

Transformation Strategy: Business Recruitment and Retention

<p>Why? Main Street Toccoa must continue to develop a focused effort on downtown business retention. This is accomplished by working with local organizations, including the Chamber of Commerce, the Stephens County Development Authority, Main Street committees, and volunteers. The overarching idea is to see a net increase in jobs and businesses downtown.</p>			
Goal 1	Goal 2	Goal 3	Goal 4
Wildly Important Goal			
<p>Bring Brewery to Downtown Toccoa. Downtown Toccoa is a prime location for a brewery, which would bring many different individuals to the downtown on a daily basis. This positive economic asset would benefit the downtown district in substantial ways.</p>	<p>Expand Downtown Entertainment District. In 2022, the City of Toccoa established a Downtown Entertainment District. The goal is to expand this district by promoting businesses that will be active participants in its promotion of economic development efforts downtown.</p>	<p>Work with Municipal Offices to Ensure Accuracy and Efficiency in Reaching Businesses. By coordinating efforts with the City Clerk, staff will be able to determine what businesses are moving into the district and how to cater to their needs.</p>	<p>Create Professional Welcome/Information Packet. Utilizing the current documents, staff will work with the City Clerk to recreate and distribute professional literature physically and online to welcome individuals into the downtown district.</p>
Repeat Annual Responsibilities			
<p>Weekly Update. Continue to provide a Weekly Update promoting downtown businesses, as well as job opportunities, events, programs, and more.</p> <p>Bi-Monthly Newsletter. Continue to provide a Bi-Monthly Newsletter promoting downtown businesses, as well as storefronts for sale, events, programs, and more.</p> <p>Website Maintenance. A new website was completed in December 2021. Continue to update the New Businesses and Available Properties informational tabs on the Main Street Toccoa website, as well as continue to update the Ritz Theatre and Ida Cox Music Series websites with relevant information.</p> <p>Social Media Marketing. Continue to update, keep relevant, and engage the Main Street Toccoa audience.</p> <p>Review Comprehensive Plan. Continue to utilize the 2021 Comprehensive Plan in determining goal priorities and short-term/long-term planning efforts.</p>			

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<p>Goal: Bring Brewery to Downtown Toccoa. Downtown Toccoa is a prime location for a brewery, which would bring many different individuals to the downtown on a daily basis. This positive economic asset would benefit the downtown district in substantial ways.</p>	<p>Define Success: Success will be determined by the establishment, operation, and maintenance of a local brewery in Downtown Toccoa.</p>
<p>Partners: City of Toccoa, City Attorney, Chamber of Commerce, Stephens County Development Authority, Property Owners</p>	

Task	Board Member Responsible	Staff Responsible	Due Date	Progress	Budget
1. Update City Codes in ADVANCE of Brewery so that codes are already adopted in anticipation of a new brewery.	All Board Members	Connie Tabor	July 1, 2022	COMPLETED	\$0
2. Establish Entertainment District in ADVANCE of Brewery so that District is created in anticipation of a new brewery.	All Board Members	Connie Tabor	July 1, 2022	COMPLETED	\$0
3. Implement New Website focusing on City of Toccoa, Main Street Toccoa, and Lake Toccoa Facilities	All Board Members	Connie Tabor	July 1, 2022	COMPLETED	\$18,500
4. Recreate Welcome Packet that will professionally and succinctly welcome new businesses downtown.	All Board Members	Connie Tabor	June 30, 2023	IN PROGRESS	\$5,000
5. Create Line of Communication with City Clerk so that new businesses are notified of Main Street benefits.	All Board Members	Connie Tabor	June 30, 2023	IN PROGRESS	\$0
6. Update Business Directory with accurate count of businesses, employees, and contact Information.	All Board Members	Connie Tabor ; Brandy Holden	October 30, 2022	IN PROGRESS	\$0
7. Update Parcel Directory with accurate information regarding property type, condition, and tax value.	All Board Members	Connie Tabor	December 31, 2022	IN PROGRESS	\$0
8.					
9.					
				Total	\$23,500

Transformation Strategy: Competitive Incentive Structure

<p>Why? Main Street Toccoa will continue to implement targeted historic preservation and revitalization efforts. This will be accomplished through offering a competitive Façade Grant program, a Beautification Fund, and through continual efforts to encourage a competitive downtown atmosphere through elements like Rural Zone and Enterprise Funding and through Main Street Toccoa’s promotion as a Live, Work, Play Community.</p>			
Goal 1	Goal 2	Goal 3	Goal 4
Wildly Important Goal			
<p>Retain the Historic Integrity of the Downtown District. This will be accomplished through a targeted incentive structure, along with the assistance of the Historic Preservation Commission.</p>	<p>Promote and Utilize the Downtown Façade Grant Program. Over 90 facades have been renovated since this program’s conception. The goal is to promote the beauty of the Downtown Historic District.</p>	<p>Promote and Utilize the Currahee Street Beautification Grant. This program focuses on the beautification of an important gateway into the Downtown District. Efforts in promoting it will help to develop this much-needed corridor.</p>	<p>Promote Other Funding Programs and Designations. Main Street Toccoa has the advantage of several other programs that will assist with revitalization efforts in the community.</p>
Repeat Annual Responsibilities			
<p>Utilize COA Process. The Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) is an important tool in securing the integrity and intactness of the Historic District.</p> <p>Utilize Design Services. With the dissolution of the Downtown Design Service, staff will now need to find an alternative, affordable program to help downtown business and property owners renovate their storefronts appropriately.</p> <p>Implement Façade Grants. The Façade Grant line item is an important element in the Main Street budget and should be utilized to its full effect annually. It must be expanded for 2022 to include the economic development boom currently happening downtown.</p> <p>Implement Currahee Street Beautification Grants. The Currahee Street Beautification Grant (CSBG) is an important element in the Main Street budget and should be utilized to its full effect annually.</p> <p>Promote Revolving Loan Funds. There are several different loan programs that the DDA may utilize to help downtown business and property owners build or expand.</p> <p>Promote Rural Zone. Main Street Toccoa was awarded Rural Zone status in 2018. This program will allow downtown business and property owners to leverage state income tax credits in purchasing property, hiring employees, and revitalizing property.</p> <p>Promote PlanFirst Designation. Main Street Toccoa was recertified with PlanFirst designation in 2021. This program is determined by the successful use and operation of the city comprehensive plan.</p>			

Transformation Strategy: Competitive Incentive Structure

Goal: Retain the Historic Integrity of the Downtown District. This will be accomplished through a targeted incentive structure, along with the assistance of the Historic Preservation Commission.	Define Success: Success will be determined by a regular number of business and property owners utilizing the various programs and incentives that Main Street Toccoa has to offer.
Partners: City of Toccoa, Historic Preservation Commission, Toccoa Planning Commission, DDA, DCA, GMRC	

Task	Board Member Responsible	Staff Responsible	Due Date	Progress	Budget
1. Find affordable and professional design rendering service with the absence of the Downtown Design Studio.	Thurston Estes	Connie Tabor	June 30, 2023	IN PROGRESS	\$6,000
2. Provide at least one Façade Grant this fiscal year.	All Board Members	Connie Tabor	June 30, 2023	5 COMPLETED; 6 IN PROGRESS	\$25,000; Additional Funds Available
3. Provide at least one CSBG this fiscal year.	All Board Members	Connie Tabor	June 30, 2023	IN PROGRESS	\$15,000
4. Assist at least two businesses with Rural Zone Tax Credits this fiscal year.	Marilyn Hall	Connie Tabor	June 30, 2023	3 COMPLETED	\$0
5. Provide Revolving Loan Funds to potential or expanding downtown businesses.	All Board Members	Connie Tabor	June 30, 2023	3 IN PROGRESS	\$0
6. Provide Green Energy Rebate from Georgia Cities Foundation to at least two downtown businesses.	All Board Members	Connie Tabor	June 30, 2023	2 COMPLETED	\$0
7.					
8.					
				Total	\$22,000

Transformation Strategy: Implementation of Downtown Events

<p>Why? Main Street Toccoa must continue to be tourism-based and culturally-driven. This effort will be accomplished through Main Street Toccoa’s operation of the Historic Ritz Theatre as an economic anchor for the downtown, which sees constant and professional programming through grant funding assistance and city budgetary obligations.</p>			
Goal 1	Goal 2	Goal 3	Goal 4
Wildly Important Goal			
<p>Promote the Ritz Theatre as the Downtown Economic Anchor. The Ritz Theatre serves as a fulcrum that bridges shopping, dining, and lodging in the downtown. Its continued operation will contribute substantially to the economic livelihood of the downtown.</p>	<p>Provide a Regular Schedule of Events Downtown. By hosting events on a regular basis, the Ritz Theatre and events downtown will help locals and tourists to continue to invest in the downtown with their time and money.</p>	<p>Seek Out Grant Funding Opportunities for Programming and Capital Improvements. Various grant funding sources will encourage lower-cost ticket options, greater programming, and an investment in the future of Main Street-operated facilities.</p>	<p>Work with Friends of the Ritz and Volunteers to Promote the Theatre and Main Street Events. This secondary fundraising 501c3, as well as regular volunteer recruitment, will help to provide additional programming and capital plans for the theatre and downtown events.</p>
Repeat Annual Responsibilities			
<p>Implement over 50 Annual Events. This includes the Harvest Festival, the Ida Cox Music Series, the Toast of Toccoa, and more.</p> <p>Provide a Regular Schedule of Entertainment. This should ideally be monthly, or at least bi-monthly, with high-quality acts ranging from live concerts to theatrical events, to educational content, and more. New events should be created that continue to appeal to downtown investment.</p> <p>Promote the Ritz Theatre as a Community Venue. Provide low-cost ticket options for residents and sponsor and host community events as necessary.</p> <p>Apply for Georgia Council for the Arts Grant Funding. The Ritz Theatre has been pleased to receive funding for the past five years in a row. This funding is vital for the programming schedule.</p> <p>Apply for South Arts Funding. The Ritz Theatre has been pleased to receive funding for the past three years in a row. This funding is vital for the programming schedule.</p> <p>Apply for Fox Theatre Funding. The Ritz Theatre has been pleased to receive funding for the past two years in a row. This funding is vital for the programming schedule.</p> <p>Communicate with Friends of the Ritz, Inc. The Memorandum of Agreement with Friends of the Ritz, Inc. should be reviewed annually so as to determine the best course for the future of the relationship with this support organization.</p>			

Transformation Strategy: Implementation of Downtown Events

<p>Goal: Promote the Ritz Theatre as the Downtown Economic Anchor. The Ritz Theatre serves as a fulcrum that bridges shopping, dining, and lodging in the downtown. Its continued operation will contribute substantially to the economic livelihood of the downtown.</p>	<p>Define Success: Success will be determined by a combination of high-quality programming and economic benefits that the Ritz Theatre provides to the downtown community.</p>
<p>Partners: City of Toccoa, Georgia Council for the Arts, South Arts, Georgia Department of Economic Development</p>	

Task	Board Member Responsible	Staff Responsible	Due Date	Progress	Budget
1. Apply for 2022 - 2023 Georgia Council for the Arts Funding.	Marilyn Hall	Christian Hamilton	June 30, 2023	Funding AWARDED	\$12,000
2. Apply for 2022 – 2023 South Arts Funding	Marilyn Hall	Christian Hamilton	June 30, 2023	Applying for Express Grant	\$4,000
3. Apply for 2022 – 2023 FTI Funding	Marilyn Hall	Christian Hamilton	June 30, 2023	AWAITING APPLICATION	\$4,000
4. Implement the 2022 Ida Cox Music Series.	All Board Members	Sharon Crosby	August 2022	COMPLETED	\$16,000
5. Implement the 2022 Harvest Festival.	All Board Members	Sharon Crosby	October 29 – 30, 2022	COMPLETED	\$14,000
6. Implement the 2022 Toast of Toccoa.	All Board Members	Sharon Crosby	April 30, 2022	COMPLETED	\$14,000
7. Implement the 2022 ChristmasFest	All Board Members	Sharon Crosby	December 2, 2022	IN PROGRESS	\$6,000
8. Implement other Yearly Events.	All Board Members	Sharon Crosby	Ongoing	Cruise-In; Toccoa Train Day; Others	\$24,000
9. Work with Friends of the Ritz, Inc. for combined programming efforts	All Board Members	Tami Mayhugh	Ongoing	IN PROGRESS	\$3,000
				Total	\$97,000

Transformation Strategy: Beautification and Design

<p>Why? Main Street Toccoa must implement a continual effort for downtown improvement and beautification. This will be accomplished through grant funding sponsored by agencies such as the United States Department of Agriculture, the Appalachian Regional Commission, the Georgia Department of Economic Development, the Georgia Council for the Arts, South Arts, the Fox Theatre Institute, and other organizations.</p>			
Goal 1	Goal 2	Goal 3	Goal 4
Wildly Important Goal			
<p>Utilize Grant Funding to Implement Beautification Efforts in Tugalo Street Parking Lot. Lacking a real “city center,” the Tugalo Street Parking Lot is the prime location for greenspace development.</p>	<p>Construct Ritz Theatre Lobby Addition. The historic nature of the Ritz Theatre means that an addition is required to meet ADA-accessible bathrooms and lobby/concession stand improvements.</p>	<p>Utilize Grant Funding to Implement Beautification Efforts in Downtown Passageway. The passageway needs minor quality-of-life updates, as well as bathroom and advertising improvements.</p>	<p>Utilize Grant Funding to Implement Beautification Efforts in Downtown Alleyways and Gateways. The alleyways and gateways need sense-of-place updates to create a more welcoming and established downtown environment.</p>
Repeat Annual Responsibilities			
<p>Search out Grant Opportunities. Whether these be through the USDA, the ARC, DCA, or other organizations, grant funds are essential to garnering downtown beautification updates.</p> <p>City Commission/DDA Meeting Updates. The Toccoa City Commission is the most critical group in the implementation of downtown beautification projects, and their support will allow Main Street Toccoa to seek out grant funding.</p>			

Transformation Strategy: Beautification and Design

<p>Goal: Utilize Grant Funding to Implement Beautification Efforts in Tugalo Street Parking Lot. Lacking a real “city center,” the Tugalo Street Parking Lot is the prime location for greenspace development.</p>	<p>Define Success: Success is determined by the completion of necessary renovation work in the Tugalo Street Greenspace.</p>
<p>Partners: City of Toccoa, Department of Community Affairs, Chamber of Commerce</p>	

Task	Board Member Responsible	Staff Responsible	Due Date	Progress	Budget
1. Apply for Grant Funding from DCA’s Rural Downtown Redevelopment Grant Program	All Board Members	Connie Tabor	June 3, 2022	FUNDING AWARDED	\$0
2. Complete Design Renderings for Project.	All Board Members	Connie Tabor	June 3, 2022	COMPLETED	\$4,000
3. Complete RFPs for Project Implementation.	All Board Members	Connie Tabor	September 2022	COMPLETED; Phase One IN PROGRESS	\$0
4. Hire Contractor to Complete Work	All Board Members	Connie Tabor	July 2024	IN PROGRESS	\$759,000
5. Open Greenspace to Public through Ribbon Tying	All Board Members	Connie Tabor	July 2024	IN PROGRESS	\$0
6.					\$0
7.					\$0
8.					\$0
				Total	\$763,000