



2019 Annual Report

OUR VISION

Uptown Shelby is the social, cultural, and independent business hub of Cleveland County. In this vibrant, walkable district, we celebrate our musical and artistic roots, our small businesses, and healthy living.

OUR MISSION

Our mission is to **advocate, celebrate, and enhance** Uptown Shelby. We accomplish this by:

Leading through long-term planning and thought leadership

Empowering Stakeholders

Fostering Communication, Community Engagement, and Collaboration

We work to grow a stronger, more viable district through promotion, partnerships, economic restructuring, and design.

adopted 2014

2019-2020 Board of Directors

David Royster IV, President - Capitol Funds, Inc
Roger Holland, President-Elect - Holland & Hamrick Architects, PA
Maggie Jaynes, Past-President - Jaynes Law
Stephen Carico, Treasurer - Gragg & Gragg, LLP
Angela Franklin, Secretary - Uptown Indigo Event Venue
Spencer Borders - Foothills Commercial Real Estate
Chris Greene - Arrows Investment / Hoke Construction
Jim Curtis - Pillar to Post Home Inspections
Brandon Fitzmorris - JPS Group
Andrea Reno - Reno Chiropractic Center
Patrick Vollmer - Vita Eye Clinic
Curtis Bailey - Uptown Olive Oil & More + Uptown Sweets & Treats
Lacey Beam - Rutherford & McDowell County District Attorney's Office
Scott Sharp - Edward Jones
April Crotts - Cleveland County representative
Rick Howell - City Manager, City of Shelby

Staff

Audrey Whetten, Executive Director
Tricia Woodland, Manager of Events & Marketing
Anna Lineberger, Bookkeeper
Jenny Seykora, Office Manager

Office

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March 2, 2020

The Uptown Shelby Association is an award-winning 501(c)(3) nonprofit that was founded in 1981 to manage one of the first thirty Main Street® programs in the country. For 40 years, we have worked to revitalize the Uptown Shelby district. Our work is guided by the proven Main Street Approach, comprehensive framework described as the Four Points – Design, Promotion, Economic Vitality, and Organization. Our efforts reflect a wide variety of tactics – including marketing, placemaking, community partnerships, business development, events, and historic preservation – that are designed to move Uptown Shelby forward in a meaningful, lasting manner. Our accomplishments from 2019 are outlined on the following pages.

We have made great strides since Shelby was designated as one of the first Main Street communities in 1980, and are excited to continue building on the momentum. We extend our sincere gratitude to our board, volunteers, sponsors, partners, and the community for supporting us for nearly 40 years. The momentum we see today would not be possible without so much broad-based support.

We appreciate your support of Uptown Shelby today and every day. 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.



The Guiding Principles of Main Street

- Comprehensive
- Incremental
- Self-help
- Partnerships
- Identifying and capitalizing on existing assets
- Quality
- Change
- Implementation

DESIGN

Projects completed

- Installation of festival lights in S. Dale St alley
- Commission & installation of *Incrementum* public art piece on South Washington St
- Working with the City of Shelby: streetscape feedback, bike/pedestrian plan steering committee, Keep Shelby Beautiful

Program services delivered

- Façade grants: 107 North Lafayette St (complete), 115 North Lafayette St (pending project completion)
- NCMS design rendering for 205 South Washington St



PROMOTION

Projects completed

- Google Business progress: increase in Uptown businesses who have claimed their listing from 36% in fall 2016 to 58% in fall 2019
- Promotional video completed & pushed digitally to likely visitors
- Event refresh for Seeds to Silverware – new name, logo, new event concepts & formats
- Hosted 25 events –
 - Second Saturday (April – Oct)
 - Art Walk (April & Oct)
 - Keep Shelby Beautiful Day (April)
 - USA volunteer thank-you party (May)
 - Shelby Alive Concert (May – Aug)
 - Seeds in Season (Sept)
 - Pumpkin painting at the Music Mush & Mutts Festival (Oct)
 - Zombie Crawl (Oct)
 - Tree Lighting & Carriage Rides (Nov-Dec)
 - Small Business Saturday (Nov)
 - Christmas Parade (Dec)

Program services delivered

- Provided advice to event organizers and shared information with businesses regarding non-USA events hosted in Uptown such as the Atrium holiday party, Mush Music & Mutts festival, Art of Sound, and the 7th Inning Stretch festival.
- Social media – about 13,300 followers across Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter
- Distributed visitor maps locally & regionally
- Distributed branded shopping bags, stickers, pens, and notepads to businesses
- Digital & print ads – Facebook, Instagram, Experience Cleveland County magazine, ALWS program, Piedmont Now, The Shelby Star, What's Up Shopper
- E-newsletter – 18 emails sent; 698 subscribers (including 147 new subscribers in 2019), 41.6% open rate
- Website management: Marketing plan implementation has had positive results. Numbers below represent change from 2018 to 2019:
 - Direct visits to UptownShelby.com increased by over 84%
 - Referrals from Facebook increased by over 186%
 - Average time on events page increased by 72%
 - 2,960 average visits per month (up from 2,620 average in 2018)
 - Total web traffic increased by 12.95% (35,518 total sessions in 2019 compared to 31,445 total sessions for 2018)

ECONOMIC VITALITY

Projects completed

- Business recruitment brochure
- Support for Mountain BizWorks – location assistance for pop-up office in Shelby (April/May), recruitment for Foundations class, client referrals

Program services delivered

- On-boarding new businesses (23 new businesses in 2019)
- Support for business expansions (7 businesses expanded in 2019)
- Providing information to prospective entrepreneurs & businesses
- Providing information to property owners and prospective investors
- Individual business consultations
- 29 business email updates in 2019 with 38.8% open rate
- 4 business socials hosted, with attendance ranging from 20 – 80 people per event
- Uptown Shelby Business Roundtable Facebook group - 142% growth in members (from 50 to 124 members over the course of 2019) with significant increase in posting frequency and member engagement



ORGANIZATION

Projects completed

- Received National Accreditation once again – a designation from Main Street America for communities demonstrating exemplary commitment to preservation-based economic development and community revitalization through the Main Street Approach.
- Recognition in several noteworthy avenues for Shelby’s successful efforts leveraging cultural resources for economic development:
 - UNC-C selected Shelby to highlight in their Urban-Rural Connections project, which included several articles, a town hall in Shelby (filmed for UNC-TV), and participation in the Shul Forum, which culminated the multi-year project.
 - UNC School of Government/UNC-TV spent several days in Shelby in Oct 2019 conducting focus groups, filming promotional videos, and hosting the town hall. The resulting episode was aired on UNC-TV in January 2020.
 - NC Main Street selected Uptown Shelby to be highlighted as a case study in the forthcoming NC Main Street Economic Impact report.
- Letters of support for NCDOT grant for acquisition of the rail trail and for the Farmers Market Promotion Program grant
- Continued streetscape communication between City and uptown stakeholders
- The USA board continued building relationships with Shelby City Council by attending City Council meetings, City Council retreat, and the City’s volunteer recognition banquet.
- Secured grant funding from the Dover Foundation as well as the City of Shelby tourism grant program
- Staff trainings attended in 2019: NC Main Street Conference, NC Main Street Managers Meeting & regional meetings, DIY Tourism & Local Marketing Conference, Outdoor Economy Conference, and the Schul Forum on Urban-Rural Connections.

Program services delivered

- Continue partnerships with City of Shelby, Keep Shelby Beautiful, Historic Shelby Foundation, Cleveland County Chamber, Foothills Farmers Market, Cleveland County Tourism, Earl Scruggs Center, Cleveland County Arts Council, American Legion World Series, Don Gibson Theatre, Mountain BizWorks, Raper-Roark Trust Fund, and others. Audrey serves on several boards locally as well as two state-wide boards: NC Downtown Development Association & NC Main Street Partners.

ON-GOING PROJECTS

- Alley lights 2.0 – W. Dale St
- Events – 21 events in 2020, including several new Seeds in Season fundraisers
- Office update
- Business socials
- Streetscape communication
- Proposal for renewing MSD services to City of Shelby
- Update to open flag program for Uptown businesses

