketing.

Design

- Increased the **pedestrian accessibility and safety** of downtown by conducting the annual Walkability Assessment.
- Allocated **\$11K** (FY22-23) to Downtown Master Plan Committee.
- Awarded **\$10K** in HOB Grant monies to assist with 7 facade improvements and 3 business expansions
- **Served on a panel at NC Main Street Conference** for the W. Jordan Street Trash and Recycling Pilot Program.
- Utilized **volunteers for weeding of HOB district tree wells** in August 2022
- **Increased grant budget by 20%** to support expanded grant opportunities for HOB business and property owners.

Economic Development

- **Received \$25K** Duke Energy Hometown Revitalization Grant.
- Cultivated **close relationships** with property owners and managers to maintain a database of downtown businesses and properties.
- Maintained and marketed a list of **available downtown spaces and properties** on HOB's website.
- **Regularly communicated with and supported businesses currently engaged in downtown development projects** including City Camper Brevard, Sycamore Cycles, Poplar and Ash, Newfound Artisan, etc.
- Maintained list of current businesses looking to **expand or open new business** in the HOB district.
- **Conducted Annual Economic Impact Survey** of HOB businesses and property owners.

ADDITIONAL UPDATES

DUKE REVITALIZATION GRANT AWARD

Heart of Brevard Awarded \$25,000 Hometown Revitalization Grant from Duke Energy Foundation

The Duke Energy Foundation distributed \$500,000 in grants to help small businesses across North Carolina – from restaurants to retailers – to continue their ongoing recovery from economic challenges initially triggered by the pandemic. This is the second year Duke Energy has provided targeted grants in support of downtowns throughout the state.

The \$25,000 grants were awarded to 20 nonprofits, each representing one community. That organization will establish a small-business support microgrant program and deploy the funding within their local community by January 2023. The microgrants may range from \$500 to \$2,500 per individual business.

Heart of Brevard will use the awarded funds to provide micro grants to businesses in the Heart with a focus on beautification projects enhancing the appearance of the business and downtown district. Project examples include pressure washing buildings, exterior painting, facade repair, signage, public art projects outdoor expansion, etc. Heart of Brevard will release grant applications, timeline and selection criteria next month (October 2022).

"We are excited to partner with Duke Energy to expand our current grant program, and to work with our downtown merchants and property owners to distribute grant funds that have a positive impact on our downtown community."
**-Nicole Bentley,
HOB Executive Director**



COMING SOON...

Checkout What's Next at HOB in 2023

- Heart of Brevard Celebrates 30-year Anniversary
- Volunteer Appreciation Event, January 2023
- HOB Annual Meeting, February 2023
- HOB Online Business Directory, Winter 2023
- Downtown Cleanup Day, Spring 2023
- Downtown Business Kiosk Refresh, Spring 2023

Stay in touch at www.brevardnc.org



@heartofbrevard



Photo by Jack Christfield

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