



Town of
Strasburg
VIRGINIA

Downtown Strasburg Economic
Restructuring Plan

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Assistance Provided by:
Community Planning Partners, Inc.
& Smither Design

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INTRODUCTION

The Town of Strasburg is located centrally in the Northern Shenandoah Valley, just south of the crossroads of I-81 and I-66 and astride of U.S. Route 11, the Valley Pike or Old Valley Pike. Although not the county seat, the Town of Strasburg is the largest town in Shenandoah County with a population of 6,511 as of the 2013 American Community Survey one-year population estimates.

Strasburg is located on the North Fork of the Shenandoah River and very near the northern most point of Massanutten Mountain. Signal Knob, an outcropping used by the Confederate Army to signal the approach of Union forces, continues to stand as a sentinel over Strasburg. Like many Shenandoah Valley towns, Strasburg saw both Union and Confederate forces march through the town on their way to battle, including the skirmish at Hupp's Hill on the north end of town.

Founded in 1761, Strasburg was an important rail terminal for local farmers and a leading producer of ceramic pottery in the late 1800's, providing the town with an early nickname, Pot Town. Always at a crossroads, whether the railroad, Valley Pike, and John Marshall Highway or I-81/I-66, the Town has both benefited from and been challenged by its access to the transportation network. The crossroads location makes it easy to get to, but also easy to get away from. This has made it easier for residents to shop and work out of the area. When entering Strasburg from the north, first time visitors might be surprised to find fair sized swaths of development more in keeping with a Northern Virginia suburb. The growth of this type of development, slowed by the recent recession, spiked the Town's population significantly between 2000 and 2010 from 4,017 to 6,398, an increase of 59.3%. Unfortunately, with larger retail hubs minutes away via the interstates, downtown retail in Strasburg did not grow along with its population, hence the need to continue examining effective strategies and securing financial resources to remake Downtown Strasburg.

The Town, with the assistance of the Northern Shenandoah Valley Regional Commission, intends to submit a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) application for downtown revitalization funding to the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) in the spring of 2015. As a required element of such an application, the Town has to complete an Economic Restructuring Plan during its planning for the CDBG grant application (a process funded by a DHCD Planning Grant). The task of developing the Economic Restructuring Plan was given to Community Planning Partners (CPP) out of Richmond, VA. CPP's partners in assembling the Economic Restructuring Plan is a local Management Team that has been tasked with ongoing downtown revitalization efforts and shaping the CDBG grant application, staff of the Town of Strasburg, and staff of the Northern Shenandoah Valley Regional Commission.

After this brief introduction and a review of previous plans, this Economic Restructuring Plan is divided into three major parts:

- Part 1: Market/Trade Area Study & Economic Restructuring Analysis
- Part 2: Marketing & Business Recruitment Strategy
- Part 3: Capital Improvement Priorities

An additional item at the end of the Economic Restructuring Plan is a list of recommendations for consideration by the Town Council of Strasburg.

REVIEW OF PREVIOUS PLANS

As with any planning process, the first step is to review all previous planning efforts and other available data and information. The Town of Strasburg has been gearing up for the revitalization of their downtown and has conducted a number of planning studies in preparation. The following text highlights those portions of the various plans germane to the assembly of this Economic Restructuring Plan.

Town of Strasburg Community Plan

Adopted in 2012, the Town of Strasburg Community Plan provides a comprehensive vision for future development of the Town of Strasburg. This “strategic” plan, or comprehensive plan per planner lingo and Code of Virginia requirements, presents the Town Vision Statement and in-depth information on Strasburg’s character and environment, land use and community design, transportation, infrastructure, and community facilities and services. The plan concludes with implementation measures listing nine goals and supporting strategies to accomplish each goal. Implementation measures do not include a schedule for implementation. Appendix A contains population projections for the Town of Strasburg through to 2050. Appendix B of the Community Plan is a SWOT Analysis, which was conducted for four target areas within Strasburg including the Downtown Historic District.

Although the scope of the Strasburg Community Plan is for the entire town of Strasburg rather than just Downtown Strasburg, the Plan provides context and information that informs the Economic Restructuring Plan. The following are key items relevant to this Economic Restructuring Plan contained in the Strasburg Community Plan:

- Goal #2 states: “Encourage the maintenance and development of historic and cultural resources, and the preservation of natural resources.” This is accomplished through three strategies including Strategy A which states “Adopt and promote tax incentives as a method of encouraging the maintenance and rehabilitation of historically and culturally significant buildings and properties” and Strategy C which states “Preserve, protect, and enhance Civil War battlefield areas, the Strasburg Historic District, and other historic sites and buildings in Strasburg.”
- Goal #6 states “Provide a transportation network that ensures safe, convenient, and efficient travel for vehicles and pedestrians, promotes regional travel, and enhances the human-scale environment of the Town.” Strategy C under Goal #6 states “Provide for the separation of pedestrian and vehicular traffic through the construction of new sidewalks and trails and the reconstruction of sidewalks in need of repair. The annual budget should include an appropriate allocation for sidewalk and trail construction and repair.” The planned transportation network for pedestrians includes a number of proposed improvements, most notably the Town Run Greenway and the expansion of Strasburg Riverwalk. The Town Run Greenway would be a multi-use trail which generally parallels Town Run and would connect the Strasburg Riverwalk to Downtown and then north to the Industrial Park. The expansion of the existing Strasburg Riverwalk would parallel the North Fork of the Shenandoah River and Cedar Creek and would tie into the regional trail planned to connect Fisher’s Hill and Cedar Creek battlefields.
- The SWOT analysis conducted for the Downtown Historic District listed the following:
 - Strengths: compact, walkable, and pedestrian friendly; natural resources such as Town Run and mature trees; pedestrian scale of buildings; distinctive architectural, cultural, and historical setting; unique businesses.
 - Weaknesses: perceived or real lack of parking; heavy traffic count on Route 11; lack of unified

- signage; condition of sidewalks and crosswalks/ramps; lack of business base and mix; underutilized physical assets (buildings); pigeons; business hours – no night life; lack of gathering spaces; aging infrastructure; mostly professional offices – little retail; condition of buildings.
- Opportunities: brand and market the Town based on its historic downtown; create a Strasburg niche; construct trail along Town Run and connect to other trails such as the Riverwalk; create civic spaces, wireless infrastructure; rail connection; facilitate economic development.
- Threats: vacancy; property maintenance and neglect; competition from commercial development outside of Downtown; unattractive nodes and entrances; distance from interstate.
- Population projections estimate Strasburg's population to be 7,573 in 2020 and upwards to 12,557 in 2050.

(The information contained in this plan will be particularly germane to Part 3: Capital Improvement Priorities.)

Strasburg Downtown Plan

The Strasburg Downtown Plan was adopted in 2012 as a small area plan or “strategic plan” for Downtown Strasburg. The National Trust Main Street Four-Point Approach was utilized as the methodology behind the plan. The Four-Point Approach is Organization, Promotion, Design, and Economic Structure.

The Strasburg Downtown Plan begins with a Comparative Analysis of Previous Plans and an Analysis of Existing Conditions. From this information, the Steering Committee developed a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats Analysis for Downtown Strasburg. Part II of the plan kicks off with a Vision Statement for the Downtown and is followed by Goals and Strategies organized by Organization, Promotion, Design, and Economic Structure. The document concludes with a detailed Implementation Timetable.

(The Strasburg Downtown Plan is a wealth of information and provides a solid foundation for this Economic Restructuring Plan. Because all of the Goals and Strategies identified in it are germane to this Economic Restructuring Plan, “Part II: A Plan for Downtown Strasburg” is included as an appendix to this plan.)

Market Analysis for the Town of Strasburg, April 2012 James Madison University Students

In 2012, students from James Madison University in Harrisonburg, VA conducted a detailed market analysis of Downtown Strasburg to assess the unmet market demand for goods and services. The students used a comparative analysis methodology examining the number of certain establishments and the cost of space in five similar towns located in the Shenandoah Valley. The results of the market study found unmet demand for the following: frozen treats, grocery, healthy dining option, sports bar/brewery, other specialty retail (wine bar, bookstore, clothing retail). *(The information contained in this report will be particularly germane to Part 2: Marketing & Business Recruitment Strategy.)*

Physical Inventory of Building Conditions & Vacancies

The Physical Inventory of Downtown Strasburg was completed in the summer and fall of 2013 as a requirement of the DHCD Planning Grant. The Physical Inventory evaluated the physical conditions of 106 properties using the Dunbar & Associates method. The results of the Physical Inventory found 73% were sound, 17% were deteriorated, and 10% dilapidated. The Physical Inventory also noted vacancies and found 17 properties or 16% were vacant. Based on this Physical Inventory, Strasburg has met the minimum

threshold of at least 25% blighted properties per the CDBG Program Design for a Downtown Revitalization Grant. *(The information contained in this report will be particularly germane to Part 2: Marketing and Business Recruitment Strategy.)*

Business Inventory Survey Data

The Business Inventory Survey was also completed in the summer and fall of 2013 as a requirement of the DHCD Planning Grant. The Business Inventory Survey is currently being update for any changes that have occurred over this past year. The Business Inventory Survey surveyed every establishment within the downtown boundaries with 22 questions including tenure, estimated annual sales, change in sales this past year, number of employees, average weekly customers, busiest day of the week, busiest month of the year, business plan, suggestions on new businesses needed, and suggestions for improvements in Downtown Strasburg. *(The information contained in this report will be particularly germane to Part 2: Marketing and Business Recruitment Strategy.)*

Downtown Parking Analysis Technical Memorandum

The Downtown Parking Analysis Technical Memorandum was completed in May of 2014 by the Northern Shenandoah Valley Regional Commission. The Memorandum compiled an inventory of all parking in Downtown Planning Area, both on-street and off-street. The results of the analysis found that parking in Downtown Strasburg is “sufficient” under general circumstances. The Memorandum presented five innovative strategies in parking management to improve and maximum the existing parking. *(The information contained in this report will be particularly germane to Part 3: Capital Improvement Priorities.)*

Key Takeaways from Previous Plans

- The Town of Strasburg has been active in planning and preparing for the revitalization of Downtown Strasburg.
- Population projections estimate Strasburg’s population to be 7,573 in 2020 and upwards to 12,557 in 2050.
- Unmet demand for the following was identified: frozen treats, grocery, healthy dining option, sports bar/brewery, other specialty retail (wine bar, bookstore, clothing retail).
- Based on the Physical Inventory, Strasburg has met the minimum threshold of at least 25% blighted properties per the CDBG Program Design.
- Parking downtown is “sufficient” under general circumstances.

PART I:
MARKET/TRADE AREA STUDY
& ECONOMIC RESTRUCTURING ANALYSIS

TRAFFIC COUNTS

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) logs traffic counts on segments of roads in the VDOT system on an annual basis. Measured as Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT), VDOT's traffic counts help paint a picture of the traffic flow in a given area. This section will examine trends in traffic counts for the Town of Strasburg and compare the traffic counts in Strasburg to traffic counts in nearby towns.

VDOT collects traffic counts for five back-to-back segments within the town limits of Strasburg from the South Corporate Limit (SCL) on Stover Avenue to the North Corporate Limit (NCL) on North Massanutten Street. The interconnectivity of the segments helps provide a detailed understanding of overall traffic flow within Downtown Strasburg. Originally, Stover Ave (South Corporate Line to King Street) and King Street (Stover Avenue to Holliday Street) was one road segment that was split into the two current segments in 2004. Data between 2001 and 2004 for that combined segment was repeated to provide a consistent analysis over time.

The highest traffic volume within Strasburg occurs on North Massanutten Street. Both recorded segments of North Massanutten Street exhibit an average volume of 13,000 cars per day and they have generally held this level of volume for some time. Stover Avenue and King Street (both segments) have decreased in traffic volume since 2001.

Both segments of King Street combined represent the main arterial through the Historic Downtown District. Between Stover Avenue and Holliday Street, King Street averages 7,500 cars daily and between Holliday and North Massanutten Street, King Street averages 7,900 a day. The loss of 400 vehicles between the two segments likely represents the traffic turning to access Strasburg High School and Sandy Hook Elementary School, both south of the downtown area. Although traffic has decreased since 2001, heavy traffic on King Street has been viewed as both a weakness and an opportunity for the corridor during previous SWOT analyses. The high number of motorists passing directly through Downtown provides businesses downtown with high visibility. However, heavy traffic can detract from the pedestrian environment. The streetscape improvement project currently being implemented will improve the pedestrian environment and safety of pedestrians crossing King Street and help counteract the high level of traffic.

VDOT does not do a traffic count along State Route 55 / John Marshall Highway to the east of the intersection of North Massanutten Street and King Street, but it can be assumed that the majority of the drop from 13,000 on North Massanutten Street to either 7,500 or 7,900 along the two measured segments of King Street, is traffic arriving or departing Town along that corridor, traveling to the industries just east/southeast of Downtown Strasburg, or perhaps traveling to the Strasburg Riverwalk and Town Park & Pool. These figures point out the importance of the intersection of North Massanutten Street and King Street as a key funnel through which all downtown traffic flows.

Table 1: Traffic Counts

	Stover Ave. (SCL to King St.)	King St (Stover Ave. to Holliday St.)	King St (Holliday St. to North Massanutten St.)	North Massanutten St. (King St. to John Marshall Hwy.)	North Massanutten St. (John Marshall Hwy. to NCL)
2012	6,400	7,500	7,900	13,000	13,000
2011	6,400	7,500	7,800	13,000	13,000
2010	7,300	7,500	7,900	13,000	13,000
2009	7,200	7,500	7,800	13,000	13,000
2008	7,100	7,500	7,600	13,000	12,000
2007	8,900	8,900	8,600	14,000	13,000
2006	8,900	8,900	8,700	14,000	13,000
2005	8,700	8,700	8,400	13,000	12,000
2004	8,000	8,000	9,100	13,000	11,000
2003	7,700	7,700	8,700	13,000	11,000
2002	7,500	7,500	8,500	13,000	10,000
2001	9,200	9,200	10,000	13,000	11,000

Note: Between 2001 and 2004, Stover Ave. and King St. (from Stover Ave. to Holliday St.) was one segment.

Source: Virginia Department of Transportation

Table 2 lists the road segment in each town that has the highest AADT. Front Royal has the highest AADT by far at 30,000 on the stretch of U.S. Route 340/U.S. 522/SR 55 that leads out of Front Royal to I-66 and the regional shopping hub just north of the interstate. The southern endpoint for this roadway segment at 14th Street is very near historic downtown Front Royal.

Luray has a slightly higher traffic count than Strasburg at 14,000 AADT on U.S. Route 211 between the West Corporate Limit (WCL) and Business U.S. 211 or Main Street. After Business U.S. 211/Main Street splits off, traffic drops down to 6,600, which means that 7,400 are exiting onto Business U.S. 211/Main Street.

The Town of Woodstock reaches the same number of AADT as the Town of Strasburg. The rest of the towns have considerably lower traffic within their town boundaries.

The comparison chart reveals that Strasburg has a significant amount of traffic passing through town in comparison to nearby towns. Furthermore, the road segment with the highest traffic counts, North Massanutten Street, connects directly and with ease to Historic Downtown Strasburg, providing retailers on King Street the opportunity to attract business directly from the traffic flow.

Table 2: Comparison Traffic Counts

Town / City	AADT	Segment Name	Segment Endpoints
Edinburg	6,300	U.S. 11 / Main St.	SCL Edinburg / SR 185, Stoney Creek Blvd.
Front Royal	30,000	U.S. 522 & 340 / SR 55 / Shenandoah Ave.	NCL Front Royal / 14 th St.
Luray	14,000	U.S. 211 & 340 / Lee Highway	WCL Luray / Business U.S. 211
Middletown	3,600	U.S. 11 / Main St.	SCL Middletown / NCL Middletown
New Market	6,900	U.S. 11 & 211 / South Congress St.	North Intersection / South Intersection
Strasburg	13,000	U.S. 11 / North Massanutten St.	John Marshall Hwy. / NCL Strasburg
Toms Brook	7,100	U.S. 11 / Main Street	SCL Tom Brook / NCL Toms Brook
Woodstock	13,000	U.S. 11 / Main Street	SR 42 / West Reservoir Rd.

Source: Virginia Department of Transportation

Key Takeaways from Traffic Counts

- An average of 7,500 - 7,900 travel through Downtown Strasburg on a daily basis.
- North Massanutten Street connects directly to Downtown Strasburg and has an annual average daily traffic count of 13,000. This count is equal to or higher than many other towns in the Northern Shenandoah Valley.

CONSUMER INTEREST SURVEY

The Downtown Revitalization Survey provides quantitative information from both residents and non-residents on how often and why they come to Strasburg, the level of use of Strasburg's amenities and attractions, and shopping trends.

The six-question survey was launched on June 25, 2014 and ended on July 19, 2014. A link to the survey was posted on the Town of Strasburg's Facebook account and paper surveys were mailed to Town residents. The survey was quite successful with an overwhelming 638 results! Of these results, 436 were collected from the internet, while 202 were paper surveys.

A summary of survey results were presented and discussed at the Public Input Session #1 on July 19th, 2014. At the Session, attendees tapped their local knowledge and shared important insights on survey trends. The results of Public Input Session #1 provide necessary explanation and context to the survey results.

Summary of Consumer Interest Survey

A summary of the Consumer Interest Survey by question is narrated below with a Retail Shopping Patterns Map included at the end of this section.

1. The introduction and survey entry point is recorded as an extra question in the internet survey format.

2. In what zip code is your home located?

Approximately 87.1% of responders stated their home was located in zip code 22657, which is the zip code for the Town of Strasburg and surrounding area. The second most common response was zip code 22660 at 4.4% of responders, which is the zip code for Tom's Brook and surrounding area. Listed in order by the number of other zip code responses, with a minimum of three responses, the remaining zip codes of relevance were 22654, 22641, 22649, 22601, 22644, and 22655.

Since the survey was publicized by either Facebook or in-town mailings, the 12.9% of responders not in zip code 22657 were reached through Facebook, demonstrating the wide geographic range of people "following" the Town of Strasburg's Facebook page.

3. How often do you come to Strasburg?

81.5% stated that they live in Strasburg. The more interesting piece of data from this question is the frequency with which non-Strasburg residents come to Strasburg. Almost eleven percent (10.5%) come to Strasburg three or more times a week; 2.6% come once or twice a week; 1.8% come four or six times a year; and 0.5% come two or three times a year. The rest of the responders, 0.6%, come once a year; less than once a year; or this was their first time.

Adding up the categories, 14.4% of non-residents come to Strasburg somewhere between three times a week and twice a year. That 14.4% represents a regional market that is already a part of Strasburg's "demand" that a new market opportunity can reach.

4. In Strasburg, have you been to...?

Of all the attractions and amenities listed in this question, Mayfest and Oktoberfest was by far the one most “frequently” attended with a little over half (50.7%) stating they attended frequently. Mayfest and Oktoberfest also had the lowest percentage of those who responded “never” than any other category at only 8.9%.

In addition to Mayfest and Oktoberfest, responders said they frequently used the following amenities: Strasburg Town Park and Pool (39.8%), Strasburg Riverwalk (36.7%), and Strasburg Emporium / Antique Stores (19.6%).

The top answers for which responders cited “a few times” are Strasburg Emporium / Antique Stores (50.3%), Cedar Creek and Belle Grove (44.0%), Strasburg Town Park and Pool (43.4%), and Other Events such as Music in the Park (41.8%).

The top answers for which responders stated “never” are Skyline Paintball (80%), Strasburg Express Baseball (69.4%), Visitor Center / Hupp’s Hill (62.4%), Art Galleries and Art Shows (52.5%).

5. Approximately how often do you come to Strasburg for the following?

This question provides more detail and context to question #2, which simply asked how often a responder comes to Strasburg. The results of this question determine which services or goods draw people to Strasburg (or within Strasburg) and the frequency at which that particular good or service attracts people.

The top goods and services that drew people weekly to Strasburg were Passing through Town (79.0 %), Grocery Shopping (64.2%), Dining (38.0%), School either as student or parent (36.0%), and Sports & Recreation (31.0%). While the 79.0% figure is encouraging, it is very close to the number of responders who indicated that they live in Strasburg (81.5%), which means the 79.0% figure may or may not accurately represent visitation to the Town for goods and services. The figure might be simply capturing those persons whose commute to and from work takes them through Strasburg. Again, this is a good, but not definitive trend.

Goods and services with a high response rate for “never” could point to personal preference; the responder’s non-use of a given good or service; or potential market leakage due to nearby competition. Goods and services which had a high response rate for “never” include Work (65.8%), Church (62.3%), School either as student or parent (55.2%), Professional Services (51.9%), and Personal Care (50.4%).

6. Where do you go most often for the following?

Question #6 is the ultimate question for understanding the current market. The results pinpoint exactly where market demand is being met, either as a result of the responder’s shopping preference or as a result of market competition. Response choices were Strasburg, Woodstock, Front Royal, Winchester, Northern Virginia suburbs, and Other.

The top goods and services that are being met in Strasburg are Restaurant: Fast Food or Take Out (70.5%), Banking, Insurance, and Financial Services (64.2%), Groceries (43.4%), and Personal Services (38.8%). Since Fast Food/Take Out is strictly a convenience item, this number is not surprising since convenience items are typically secured near home or work.

The 43.4% going to Strasburg for groceries is a telling number when compared to the 64.2% of responders to the previous question who state that they frequently come to Strasburg for groceries. Discussion at Public Input Session #1 revealed that residents use Strasburg for basic weekly grocery supplies, but use stores outside of Strasburg for a wider variety of items and fresher produce.

Top responses for each location are as follows: Farm/Garden Supplies or Building Materials in Woodstock at 19.6%; Small Household Items & Supplies in Front Royal at 28.0%; Furniture, Appliances, and Other Large Items in Winchester at 75.4%; Upscale Dining in the Northern Virginia suburbs at 15.7%; and Business and Legal Services in “Other” at 10.4% with “Other” most commonly being Stephens City and Leesburg, both in Virginia and Martinsburg, West Virginia.

7. Strasburg is considering the development of a public space downtown. Please rank your top choices for desired facility.

The survey asked responders to rank their 1st, 2nd, and 3rd choices of a public space.

As the 1st choice in order of ranking, 28.5% of responders would like a Farmers Market, 14.7% of responders would like a Performance Space / Amphitheater, and 13.7% of responders would like a Playground / Splash Pad.

As the 2nd choice in order of ranking, 26.2% of responders would like a Farmers Market, 14.7% of responders would like a Performance Space / Amphitheater, and 11.3% of responders would like Outdoor Recreation for Youth.

As the 3rd choice in order of ranking, 14.4% selected Farmers Market, 13.5% selected Performance Space / Amphitheatre, and 12.4% selected Outdoor Recreation for Youth.

Analysis of Shopping Patterns

The Consumer Interest Survey results were revealed at the Public Input Session #1 held on July 29th from 7:00 – 8:30pm at Strasburg Town Hall. At the Public Input Session, the public was encouraged to share their opinions on the results of the survey. The second half of the public session was a guided discussion on observed market trends in the Strasburg regional area. The participation at the Public Input Session gave the Consultants invaluable insight on the survey data and provided qualitative narrative to shed light on the quantitative results.

For many of the goods and service categories, general market leakage went mostly to Winchester and Front Royal with some going to Woodstock. However, shoppers going to these destinations are typically not going to the downtowns for their goods and services, but to shopping centers located on the outskirts and conveniently placed near interstate exits. For example, Riverton Commons is located at the intersection of U.S. 340 and I-66 and contains a Wal-Mart Super Center, Lowe's, and Target. The shopping center and other nearby retail shopping is often referred to as “Exit 6” by locals due to its exit number on I-66. Though outside of the Front Royal Corporate Limit, responders would consider this to be a Front Royal retail location, even though they are unlikely to “swing by” Front Royal proper on their trip to Wal-Mart. Woodstock has a Wal-Mart and Lowe's, but these stores are located on the west side of I-81 at Exit 283. As with Front Royal, shoppers at the Woodstock Wal-Mart or Lowe's can easily go to these stores and jump back on the highway without ever driving through downtown Woodstock.

Groceries

64.2% of responders reported shopping for groceries in Strasburg weekly but only 43.4% designated Strasburg as the location where their grocery shopping occurs. Attendees at Public Input Session #1 explained the discrepancy. Many people shop for groceries in Strasburg for basic items, but travel to other grocery stores outside of Town due to the greater selection of items. From what was heard at the Public Input Session, Stephens City is a very popular destination for obtaining groceries. Stephens City was not listed as an option on the survey, but 7.2% of responders selected “other” with many stating Stephens City in the comment box. It is possible that some survey takers included Stephens City in with Winchester since Stephens City is an adjacent crossroads community. Winchester received 21.0% of the votes in the Groceries category.

Small Household Items and Supplies

The majority of responders looking for Small Household Items and Supplies ranked Front Royal (28.0%) and Winchester (27.6%) as top destinations, with Strasburg coming in closely behind at 25.4%. As stated above, shoppers utilizing Front Royal and Winchester for supplies are likely using shopping centers rather than downtowns. In contrast, the Dollar General in Strasburg, where many individuals purchase household items and supplies, is located directly within Downtown Strasburg.

Clothing & Accessories

The vast majority of responders stated Winchester was their destination of choice for Clothing & Accessories at 72.1%. Clothing stores require a larger market base such as Winchester with a population of 26,203 as an independent city and 122,369 people in the metropolitan area. Clothing stores also tend to locate in malls, super centers, some downtowns, or in close proximity to each other (requiring larger population bases) since shoppers typically want various choices close at hand when selecting clothing. Since clothing is usually a several times a year purchase rather than a regular purchase, customers are willing to drive the extra distance for the product. Apple Blossom Mall in Winchester is a very reasonable distance from Downtown Strasburg at only 17.5 miles or a 20 minute drive. Front Royal was ranked by 9.4% and Woodstock by 7.6% of responders for their clothing needs. As mentioned above, Front Royal contains Riverton Commons which features a Wal-Mart and Target and Woodstock contains a Wal-Mart. Although Front Royal and Woodstock are receiving a percentage of the shoppers for clothing, those shoppers are highly unlikely to be stopping by their respective downtowns due to the convenient interstate locations of those shopping centers.

Furniture, Appliances, and Other Large Items

The distribution of results for Furniture, Appliances, & Other Large Items was quite similar to Clothing & Accessories. According to survey results, Winchester captures almost the entirety of the furniture and appliances market with 75.4% of the votes. Woodstock and Front Royal were both voted by 7.8% of responders, likely due to the furniture and appliances available at Wal-Mart, Target, and Lowe’s. Like clothing, furniture and appliances require a larger market like a Winchester. However, some small Virginian towns in the southern part of the state have been quite successful at holding their own in the furniture market. Farmville is the most obvious example with the popular Green Front Furniture, a multi-warehouse complex carrying a vast and unique selection of furniture that draws shoppers long distances. Blackstone’s downtown houses three anchor furniture stores supported by a regional customer base. Towns like Farmville and Blackstone are able to specialize in furniture due to: 1) the availability of some large retail space and 2) the furniture manufacturing history of the area (including across the line in North Carolina).

Farm/Garden Supplies or Building Materials

Responders were divided fairly evenly on the location in which they purchase Farm/Garden Supplies or Building Materials. Approximately one-quarter of survey takers voted for each: Strasburg (26.0%), Front Royal (24.7%), Woodstock (19.6%), and Winchester (24.4%). Attendees at Public Input Session #1 explained that the hardware and garden supply stores in Strasburg meet most of their supply needs, but they are often forced to go outside of town due to the limited business hours (the two retailers close at noon on Saturday and are not open on Sundays). Participants agreed that the local hardware and garden supply stores would get more of their business if they were open during some weeknight evenings or had longer weekend hours. Since Winchester, Woodstock, and Front Royal all have hardware and garden stores, the expansion of hours at Strasburg's store is likely to just draw more Strasburg customers rather than pull customers regionally unless the Strasburg store offers specialty hardware items and services.

It is important to note that Strasburg's hardware and garden supply stores are located within the downtown area (H. L. Borden Lumber and Strasburg Farm and Home, both on East King Street), unlike Woodstock's, Front Royal's, and Winchester's. With this location, Strasburg has the opportunity to capture customers from shopping centers to a downtown location. Since Strasburg already captures the highest percentage of shoppers at 26.0%, it would appear that extended hours would significantly reduce market leakage to similar outlets in the regional shopping centers. The hurdle for many small, locally-run stores is whether sales during extended business hours would balance the cost of the extended hours.

Sporting Goods

Winchester is also the top place for shoppers to purchase Sporting Goods, named by 63.4% of responders. 14.1% of responders did list Front Royal as their destination of choice for sporting goods, likely because the Wal-Mart and Target have a sporting goods section to fulfill the "convenience" sporting goods market but not the specialty sporting goods market.

A specialty sporting goods store requires an large population base and strong recreation-orientated market. For example, Walkabout Outfitter is a small specialty outfitter store that focuses on camping. It has five locations within Virginia: downtown Roanoke, Valley View Mall in Roanoke, downtown Harrisonburg, downtown Lexington, and just recently, downtown Richmond. Of all these locations, Lexington has by far the smallest population base with only 7,000 residents, but it also has two colleges. Since the closest outdoor stores are located between 40 and 50 miles away in every direction, Lexington is able to fill a market gap due to a regionally based market demand. Although Strasburg has an outdoor recreation market, Mountain Trails, a specialty outdoor store, is located only 19 miles away in Winchester.

Entertainment / Music

As expected, Winchester was ranked as the top destination for Entertainment / Music by 52.4% of responders. However, Strasburg was ranked second with 15.1% of the votes, far more than Woodstock at 4.4% and Front Royal at 5.1%. Cristina's Café was named during Public Input Session #1 for providing musical entertainment on the weekend and drawing customers from Strasburg and nearby towns. Attendees of the Public Input Session agreed that Cristina's Café is good for Strasburg's entertainment scene, but that a large gap still exists in the area.

Personal Services

Strasburg was ranked as the top destination for Personal Services (such as a hairdresser) by 38.9% of responders. 27.0% of survey takers stated Winchester was their destination of choice for personal services,

likely due to the variety and specialization of personal services supported by the large market base. However, 11% of survey takers do go to nearby Front Royal, which is not a large number but is significant enough that further investigation should be done to determine which personal services are available in Front Royal that are not available in Strasburg.

Business and Legal Services

Strasburg does fulfill 21.1% of responder's needs for Business and Legal Services. The rest of the market for business and legal services is leaked to Winchester at 35.5% and Woodstock at 18.3%. Woodstock, being the County Seat, has a cluster of business and legal services that draw people from Strasburg. Winchester, with a larger population base, is able to provide more specialized business and legal services that a smaller town cannot support. However, the reasoning behind locals leaving Strasburg for their business and legal service needs was summed up quite nicely by one attendee at Public Input Session #1 – He stated that no matter what legal services were available in Strasburg, they would prefer to use a non-local attorney for the purpose of anonymity.

Medical Services & Supplies

Slightly over half of responders (52.4%) stated that Winchester is their destination of choice for Medical Services and Supplies. Winchester has several medical services not available in Strasburg including at least two urgent care facilities, Winchester Medical Center, and a large number of specialty doctors. The Winchester Medical Center is almost 20 miles away from Downtown Strasburg. Front Royal's Warren Memorial Hospital is closer at only 11 miles away, but Front Royal only received 5.4% of votes for medical services and supplies.

Strasburg ranked second with 20.2% of votes. A couple of doctors and dentists are located in town, but the votes for Strasburg may also refer to the basic medical supplies such as Band-Aids and over the counter drugs that are available at Dollar General and Food Lion. Woodstock received 12.7% of the votes and contains Shenandoah Memorial Hospital and more doctors than Strasburg including an eye doctor.

Strasburg is at a market disadvantage for medical services since the supply of such services in all three directions via the interstates is rather high. Winchester, Front Royal, and Woodstock all three contain hospitals and more medical services than Strasburg. Strasburg would have to compete with all three towns/cities, a competition that it would not easily win.

Banking, Insurance, and Financial Services

Strasburg leads in fulfilling Banking, Insurance, and Financial Services with capturing 64.3% of responder's business in this category. Winchester ranks second, but only captures 13.3% of responder's business. Front Royal was selected by 7.4% of survey takers and Woodstock by 6.1%. It is likely that the high percentage of customers captured by the Strasburg market reflects just banking services, which is a convenience service where a close location to home is a high priority. However, Strasburg's banking, insurance, and financial services should be further investigated to determine if they are pulling from a customer base outside of Strasburg.

Fast Food or Take Out Dining

The good/service with the highest percentage of fulfillment within Strasburg is Fast Food / Take Out Dining at 70.4%. The reasoning behind the high percentage is not so much the supply of fast or takeout food in

Strasburg, but simply the nature of a convenience good. People who purchase fast or takeout food want food both quickly and close to home. Driving a considerable distance for fast food or takeout would counter the primary motivation for purchasing fast food or takeout in the first place.

Sit Down Dining

Winchester was voted by half of responders (50.6%) as their go-to place for Sit Down Dining. With Winchester's large population base, it is expected that a sizeable portion of responders would go to Winchester for the large selection of restaurants available. Furthermore, restaurant-goers often go out of town to a restaurant to make a trip out of it.

Strasburg received 25.4% of the votes as their top choice for sit down dining. Front Royal was ranked top choice by 12.1% and Woodstock by 5.1%. Strasburg is capturing a significant portion of the responders, but there is certainly room for growth. The responders may be going to neighboring Front Royal and Woodstock for a chance to get out of town. This small amount of leakage to neighboring towns is acceptable as long as Strasburg's restaurants are also attracting customers from the neighboring towns. Conducting a zip code survey at the restaurants would reveal their customer bases and the extent of Strasburg's regional market.

Upscale Dining

Winchester was the top voted destination (62.3%) for Upscale Dining and the Northern Virginia suburbs was the second highest at 15.7%. Most households dine at upscale restaurants only during special occasions, usually only a few times a year. Upscale dining establishments require a significant middle- to upper-income population base and are therefore found in larger areas. This population can be found in Winchester and in the Northern Virginia suburbs. Since upscale dining is an occasional need, the distances to Winchester or the Northern Virginia suburbs are not a problem.

Key Takeaways from Consumer Interest Surveys

- A Farmers Market and Performance Space are the most highly desired uses for a potential public space.
- Winchester is only located 20 minutes away and due to its large population base can provide a larger variety of goods and services than Strasburg can.
- Strasburg's market leakage typically goes to shopping centers outside of the neighboring towns, such as Front Royal's Exit 6. The market leakage is not likely downtown to downtown, except in the case of the City of Winchester.
- Strasburg could recover some Farm/Garden Supplies and Building Materials market leakage by extending hours, but would unlikely draw customers from neighboring areas due to the presence of similar stores in those communities.
- A small portion of Strasburg's Sit Down Dining market does leak to nearby Front Royal and Woodstock. Hopefully Strasburg's restaurants are equally capturing some of the market from Front Royal and Woodstock.

RETAIL SHOPPING PATTERNS

CONSUMER INTEREST SURVEY RESULTS

TOWN OF STRASBURG

VIRGINIA

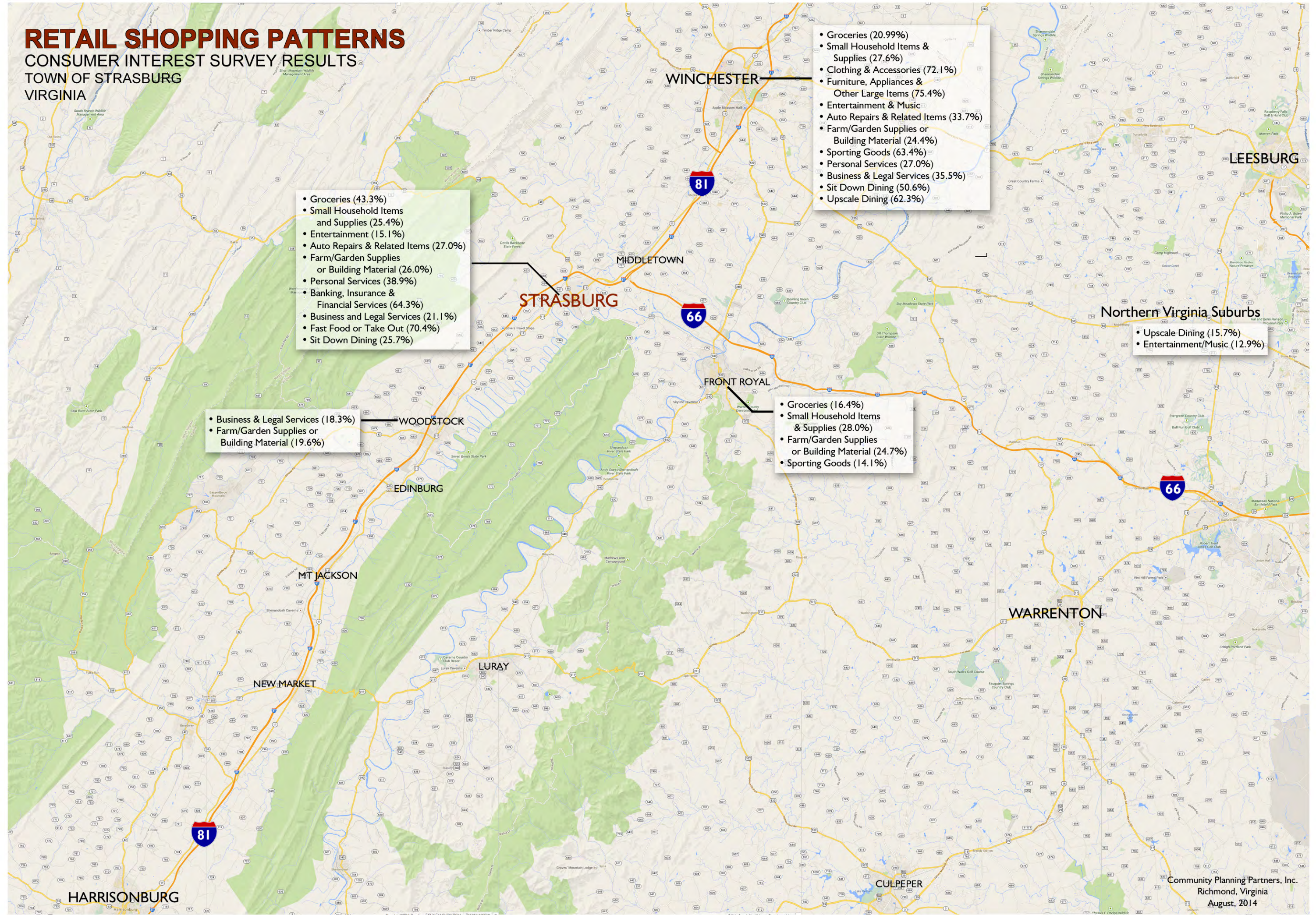
- Groceries (20.99%)
- Small Household Items & Supplies (27.6%)
- Clothing & Accessories (72.1%)
- Furniture, Appliances & Other Large Items (75.4%)
- Entertainment & Music
- Auto Repairs & Related Items (33.7%)
- Farm/Garden Supplies or Building Material (24.4%)
- Sporting Goods (63.4%)
- Personal Services (27.0%)
- Business & Legal Services (35.5%)
- Sit Down Dining (50.6%)
- Upscale Dining (62.3%)

- Groceries (43.3%)
- Small Household Items and Supplies (25.4%)
- Entertainment (15.1%)
- Auto Repairs & Related Items (27.0%)
- Farm/Garden Supplies or Building Material (26.0%)
- Personal Services (38.9%)
- Banking, Insurance & Financial Services (64.3%)
- Business and Legal Services (21.1%)
- Fast Food or Take Out (70.4%)
- Sit Down Dining (25.7%)

- Business & Legal Services (18.3%)
- Farm/Garden Supplies or Building Material (19.6%)

- Groceries (16.4%)
- Small Household Items & Supplies (28.0%)
- Farm/Garden Supplies or Building Material (24.7%)
- Sporting Goods (14.1%)

- Upscale Dining (15.7%)
- Entertainment/Music (12.9%)



ATTRACTIONS & AMENITIES

Attractions are instrumental to drawing tourism and fueling tourism-supportive industries such as hotels and restaurants. For this narrative, attractions can be either a stand-alone, major tourist destination or be tourist destination in combination with other nearby attractions. For example, the Strasburg Museum is unlikely to be the primary and sole motivation behind tourists coming to the Shenandoah Valley, but does become an attraction for tourists when packaged with the nearby Cedar Creek Battlefield and Belle Grove Plantation.

For this narrative, an amenity is a desirable feature that adds to the appeal of a place for both tourists and residents. Amenities tend to not be the primary attracting feature for tourists but certainly influence decisions by tourists as they decide where to spend their time and money.

This section will: 1) review the existing local attractions and amenities; 2) identify regional attractions that contribute to the general tourism of the Northern Shenandoah Valley, and 3) discuss proposed attractions and amenities.

Existing Local Attractions and Amenities

The existing local attractions and amenities section identifies and discusses destinations that attract visitors to Strasburg and amenities that make Strasburg appealing to both tourists and locals. Although shopping can certainly be viewed as an amenity, only stores that are tourist destinations are identified for this narrative.

Strasburg Museum

The Strasburg Museum is located on East King Street in the building that once housed the steam pottery and the Strasburg Railroad Depot, a National Historic Landmark. Opened in 1970, museum exhibits include a genuine caboose that can be toured, a large collection of original Strasburg pottery, a working railroad depicting Strasburg and the Southern Railway in the 1930s, an old country store display, colonial and Victorian style rooms, historic local photographs, and Native American artifacts.

The museum is open every day from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. between May 1st and October 31st. In 2013, the Strasburg Museum had an attendance of 4,600 not including free tours such as student groups. Admission is \$3.00 for adults, \$1.00 teens, and \$0.50 for children. The Strasburg Museum is ranked 67 out of 138 museum attractions in the Shenandoah Valley according to TripAdvisor.com

Hupp's Hill Civil War Park and Gateway to the Shenandoah Visitor Center

The Gateway to the Shenandoah Visitors Center and Hupp's Hill Civil War Park are co-located within the Town of Strasburg, but north of the Historic Downtown. The newly refurbished museum that is a part of the Visitors Center tells the story of the Shenandoah Valley in 1864 and the variety of battles and actions that occurred. Numerous displays and artifacts are available for viewing and learning. Interpretative walking trails run throughout the grounds of the Civil War Park.

The Visitor Center is open from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. seven days a week. Admission is free to the Visitor Center. In 2013, the Visitor Center had 5,130 visitors and the museum had a total of 1,191 visitors of which 991 were paid visitors. According to TripAdvisor.com, Hupp's Hill Civil War Park is ranked 126 out of 138 of museum attractions in the Shenandoah Valley; however, the rating includes ratings that occurred pre-renovation of the facilities.

Strasburg Riverwalk

The Strasburg Riverwalk is a dedicated trail that connects the Strasburg High School to the Strasburg Town Park and Pool. The Riverwalk is about a mile long and hugs the edge of the North Fork Shenandoah River for a portion of its length and Town Run for its remainder. On the Consumer Interest Survey, 36.6% responders indicated that they use the Riverwalk frequently and 31.8% stated they have used the Riverwalk a few times. The Consumer Interest Survey also inquired about frequency of use. 22.7% stated they use the Riverwalk weekly, 15.3% use the Riverwalk monthly, 15.9% use the Riverwalk four to six times per year, 12.2% use the Riverwalk two to three times per year, 7.8% use the Riverwalk once a year, and only 26.0% have never used the Riverwalk.

Skyline Paintball

Opened in 1991, Skyline Paintball is a complete paintball center including a pro store, rentals, and a wide variety of recreational paintball fields. Skyline Paintball is located within Town boundaries just below I-81. It is open year-round from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays. The owners estimate they attract 15,000 visitors a year and as many as 400 visitors on a weekend. Customers include a wide range of ages including pre-teens, teenagers, college students, and adults. The majority of customers come from either the D.C. Metro Area or James Madison University in Harrisonburg.

Skyline Paintball has certainly established itself as a successful, popular recreation destination. From online reviewers' comments, it is clear that Skyline Paintball is the cream of the crop when it comes to paintball fields. Online reviews attribute its success to great management, the diversity of fields, and the fair prices.

The owners of Skyline Paintball are passionate about supporting local businesses. On their website, they dedicate a whole page to "B.O.L.D.", which stands for Businesses Offering Local Discounts. Skyline Paintball has a B.O.L.D. display area within the store and encourages local businesses, especially restaurants, to set up advertisements. Furthermore, when parents bring their teenagers to the fields, the owners direct them downtown to enjoy their time.

According to the owners, the restaurants at Exit 6 benefit most from Skyline customers. Within town, Anthony's Pizza, Castiglia's Italian Eatery and Pizza, and Jalisco's receive the most Skyline customers. The owners feel there is significant potential for restaurants to benefit from their hungry customers. Skyline Paintball is also open to the possibility of a food truck coming to the venue. The owners would like to see a mid-size restaurant open downtown that has good food, but is casual enough to allow people that have been paintballing all day, and large enough to accommodate groups of 20-30 people.

Shenandoah Valley Artworks

Shenandoah Valley Artworks, an art gallery and retail store, is located on the western end of King Street within the Historic Downtown District. Though fairly new, it benefits from much popularity within the Shenandoah Valley. According to TripAdvisor.com, Shenandoah Valley Artworks is the top rated shopping attraction in all of the Shenandoah Valley, rated number one out of 74 other shopping attractions. Online reviewers beam about the friendliness of the owner, the wide variety of displays, and the availability of layaway for art. The location of Artworks on the western end of Downtown provides a nice anchor to draw folks from the eastern and central segments of King Street. Additionally, Artworks' location directly across the street from the popular Cristina's Café creates a "node" of activity.

Strasburg Emporium

The Strasburg Emporium is located on the eastern side of the Historic Downtown District at the intersection of East King Street and North Massanutten Street. With over 50,000 square feet of space, the Emporium's large size and wide variety of items attracts many antique-seeking tourists. The Emporium differentiates itself from other antique and consignment stores by its neat and organized layout, rather than the packed and sometimes chaotic nature of other stores. The Strasburg Emporium is certainly a destination attraction for antique enthusiasts and also serves as an anchor for the retail shopping experience in Downtown Strasburg. Both Skyline Paintball and the A. C. Stickley Bed and Breakfast frequently refer their customers to the Emporium if customers are looking for something to do downtown.

Shenandoah Showcase at Town Hall

Strasburg Town Hall showcases work by artists from throughout the Shenandoah Valley, but specifically focuses on artists within a 30-mile radius. The bios of the artists are posted in the lobby and each artist is on hand to meet the public at an evening reception on the 2nd Tuesday of each month. Art is shown through the hallways on the ground floor during normal business hours. New work is displayed every month to keep the Shenandoah Showcase fresh and interesting to local and regular tourists.

The Shenandoah Showcase has been tremendously successful according to online reviews. The simple technique of displaying art at a municipal building creates an amenity directly on King Street, giving tourists and locals another "stop" on their stroll through historic Downtown Strasburg. Combined with the Strasburg Emporium and Shenandoah Valley Artworks, the trio of art-related amenities provides anchors at the western edge, eastern edge, and in the center of the Historic Downtown District.

Fisher's Hill Battlefield, Cedar Creek Battlefield, & Belle Grove Plantation

Fisher's Hill Battlefield, Cedar Creek Battlefield, and Belle Grove Plantation are not located within Strasburg, but their close proximity to Strasburg qualifies them as local attractions. The Cedar Creek National Historic Park includes 900 acres and is partnered Belle Grove Plantation which lies in the center of the battlefield. Visitors can tour the plantation house and take self-guided or ranger-guided driving tours of the battlefield. Cedar Creek and Belle Grove hold a number of events during the year which attract both locals and tourists. On October 15th-20th, 2014, the park celebrated the 150th anniversary of the Battle of Cedar Creek with reenactments of the battle. A lesser known battlefield, Fisher's Hill Battlefield is literally a few minutes south of Downtown Strasburg. Not recognized as a national battlefield, local and state efforts are underway to highlight the history of the battle there and to preserve more of the battlefield from encroaching development. As it stands today, visitors can tour the battlefield on a self-guided automobile tour via a brochure that is available locally.

Hotel Strasburg

Established in 1915, the Hotel Strasburg is a Victorian style boutique hotel located in Downtown Strasburg. Between the main hotel structure, the Chandler House, and the Taylor House, the hotel contains a total of 29 rooms. At a minimum, the rooms contain a double bed and private bath equipped with a shower. Some rooms contain queen beds, king beds, or supplementary single beds. A few of the more luxurious rooms feature a Jacuzzi bathtub. Rates range from \$98.00 to \$190.00 per night.

In addition to accommodations, the Hotel Strasburg contains a dining room and banquet facilities. The banquet facilities can hold up to 80 people seated and is rented out for weddings, private parties, and large

meetings. Guests who use the banquet facilities often stay at the Hotel. The dining room serves lunch daily from 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. and dinner daily at varying hours.

During an interview with the manager of the Hotel Strasburg, a key piece of information was garnered that explains the motivation of guests who stay in Strasburg. Since the Hotel Strasburg is well established, many guests have been staying at the Hotel annually for more than 10, 20, and sometimes even 30 years. The primary motivation for guests staying at the Hotel Strasburg is the unique experience the Hotel gives guests and access to all of the attractions in the Shenandoah Valley. Some guests do stay at the Hotel due to an event or activity going on in the banquet rooms. Other guests stay at the Hotel as a stopover before getting on Skyline Drive or while exploring the rest of the Shenandoah Valley. Weekenders tend to be more common and the Hotel Strasburg does allow one night stays with the exception of special event weekends.

Beyond the Civil War sites, a common activity for guests is antiquing and going to wineries. Guests normally eat at the Hotel but also frequent Cristina's Café. Guests spend their free time relaxing on the Hotel's porch with a cup of coffee. The Strasburg Historic Walking Tour is quite popular with guests and the Hotel makes sure it is stocked up on the brochures.

A.C. Stickley Bed & Breakfast

Although the A. C. Stickley Bed & Breakfast has only been around for four years, it has already established a strong reputation for a quality and unique accommodation experience. A. C. Sickley contains three rooms, each featuring private, deluxe bath facilities. The rooms are named after famous Strasburg potters and the Bed and Breakfast itself has an extensive display of historic Strasburg pottery. Guests at the A. C. Stickley are treated to a three-course breakfast, luxurious robes, and complementary coffee, tea, wine, and snacks. According to online reviews, the three-course breakfast, all the bells and whistles, and the owners friendliness is what makes the experience well worth the cost. Accommodations range from \$140 - \$180 per night.

According to the owners of A. C. Stickley, guests stay in Strasburg for the easy access to the many Civil War sites, the Skyline Drive/Shenandoah National Park, antiquing, hiking, and cycling. While within Strasburg, guests use the Riverwalk, visit Cristina's Café for food and entertainment, and At Home Bistro on East Queen Street for a quieter dining setting.

Strasburg Express Baseball

Strasburg Express is a Valley Baseball League Team that began playing in Strasburg in June of 2011. Since its inception, six former players have moved on to the major leagues and projections indicate that more will be moved up this year. First Bank Park, the playing field for the Strasburg Express, is located by Sandy Hook Elementary School and is also used by the Strasburg High School baseball team.

According to the Strasburg Express website, baseball games usually have an attendance of around 600 people. According to the Consumer Interest Survey, 6.5% of responders frequently attend games, 14.1% have attended games a few times, 10.1% have attended once, and 69.4% have never attended a game.

Virginia Bicycling

Virginia Bicycling is a private company offering self-guided road bicycling tours of Virginia's Shenandoah Valley and Piedmont Region. The service provides custom tour packages tailored to suit the customers'

cycling abilities, trip length, desired attractions to visit, and preference on style of accommodations. Although Virginia Bicycling is technically a regional service attraction, it is included here because the typical Northern Shenandoah Tour sponsored by Virginia Bicycling stops over in Strasburg. During the stopover the bicycle riders often stay at the A. C. Stickley Bed and Breakfast and the Hotel Strasburg.

Existing Regional Attractions and Amenities

Strasburg's location in the Shenandoah Valley provides the town with a wealth of regional destination attractions and plays a large role in the Town's current and potential tourism market. Strasburg holds a strategic position in the Northern Shenandoah Valley Region with its easy access to I-81, I-66, and U.S. Route 11. I-66 connects visitors staying in Strasburg with a cluster of wineries located east of Front Royal. Battlefields and historic sites are clustered around towns such as Winchester, Middletown and New Market and Strasburg is centrally located between them on the I-81 corridor.

Historic / Battlefields

Civil War history is a central part of the Shenandoah Valley's history. The Valley Campaigns of 1862 and 1864 moved through the Shenandoah Valley and included Strasburg and the surrounding towns. Two trail routes interpreted and publicized by the Civil War Trails Program run through the Town, one runs along U. S. Route 11 and the other connects to Front Royal. In addition to Strasburg's own Hupp's Hill, major area battlefields include the New Market Battlefield Park in New Market (a 30 minute drive), Cedar Creek Battlefield in Middletown (less than 10 minutes away), the three Winchester battlefields, downtown Winchester's Civil War sites, and the Kernstown Battlefield (20 minutes away). Additional historic sites are associated with Colonial history including George Washington Office Museum in Winchester and the French and Indian War including the site of Fort Loudoun, also in Winchester. In addition to the Civil War battlefields, museums about the Civil War include the Virginia Museum of the Civil War adjacent to the New Market Battlefield, the Warren Rifles Confederate Museum in Front Royal, and the Old Courthouse Civil War Museum in downtown Winchester.

Arts / Cultural / Museums

The greater Shenandoah Valley has a variety of cultural attractions that center around small town arts communities, agri-tourism, and preserved history. The largest museum in the Valley is the Museum of the Shenandoah Valley including the Glen Burnie Historic House in Winchester. Smaller venues include the Virginia Quilt Museum in Harrisonburg, the Patsy Cline House in Winchester, and numerous other historic homes. Each small town in the Valley has its own history and many operate seasonal or year-round museums that tell their unique stories including the Woodstock Museum and Germanic Heritage Museum in Toms Brook. Additionally, Strasburg is a part of the O Shenandoah County Artisan Trail. The Trail features 24 artist studios, 8 craft related venues, and 16 agri-artisan farms. Strasburg and Woodstock have the most contributing venues on the Trail.

Natural Amenities

The Allegheny Mountains, Blue Ridge Mountains, Shenandoah Valley, and Shenandoah River are all natural amenities that draw people to the area. Strasburg has a locational advantage by being central to two mountain ranges (Allegheny and Blue Ridge) and adjacent to the North Fork of the Shenandoah River while also being accessible to two interstates that can connect the greater region with the state parks and caverns that are available. The northern terminus of the Skyline Drive is located in nearby Front Royal, as are the Skyline Caverns. The Shenandoah, Endless and Luray Caverns are all located within a 30-50 minute drive.

The distance to some of the natural amenities (like the caverns) isn't a deterrent to visitors using Strasburg as a stop on their itinerary or as the central point of their visit. Scenic drives along the Skyline Drive, U. S. Route 11, U. S. Route 340, and other routes through the Valley are pleasant experiences in and of themselves with the benefit of a featured amenity at the end of the journey.

Outdoor Recreation / Adventure

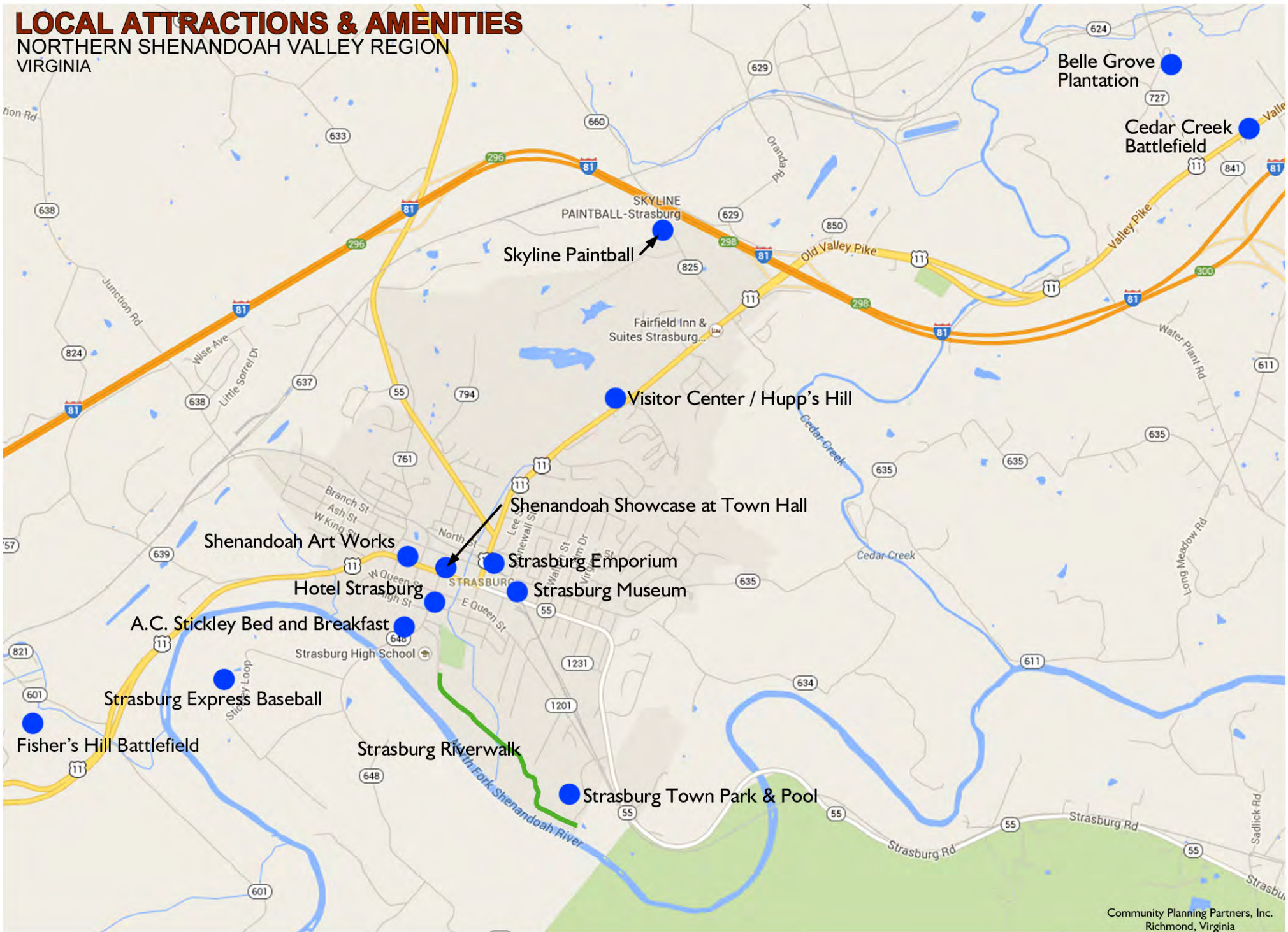
The Shenandoah Valley offers many opportunities for outdoor recreation and adventure tourism. The Appalachian Trail goes through the Shenandoah National Park and is joined by many side trails and places to scramble over the rocks to enjoy a great view. The Bryce and Massanutten Ski Resorts are located in the Valley. Several canoe companies operate on the Shenandoah River providing rental equipment and livery service to and from the river for short or day-long trips. Luray Caverns has even gotten in on the action with an adventure ropes course.

Wineries, Distilleries, & Breweries

The Northern Shenandoah Valley boasts a number of wineries and some distilleries. The co-location of so many wineries led to the creation of the Shenandoah Valley Wine Trail, a non-profit organization that maintains a location map of the wineries, publicizes events, and lists lodging options for the area. The owner of Virginia Bicycling noted that although there are wineries in many areas of Virginia, the Northern Shenandoah Tour is their only self-guided bicycle tour that goes directly by wineries due to the wineries' locations on bike-touring-friendly roadways.

LOCAL ATTRACTIONS & AMENITIES

NORTHERN SHENANDOAH VALLEY REGION
VIRGINIA



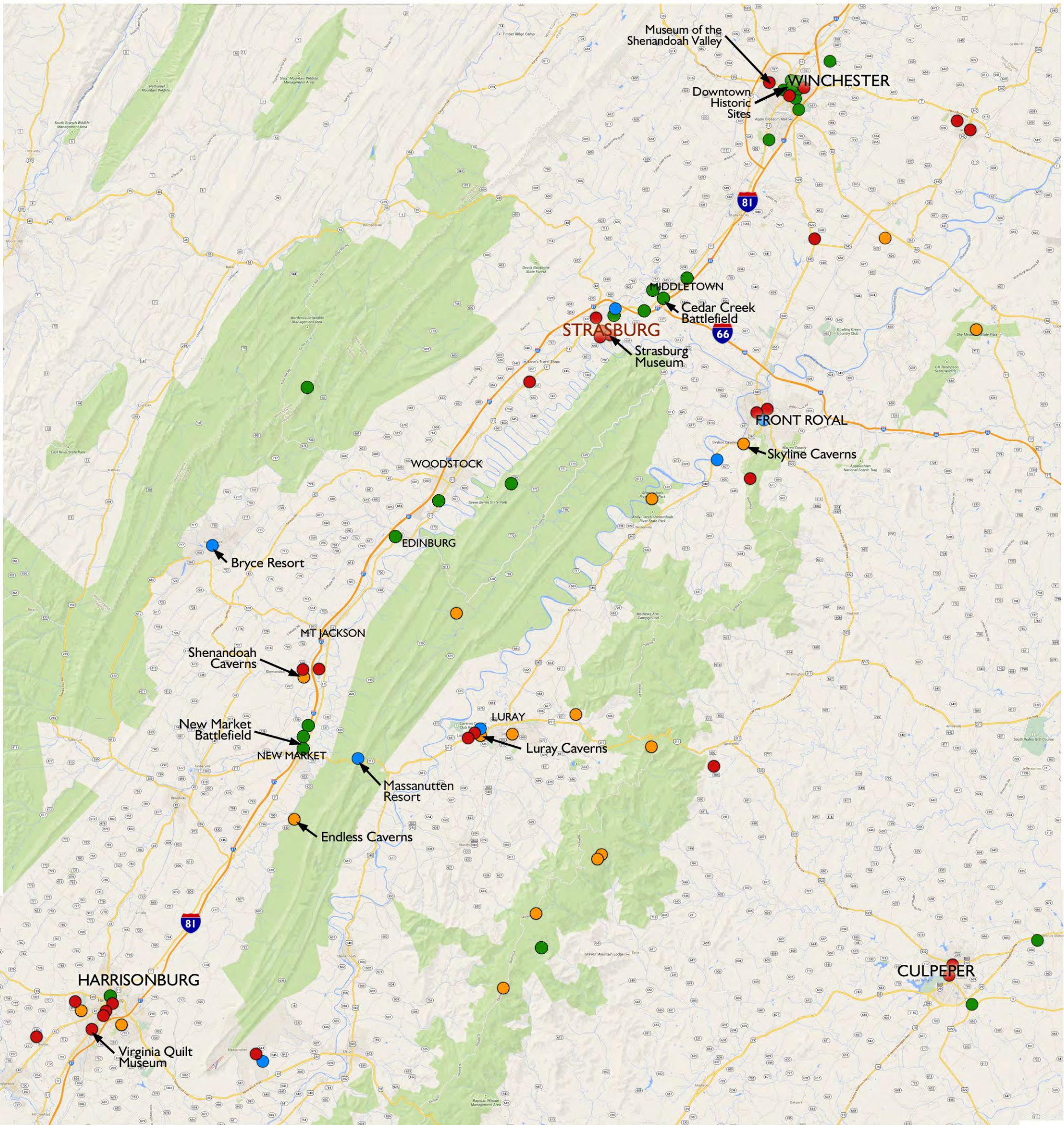
REGIONAL ATTRACTIONS & AMENITIES

NORTHERN SHENANDOAH VALLEY REGION

VIRGINIA

LEGEND

- HISTORIC / BATTLEFIELDS
- ARTS / CULTURAL / MUSEUMS
- NATURAL AMENITIES
- RECREATION / ADVENTURE



REGIONAL ATTRACTIONS & AMENITIES

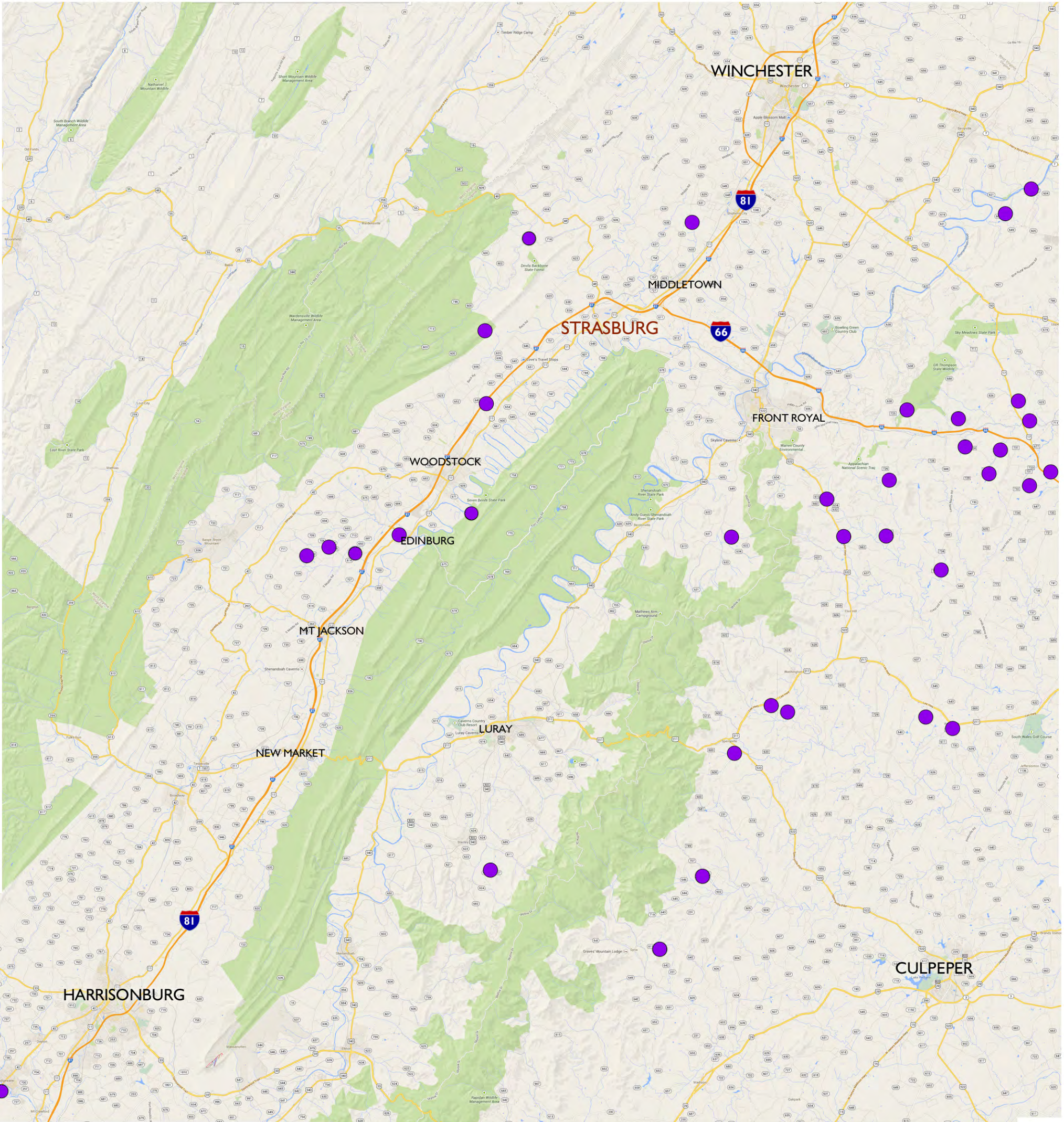
WINERIES, DISTILLERIES, BREWERIES

NORTHERN SHENANDOAH VALLEY REGION

VIRGINIA

LEGEND

 WINERY/BREWERY/DISTILLERY



Proposed Local and Regional Attractions and Amenities

Looking to the future, there are numerous proposed improvements, additions, and new attractions that will continue to shape tourism in the Northern Shenandoah Valley and in turn, Strasburg. Additionally, Strasburg has several proposals that will improve and add to the amenities within town. These include:

- ***North Fork of the Shenandoah River Blueway.*** The Virginia Department of Conversation and Recreation proposes a Blueway designation for the North Fork of the Shenandoah River. A Blueway is a designated water trail with a managed system of access points and support facilities to allow trail users opportunities for multi-day trips. Strasburg is strongly positioned as a stop along the Blueway.
- ***Valley Pike and Fisher's Hill Trail Project.*** The proposed trail will connect Fisher's Hill Battlefield with the Town of Strasburg and the Cedar Creek Battlefield and Belle Grove Plantation. The project is managed by the Battlefields Foundation. The \$1.9 million has been funded in part by transportation enhancement grants and will connect properties that have been preserved using federal, state, local, and private funds.
- ***Seven Bends State Park.*** Seven Bends State Park is well past the proposed stage and is scheduled to be open as early as May, 2015. The park contains 1,066 acres just outside of Woodstock. The initial opening of the park will include primitive trails and river access. When funds are available, the park's plan calls for adding camp sites and cabins.
- ***Strasburg Riverwalk Extension.*** The Strasburg Community Plan states that the Strasburg Riverwalk should be extended west and parallel to the North Fork Shenandoah River and Cedar Creek. The extension would connect with the Valley Pike and Fisher's Hill Trail Project.
- ***Town Run Greenway.*** The Strasburg Community Plan includes a multi-use trail which generally parallels Town Run and would connect the Strasburg Riverwalk to Downtown Strasburg and travel through downtown, heading north to the Industrial Park.

Key Takeaways from Attractions & Amenities

- Strasburg has an emerging arts-focused tourism draw that includes Shenandoah Valley Artworks, the Shenandoah Showcase at Town Hall, and the pottery-themed accommodations at A.C. Stickley Bed and Breakfast , all of which compliment the Strasburg Museum and Strasburg Emporium.
- Neighboring towns are also in the business of attracting tourists who come for the regional attractions of the Shenandoah Valley. Strasburg faces steep competition, but has equal if not better access to the regional attractions and amenities.
- Strasburg has a strong boutique hotel and bed and breakfast industry, which illustrates Strasburg's competitive location due to its central location and access to the region's attractions.
- The proposed Blueway on the North Fork of the Shenandoah River and the Valley Pike & Fisher's Hill Trail Project are major opportunities for the Town of Strasburg to knit itself even more significantly into the region's outdoor recreation and adventure tourism scene.
- The proposed Strasburg Riverwalk Extension (which will connect the Valley Pike & Fisher's Hill Trail to Strasburg) and the Town Run Greenway (which will connect the Riverwalk to Downtown) will maximize Strasburg's opportunity to benefit from these key regional efforts.

Small Town Retail Mix

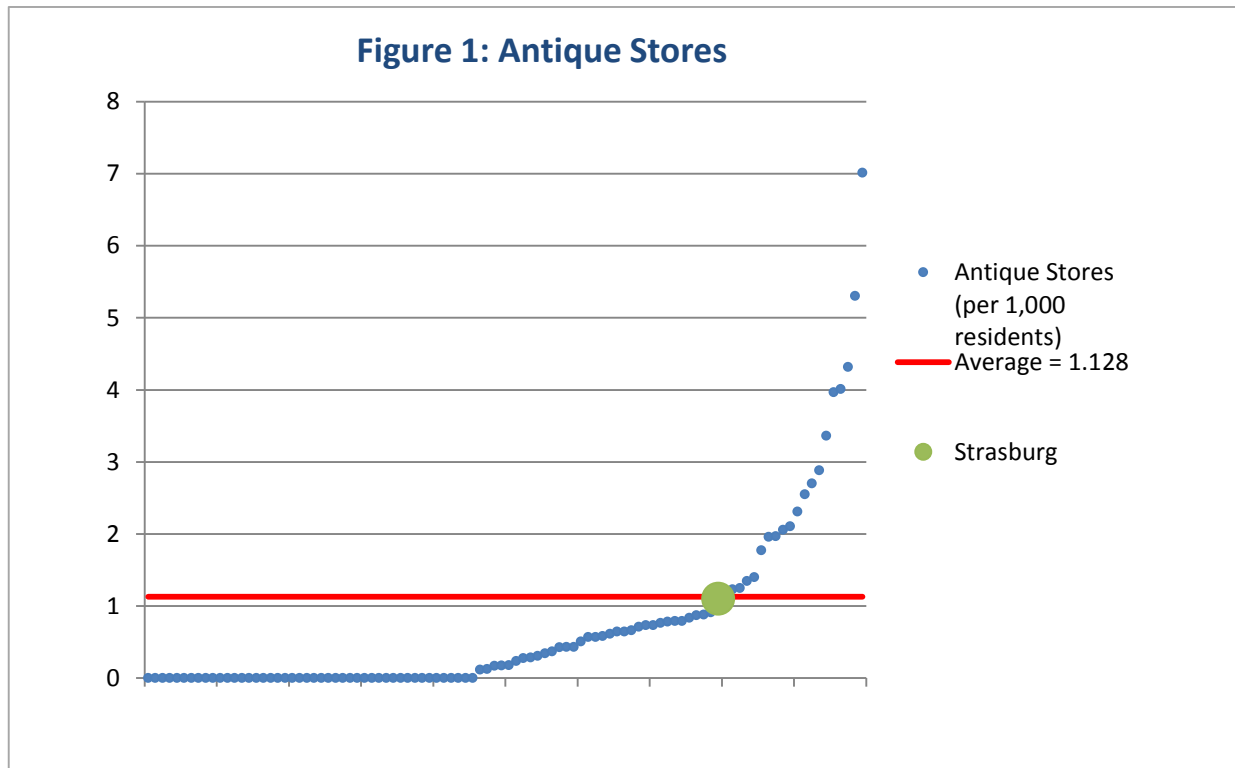
Community Planning Partners originally conducted a Comparison Study of Virginia Places in 2013 for a DHCD Planning Grant for a downtown economic restructuring study in a similarly sized town near an interstate. The original Comparison Study had a “universe” of 100 small towns and cities across Virginia. The Comparison Study included in this section adds into the original study Strasburg’s “supply” information and reworks the analysis. Therefore, this Comparison Study looks at 101 similarly situated towns and cities across Virginia and identifies the number of retail outlets located within their borders by the following retail categories: antique stores, florists/gift shops, jewelry stores, restaurants (non-national chain), clothing stores, bakeries, ice cream/dessert shops. The number of retail outlets by these categories is compared against what is currently present in Strasburg.

Cities and Towns were identified using an exhaustive list of “places” in Virginia that are similarly situated. The list discounts the smallest towns that have no commercial district and Census Designated Places (CDPs) that are subsets of, and contiguous with, larger metropolitan areas. In order to create a fairer comparison, the total number of any type of business is compared against the local population to create a “retail outlets-per-thousand residents” data point. For example, there are 22 local restaurants in the Town of Strasburg, which comes to 3.3 local restaurants for every 1,000 residents of Strasburg. This figure is compared against the other 100 cities/towns in the study and repeated for each retail category. Retail outlets were identified using the online Yellow Pages database – www.yp.com.

The data is analyzed in two ways: 1) The average retail outlets-per-thousand residents for each retail category is compared against Strasburg’s in order to identify potential opportunity gaps where Strasburg is below the statewide average; and 2) The towns/cities with the highest number of retail outlets-per-thousand residents are assessed to identify common trends.

Antique Stores

On average, there is a little over one antique store for every 1,000 residents within the data set. Figure 1 demonstrates that Strasburg falls exactly at the average with 1.1 stores for every 1,000 residents.



The top ten places for antique stores are:

Place	County	Number	Outlets-Per-Thousand
Ruckersville	Greene	8	7.0
Scottsville	Albemarle	3	5.3
Wakefield	Sussex	4	4.3
Gordonsville	Louisa/Orange	6	4.0
Cape Charles	Northampton	4	4.0
Kilmarnock	Lancaster	5	3.4
Edinburg	Shenandoah	3	2.9
Bowling Green	Caroline	3	2.7
Buchanan	Botetourt	3	2.5
Appomattox	Appomattox	4	2.3

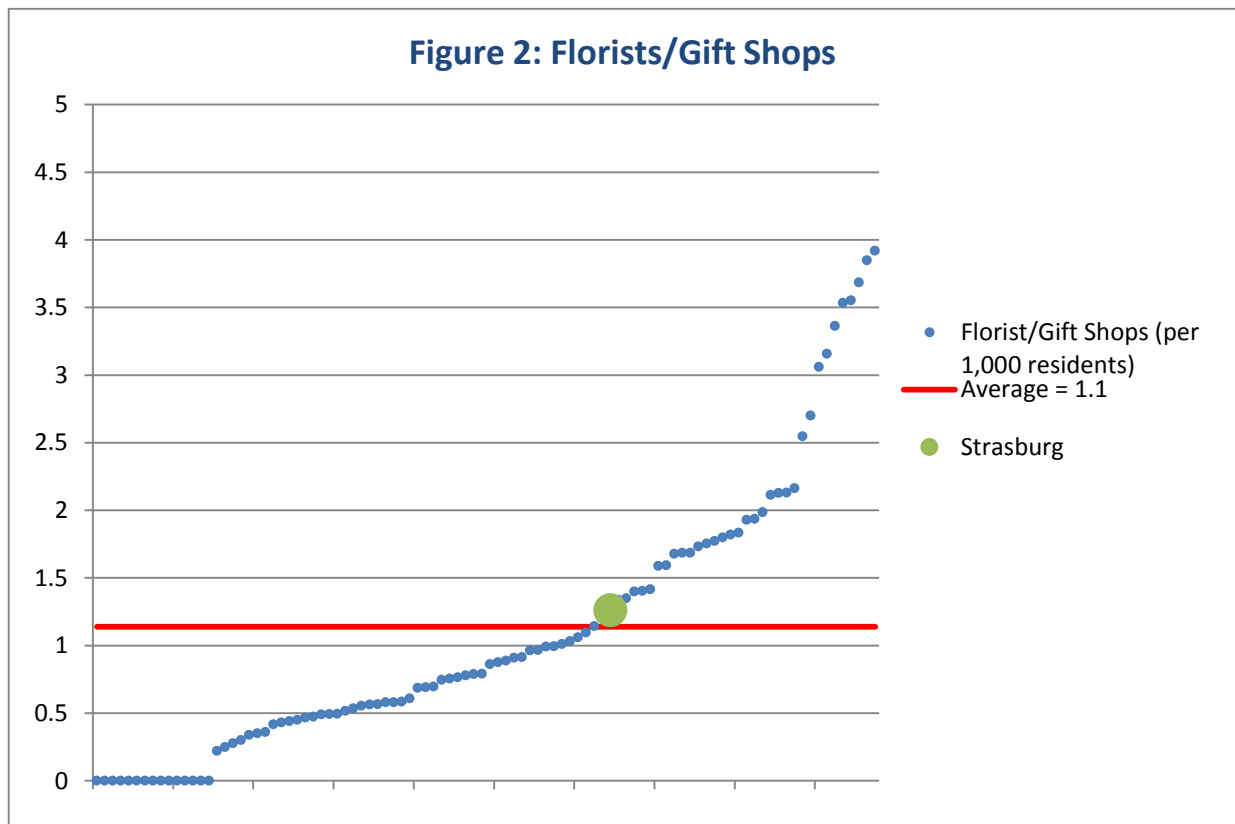
The places with the highest concentrations of antique stores tend to be: 1) located in Central Virginia, 2) in counties with seasonal homes, or 3) located along a major federal highway. Locations in Central Virginia seem to thrive through connections to Civil War history and/or Piedmont landscapes and are a daytrip's

distance from a major metro area. Cape Charles and Kilmarnock are both located near high seasonal populations of second home-owners who own waterfront property. Lastly, Edinburg and Buchanan are small towns located along the I-81 corridor in scenic mountainous settings. Most all of these places could be described as “quaint” and have historic character.

Strasburg shares many of the characteristics with the places listed above that have the highest concentration of antique stores. Strasburg is located close to not just one, but two interstates and certainly falls into the category of being a daytrip’s distance from the D.C. Metro Area. Additionally, Strasburg already has a strong tourist draw due to Civil War history and the natural amenities of the Shenandoah Valley. Since Strasburg is statistically average for its number of antique stores, it is likely that Strasburg can support a larger number of antique stores like those communities on the top ten list. However, this analysis is somewhat mitigated by the size of the Strasburg Emporium, which given its scale could discourage other antique retailers from coming into the area.

Florists / Gift Shops

On average, places can support a little over one florist or gift shop per 1,000 residents. Strasburg is currently above average with 1.3 florists/gift shops per 1,000 residents.



The combination of florists/gift shops is meant to include businesses that sell flowers, flowers in combination with other small gifts, or just small gift items. By comparing Figure 1 and Figure 2, one can see a difference between how florists/gift shops and antique stores are distributed among the 100 Places. Antique stores are

concentrated in higher numbers among a few particular geographies while florists/gift shops are distributed more evenly. This suggests that florists/gift shops meet local needs, while antique stores are more often regional and specialty destinations.

The top ten places for florists/gift shops are:

Place	County	Number	Outlets-Per-Thousand
Clarksville	Mecklenburg	4	4.4
Grundy	Buchanan	4	3.9
Lovingston	Nelson	2	3.8
Charlotte Court House	Charlotte	2	3.7
Stuart	Patrick	5	3.6
Scottsville	Albemarle	2	3.5
Kilmarnock	Lancaster	5	3.4
Gretna	Pittsylvania	4	3.2
Chincoteague	Accomack	9	3.1
Bowling Green	Caroline	3	2.7

These top ten places are smaller on average than the entire dataset (1,200 population compared to 2,612). They are mostly situated in sparsely populated parts of the state and none are located on major interstates. The location of these places suggests that florists in rural towns do well because they draw from the surrounding rural areas and draw a customer base from beyond the small town.

Jewelry Stores

Jewelry stores include those that sell and repair jewelry or watches at retail or consignment. Jewelry stores tend to be less common in places with populations of less than 3,000 residents. However, while some places have a much higher concentration of jewelry stores, there are many places with retail outlet-per-resident counts that range between 0.25-1.0 (see the cluster of places in Figure 3). Most places that have a population of 3,000 or more can support at least one to three jewelry stores. Strasburg has one jewelry store or 0.22 jewelry stores per 1,000 residents and therefore there is room in the market for additional jewelry retail outlets.



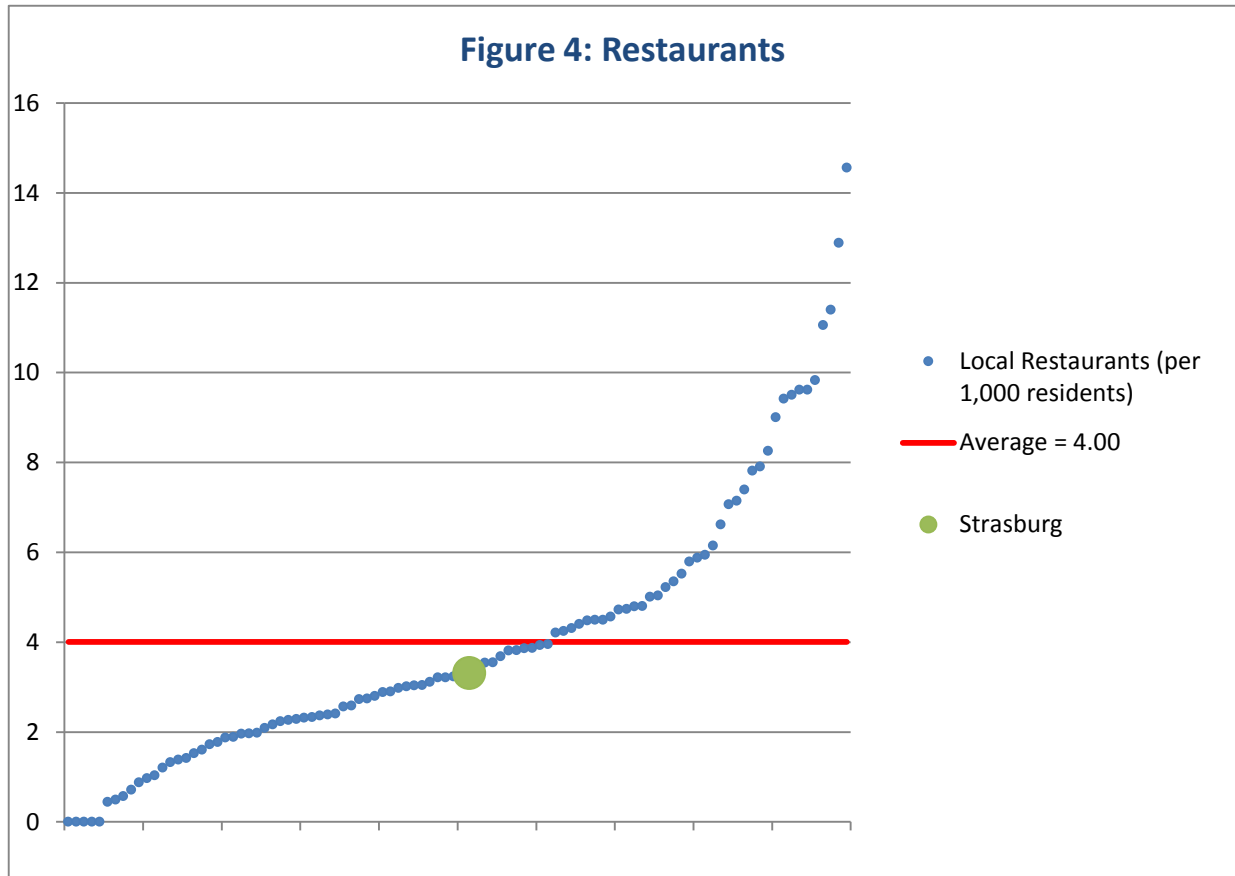
The top ten places for jewelry stores are:

Place	County	Number	Outlets-Per-Thousand
Rich Creek	Giles	2	2.58
Grundy	Buchanan	2	1.96
Orange	Orange	7	1.48
Stuart	Patrick	2	1.42
Kilmarnock	Lancaster	2	1.36
Pound	Wise	1	0.96
Bowling Green	Caroline	1	0.90
Brookneal	Campbell	1	0.90
Clarksville	Mecklenburg	1	0.88
Ruckersville	Greene	1	0.88

None of these places are located on an interstate. Otherwise, they exhibit many characteristics found for the previous retail categories: small towns that draw from a wide and rural geographic range. The exceptions are Ruckersville and Orange, which are located close to Charlottesville, and Bowling Green, which is located close to Fredericksburg.

Local Restaurants

Local restaurants are the most ubiquitous establishments across small towns in Virginia. Figure 4 demonstrates that local restaurants are present in almost all of the 100 Places. On average, there are about four local restaurants for every 1,000 residents. In Strasburg, there are 3.3 local restaurants for every 1,000 residents. A local restaurant, for the purpose of this study, is any restaurant that is not a national chain. Regional chains like Pinos in the Southside are counted.



The top ten places for local restaurants are:

Place	County	Number	Outlets-Per-Thousand
Amelia Court House	Amelia	16	14.40
Cape Charles	Accomack	13	8.74
Ruckersville	Greene	13	10.29
Gretna	Pittsylvania	14	26.92
Deltaville	Middlesex	11	13.22
Lovingston	Nelson	5	4.47
Keysville	Charlotte	8	6.31
Onancock	Accomack	12	10.52
Kilmarnock	Lancaster	14	13.88
Bowling Green	Caroline	10	9.10

These top ten places are not located near interstates. They tend to be located in remote areas and/or visitor destinations. Cape Charles, Deltaville, Lovington, Onancock, and Kilmarnock are all located near vacation homes or other visitor attractions. Amelia Court House, despite its small size, supports 16 local establishments. It is the county seat and is centrally located in a very rural county, hence drawing from a wide area.

The presence of chain restaurants in the north end of Strasburg near the I-81 interchange provides steep competition for local restaurants, but the data suggests that there is still an untapped market for local restaurants as an alternative to the chain outlets. To reach the average rate of local restaurants, Strasburg could technically add four more restaurants. However, the high number of chain restaurants in Strasburg and the close proximity of Winchester suppresses Strasburg's market potential for more local restaurants.

Clothing Stores

Small towns with fewer than 1,000 residents are able to support a small clothing store, though on average, it takes 1,600 residents to support a small clothing store. Small clothing store" as defined here excludes Wal-Mart, Target, and other large chain retailers that sell primarily clothing or clothing along with other goods. Strasburg currently has two small clothing stores, however, both are consignment stores selling used clothing. As seen in Figure 5, Strasburg is below average with only 0.32 small clothing stores per 1,000 residents. Although the data would suggest there is room in the market for additional clothing stores, the nearby presence of Winchester creates steep competition and is likely reducing Strasburg's market potential to support additional clothing stores.



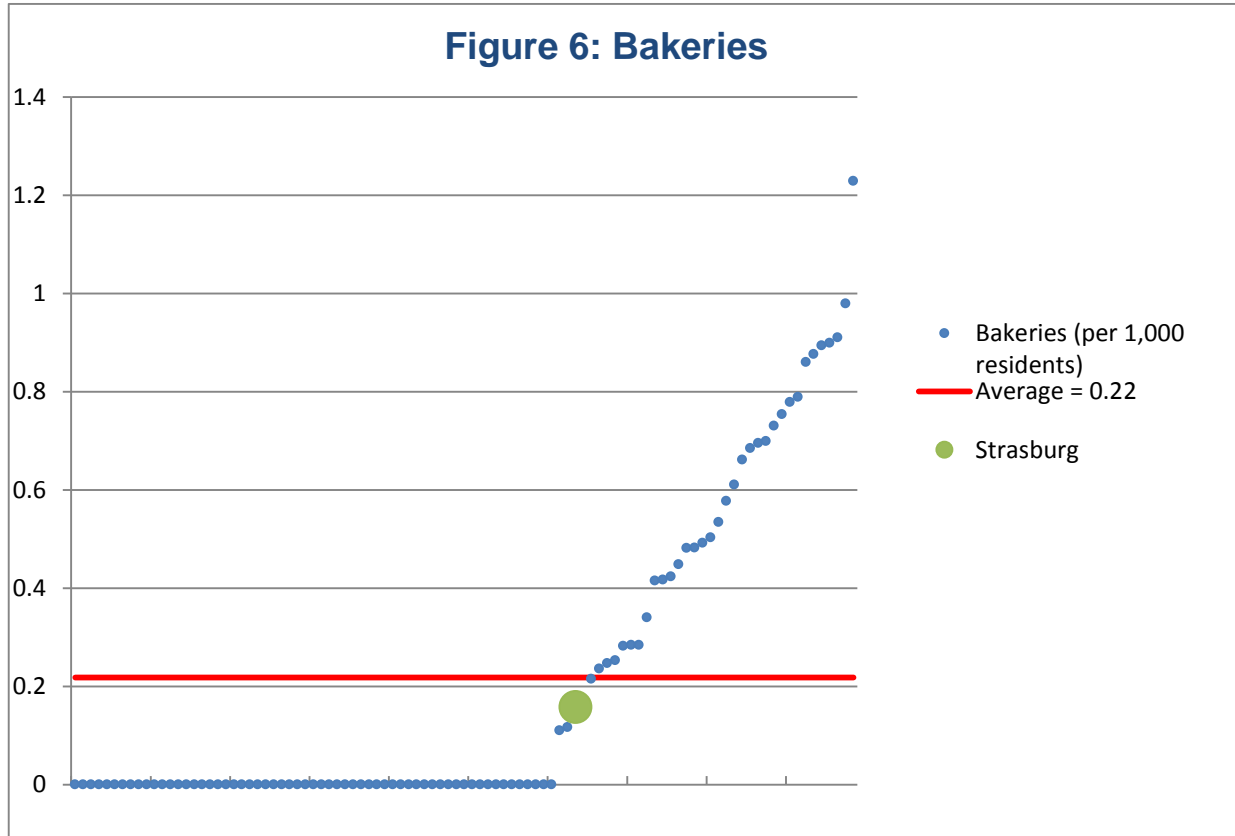
The top ten places for small clothing stores are:

Place	County	Number	Outlets-Per-Thousand
Clarksville	Mecklenburg	5	4.39
Kilmarnock	Lancaster	5	3.36
Chatham	Pittsylvania	4	3.15
Grundy	Buchanan	3	2.94
Chincoteague	Accomack	8	2.72
Stuart	Patrick	3	2.13
Norton	Wise	8	2.02
Warsaw	Richmond	3	1.98
Abingdon	Washington	16	1.95
Edinburg	Shenandoah	2	1.92

Places that can support a high number of these stores are either located great distances from metropolitan areas or located at or near destinations like Clarksville on Buggs Island Lake, Kilmarnock near the

Chesapeake Bay, or Chincoteague on the Atlantic Ocean. Abingdon has the highest count of niche clothing stores at 16 among the places listed above. It combines interstate access, an historic downtown, and destination status as an arts and cultural community and trail community.

Bakeries



The bakeries category includes shops that sell bread and other baked goods such as donuts as separate entities apart from the bakeries found in grocery stores. Grocery stores like Food Lion and Wal-Mart are available throughout the state and, perhaps for this reason, bakeries are not commonly found in many places. On average, one bakery can be supported by every 4,500 residents. Strasburg has one bakery and one donut shop which recently opened, but falls slightly below average due to its population of 6,348.

A comparison of top bakeries by population would not be very informative since most places with bakeries supported either have one or two. Instead, the places with the highest number of bakeries, regardless of population size were identified. They are as follows:

Place	County	Number	Population
Farmville	Prince Edward	6	8,216
Abingdon	Washington	5	8,191
Ashland	Goochland	3	7,225
Covington	[City]	3	5,961
Bedford	Bedford	3	6,222
Big Stone Gap	Wise	3	5,614

All of these places are located on interstates or federal highways. Farmville, Abingdon, and Ashland are regional draws for education and the arts. All but Big Stone Gap serve as the county seat of their respective counties. Strasburg is not the county seat, but it is located close to I-81 and I-66. With the presence of Food Lion in the community, Winchester close by, and several bakeries in Woodstock and Front Royal, it may be difficult for another bakery to break into the Strasburg market.

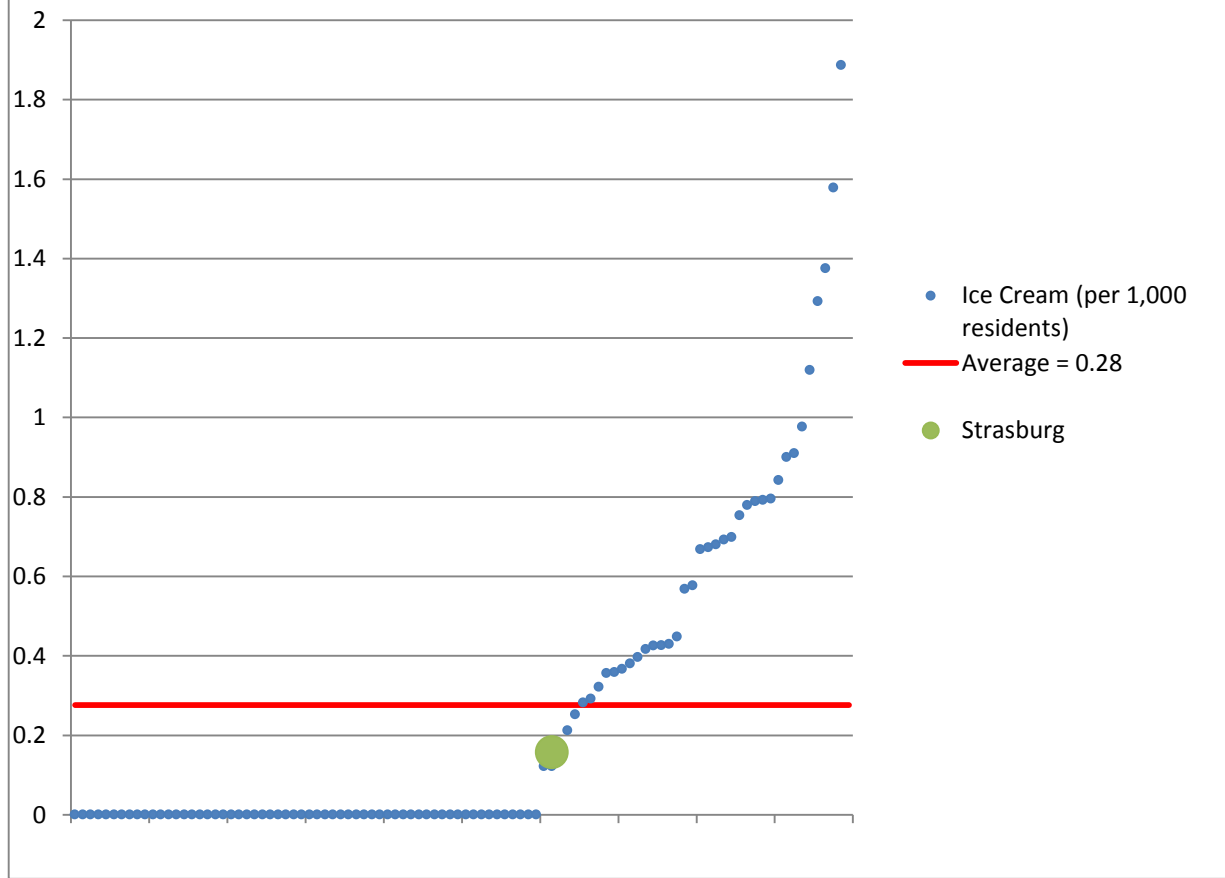
Ice Cream/Dessert Shops

Like bakeries, ice cream and desserts are more of a specialty good than a convenience good. Most of the 100 places studied did not have a store that specialized in selling ice cream or other desserts. Ice cream shops do not become a commonplace in towns until population exceeds 2,300 residents. However, this does not guarantee that populations exceeding 2,300 can support an ice cream/dessert shop. For example, the Town of Pulaski, which has a population of over 9,000 contains no ice cream/dessert shop per a Yellow Pages search.

As can be seen on the next page, places with a high ratio of ice cream shops to population include those that are tourist destinations. This includes the town of Damascus, which is branded as "Trail Town USA", Tangier Island, Hillsville, and Abingdon.

Strasburg has one seasonal ice cream shop, which is a rate of .16 ice cream/dessert shops per 1,000 residents. A second dessert shop would put Strasburg above average at .33 shops per 1,000 residents. The level of Strasburg's tourism would determine whether there is a market for a second ice cream/dessert shop, particularly in the Historic Downtown District.

Figure 7: Ice Cream/Dessert Shops



The top ten places for ice cream/dessert shops are:

Place	County	Number	Outlets-Per-Thousand
Damascus	Washington	2	2.46
Drakes Branch	Charlotte	1	1.89
Gretna	Pittsylvania	2	1.58
Tangier	Accomack	1	1.38
Rich Creek	Giles	1	1.29
Hillsville	Carroll	3	1.12
Abingdon	Washington	8	0.98
Amelia Court House	Amelia	1	0.91
Bowling Green	Caroline	1	0.90
Tappahannock	Essex	2	0.84

Key Takeaways from Comparison Study

- The data suggests that there is room in Strasburg's market for additional local restaurants, but steep competition from chain restaurants and the nearby presence of Winchester might suppress Strasburg's market potential for local restaurants.
- Small clothing stores, ice cream/dessert shops, and bakeries all fall below average in comparison to similar places, but adding additional retail outlets would put Strasburg above average, a ratio that might be unsustainable.
- Strasburg shares similar characteristics with top performing places for antique stores and has potential to build on regional tourism to support an above average rate of antique stores. Currently Strasburg has an average rate.
- Top performing places for florists/gift shops, small clothing stores, and jewelry tend to be located far from larger towns and away from interstates in order to capture the market for a large, rural, regional area. Strasburg does not have this luxury with competition from nearby and similarly-sized Woodstock, larger Front Royal, and the much larger market of Winchester.

A VISITOR-FRIENDLY MIX OF RETAIL & VENUES

For a previous project, Community Planning Partners also conducted research to determine those businesses typically found within walking distance of boutique hotels that collectively provide a friendly environment for the hotels and contribute to their success. The previous section looked at general market potential by particular retail categories, this section outlines the retail needed in support of a visitor-oriented venue, a boutique hotel. While the former is a stand-alone analysis, this section looks at the synergy that could be created by combining forces to make for a visitor-friendly downtown.

Boutique hotels are typically hotels located in historic downtowns in older buildings, either a former downtown hotel that was vacant or underutilized for many years or a building adapted for use as a hotel. Most, but not all are limited in size. The research is germane to this study, because even though the Hotel Strasburg predates the term “boutique hotel,” it can be easily defined as a boutique hotel because of its size, its historic building, and its key role in Downtown Strasburg.

Six comparison hotels were chosen because they held common characteristics:

- Location adjacent to an historic downtown outside of a major metro area.
- Historic building that was renovated after a period of dormancy or marginal use.
- Offered between 35 and 125 rooms.

The comparison hotels researched were:

- Stonewall Jackson Inn - Staunton
- Hotel Roanoke - Roanoke
- Robert E. Lee Hotel - Lexington
- The George Washington Inn - Winchester
- Craddock Terry Hotel - Lynchburg
- General Francis Marion Hotel – Marion

Included in the comparison was the Hotel Roanoke, which is not a typical ‘boutique’ hotel because of its size and management. However, its unique building history and position as a downtown anchor in an historic Virginia downtown make it an appropriate model for comparison. Another outlier was the Robert E. Lee Hotel, which was still under construction as of the time of the study in December 2013.

Research Findings

Table 3 on the next page delineates the retail outlets and other venues found within walking distance of the listed boutique hotels. Shopping and Restaurants are the most common amenities found adjacent to these hotels. The other most common amenities are Food (cafes, bakeries, desserts, etc.) and Arts & Entertainment (galleries, theaters, etc.). Not coincidentally, these amenities are what make a central commercial district attractive to locals and visitors alike. A “visitor” to Downtown Strasburg can be someone traveling to the Northern Shenandoah Valley to visit the many battlefields, who has never been in Strasburg. “Visitor” could be a Strasburg resident who resides in the northern portion of the Town in the suburban development found there, who rarely, if ever, stops in the downtown area, though he or she

might travel through the Historic Downtown on the way to a school function or sporting event. Per input at the Public Input Session #1 on July 29, 2014, many of these Northside Strasburg residents are very busy commuting to jobs in the D.C. Metro Area and do their shopping while at lunch in D.C./Northern Virginia or enroute home at the retail hub snug up against I-66 in Front Royal.

Table 3: Visitor-Friendly Businesses Located Near Boutique Hotels

Hotel - Location	Active Life	Arts & Entertainment	Beauty & Spas	Food	Nightlife	Restaurants	Shopping	Total
Stonewall Jackson Inn - Staunton	0	15	6	14	4	26	60	125
Hotel Roanoke - Roanoke	1	14	2	13	10	49	20	109
Robert E. Lee Hotel - Lexington	0	13	11	14	3	25	39	105
George Washington Inn - Winchester	0	8	7	14	4	28	40	101
Craddock Terry Hotel - Lynchburg	8	2	4	5	0	8	22	49
General Francis Marion Hotel - Marion	0	1	7	3	0	8	15	34

Source: yelp.com, November 14, 2013

Shopping

Table 4: Most Common Shopping Categories

Category	Count
Antiques	26
Jewelry	16
Women's Clothing	11
Accessories	10
Bookstores	10
Florists	7
Shoe Stores	5
Cards & Stationery	5

Source: yelp.com, November 14, 2013

Shopping is a broad category that includes retail stores that sell a broad range of retail goods. The sale of art through art galleries is included in the Arts & Entertainment category. Table 4 shows a breakdown of the top shopping categories. Antiques, jewelry, and women's clothes are the most common types of businesses.

In this category, Strasburg has the advantage of already having a long-standing and significant antique retailer, the Strasburg Emporium with a 50,000 square foot imprint on downtown. The Emporium is a regional draw that helps put Strasburg on the map. The owners of the Emporium recently attempted to sell it at auction, but were unsuccessful. Keeping it in Downtown Strasburg is very important to the success of the downtown area. In addition to the Emporium, four other smaller antique retailers are present in Downtown Strasburg, helping add to the critical mass of the antique segment of the retail market.

Jewelers and women's clothing stores are also a key component of a visitor-friendly downtown and often are located in close proximity to each other. As this planning project was getting underway, Downtown Strasburg had no retail outlets that specialize in these shopping

categories, except for one consignment shop, Lydia's Clothing Basket. In the fall of 2014, however, Jean's Jeweler's and Iron Rose (a women's clothing shop) opened in downtown helping address this weakness. Additional opportunities likely exist for similar retailers and fortunately, since many women's clothing and jewelry stores are quite small, they could easily fit in the spaces available in Downtown Strasburg.

Downtown Strasburg also has a number of smaller retailers that offer an eclectic mix of products including Buggy B's, E. Pearl's, and Your One Stop Shop. Given the size of the retail space in the Historic Downtown, medium or big box retailers will never come into the area. However, the smaller spaces are more in keeping with the needs of small scale and boutique retailers, though the configuration of some of the spaces has its challenges (e.g. where former log structures and residential buildings are used as retail outlets).

Restaurants

Table 5: Most Common Restaurant Categories

Category	Count
American	38
Italian	14
Pizza	12
Sandwiches	12
East Asian	11
"Bars"	8
Mexican	8
Burgers	5

Source: yelp.com, November 14, 2013

The Restaurant category includes locations primarily for on-site food consumption. Table 5 shows the most popular restaurant types found within walking distance to comparable boutique hotels. The most common restaurant descriptor found on yelp was "American," sometimes labeled as Traditional American or New American, covers a wide variety of options including steaks, salads, burgers, pasta, wings, etc. In Virginia, "Bars" are not truly bars, but restaurants where alcohol consumption is a significant amount of their business.

Downtown Strasburg currently has ten restaurants with Christina's and the Hotel Strasburg Restaurant representing the higher end of the market, Hi Neighbor being the "country cooking" option, and Subway holding down the fort as downtown's only chain restaurant. Other offerings include Jalisco's (Mexican), Prava Café, and two informal Italian restaurants. There is significant room in the marketplace for additional restaurants, particularly those that might provide more variety in food and price point. Also of growing interest to both locals and visitors, are restaurants that serve locally grown produce and meats and other farm products including local wines, beers, and distilled spirits. "Local" restaurants are growing across Virginia, including in small towns (e.g. the

very successful Harvest Table in Meadowview, just north of Abingdon).

Food

This category addresses food that is purchased for off-premises consumption or items like coffee or ice cream that are not whole meals. It also includes convenience stores and grocery stores. Table 6 on the following page shows the most popular restaurant types found within walking distance to comparable boutique hotels.

Table 6: Most Common Food Categories

Category	Count
Coffee & Tea	11
Beer, Wine, & Spirits	7
Ice Cream	7
Bakeries	7
Convenience Stores	7
Candy Stores	3
Grocery	3
Desserts	2

Source: yelp.com, November, 14 2013

Downtown Strasburg does not have a true coffee shop, but retailers that only specialize in coffee and tea are not always successful in a small market. Christina's fills in as a coffee shop as will the newly opened Holy Moly Donuts at the corner of East King Street and North Massanutten Street. Other retail outlets in the Food category include the Ice Cream Depot and Pat's Cakes & Deli. There are also several convenience stores in the area. There is not an ABC store in Downtown Strasburg, perhaps representing another opportunity to particularly sell local products. As noted earlier, the area has numerous wineries and a cooperative retail outlet that offers their products along with other goods could be a possibility. Just behind the wine craze, is the growing craze for locally produced hard ciders and locally produced distilled spirits. As an example of the latter, the Virginia Sweetwater Distillery, a craft distiller of whiskey and legal moonshine, located just outside of Marion, VA has recently opened the Appalachian Mountain Spirits retail shop on Main Street in downtown Marion.

Arts & Entertainment

Table 7: Most Common Arts & Entertainment Categories

Category	Count
Art Galleries	20
Museums	12
Performing Arts	6
Cinema	4

Source: yelp.com, November 14, 2013

Arts & Entertainment includes ticketed venues, historical and cultural centers, museums, and art galleries. The listed establishments in Table 7 are the aggregate of all of Arts & Entertainment Uses identified in Table 3. As seen in Table 3, Arts & Entertainment establishments are less frequent than restaurants or retail stores. Art galleries are the most common amenity. They provide a visually enticing and interesting destination for window shoppers as well as a venue for local and regional artists to showcase and sell their work. Downtown Strasburg has several art galleries including Shenandoah Valley Artworks, Massanutten Street Gallery, and several shops that have art/gallery items along with their other offerings. Both the Town Hall and Town Library maintain rotating exhibits of local art that is quite popular among both locals and visitors. The library in particular is listed as a site on the O Shenandoah County Artisan Trail.

Museums were the next most common establishment. The Strasburg Museum in the former steam pottery and railroad depot serves as a strong anchor to the eastern end of Downtown Strasburg. Obviously, the entire Shenandoah Valley is filled with numerous historic sites and museums, but these many venues serve to draw visitors to Strasburg and at the same time, pull them away to the other villages, towns, and cities in the Valley.

There are currently only two performing arts venues in Downtown Strasburg – Christina's that hosts small concerts on a regular basis and Hometown Park where Hometown Strasburg sponsors a "music in the park" series. Efforts are under way to bring the Strasburg Theater back to life. This effort is to be

commended in that many small towns have benefited when their old downtown theaters come back to life including the Rex Theater in Galax, VA and the Lincoln Theater in Marion, VA. In Rocky Mount, VA, a \$2.7 million adaptive reuse of the Lynch Hardware Store created the Harvester Performance Center which opened in April, 2014. Harvester started with a bang with a very full schedule and rave reviews of the two performance spaces it contains. The goal is to have 175 performances per year and a quick look at the Center's website indicates that it is well on its way to meeting that goal, even in the first year.

A strong performing arts space that can be used year round, not only provides an amenity for visitors, but in itself can be a draw that helps fill the Hotel Strasburg and local restaurants. Additionally, a larger outdoor performing arts space can be of similar benefit. However, the old "build it and they will come" mantra is not true for there are also examples of redone theaters in small downtowns that have not provided a boost to the local economy because of their limited use.

Factors that Take Away from a Visitor-Friendly Atmosphere

One of the key concerns of residents who attended a Public Input Session #1 on July 29, 2014 was the limited hours kept by many of the downtown retailers. For visitors looking for something to do after dark, this can be pretty discouraging. Again, it is important to think of the northside Strasburg residents as visitors as well. Given their likely job situation and associated commutes and busy weekends catching up on house, yards, and family, an evening visit to Downtown Strasburg might be all they can squeeze into their busy schedules. It does not take too many visits to a closed up downtown to discourage future visitation.

However, Strasburg is not alone regarding the issue of limited hours by downtown retailers. Most small towns struggle with this issue and it is the typical "chicken or the egg" situation. Small retailers can not afford to stay open and keep staff on hand if foot traffic in the area, particularly to their business, does not support it. Economic restructuring efforts that increase the foot traffic in Downtown Strasburg during current business hours and after hours would go far toward encouraging the retailers to stay open later. Many small towns utilize their Main Street or a similar organization to coordinate special events and provide coordinated retail advertising and shopping "extravaganzas" to support seasons of extended hours or even an "extended hour" opportunity each week.

Another detraction that is obvious when walking through the Historic District, or even reviewing Downtown Strasburg's Business and Building Inventories, is the amount of street level space that is vacant or underutilized and space that is in poor condition. Additionally, a large amount of street level space that is in good shape and occupied, is occupied by banking, financial, and other services. While necessary and important to local residents, these uses do not contribute to a visitor-friendly atmosphere.

A third detraction is not having access to a handicap accessible public restroom. Many small downtowns are adding public restrooms to their mix of public amenities as a way of making it possible for visitors to linger in the downtown area. This is a particularly acute need where the retail establishments are mostly small and/or older and do not have space or infrastructure that would allow for a publically used restroom. Public restrooms are often associated with a visitors center, but can also be attached to another public facility, such as a park or outdoor performing arts space, or be a stand alone facility. It is important that however a public restroom is provided, it be clean, safe, and have hours that meet the demand of the visiting public.

Key Takeaways from a Visitor-Friendly Mix of Retail & Venues

- Downtown Strasburg has a strong antique presence, but has a much more limited offering of other retail goods.
- Downtown Strasburg restaurant offerings are limited in variety and price point, detracting from its appeal to outside visitors.
- Downtown Strasburg has no signature “locavore” retailer or restaurant, therefore missing out on a growing trend.
- Downtown Strasburg’s performing arts venues are very limited and small, therefore limiting the scale of the performances and the size of the audiences for downtown events.
- The limited hours of operation for many of Downtown Strasburg’s retailers significantly diminishes the overall success of the downtown retail market.
- Vacancies, underutilization, and building conditions in Downtown Strasburg and the use of better buildings for banking, finance, and other services take away from the retail experience, particularly for visitors.
- The lack of a public restroom in Downtown Strasburg makes it difficult for visitors to linger or extend their shopping experience in the downtown area.

ECONOMIC RESTRUCTURING ANALYSIS

The best means of building on the Key Takeaways that have been delineated on the proceeding pages is to state the key Challenges that need to be overcome and the Opportunities that need to be pursued in order to move forward in restructuring Downtown Strasburg's economy. With each Challenge and Opportunity, a Restructuring Strategy is proposed that addresses the Challenge or Opportunity.

Challenges

1. A market presence and identity that is not well known or understood.
2. A limited retail and restaurant mix that is not visitor-friendly.
3. Retail outlets that keep limited evening and weekend hours.

Restructuring Strategies

A marketing concept that appears in some, but not all market items for the Town relates to Strasburg as the crossroads of history and nature. This concept has merit and would play well as "Strasburg, at the Crossroads of the Shenandoah Valley" or "Strasburg, at the Crossroads of History and Nature" or "Strasburg, Your Crossroads Community." Any final marketing concept should be formally adopted and utilized on stationary, promotional items, street banners, etc. Also, any final logo should not be closely held, but rather, made available for use by local retailers and restaurants in their promotional material.

Recruitment and support of key, targeted retail and restaurant outlets including women's clothing, jewelry, a "locavore" restaurant, Asian/East Asian restaurant, and a wine/beer/distilled spirits outlet. Recruitment should be coupled with incentives such as "micro" business start-up grants, access to a Revolving Loan Fund for larger start-up expenses, and tax abatement (both town and county) for building improvements that impact assessed values, etc.

The retail and restaurant offerings to also be enhanced by encouraging retailers to remain open for additional weeknight and weekend hours. Because this is difficult for small retailers to regularly do, the Main Street program could coordinate special events, advertising campaigns, and shopping "extravaganzas" where retailers remain open and can enjoy the synergy of their fellow retailers being open as well.

Challenges (continued)

4. Retail market leakage to Winchester, Front Royal, and even Woodstock.

5. Vacant buildings, underutilized buildings, and buildings in poor condition.

6. Lack of larger performing arts venues.

Restructuring Strategies (continued)

Because of the quick access to these markets along the interstate routes, recruiting medium and big box retail will always be challenging. Strategies that continue to develop the commercial and industrial employment base, driving population growth and the development of additional new housing, will by extension drive the development of medium/larger retail outlets.

Creation of a Façade Improvement Program funded through a CDBG grant that targets only those buildings in poorest condition and/or those buildings being adapted for new tenants and uses in order to concentrate the resources so that the buildings that are the most difficult and expensive to improve are addressed. Often, the already engaged building owners whose buildings are in good shape are the first to line up for a Façade Improvement Grant and the difficult owners whose buildings are in poor shape linger and fail to participate. Serious and regular code enforcement efforts are often required to gain the participation of the difficult owners.

Very particularly, the marginal businesses and vacant log structure at the intersection of North Massanutten St. and King St. and the large area of parking located at the northwest corner of the intersection need to be addressed. This intersection is perhaps even more important to Downtown Strasburg's success than the downtown gateways.

Redevelopment of the Strasburg Theater and the development of a downtown park/performance space that is laid out to also provide for multiple uses such as a farmers market, festivals, and other special events. A goal for a redeveloped Strasburg Theater should be at least one event per week, preferably live entertainment, year round. Currently there is a study of the theater to be completed in March 2015 funded via a Mixed-Use/Mixed-Income grant from the Virginia Housing Development Authority.

Challenges (continued)

7. Northside Strasburg, other Strasburg residents, and nearby residents who pass through downtown, but rarely stop.

Opportunities

1. 13,000 AADT along North Massanutten St. and 7,500 to to 7,900 AADT along East/West King St.
2. Situated at the crossroads of I-81 and I-66 and U.S. Route 11 and VA 55 and central to the key attractions of the Northern Shenandoah Valley.

Restructuring Strategies (continued)

Efforts at conducting concerts and other special events should be redoubled and coordinated with retailers through the Main Street program so that the retail outlets and restaurants are always open during events. A goal should be to have one event each week during the spring, summer, fall, and holiday season. Events can be large scale, such as the existing Mayfest and Oktoberfest, or simple, such as “Strasburger Day” where the volunteer fire department cooks up Strasburgers as an annual fundraiser. Be creative and have fun!

Restructuring Strategies

As streetscape improvements continue, banners, arrival signage, and wayfinding signage should be put in place and maintained to a high standard of quality. Strasburg should implement a signature streetscape element such as large scale and well maintained planters/hanging baskets, themed sculptures provided by retailers in a Town-sponsored contest, etc. One particular possibility for “Pot Town” would be to utilize larger ceramic planters uniquely decorated and planted with seasonal plants by retailers that can be removed and stored during the winter months.

Much like the New England countryside, a trip along U.S. Route 11 brings into view a quaint village or town every few miles. Strasburg is not unique in the Shenandoah Valley – frontier history, Civil War battlefields, mountain vistas, picturesque streams and rivers, and interesting architecture are found throughout the Valley. However, Strasburg is the only Town at the intersection of I-81 and I-66. As referenced above, emphasizing Strasburg’s crossroads location does provide a unique marketing opportunity.

Opportunities (continued)

3. Proximity to the North Fork of the Shenandoah River, proposed to be designated as a Blueway by the VA Department of Conservation & Recreation.

4. The pending development of the Seven Bends State Park, the Valley Pike & Fisher's Hill Trail, and other trail connections along the U.S. Route 11 corridor.

5. 305 on-street and 716 off-street parking spaces.

Restructuring Strategies (continued)

The Town's efforts at creating and eventually expanding the Strasburg Riverwalk are very much on target. The goal of connecting the Riverwalk to Downtown Strasburg via the Town Run Greenway should be pursued vigorously in order to complete the connection to one of the Town's biggest assets, the river. Consideration should also be given to creating a small riverside campground with perhaps a dozen campsites targeting canoers/kayakers, fishermen, and cyclists. An example of a small "urban" campground is the Cliff View campground on the New River Trail on the edge of Galax that when joined by a Town operated track and par course, creates both a local and visitor amenity. An example of a town-owned campground is the Gatewood Park and Campground maintained by the Town of Pulaski at its reservoir.

In addition to the Riverwalk and Town Run Greenway, Strasburg should create a network of sidewalk and trail connections to these pending projects as they fall into place. Strasburg representatives should, as much as feasible, be engaged in these projects in order to protect and promote the Town's interests. The Town could also drive the efforts in directions beneficial to the Town by being a step ahead in its own trail development and by proactive efforts such as negotiating and acquiring the easements and right-of-ways needed for the regional trail system.

Visitors to downtown areas often say there is not enough parking, even though sufficient parking is nearby. Surveys indicate that this mantra is heard in Strasburg as well even though the downtown area scores well as "very walkable." Per the Downtown Parking Analysis there is a total of 1,021 parking spaces downtown. Efforts should be undertaken to highlight and improve the public spaces available downtown and access to them. The Town should also work with owners of key private parking where possible to gain commitments for making parking available to the general public for large events in exchange for

Opportunities (continued)

6. The Hotel Strasburg.

Restructuring Strategies (continued)

Town-funded improvements. In addition to pointing out local amenities, wayfinding signage should also include the location of the larger parking venues.

A boutique hotel in the Historic Downtown makes Strasburg unique among the Shenandoah Valley's small towns. The Town should pursue public-private efforts to highlight this facility. An example would be the Town purchasing a weekend stay at the Hotel Strasburg and utilizing it as the prize for a Main Street fundraising raffle during Mayfest or Harvestfest.

PART 2:
BUSINESS RECRUITMENT STRATEGY & MARKETING

THE BASICS OF ENTREPRENEURIAL DEVELOPMENT / BUSINESS START-UPS

Economic development efforts typically involve three major strategies. One is to go after existing businesses and get them to locate in your locality. This is often the tactic pursued when trying to recruit new industry to an area and often is a “zero sum” game. The jobs gained are the jobs lost at the former location, whether on the other side of the county, state, nation, or world. Another is to encourage existing businesses to open a new branch in your locality, whether an industrial concern, a retailer, or chain restaurant. These efforts can bring new jobs to an area, but most often the businesses are looking for a prime location in a known market. There is a reason that the small town Hardee’s moves near the interstate exit or the Peebles goes to a strip mall instead of a downtown location. A final strategy is to encourage and support the start of new businesses – industrial, service, or retail. Across America, it is this latter strategy that is getting the most attention as job creation in established markets and business sectors continues to lag in the nation’s slow economic recovery since the “Great Recession.” The creation of new businesses is seen more and more as the gateway to the new economy envisioned for America’s future.

Certainly in the downtowns of America’s small towns, pursuing and supporting business start-ups is seen as the more viable business recruitment strategy. Most business start-ups are by definition flexible and adaptable (at least in their early days) and can more easily fit into the smaller spaces usually found in an older downtown setting. Business start-ups need cheap rents, more typically found in older downtowns as opposed to the new shopping center or office building on the edge of town. Downtowns, whether in a small town or larger city, are typically the center of entrepreneurship and creativity in most locations. This is even truer today than in the past with young adults and empty nesters alike flocking to downtown locations across the country. Though a few years behind the “big city” trend, this is more and more becoming the trend for small towns as well. Just a few miles away from Strasburg, Katie McCaskey has written the “Micropolitan Manifesto” about her experience in leaving New York City for Staunton, VA where she and her husband have started the very successful George Bowers Grocery (and coffee shop). Ms. McCaskey’s story has become somewhat of an Internet sensation.

There are probably a 1,000 different ways to recruit businesses to a small town downtown setting. The “Market Analysis for the Town of Strasburg,” assembled by the group of James Madison University students in the spring of 2012, looked at unmet demand and identified existing small chain outlets that could be recruited to fill the demand in Downtown Strasburg. Part 1 of this report also reviewed and delineated market segments that represent opportunities in Downtown Strasburg. Part 2 of this report will focus on the business start-up side of recruitment. That being said, the following information can also be applied to a small independent business seeking a second or third location, a small regional chain, and even some smaller franchise businesses, where the local entrepreneur has some flexibility as to location (e.g. Subway that permits its restaurants to be in a typical storefront as opposed to a McDonald’s that requires a drive-up window in most locations).

When pursuing business start-ups, a locality has to be ready to answer the basic question on the mind of every budding young entrepreneur, mid-career changer, or early retiree wanting to start a new business – “What do I need to succeed and where can I get it?” Those communities that are addressing this basic two-part question are the ones that are on the cutting edge of business recruitment and are achieving success in filling their vacant and underutilized storefronts. So, what do the entrepreneur, career changer, or early retiree need in order to start a new business? They need the following:

- 1. Entrepreneurial Know How** – Depending on that data consulted, it is reported that 50% to 95% of all new businesses fail within five years. Every ounce of knowledge that an entrepreneur can gain

in workshops and classes, through a supportive network, and from the advice of seasoned business people decreases this failure rate.

2. **A Business Plan** – Many people launch into a new business without a clear sense of direction or specific plan of action. Most of these “by the seat of the pants” entrepreneurs fail. Though not a guarantee, a well thought out business plan, molded with the assistance of seasoned entrepreneurs, helps keep energy focused and the business moving in the direction of the goals original established.
3. **Access to Cheap Money** – Access to capital is the biggest reason many would-be entrepreneurs never take the leap. Purchasing equipment and inventory, paying rent and utilities, buying real estate if needed on the front end, and hiring staff will likely lead to negative cash flow for many months and perhaps even years depending on current market conditions and the nature of the business. The dollars raised on the front end before the doors even open are crucial to surviving those early days.
4. **Active and Inactive Partners** – Whether an “angel investor” who puts in dollars, but stays out of the way or a fellow entrepreneur with whom services can be exchanged at low or no cost, most entrepreneurs need ways to keep costs low and cash flow moving in the right direction during the start-up phase of his/her new business.
5. **A Well-Traveled Location** – There is a reason many retail businesses bypass downtown settings to shopping center and malls – access to foot traffic and eyeballs. Small downtowns are challenged to provide the foot traffic needed by both existing and new businesses and to the extent that a locality can increase the number of people visiting and lingering in downtown, the more successful the downtown and its small businesses will be.
6. **An Attractive Space** – For “space” substitute any or all of the following – kiosk, shared space, business incubatory, store, office, service bay, website, etc. “Attractive” may be in the eye of the beholder, but for each business going after a particular demographic, its facility has to be attractive and in reach of its intended clientele.
7. **A Means to Get the Word Out** – Most start-up businesses have little or no capital to use for marketing after all of the expenses related to getting the lights turned on and the doors opened. Having access to shared publicity and special promotions offered through the Town of Strasburg and Hometown Strasburg is a lifesaver.
8. **A Winning Product** – Every entrepreneur starts with an idea. Some ideas work, some don't. Even some great ideas don't germinate fully or never grow to the scale needed to succeed. There are a few entrepreneurs that can shape an idea into a successful product on their own. Most, however, need the objective help of a mentors and experts that know how to walk the entrepreneurial road. This is even more true in communities not known for their entrepreneurial spirit and where high unemployment has driven even the most reluctant entrepreneurs to give it a try.
9. **Customers** – The entrepreneur is truly on his own when the doors first open. Those first few hours, days, and even months can be pretty lonely. However, to the extent the entrepreneur has had help with items #1 through #7 above, the lonely days will become less so as his/her business survives start-up and moves toward thriving.

Starting a business is the responsibility of the budding entrepreneur. The risk is his or hers to take. At the same time, most communities, including Strasburg can serve in a support role in order to attract business start-ups and to improve their chance of success. They can assist with the first seven items on the list above and to some extent even item #8 by steering an entrepreneur who has a general sense of what he/she wants to accomplish, but needs some direction and market data to zero in an exact market niche. Assisting with the list above is the backbone of a business recruitment strategy where the focus is on business start-ups. Strategies that address each piece of the backbone are described more fully on the pages that follow.

A BUSINESS RECRUITMENT STRATEGY

Entrepreneurial Know How & A Business Plan

Strategy #1: Offer a Regular Schedule of Business Start-Up Training Events

Like many Virginia community colleges, the Lord Fairfax Community College houses the Small Business Development Center for the Northern Shenandoah Region. The Lord Fairfax Small Business Development Center (LFSBDC) offers support, training, and other services to new business start-ups. The Virginia Economic Development Partnership has made available Entrepreneurial Express 1-day conferences by request across the state. Even with these excellent resources, more and more, small and mid-sized communities are creating their own business start-up classes tailored to their situation. One example is "Pop Up Marion" in Marion, VA which through six rounds of 8-session "Small Business Boot Camp" workshops has had 142 attendees and 50 graduates. Since "Pop Up Marion" was started, Downtown Marion has seen nine previously vacant storefronts filled, 14 new businesses started, and 68 new jobs created. In Charlottesville, VA the Community Investment Collaborative offers a 17-week "Workshop in Business Opportunities" for persons with a business idea or existing businesses. These programs have had no difficulty getting volunteers from the business community to location. The LFSBDC could even be recruited to assist with entrepreneurial training at a Strasburg location.

Strategy #2: Develop a Mentoring Network for New Businesses

Both "Pop Up Marion" and the Community Investment Collaborative provide opportunities for new businesses to link up with experienced business leaders as mentors. These relationships are typically first formed immediately after an individual has attended one of the business start-up workshops. For many organizations that support business start-ups, having an active mentor relationship is a requirement for gaining access to the resources of the organization, including financial resources. The Chamber of Commerce is already an informal mentoring network. The Chamber can be tapped to create a more formal mentoring network with a particular focus on business start-ups.

Access to Cheap Money

Strategy #3: Make Available Start-Up Grants for New Businesses

Several sources can be tapped into to provide start-up grants to new businesses. With enough lead time, a budding entrepreneur who is low- to moderate-income can set up a Virginia Individual Development Account (VIDA) with the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). These accounts are traditionally used to buy first homes, but can also be used for the purpose of starting a business. Once an individual saves \$2,000 through his/her VIDA account, it is matched with \$4,000 in additional funds. People Incorporated, with whom Strasburg has a relationship, is a certified intermediary for administering VIDA accounts for participants.

DHCD recently started a new grant program called Building Entrepreneurial Economies that provides Planning Grants of \$7,500, Implementation Grants of up to \$25,000, and Innovation Grants of up to \$45,000 to non-profits and local governments for business start-up efforts. The goals set for these grants are: 1) awareness of entrepreneurship; 2) business formation; 3) job creation and retention; and 4) entrepreneurship support. The businesses that DHCD is seeking to support through these grants are micro or small businesses that are place-based and therefore difficult to outsource; small scale with limited business experience or expertise; and tied to a broader economic restructuring effort.

Existing, successful local businesses can also be tapped for grant funds, particularly those that might have grown more regional in nature, but still call Strasburg home. Banks who have to invest back into their local community in keeping with the Community Reinvestment Act could also be encouraged to participate. “Pop Up Marion” has been able to provide \$5,000 in start-up capital to new businesses graduating from its “Small Business Boot Camps” through a competitive process using a combination of DHCD and Wells Fargo Bank funds and local radio station advertising credits.

Strategy #4: Put In Place a Revolving Loan Fund

As referenced in the previous section, DHCD also makes available funding for a Revolving Loan Fund for localities receiving a CDBG-funded Downtown Revitalization Grant. Funds for a Revolving Loan Fund can be as high as \$300,000 and are intended for the cost of business start-ups and expansion and do require the tracking of jobs creating. Once loaned and paid back, receipts from the loans (principal and interest) become “Program Income,” funds that the locality can keep and loan again. Revolving Loan Funds are formalized lending services and can be overseen by an Economic Development Authority. Some localities choose to work with a local bank to provide underwriting and loan servicing as a part of its Community Reinvestment Act commitment or a community development non-profit. Even with their formality, DHCD-funded Revolving Loan Funds are able to make loans at a rate less than the market and with more friendly underwriting standards. As an alternative, DHCD Revolving Loan funding can also be used to establish a loan loss reserve. Properly publicized and administered, the loan loss reserve encourages local banks to take the risk of making business loans to start-up and smaller businesses. Utilizing the loan loss reserve also provides a means of dictating more friendly terms for the loans offered under its protection.

Active & Inactive Partners

Strategy #5: Develop Support Systems for Local Investing

Most entrepreneurs starting a new business venture tap into their own debt capacity and approach family and friends to cobble together enough start-up capital. While expected, this does limit business start-ups to individuals with a strong credit history, low current loan balances, and a network of people who have money to give or lend. The person of more modest means can be left out of this equation. However, there is a growing trend toward more informal lending and collaborative forms of business start-up assistance.

The Staunton Creative Community Fund in Staunton, VA has assisted its entrepreneurs through many creative funding strategies including crowd funding, where a call is put out via the Internet for assistance and multiple people respond with small amounts of funding that when added up can be significant. The Fund has also created an hOUR Economy time bank where new businesses can assist each other within their areas of expertise and the hours are “banked” for later withdrawal when assistance is needed in reverse. The Fund is even helping new businesses tap into informal “peer-to-peer” loans and recently saw its first self-directed IRA loan from an individual to a business start-up.

A Well-Traveled Location

Strategy #6: Make “Placemaking” a Top Priority of Downtown Revitalization

The following section of this report outlines the specific Capital Improvement Priorities that have come out of this research and planning process that are at least partially fundable through a DHCD Downtown Revitalization Grant. These improvements include creating a new public park/performance space and enhancing the visibility, access, and attractiveness of the Town’s most central parking area. In addition to utilizing a DHCD Planning Grant for developing a Downtown Revitalization Grant Application/Project, Strasburg is also utilizing a planning grant from the Virginia Housing Development Authority for evaluating the feasibility of a Mixed-Use Mixed Income (MUMI) project involving the renovation and reopening of the Strasburg Theater. Implementing these projects along with the completion of the Town’s current T-21 streetscape improvements, will go far to improve foot traffic in Downtown Strasburg and begin to create a more clearly defined sense of place.

“Placemaking” is a fairly recent concept that is defined by the Project for Public Spaces (pps.org) as “how we collectively shape our public realm to maximize shared value. Rooted in community-based participation, placemaking involves the planning, design, management and programming of public spaces. More than just creating better urban design of public spaces, placemaking facilitates creative patterns of activities and connections (cultural, economic, social, ecological) that define a place and support its ongoing evolution. Placemaking is how people are more collectively and intentionally shaping our world, and our future on this planet.” This rather expansive definition can be more narrowly defined for a small town downtown setting as regularly paying attention to the casual and programmed use of public spaces to understand the organic relationships between these places and the surrounding retail. Well planned spaces and their uses coupled with the surrounding retail can add up to something more than the sum of its parts.

Some specific examples can explain how placemaking fits into a business recruitment strategy. The existing Ice Cream Depot is surrounded by surface parking on East King Street, not a location that encourages patrons to linger. When the new public park comes on line, Town staff should work with the Ice Cream Depot to potentially relocate to a seasonal or year-round space closer to the park. The “co-location” of this retailer and the public place would be beneficial to the retailer and create more regular use of the public park. Similarly, the renovation and reuse of the Strasburg Theater should create the opportunity to actively recruit restaurants to locate nearby once a fairly regular schedule of events is in place. In both cases, Town staff should take on a very active role in marketing real estate and other spaces armed with not only the placemaking concept in mind, but with data regarding the scheduling of events and projected or actual attendance at such events as “market data” to entice the potential retailer.

An Attractive Space

Strategy #7: Package & Publicize a Façade Improvement Program, Rehabilitation Tax Exemptions, & Available Real Estate

The Façade Improvement Program that can be funded through a CDBG-funded Downtown Revitalization Project can provide a significant incentive to downtown building owners and to potential businesses that may be seeking to purchase a building. 40% to 50% of the base \$700,000 Downtown Revitalization grant is usually dedicated to such a program. Façade Improvement grants are extended to building owners to make improvements to the outside of their buildings visible from a public right-of-way. A typical \$15,000 grant might be given to add an appropriate awning, replace the storefront windows and doors, add signage, and paint a building. Funds can be extended, though in lesser amounts, for side and rear facades as well,

particularly where they face a public amenity such as a municipal parking lot. While business operators who do not own their buildings can not apply for a Façade Improvement Grant, they can encourage their landlords to participate in support of their continued rental of a property needing improvement.

The currently existing partial real estate tax exemption for rehabilitation/renovation within a historic district put in place by the Town of Strasburg provides an additional incentive. Town staff should meet regularly with current building owners and real estate agents to gather information from them and to provide them with information regarding these incentive programs that they can in turn use to incentivize the lease and/or sale of their properties.

The Town could also sponsor a broader semi-annual breakfast meeting with downtown business owners, building owners, and other downtown leaders to present “What’s Happening in Downtown Strasburg,” to discuss the logistics of upcoming events, and to gather ongoing input regarding the shifting scene in Downtown Strasburg. These breakfasts can be started in conjunction with the Downtown Revitalization Project, but should not be dependent on that program.

A Means to Get the Word Out

Strategy #8: Develop a More Robust Downtown Strasburg Website

The Hometown Strasburg website (hometownstrasburgva.com) and the new downtown section to the Strasburg website (downtownstrasburgva.com) are good starts, but should continue to be enhanced and expanded. Plans to provide a link to real estate offerings in downtown Strasburg are right on target. Links to the websites or Facebook pages of downtown businesses are a must. To avoid confusion and to take advantage of some economies of scale when it comes to creating and updating content, some consideration should be given to merging the Hometown Strasburg and Downtown Strasburg websites as a single site. As the new public park and a renovated Strasburg Theater come on line, a web presence for these venues accessed through a single website branded as the Downtown Strasburg website will be an important part of their success in this day when most people look for event information via the Internet. As an example of the level of interactivity that draws a viewer in, look at the websites of Front Royal, VA and Woodstock, VA (two of Strasburg’s rivals) which are very attractive and have multiple links to the restaurants, hotels, and amenities in the area.

A Winning Product

Strategy #9: Recruit Specific Businesses Needed in Downtown Strasburg

The Town of Strasburg should not be shy about intentionally recruiting businesses needed to improve the mix of retail outlets in Downtown Strasburg. This can be done in several ways:

1. Assisting existing building owners who are having a hard time leasing their property to think about the kind of use most viable for their building and that adds to Downtown’s sense of place and moving them toward the financial assistance programs referenced above.
2. Assisting potential businesses, new or existing, with securing grants and loans to help with opening a business in Downtown Strasburg. Depending on a final program design start-up grants could be extended to both true start-ups and existing businesses locating to Downtown Strasburg from out of the area. Revolving loan funds are typically used for equipment and building improvements, even where the business owner does not own the real estate out of which his/her business operates.

3. Actively recruiting successful regional businesses and small chains to have an outlet in Downtown Strasburg.
4. Actively recruiting medium-sized and larger chain restaurants and retail outlets to Downtown Strasburg, though limiting the scope to the most reasonable candidates (e.g. downtown friendly chains that fit well into small spaces in a downtown setting, but could bring a large amount of new foot traffic to the area).
5. Actively recruiting those retail businesses that are under-represented in the Downtown Strasburg market and that are needed to provide a more visitor-friendly mix of retailers as outlined in Part I of this report:
 - Additional restaurants that offer more variety and price points. Particular restaurants to be targeted might include:
 - **A “locavore” restaurant/retailer.** The hugely popular and successful Harvest Table Restaurant in Meadowview, VA stands as a strong example of what a locavore restaurant can bring to a small town setting (check out their website at harvestablerestaurant.com).
 - **A brew pub.** Hugely popular across America, brew pubs are quickly becoming a hub for their localities and do add significantly to the visitor experience. For obvious reasons, people tend to linger at brew pubs, increasing the number of persons regularly downtown, particularly in the evenings and on weekends.
 - **Asian or Asian-fusion restaurant.** Though two Chinese restaurants are located along Route 11 on the northern edge of Strasburg, this cuisine is particularly missing from Downtown Strasburg.
 - Additional retail outlets that might include:
 - **Additional antique stores.** Though Downtown Strasburg already has a large antique presence, the Strasburg Emporium has created a draw that can be advantageous to additional antique dealers.
 - **Small clothing stores.** Hotel guests are particularly fond of clothing stores, though in a small town setting they are looking for unique offerings, local products, or bargains. They can shop at the usual list of retail outlets at home.
 - **Florists/gifts shops.** There are additional growth opportunities here, but each would need to be unique in order to avoid unnecessary competition with each other.
 - **Jewelry stores.** A new jewelry store has recently opened in Downtown Strasburg and may fill this need, but depending on its mix of products and price points, additional jewelry offerings could be in order.

MARKETING

Good News / Bad News

There is much good news when it comes to marketing Strasburg in general and Downtown Strasburg in particular – a great location in the Shenandoah Valley, near historic Civil War battlefields and the Shenandoah National Park, and a quaint downtown along the North Fork of the Shenandoah River. However, the bad news is that these “marketable” features apply to many other towns and places in the Shenandoah Valley. A Web search reveals the following:

- Front Royal bills itself as the “Northern Gateway to the Shenandoah Valley and Shenandoah National Park.”
- Edinburg’s website has a lengthier tag line: “Nestled in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains, in central Shenandoah County, Edinburg exemplifies the quaint, small town atmosphere of the Shenandoah Valley.”
- Woodstock’s tag line is a more modest “Discover Woodstock.”
- New Market’s website does not have a specific tag line, but does refer to the town as being “located in the heart of the beautiful Shenandoah Valley.”
- Luray advertises itself as a “Four-Season Destination – Surrounded in scenic beauty, the Town of Luray is an exciting and beautiful journey through Virginia’s splendor in winter, spring, summer and fall.”
- Winchester’s brand statement is “Rooted in History, Reaching for the Future.”
- Staunton bills itself as the “Queen City of the Shenandoah, where the spires of the city are our crown.”

So what makes Strasburg unique among all of the quaint Shenandoah Valley communities, particularly those in the Northern Shenandoah? Though it might seem rather mundane, it is its location at the major crossroads of the Northern Shenandoah Valley. It is not just happenstance that the John Marshall Highway (State Route 55), I-66, and the old Manassas Gap/Southern Railroad wind their way through the Blue Mountain passes and connect the Strasburg area to the D.C. Metro Area. Both the old Valley Turnpike (U.S. Route 11), I-81, and the old Baltimore & Ohio line follow an historic and major north-south transportation corridor that was integral to the settlement of the Valley and shaped its ethnic, religious, architectural, and agricultural roots. The intersection of these historic and modern transportation networks has made Strasburg a significant transportation hub for most of its history. Not surprisingly, Strasburg’s biggest roles in the Civil War were transportation related – the movement of troops, both Northern and Southern, up and down the Valley Pike and the place where the train engines seized during the Great Train Raid of 1861 were placed back on the tracks after being moved over land down the Valley Pike from Martinsburg, WV (Virginia at the time).

The kernel on which Strasburg can build a brand and mount a marketing campaign is its location at the Northern Shenandoah Valley’s most significant intersection. This intersection theme has the advantage of being both historic (the old Valley Pike and railroads) and modern (I-66 and I-81). It also has the potential for being very memorable. Among area residents, who hasn’t likely said to someone who doesn’t know the location of Strasburg “It is at the intersection of I-81 and I-66 in the Northern Shenandoah Valley.” The intersection theme also lends itself to use in the D.C. Metro market in that the major interstate intersection

is also likely used as a means of explaining how to get from Washingtonian to Strasburg – “Follow I-66 west to where it intersects I-81 and you’re in Strasburg!”

Building a Brand

As seen to the right, a brochure was previously created by the Tourism Committee of the Strasburg Chamber of Commerce with the tag line of “Strasburg, Virginia: Crossroad of History & Nature” with a very simple “intersection” graphic. The blue and green color scheme of the graphic is well chosen in that the blue denotes the color of water, the North Fork of the Shenandoah River, and the green denotes the rural beauty of the Shenandoah Valley. This attempt at branding is somewhat lessened by the statement on the inside of the brochure that states “Gateway to the Great Shenandoah Valley,” a claim that can be and is also made by nearby Front Royal (see previous page). The “Crossroad” or “Crossroads” brand is excellent by itself and should be treated as a stand-alone theme for the Town’s marketing efforts.

A brand is a marketing/advertising concept that can be fleshed out in a few words and usually is linked to a simple graphic element. A brand should be fairly unique to the product being touted, at least within its given market, and should be easy to remember. Some of the statements on the previous page are too lengthy and therefore hard to remember. They are also not particularly unique to the location being advertised, even within just the Northern Shenandoah Valley market. “Strasburg: Crossroads of History & Nature” works very well as a brand. It is brief. It is memorable, and to some extent already in the “memory bank” of many people because it builds on the directions everybody likely gives to strangers about the Town. It has a simple graphic element that is easily transferrable to many media. Most importantly, it is unique to the Northern Shenandoah Valley market.

The “Crossroads” brand also allows for some flexibility that can make it more organic and longer lived. The word “crossroads” is the unique element that must be maintained, but the words that follow can be flexed to allow for other current and future uses and emphases. The Town currently uses a branding phrase for economic development that touches on the concept of being small, but connected via the crossroads location – “Local Feel, Global Touch.” An example of using the “Crossroads” brand flexibly for economic development purposes might be – “Strasburg: Crossroads of Commerce.” The colors used for the graphic in the existing brochure, or a subsequently chosen color palette, should also be maintained, but not necessarily the exact graphic from the



brochure. As seen on the next page, a simplified version of the graphic that maintains the color palette for the logo can be superimposed on a red-colored background and might make for an attractive light pole banner during the Holiday Season.

Uses of a Brand



The secret to utilizing a brand as the centerpiece of a marketing/advertising campaign is to use it consistently across various documents and media. Always In the past, this was accomplished by one entity tightly controlling the brand – its usage, colors, type fonts, etc. Brands (the unique combination of the words and graphics) can be copyrighted and formally licensed for use by others. While this is still quite appropriate for commercial brands (and costly), it is more and more difficult for non-commercial brands where funds are limited given the breadth and depth of the internet and social media. Quite the opposite of controlling a brand, letting the internet and social media help build a locality's brand creates an organic marketing campaign and has the advantage of being low cost and even free.

Most people in America, particularly the younger generations, can quickly fill in the following blank: "Keep _____ weird." (Austin, Texas or Portland, Oregon for the older readers of this report). Because of the organic nature of community branding and wildly successful campaigns such as those in Austin and Portland, there is a trend in local government to purposely open up the use of a community's brand. In Richmond, VA this has been done with the "RVA" campaign which has been promoted as an open brand with great success. Not coincidentally, Richmond has drawn large numbers of young adults to its core and has become quite trendy over the last ten years as the RVA brand has run. Richmond is now known for more than its Civil War history. Its restaurant scene, new downtown housing, creative murals, and even the number of tattooed people have helped put it on the map in new ways. Subsequently, Frommer's named Richmond one of its top ten destinations for 2014.

All of the above being said, the "Crossroads" brand should be polished and released for public use. If the Town successfully obtains a DHCD grant for Downtown Revitalization, a portion of those funds can be used for branding/marketing/advertising. Strasburg would do well to use some of these funds to improve its internet presence and to polish the "Crossroads" brand. Then, turn them loose to see what happens.

PART 3:
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PRIORITIES

BACKGROUND DATA

The 2013 Strasburg Downtown Plan, previous data and new data researched and analyzed for this Economic Restructuring Plan, and input from the public gathered during the course of developing this plan inform the Capital Improvement Priorities outlined in this section. Key data and information and their sources are outlined below:

Source

1. 2013 Downtown Strasburg Plan

Key Data & Information

Goal 4: Establish a safe, welcoming, and connected environment.

Strategy B: Develop new “green” and open space features for Downtown.

Strategy C: Strengthen the physical and psychological connectedness within and outside of Downtown.

Strategy D: Connect Downtown with the Town Park and River Walk.

Goal 5: Strengthen Existing Businesses.

Strategy A: Utilize available financial incentives and organization resources to enhance the effectiveness of businesses.

2. Downtown Building Conditions Field Survey (including building photographs) compiled November 2013

This survey assembled with the assistance of the Northern Shenandoah Valley Regional Commission was invaluable in delineating the conditions found in Downtown Strasburg, from sound to dilapidated.

3. Downtown Parking Analysis Technical Memorandum dated May 2014

This analysis assembled by the Northern Shenandoah Valley Regional Commission pointed out Downtown Strasburg has a sufficient number of on-street and off-street parking, but also pointed out the need to define it better; enhance it with improved lighting and landscaping; and make it easier to find.

4. Consumer Interest Survey conducted during the course of developing this plan with additional input at a Public Input Session conducted on July 29, 2014

Question 7: Strasburg is considering the development of public space downtown. Please rank your top choices for desired facility.

Highest Ranked Response – Farmers Market

2nd Highest Ranked Response – Public Performance Space

3rd and 4th Highest Ranked Responses – Outdoor Recreation for Youth and Playground/Splash Pad

- | | |
|---|---|
| 5. Public Design Charettes conducted on September 11, 2014 | These two very well attended Public Design Charettes provided crucial input as to what should be accomplished on the two key properties that the Town of Strasburg own in the heart of Downtown – the Brill Building property which also contains the “Taxi Stand” and the large public parking area immediately behind the Fire Station. |
| 6. Monthly Management Team Meetings, summer and fall, 2014 | Monthly Management Team meetings were held in the summer and fall of 2014 as this plan was developed. These key stakeholders and Town officials provided additional input as the text of this plan came together and as the emerging Physical Improvement Priorities were developed by the project architect. |
| 7. Analysis in this plan: A Visitor-Friendly Mix of Retail & Venues | As a part of creating a “visitor friendly-atmosphere,” additional performing arts venues are affirmed as a needed amenity that can help drive downtown visitation. As a part of any outdoor public performance space, this analysis also points out the need to have a public restroom in downtown to make lingering stays in Downtown Strasburg more viable. |

PROPOSED TOWN GREEN

Following this page are two conceptual drawings (looking south and looking north) of what a Town Green might look like on the Brill Building property currently owned by the Town of Strasburg. For the purpose of this plan and for the foreseeable future, the Town Green is limited to the Brill property. The Town Green could be expanded with additional amenities as a second phase at a point in the future when the adjoining two parcels become available (one with a house at the street/sidewalk and the other totally vacant).

The key features of the Town Green that would be implemented as Phase I-A improvements are listed below with notations where Phase I-B improvements could be undertaken.

- **Brill Building Market / Town Green Entrance.**

Historic considerations require that the Brill Building remain (seen at right). It is also considered an important part of Downtown's Streetscape and should be maintained. It would, however, be opened up as a part of the Town Green so that persons attending events at the Town Green could walk through it to enter the Green. The downstairs of the building would be maintained as an open market space for use as a farmers market and made available to retailers wanting temporary "pop up" space for periodic and seasonal sales events. The front storefront windows could be replaced with a roll-up glass door similar to those seen on fire stations. The back of the building would also have a roll-up glass door to complete the "walk through" configuration. These doors would allow the building to be secured when not in use or would be closed during an indoor event in bad weather, with the standard door at the front of the building used for access instead. *As a part of a Phase I-B, the upstairs of the Brill Building can be improved for Town, retail, or other uses.*



- **Taxi Stand & Public Restrooms.** The Taxi Stand building (seen at right) would also be maintained and its exterior improved. An addition would be added to the rear of the building containing handicap accessible public restrooms. Some consideration was given to using the Taxi Stand for public restrooms, but its size and configuration likely preclude this use. Additionally, it is easier to address the accessibility issue while not impacting the historic character of the Tax Stand itself. *As a part of a Phase I-B, the interior of the Taxi Stand can be improved for Town, retail, or other uses.*



- **Band Shell / Amphitheater.** The back portion of the Town Green would contain a bandshell/amphitheater for outdoor performances. It is carefully placed on the Green with screening/sound barriers behind it to avoid any unnecessary impacts on the residences to the rear of the property.

- **The Green.** The Green would contain the walkways, landscaping, and seating as shown. Along Town Run there would be a seatwall that allows seating facing the stage or facing Town Run.

Currently the concept includes a fence along the parcel line dividing the public space from the two adjoining properties so that it can be easily removed as the adjoining parcels become available for future expansion of the Green.

- **Town Run Greenway.** The concept shows the Town Run Greenway (traveling north to south) entering the Green after it crosses East King Street and a pedestrian bridge. The Greenway would continue along the Town Run side of the Green to the rear of the property and continue on to its connection with the Riverwalk.

- **Signature Pedestrian Bridge.** In many places along the Shenandoah River there were swinging or suspension bridges put in for pedestrian use and to provide access to remote properties. Several of these still stand (see example at right). The pedestrian bridge nearest to East King Street shown in the concept would be built as such a bridge. Additionally, the towers used to suspend the bridge would be duplicated on either side of East King Street at the sidewalk. The placement of these elements would set off the



crosswalk as a part of the Town Run Greenway and help draw attention to the area. While leaving the Brill Building and Taxi Stand in place are important features of this plan, it will make it more difficult to see the Town Green to the rear of these buildings. These extra towers and the “signature” pedestrian bridge would help draw the attention of pedestrians and automobile drivers/passengers alike. The sidewalk towers could also be used to suspend banners across East King Street during special events with the approval of the Virginia Department of Transportation that controls Route 11. There would be an additional pedestrian bridge across Town Run at the rear of Town Green that would be handicap accessible and connect to handicap spaces in the Town Hall parking lot. This extra pedestrian bridge also serves the purpose of allowing performers to unload their equipment in the Town Hall parking lot for movement across the bridge to the bandshell/amphitheater.

- **Wayfinding Signage.** The concept shows wayfinding signage that will be important to connecting the different elements of the Physical Improvements outlined in this plan and other parts of Downtown Strasburg. They would utilize a consistent color palette (or perhaps several complimentary colors pointing out different types of amenities), uniform font(s), and the Crossroads logo/branding element.



LEGEND:

- 1. Town Run with new Plantings
- 2. Entry Gate
- 3. Preserved Brill Building
- 4. Taxi Stand with Restroom Expansion
- 5. Band Shell
- 6. Seatwall
- 7. Lawn
- 8. Walkway
- 9. Fence
- 10. Seating (typ.)
- 11. Pedestrian Bridge
- 12. Crosswalk
- 13. Path to Parking
- 14. Wayfinding Signage

Town of Strasburg

Proposed Town Green - Looking South





LEGEND:

- 1. Town Run with new Plantings
- 2. Town Hall
- 3. Preserved Brill Building
- 4. Taxi Stand with Restroom Expansion
- 5. Lawn
- 6. Seatwall
- 7. Bench (typ.)
- 8. Pedestrian Bridge

Town of Strasburg

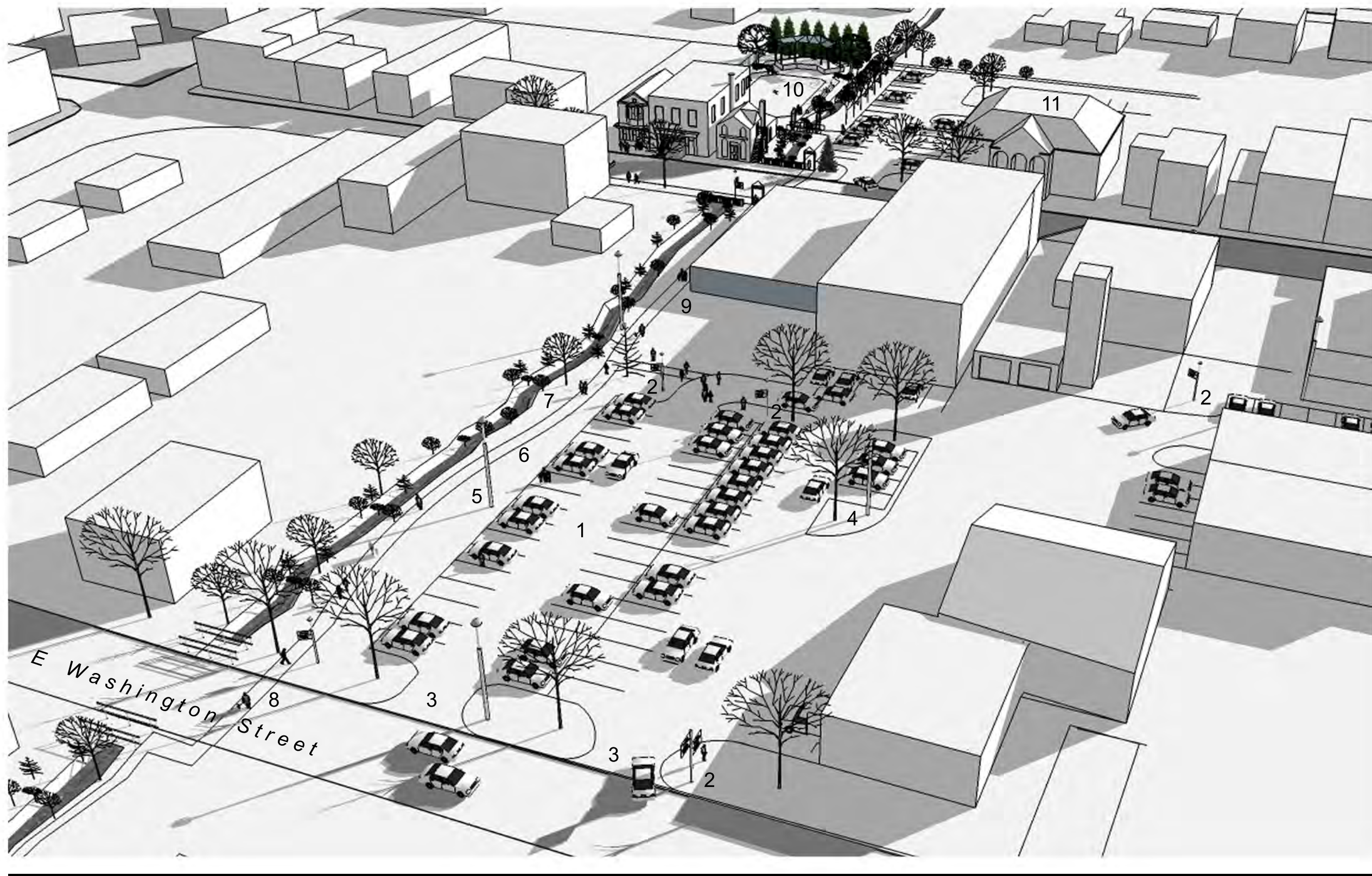
Proposed Town Green - Looking North



ENHANCED PUBLIC PARKING

Following this page is a conceptual drawing of enhancements to the public parking lot behind the Fire Station. Once improved, this lot would serve as the main downtown parking lot and particularly the parking lot of choice for events at the Town Green. The key features of the Enhance Public Parking that would be implemented as Phase I-A improvements are listed below:

- **Removal of Town Storage Shed & Food Stand.** Both the small garage that is no longer used by the Town and the cooking shed that is used only a few times a year would be removed. Demolition of these buildings, both owned by the Town, would create room for an additional 10 to 12 parking spaces.
- **Delineated Parking Spaces.** Parking spaces would be aligned and delineated with striping as shown. “Formalizing” the parking, versus the informal parking that exists today, would increase the capacity of the lot and would make the parking experience easier when the lot is approaching capacity.
- **Islands with Landscaping.** To make the parking lot more attractive and to help with traffic flow, the traffic islands as shown would be developed. The islands would be landscaped with appropriate trees that provide an amenity while not blocking views in a way that would impact the feeling of safety achieved by the lighting listed below. The islands at East Washington street would effectively create two entrances/exits to the parking lot, also improving the parking experience when the lot is approaching capacity.
- **Lighting & Wayfinding Signage.** The parking lot would have several street lights installed to enhance its safety. As with the Town Green, wayfinding signage would be installed as well.
- **Town Run Greenway.** The Town Run Greenway would be completed and landscaped along the parking lot and connected to the lot at its southeast corner as a part of the improvements shown. That portion of the Town Run Greenway that travels alongside the Dollar General building will create some challenges because of a change in grade from the path of the Greenway to sidewalk/street level, particularly as related to handicap accessibility. The grade is not insurmountable, but will likely require (by purchase or easement) several feet of the undeveloped portion of the Dollar General property to be overcome.



LEGEND:

- 1. New Parking Layout
- 2. Wayfinding Signage
- 3. Parking Entrance
- 4. New Parking Lot Tree Plantings (typ.)
- 5. New Lighting (typ.)
- 6. Town Run Greenway
- 7. New Town Run Plantings
- 8. Crosswalk
- 9. Path to Town Green
- 10. Town Green
- 11. Town Hall

Town of Strasburg

Enhanced Parking Lot

FACADE IMPROVEMENTS

Following this page are conceptual drawings of enhancements to the front facades of two Downtown Strasburg buildings. As referenced on pages 43 and 51 of this plan, CDBG funding secured by the town as a part of a Downtown Revitalization Grant can be used to provide Façade Improvement Grants to downtown property owners. In fact, a Façade Improvement Program is a required activity for any CDBG-funded Downtown Revitalization Project. These improvements can be as easy as repainting a building (as highlighted for the Bygones building conceptual drawing) or adding appropriate signage and awnings (as highlighted for the State Farm and Toy Store building conceptual drawing), but can also be used for more extensive improvements. Façade improvements must be visible from a public right-of-way to be fundable by CDBG funds and can include side and rear facades that are visible from public parking areas. While CDBG funds can not be spent on the interior of a downtown building, they can complement efforts by building owners who are making general interior improvements or particular improvements requested by their tenants.



1. Repair and repaint with attractive green and off-white colors.
2. Accent the details in the facade with the painting scheme.
3. Add support columns to reinforce the porch. Column details mimic porch columns.
4. New signage addresses pedestrian and vehicle traffic.

Town of Strasburg

Draft Proposed Facade Improvements to Bygones
November 12, 2014

SMITHER urban design
landscape architecture | design

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1. Remove existing heavy historically inaccurate awning and replace with smaller light weight cloth awning.
2. New awning is separated into two pieces allowing the brick facade to dominate.
3. New signage addresses pedestrian and vehicle traffic.

Town of Strasburg

Draft Proposed Facade Improvements to State Farm and Toy Store
November 12, 2014

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CONSIDERATION BY TOWN COUNCIL

The following are the final recommendations for consideration by the Strasburg Town Council. They outline the formal actions required to fully implement the Economic Restructuring Plan developed in this report.

1. **Continue planning and assembling and commit matching public funds for a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) application to be submitted to the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (VDHCD) at the March 2015 deadline for the purpose of Downtown Business District Revitalization.** The activities and budget for the grant application would be generally as indicated below, with additional detail added and adjustments made in the final stages of the grant application process. To understand the “template” shown below, two important guidelines for CDBG Downtown Revitalization grants need to be understood. First, the basic grant amount is up to \$700,000 and is typically used for a Façade Improvement Program and physical improvements in the downtown area. Second, communities can apply for up to an additional \$300,000 in the same application for either Upper Floor Housing Rehabilitation or a Revolving Loan Fund. This additional \$300,000 can not be used for the activities allowed under the basic grant.

The matching funds shown below are essential to having sufficient funds for the development of the Public Park, Enhanced Public Parking Lot, and the connecting trail and to enhance the likelihood of obtaining the CDBG grant. VDHCD allows local governments to count as matching funds other public funds, including certain grants from other sources including the Virginia Department of Transportation, expended in a project area during the previous two years at the time of application and during CDBG grant implementation. With this allowance, the current funding spent or committed to the Streetscape Enhancement Project is shown below as additional matching funds.

CDBG Downtown Revitalization Grant Budget Template

Activity	CDBG Funds	Local & Other Matching Funds
Project Administration (based on VDHCD guidelines)	\$80,000	\$10,000
Façade Improvement Program – Design (based on 10% of Façade Program Physical Improvements)	\$30,000	\$0
Façade Improvement Program – Physical Improvements (based on 20 façade grants at an average of \$15,000 each)	\$300,000	\$0
Public Park, Enhanced Public Parking Lot, Trail – Design (based on 10% of Physical Improvements)	\$25,000	\$25,000
Public Park, Enhanced Public Parking Lot, Trail – Physical Improvements (based on funding available & matched by Town)	\$250,000	\$250,000
Revolving Loan Fund (available only for this use)	\$300,000	\$0
Marketing, Logo Development, Branding	\$15,000	\$15,000
Streetscape Enhancement Project	\$0	\$4,150,000
Totals	\$1,000,000	\$4,450,000

2. ***Develop the Public Park, Enhanced Public Parking Lot, and connecting trail as delineated in Part 3 of this report as a means of creating a more visitor friendly Downtown Strasburg, providing an additional and larger venue for regularly scheduled outdoor events, encouraging visitors to stay longer, stimulating additional downtown investment, and creating jobs.*** Though these improvements are dependent to a great extent on receiving CDBG funding, local funding needs to be included in the Town's Capital Improvement Plan in order to provide the total amount of funds needed, to provide the matching funds necessary for a successful CDBG application, and to indicate that their development is a priority for the Town. Any CDBG grant provided to the Town will not become operative until late 2015 at the earliest, will have a two year implementation timeframe at a minimum, and will require that physical blight be tackled first (e.g. through a façade improvement program). Because of these provisions, it is possible to include the necessary capital funds in the Council resolution needed for the CDBG grant application, but stretch out the actual capital funding commitment to two to three fiscal years (e.g., \$137,500 in FY16 CIP and \$137,500 in FY17 CIP using the figures on the preceding page for designing and building the Public Park and Enhanced Public Parking and stretching out the commitment over two years) with a carry-over provision for any unspent funds in a particular fiscal year.

The Public Park, Enhance Public Parking Lot, and connecting trail are important public amenities in their own right. The Enhanced Public Parking even touches on a public safety issue in that the parking lot will not only be more attractive, but safer. Collectively, however, the most important function of these physical improvements is to contribute to the overall efforts to revitalize Downtown Strasburg, start new businesses, and create new downtown jobs. With this in mind, the expenditure of local funds as outlined above should serve as an investment in Downtown Strasburg that should accrue to the Town's financial bottom line over time.

3. ***Implement a robust Business Recruitment Strategy that focuses on business start-ups in keeping with Part 2 of this report including applying for a Building Entrepreneurial Economies grant of \$45,000 from the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development at the December 2015 or December 2016 deadline in cooperation with the Northern Shenandoah Valley Regional Commission.*** While certain strategies outlined in Part 2 may be more or less effective in the Downtown Strasburg setting, the main thrust of this Business Recruitment Strategy is business start-ups rather than trying to recruit existing businesses to the area. As delineated in Part 2, focusing on business start-ups is being met with some success in other similarly situated small downtowns in Virginia.
4. ***Pursue a marketing approach that emphasizes Strasburg's "Crossroads" location and utilize a portion of the CDBG grant, if awarded, for developing the "Crossroads" brand more fully and for developing enhancements to the Town's website.*** The "Crossroads" brand and logo would be applied across all media. Once developed, the brand and logo can also be used for wayfinding signage. In particular, the signage related to the Public Park, Enhanced Public Parking Lot, and connecting trail can be paid for from CDBG grant funds as a part of the physical improvement budget.

APPENDIX A

Part II: A Plan for Downtown Strasburg

Vision Statement

The first step for Strasburg when developing downtown planning goals and strategies is to establish the collective “vision,” or overarching theme that will guide the process. The Strasburg Downtown Plan Steering Committee has articulated the following vision for its future:

Downtown Strasburg had long been the choice for the convenience needs of nearby residents and others. However, recent changes to the commercial marketplace in Strasburg and pressure from commercial development outside of the Downtown core have forced many shops to close their front doors.

Envision a downtown that appeals to a variety of people, from the hungry student at Strasburg High School, to the busy commuter heading home from work, to the out-of-town visitor to Shenandoah National Park, to the energetic senior seeking a night on the town. From participating in an outdoor adventure, to a scoop of frozen yogurt, to an antique you cannot find anywhere else, Downtown Strasburg provides an array of businesses that cater to a wide variety of needs, from specialty to necessity. This convenient and accessible commercial node also encompasses a livable, mixed-use area in and around the corridor.

Shoppers who come to Downtown Strasburg choose to experience the historic and small-town charm of the locally owned businesses at their own pace. Unparalleled service and friendly and knowledgeable merchants make a trip to downtown Strasburg a step back into the past, reminiscent of a time when shopping involved walking sidewalks and store fronts, not wading through parking lots and strip malls. The unique shopping experience is further complemented by Downtown Strasburg’s “green” elements. The lush landscaping is not only attractive, but also it serves to remind visitors that Downtown Strasburg has made it a priority to promote environmentally conscious design and business practices.

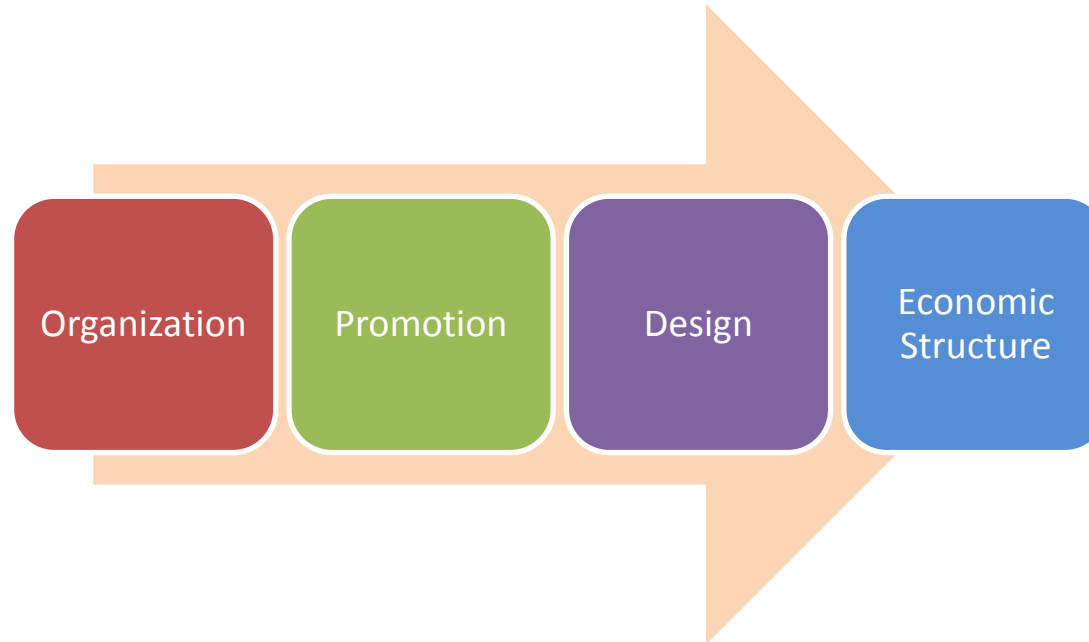
Visualize a downtown that is unlike any main street in the Northern Shenandoah Valley, attracting visitors and shoppers with its variety, environmental integrity and historic beauty.

Finally, envision a downtown Strasburg shopper who, upon arrival, suddenly relaxes and smiles, knowing that it is here that he or she can experience the natural heritage, eat delicious food, buy unique gifts, and visit with friendly merchants in a rural and environmentally sustainable place. This is Downtown Strasburg, Virginia.

The goals and strategies to achieve this vision are outlined in subsequent sections of the plan.

Goals & Strategies

This section will outline a series of goals and strategies required to achieve the realization of the vision outlined in the previous section. The goals and strategies follow the Main Street Four-Point Approach: Organization, Promotion, Design and Economic Structure.



Organization

Goal 1: Establish the framework for an appropriate or existing organization or individual to take responsibility for revitalization goals, both short and long term.

Strategy A: Transition responsibility of revitalization and planning from the Downtown Plan Steering Committee to another community-based organization or to-be-appointed staff position within the Town for economic development.

The Steering Committee provides a much needed forum for Downtown planning, but it will be important to transition and expand the role of Downtown planning to an organization equipped with resources and the able to facilitate long-term activities in the district. Regular meetings of this

group should be held to continually assess the effectiveness of implementation of the Downtown Plan's goals and strategies. This group should also coordinate and pool resources with Shenandoah County's Economic Development and Planning Department and other regional economic development groups including the Strasburg Chamber of Commerce.

Strategy B: Organize a task force(s) to address specific areas of implementation such as business recruitment and sustainability, community event planning, and beautification.

For a revitalization effort to be successful it must be led from within the community. This means current merchants and stakeholders not only must be part of the effort, but must also lead it. Hometown Strasburg is the most-active and broad-based organization within the Downtown community and is the ideal organization to lead this charge, or this could be carried out under the leadership of a Town staff position. However, a to-be-appointed Town staff person may also be appropriate. An annual report on the progress of the plan should be shared with all stakeholders (such as Council, volunteer organizations, business owners, etc.).

Goal 2: Strengthen the bond between youth and the community.

Strategy A: Engage youth in productive activities in and around the Downtown.

Strasburg is a community of families and encouraging youth to shop locally will create a Downtown "culture," and encourage return trips. Youth and young adults were cited by the Steering Committee as having a substantial influence on the vitality and long-term success of Downtown. Partnering with Strasburg schools, especially Strasburg High School or Middle School which is directly adjacent to Downtown, will allow youths to interact productively with their environment and reduce the negative perception of teens loitering. Identifying a school Downtown leader such as a service-based club or civics class is essential to ensure a continued dialogue. Students could lead special projects such as creating a Downtown business, marketing and outreach, or other Downtown oriented efforts.

Promotion

Goal 3: Establish a unified campaign to promote Downtown Strasburg to potential customers and businesses.

Strategy A: Enhance and re-energize the community identity, or brand, to marketing Downtown.

A coherent and identifiable brand helps to communicate quality of service, variety, and a sense of community. This could be accomplished through a community developed design, but should distinguish the Downtown district from the larger Town. Signage should be located at either end of the

district at major intersections/roadways and throughout on hanging banners. Hometown Strasburg has already undertaken steps to achieve this strategy.

Strategy B: Promote and organize special and unique events that extend to market niches such as recreation (biking, hiking, or rafting), furthering community awareness and encouraging cross-shopping opportunities.

Connecting Downtown Strasburg with broader regional marketing including Shenandoah County's Fields of Gold program and Artisan Trail should also be considered as this will attract more long-term visitors to check out what Strasburg has to offer. New customers can be attracted to special events and deals and can become regular customers. Community events help to create good will and offer a chance to get feedback from residents and shoppers about their likes and dislikes for Downtown. This could include bingo, art auctions, culinary events, or live music/performances. Examples of recreational events could include bike rodeos, 5K's or other outdoor oriented events in and around Downtown. These could also coincide with other Town events like Mayfest (spring) and Oktoberfest (fall). Discounts could be offered to persons who bike to these events to increase participation.

Strategy C: Actively market Downtown Strasburg to potential investors and businesses looking to locate or expand in the Northern Shenandoah Valley.

Increasing the prominence and reputation of Downtown Strasburg as a regional area of economic opportunity is essential to attracting desired goods and services. Providing relevant information about current market conditions and the availability of properties for lease or sale and working with the Shenandoah County Economic Development Authority are critical to making investments in Downtown Strasburg attractive and simpler. In the fall of 2012, Hometown Strasburg held an Open House of available commercial property Downtown; these types of events should continue to be held to market Downtown.

Design

Goal 4: Establish a safe, welcoming and connected environment

Strategy A: Utilize cohesive strategies to create a unified Downtown district.

Strasburg is well underway to realizing this strategy through its Streetscape Enhancement Program (Spring 2013). This strategy goes beyond simply improving the pedestrian environment

Image 10: Proposed crosswalk design for Streetscape Enhancement Program; artist rendering. (Photo credit: Town of Strasburg, 2013)





Image 11: Example of potential gateway signage. (Photo credit: Google Images, 2012)

but encouraging attractive maintenance of business and /shop facades, allowing for alternative modes of transportation to access Downtown such as bicycle and transit and developing bicycle infrastructure (bike racks), appropriate scaled signage and wayfinding. People should feel a sense of place and atmosphere of activity when entering the district. This could be accomplished through new signage, light-pole banners, street trees, and street furniture such as benches. Installing new pedestrian crossings can improve both safety and design. Including the public in the selection process can serve to create a sense of ownership in the Downtown enhancement throughout the community. Development of a Downtown Strasburg Design Guidebook for rehabilitation and new construction should also be encouraged to ensure historic preservation and harmonious and compatible design within the Downtown district. This Guidebook would enhance or serve as an addendum to the Historic District Design Guidelines but would be more specific to the Downtown planning area.

Strategy B: Develop new “green” and open space features for Downtown.

One desire of the Steering Committee from the beginning of the planning process was to encourage green features Downtown. This can include but is not limited to expanding open and /park spaces (such as pocket parks, a dog park or skate park), developing a community garden and/or farmers market program. Utilization of local nursery’s to create planters and other natural enhancements will further increase community involvement and active participation. Designations for green or bike friendly businesses could be awarded by the merchant or Downtown organizations as a way to encourage a sustainable economy.

Strategy C: Strengthen the physical and psychological connectedness within and outside of Downtown.

Downtown Strasburg has two (2) distinct districts as divided by US Highway 11 (North Massanutten Street) and US Highway 55 (East/West King Street). East of the intersection is more industrial and ideal for a farmers’ market or community garden, west of the intersection is the traditional shopping core. Distinguishing these two districts but keeping them connected is vital to the flow of shoppers and vehicles Downtown. Clearly identifying gateways (or entrances and exits to the district), extending and expanding current sidewalks and pedestrian crossings (for example “bump outs”) to reduce the distance across intersections (for example “bump outs”) and installing pedestrian signals should be utilized to harmonize the pedestrian environment.



Image 12: A proposed artist rendering of streetscape enhancements at the intersection of King and Holliday Streets creating a unified and “green” design that is scaled to the pedestrian. (Photo credit: Town of Strasburg, 2013)

Establishing a “hub” can create physical space that encourages gatherings and is a symbol of the Downtown environment. The Steering Committee identified the old theater (currently under new management who are renovating the property) and the adjacent vacant parcel as an ideal place for public gatherings. Strasburg should pursue the development of the area into a Downtown Park and /outdoor venue for shows, music and people watching. This will help to create a sense of place and encourage pedestrian traffic.

Finally, linking Downtown to the greater Town community is essential so that residents outside of the Downtown core are aware of events, shopping and access to Downtown. This could include linking new residential developments near Interstate 81 with sidewalks and trails, improved pedestrian crossings that are clearly marked, or wayfinding signs.

Strategy D: Connect the Downtown with the Town Park and River Walk south of the study area.

Downtown Strasburg already utilizes wayfinding to direct residents and businesses to these recreational amenities. However, a long-term physical connection would create a trail thoroughfare through Town linking recreation, shopping, dining and residences. Utilizing the space along the Town creek would be an ideal natural fit for a trail and would connect newer residences through the Downtown district to the Town Park and Shenandoah River. This should also include clear wayfinding signage. Future planning efforts for this strategy should also include a comprehensive review of Larry Hall’s Greenway/Town Walk efforts and the Town Run proposal in the Strasburg Community Plan (2012).



Image 13: Existing Strasburg River Walk (Photo credit: Google Images, 2012)

Economic Structure

Goal 5: Strengthen Existing Businesses

Strategy A: Utilize available financial incentives and organization resources to enhance the effectiveness of businesses.

These funding incentives can greatly reduce the cost of physical improvements, including façade appearance, security and fire suppression. Rebates and low-interest loans can help create thriving new businesses, boosting the local economy and vitality of the Downtown. Publicity through a Downtown organization (such as Hometown Strasburg) and meetings with prospective and current business owners can help share these resources. Establishing a business incubation program should also be explored. This could also include funding through the Virginia Department of Housing & Community Development (DHCD) Local Innovative Funding, Virginia Main Street Trust or the Virginia Housing Development Authority (VHDA) Micro-Loan Program.

Goal 6: Recruit new businesses to fill unmet market demand.

Strategy A: Recruit an outdoor outfitter or bicycle shop to capitalize on cultural and natural heritage of the Northern Shenandoah Valley.

The market analysis and stakeholder groups revealed that there is significant unmet demand within the community for an outdoor outfitter or bicycle shop (or combination of the two). This represents an economic opportunity for prospective investors, and would also provide residents with a needed service. Appropriate properties are currently available within the commercial corridor that would be ideal for such a business. Partnering with local outdoor tour and /adventure operators should also be encouraged. Developing a marketing packet including properties and financial/ and development incentives should also be undertaken.

Strategy B: Recruit a specialty food and drink establishment such as frozen yogurt vendor or microbrewery.



Image 14: A frozen yogurt vendor was identified as the top retail desired for Downtown. (Photo credit: Google Images,

The Market Analysis and stakeholder groups revealed there is significant unmet demand within the community for a frozen yogurt or special food establishment (including a brewery, wine bar or sports bar). There are very few dining options Downtown so this use would not detract from other established businesses but would reduce the “leakage” of demand to areas outside of the Downtown district and outside of the Town boundaries. Vacant properties are available to host these types of uses. Emphasizing the competitive advantage to potential business/franchise operators is key to attracting these types of businesses. Developing a marketing packet including properties and financial/ and development incentives should also be undertaken. A downtown planning group or the Chamber of Commerce should actively pursue these types of businesses.

Implementation Timetable

The implementation timetable below is a generalization of how the above goals and strategies could be implemented over the next 6 months to 3 years. It should serve as a resource for future planning efforts carried out by the Town of Strasburg or a community-based organization relating to the Downtown district.

Strasburg Downtown Plan

Strategy	Immediate (0-6 months)	Short (6 months-1 years)	Intermediate (1 -3 years)	Long-Term (3+ years)	Partners	Funding Opportunities
Goal 1: Establish the framework for an appropriate or existing organization to take responsibility for revitalization goals, both short and long term.						
Strategy A: Transition responsibility of revitalization and planning from the Downtown Plan Steering Committee to another community-based organization or to-be-appointed staff position within the Town.					Shenandoah County Economic Development and Planning Department, Chamber of Commerce.	
Strategy B: Organize a task force(s) to address specific areas of implementation such as business recruitment and sustainability, community event planning, and beautification.					Hometown Strasburg.	

Strasburg Downtown Plan

Strategy	Immediate (0-6 months)	Short (6 months-1 year)	Intermediate (1 -3 years)	Long-Term (3+ years)	Partners	Funding Opportunities
Goal 2: Strengthen the bond between youth and the community.						
Strategy A: Engage youth in productive activities in and around the Downtown.					Strasburg High School students (service based clubs, civics classes).	Virginia Recreational Trails Program, Tony Hawk Foundation, Land and Water Conservation Fund.
Goal 3: Establish a unified campaign to promote Downtown Strasburg to potential customers and businesses.						
Strategy A: Enhance and re-energize the community identity, or brand, marketing Downtown.					Hometown Strasburg, Town Staff, Strasburg High School students and staff.	CDBG, BID, LIHTC, Enterprise Zone Funding, BEZL.
Strategy B: Promote and organize special events that extend to market niches such as recreation furthering community awareness and encouraging cross-shopping.					Shenandoah County's Fields of Gold program and Artisan Trail, Shenandoah County Parks and Recreation, Hometown Strasburg.	Virginia Recreational Trails Program (RTP), Tony Hawk Foundation, Land and Water Conservation Fund, Bikes Belong Coalition.

Strasburg Downtown Plan

Strategy	Immediate (0-6 months)	Short 6 months-1 year)	Intermediate (1-3 years)	Long-Term (3+ years)	Partners	Funding Opportunities
Strategy C: Actively market Downtown Strasburg to potential investors and businesses looking to locate or expand in the Northern Shenandoah Valley.					Hometown Strasburg, Town of Strasburg, Northern Shenandoah Valley Regional Commission, Strasburg Chamber of Commerce, Shenandoah County Chamber of Commerce.	CDBG, BID, LIHTC, Enterprise Zone Funding, BEZL.
Goal 4: Establish a safe, welcoming, and connected environment						
Strategy A: Utilize cohesive strategies to create a unified Downtown district.					Town of Strasburg via Streetscape Enhancement Program.	CDBG, BID, LIHTC, Enterprise Zone Funding, BEZL.
Strategy B: Develop new “green” and open space features for Downtown.					Downtown organizations & merchants, farmer’s market program.	RTP, Land and Water Conservation Fund, Petco Foundation 4Rs Project Support.

Strasburg Downtown Plan

Strategy	Immediate (0-6 months)	Short (6 months-1 year)	Intermediate (1-3 years)	Long-Term (3+ years)	Partners	Funding Opportunities
Strategy C: Strengthen the physical and psychological connectedness within and outside of Downtown.					Town of Strasburg, Hometown Strasburg, Merchant's Association.	
Strategy D: Connect the Downtown with the Town Park and River Walk.					Town of Strasburg.	Virginia Recreational Trails Program (RTP).
Goal 5: Strengthen Existing Businesses						
Strategy A: Utilize available financial incentives and organization resources to enhance the effectiveness of businesses.					Hometown Strasburg, State Administered Programs.	Virginia Department of Housing & Community Development (DHCD) Local Innovative Funding, Virginia Main Street Trust or the Virginia Housing Development Authority (VHDA) Micro-Loan Program.

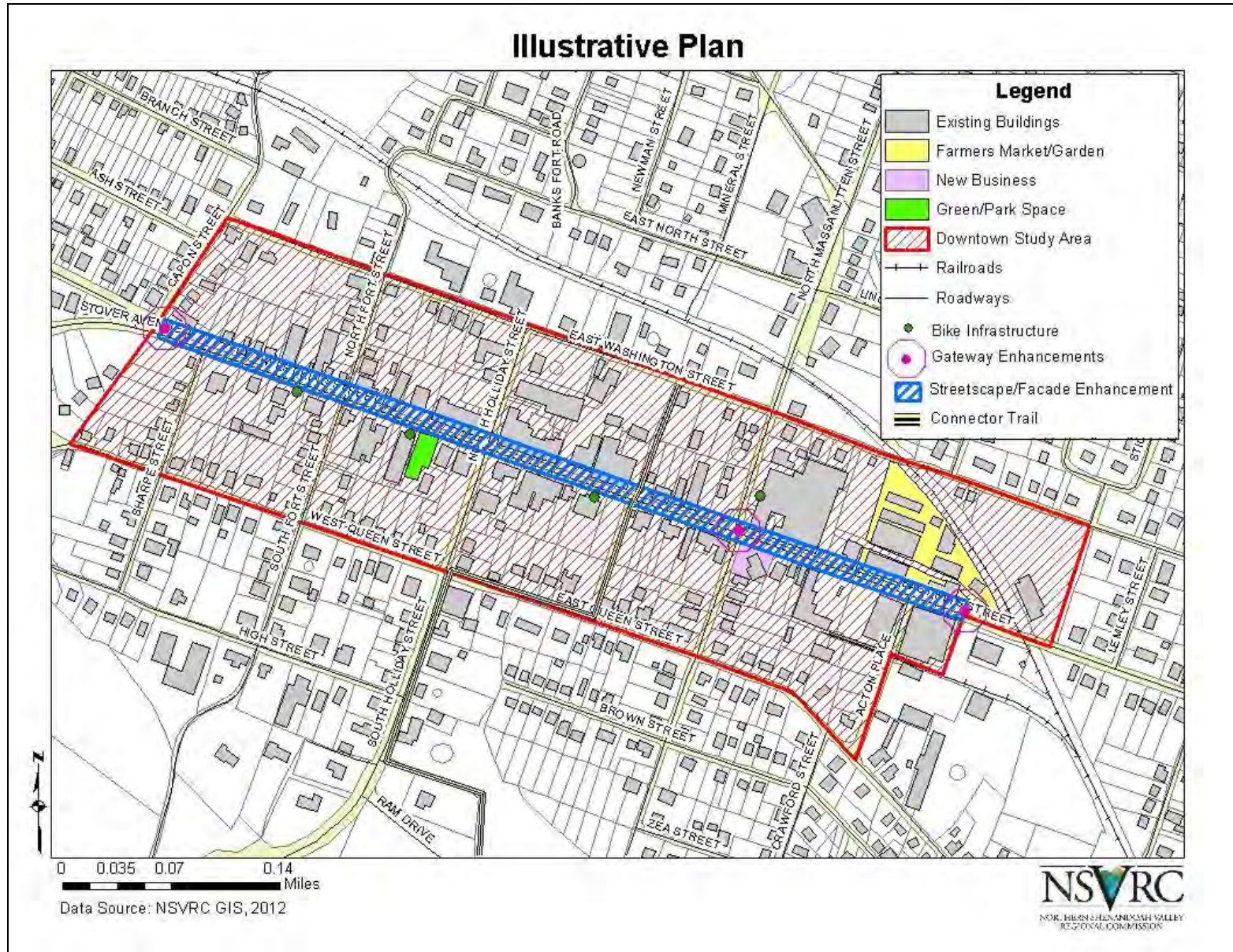
Strasburg Downtown Plan

Strategy	Immediate (0-6 months)	Short 6 months-1 year	Intermediate (1-3 years)	Long-Term (3+ years)	Partners	Funding Opportunities
Goal 6: Recruit new businesses to meet unmet market demand.						
Strategy A: Recruit an outdoor outfitter or bicycle shop to capitalize on cultural and natural heritage of the Northern Shenandoah Valley.					Local outdoor tour/adventure operators.	Developing a marketing packet including properties and financial and/or development incentives should also be undertaken.
Strategy B: Recruit a specialty foods establishment.					Downtown planning group, Chamber of Commerce.	Developing a marketing packet including properties and financial and/or development incentives should also be undertaken.

Illustrative Plan

The map on the following page is intended to be a visual depiction of the goals and strategies identified in this Plan. Like goals and strategies, the illustrative plan serves the elements of the Main Street Four-Point Approach. In addition to describing Plan components such as gateway, and pedestrian enhancements, the plan also showcases the vision for future development of open space and business conversion. This map is not intended to provide specific parameters, but instead convey more generally how development could occur according to this plan.

Illustrative Plan



Potential Funding Resources

Because Downtown Strasburg is in need of both public and private investment, a mix of funding strategies will be necessary. The phasing established in the plan calls for immediate and ongoing action to revitalize the area. Because minimal funds will be available from the Town, a significant funding source will be necessary to implement the strategies outlined in the plan. Brief descriptions of available programs are given below.

Community Development Block Grants

Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) help communities develop plans that will address their needs. Downtown Strasburg could benefit from the following CDBG programs:

The Department of Housing and Community Development offers tiered grants for construction projects. Projects must improve the economic vitality of the community. The Community Needs/Economic Assessment Planning Grant is a potential funding source for projects in this plan. Localities can be awarded up to \$10,000 through Community Organizing Planning Grants. In addition, community residents can use the grant to develop strategies for future improvements.

Business District Revitalization Grants require complicated preparation and can take years to carry out. Therefore, the following grants are precursors to the BDRG: the Community Needs Assessment/Economic Assessment Grants of up to \$10,000 are used to perform a general needs analysis and determine the community's needs. A focus is placed on social and physical improvements with resident input.

Low Income Housing Tax Credits

LIHTC can be awarded to developers of qualified projects. Developers can then sell credits to investors to raise funds for their projects, reducing the amount developers have to borrow. Because the developer's debt is lower, the tax credit property can charge affordable rent to low-income residents. Projects eligible for LIHTC must meet the low-income occupancy threshold requirements. A minimum of 20% of the units are required to be rent restricted and occupied by households with incomes at or below 50-60% of the HUD-determined area median income. These rent and income restrictions must be in place for 30 years or longer. LIHTC requirements also include rehab costs if a developer is acquiring an existing building.

Business Improvement District

A Business Improvement District (BID) is a special district defined by the Town, where additional taxes are levied on property owners and the additional revenue goes directly to improve or promote the district. A BID ensures a steady stream of financing. This method of financing reduces

political opposition because the beneficiaries will pay directly for improvements. The creation of distinct geographical boundaries can limit who benefits from improvements. A major disadvantage is the lack of a large pool from which to finance improvements. The pace of fundraising may not match the phasing of the Plan.

Tax Increment Financing

Tax increment financing is a system whereby additional tax revenue collected from rising assessments is earmarked to repay bonds issued to make improvements to a district. A baseline tax base is established and any taxes that are collected in excess of this baseline figure are used to repay the debt. This option can accelerate infrastructure and organizational investment needed to encourage private development. There are issues with this process, mainly related to the ability to repay the bonds that finance improvements. Since the real estate market is unreliable, it is difficult to predict increased tax revenues and thus the amount financed may not be very high.

New Market Tax Credits

The allocation process for these funds is very competitive. A community development entity (CDE) must be formed and certified by the Community Development Financial Institution Fund to compete for the credits. This program mainly finances private developments on a large scale, but smaller projects have been funded using these credits. The credit granted to the investor totals 39% of the cost of the investment and is claimed over a seven-year credit allowance period. During the first three years, the investor receives a credit equal to 5% of the total amount paid for the stock or capital interest at the time of purchase. For the remaining four years, the value of the credit is 6% annually. Investors cannot redeem their investments in CDEs prior to the conclusion of the seven year period.

Historic Tax Credits

This program provides tax credits that can encourage the rehabilitation of historic structures. To qualify for the credits the building must be an income-producing structure that is listed on the National Register of Historic Places or is listed as a contributing structure in a qualified historic district. The property is certified to receive the credits through an application process to the National Park Service and must meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. The cost of the rehabilitation must exceed the pre-rehabilitation cost of the building and twenty percent of approved rehabilitation costs can be used as a tax credit for the developer. The program can be very effective in the revitalization of older commercial districts because the historic character of buildings must be retained to qualify. The continued use of the property as a functional structure is ensured because of the extensive repairs that can qualify.

Enterprise Zone Funding

The Town and State offer many incentives to businesses located in Enterprise Zones (*although Strasburg is not currently designated and Enterprise Zone*). An Enterprise Zone is a specific geographic area targeted for economic revitalizing. Enterprise Zones encourage economic growth and investment in distressed areas by offering tax advantages and incentives to businesses locating within the zone boundaries. Funds from this program could be used for existing and new businesses alike.

Types of incentives that would be appropriate for businesses located in Downtown Strasburg are:

- Employment Assistance Grant: A one-time grant equivalent to \$250 per eligible permanent full-time position provided to new or expanding businesses.
- Business Relocation Grant: Relocation grants assistance to eligible new Town businesses. Award amount would be scaled to square footage of businesses space.
- Development fee rebate: Scaled fee rebate for permits associated with the renovation or construction of commercial facilities.

Existing State Incentives for Enterprise Zones:

- Real Property Improvement Tax Credit: Building rehabilitation projects of at least \$50,000, which exceeds the current assessed value of the property, and new construction projects of at least \$250,000, are eligible for a refundable state tax credit of 30% of qualified improvements. The maximum credit cannot exceed \$125,000, in any five-year period.
- Job Grants: Under certain conditions, companies may receive a grant of \$1,000 for each job filled by an Enterprise Zone resident, or \$500 for the hiring of any other employee, per year, for a three-year period. The maximum job grant per firm in any year is \$100,000.

Business Enterprise Zone Loan Program (BEZL)

The BEZL program is designed to promote community and economic development within a jurisdiction's Enterprise Zones by fostering the formation and expansion of small businesses, the creation of jobs, and removal of blight in these areas. BEZL loans are available for up to \$100,000 and can be used for seasonal or permanent working capital, equipment purchase or rehab financing of "owner-occupied" commercial properties. These are common in many existing Enterprise Zones around the Commonwealth.

Virginia Recreational Trails Program (RTP)

The Recreational Trails Program (RTP) is a matching reimbursement grant program that provides for the creation and maintenance of trails and trail facilities. The program is funded through the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and administered by the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR).

Tony Hawk Foundation

The Tony Hawk Foundation seeks to foster lasting improvements in society, with an emphasis on supporting and empowering youth. The principal focus of foundation grants are to encourage and facilitate the design, development, construction, and operation of new quality skateboard parks and facilities that are located in low-income communities in the United States.

Land and Water Conservation Fund

The Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965 established a federal reimbursement program for the acquisition and/or development of public outdoor recreation areas. The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) is administered in Virginia by the Department of Conservation & Recreation (DCR) for the National Park Service. The program represents a federal, state and local partnership. A key feature of the program is that all LWCF assisted areas must be maintained and opened, in perpetuity, as public outdoor recreation areas. This requirement ensures their use for future generations.

Petco Foundation 4Rs Project Support

This opportunity provides funding for projects that support the Petco Foundation 4Rs: Reduce (spay/neuter); Rescue (adoptions); Rehabilitate (training); Rejoice (promotes and assists with the human/animal bond). This grant provides financial support for the creation of facilities such as dog parks.

Bikes Belong Foundation

This organization is funded by the bicycle industry, whose mission is, "Putting more people on bikes more often." "Bikes Belong" awards grants of up to \$10,000 each to project that seeks federal funding for bicycle facilities. Because each State differs in what it allows qualifying for local match of a

project, one must check with the state TEA Transportation Enhancements (TE) coordinator before applying. Bikes Belong grants have been used for concept plans, cartography, design, outreach, and preliminary engineering, as well as contributions to the local match.

BikeWalk Virginia: Safe Routes to School Mini-Grants

BikeWalk Virginia is making available \$1,500 for Walk to School programs. Any school, school district, public agency, or non-profit is eligible to apply. These grants are intended to supplement primary funding from your local community for new or existing Safe Routes to School programs. The funds may be used for local programs as a part of International Walk to School Day. Applicants can request any amount up to \$1,500.

Kodak American Greenways Grant

The Kodak American Greenways Awards Program, a partnership project of the Eastman Kodak Company, The Conservation Fund, and the National Geographic Society, provides small grants to stimulate the planning and design of greenways in communities throughout America.

APPENDIX B

Q1 Welcome to the Town of Strasburg Downtown Revitalization Survey. The survey contains only seven questions and should take about ten minutes to complete. Right now is an exciting time for Strasburg. The streetscape project is almost completed and it looks great! The Town currently has a Planning Grant from the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development to plan additional improvements to the downtown. The Town would like your assistance with shaping the future of Downtown Strasburg and helping to Move Strasburg Forward. A completed survey will allow you to enter a drawing for Town Park Pool Punch Passes! A link to enter the raffle is displayed on the last question of this survey. The raffle is completely separate from this survey and in no way can your name be linked back to your survey responses. Limit one survey per household. All answers are confidential.

Answered: 578 Skipped: 60

Answer Choices	Responses
Please select to start!	100.00% 578
Total	578

Town of Strasburg Downtown Revitalization Survey

Q2 In what ZIP code is your home located?

Answered: 622 Skipped: 16

Answer Choices	Responses	
22657	87.14%	542
22641	0.80%	5
22660	4.34%	27
22645	1.29%	8
22649	0.64%	4
Other	5.79%	36
Total Respondents: 622		

#	Other (please specify)	Date
1	22630	7/24/2014 12:06 PM
2	22153	7/24/2014 9:45 AM
3	22015	7/22/2014 5:43 PM
4	22655	7/16/2014 5:07 PM
5	20177	7/16/2014 12:41 PM
6	20180	7/15/2014 11:37 AM
7	22623	7/11/2014 5:17 PM
8	22655	7/11/2014 5:14 PM
9	22654	7/11/2014 5:13 PM
10	22652	7/11/2014 5:12 PM
11	22664	7/11/2014 5:12 PM
12	23116	7/11/2014 5:11 PM
13	22824	7/11/2014 5:11 PM
14	17404	7/11/2014 5:10 PM
15	30701	7/11/2014 5:09 PM
16	22601	7/11/2014 5:08 PM
17	26753	7/11/2014 5:08 PM
18	25413	7/11/2014 5:06 PM
19	22824	7/11/2014 5:06 PM
20	82609	7/11/2014 5:05 PM
21	22601	7/11/2014 5:03 PM
22	22644	7/11/2014 5:03 PM
23	22655	7/11/2014 5:02 PM
24	22443	7/11/2014 5:01 PM
25	22644	7/11/2014 5:01 PM
26	22206	7/11/2014 5:00 PM
27	22602	7/11/2014 4:59 PM
28	25401	7/11/2014 4:58 PM
29	22644	7/11/2014 4:58 PM
30	22902	7/11/2014 4:57 PM
31	22664	7/11/2014 4:57 PM
32	22642	7/11/2014 4:56 PM
33	22630	7/11/2014 4:55 PM
34	22654	7/11/2014 4:55 PM

Town of Strasburg Downtown Revitalization Survey

35	22601	7/11/2014 4:54 PM
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Town of Strasburg Downtown Revitalization Survey

Q3 How often do you come to Strasburg?

Answered: 622 Skipped: 16

Answer Choices	Responses	
I live in Strasburg	81.51%	507
3 or more times a week	10.77%	67
Once or twice a week	2.57%	16
A few times a month	2.41%	15
4 to 6 times a year	1.77%	11
2 to 3 times a year	0.48%	3
Once a year	0.16%	1
Less than once a year	0.16%	1
This is my first time	0.16%	1
Total		622

Town of Strasburg Downtown Revitalization Survey

Q4 In Strasburg, have you been to... ? (Please check one column for each.)

Answered: 615 Skipped: 23

	Never	Once	A few times	Frequently	Total
Mayfest / Oktoberfest	8.93% 54	11.07% 67	29.26% 177	50.74% 307	605
Strasburg Town Park & Pool	13.82% 84	2.96% 18	43.42% 264	39.80% 242	608
Strasburg Express Baseball	69.35% 414	10.05% 60	14.07% 84	6.53% 39	597
Strasburg Museum	38.25% 231	27.15% 164	28.81% 174	5.79% 35	604
Art Galleries and Art Shows	52.51% 314	16.22% 97	24.92% 149	6.35% 38	598
Strasburg Emporium / Antique Stores	12.96% 78	17.11% 103	50.33% 303	19.60% 118	602
Visitor Center / Hupp's Hill	62.44% 374	22.70% 136	13.36% 80	1.50% 9	599
A.C. Stickley Bed and Breakfast or Hotel Strasburg	44.68% 269	12.79% 77	32.06% 193	10.47% 63	602
Skyline Paintball	80.43% 481	10.03% 60	8.53% 51	1.00% 6	598
Strasburg Riverwalk	22.70% 136	8.85% 53	31.72% 190	36.73% 220	599
Cedar Creek & Belle Grove	26.59% 159	19.23% 115	43.98% 263	10.20% 61	598
Other Events (such as Music in the Park)	33.11% 198	13.38% 80	41.81% 250	11.71% 70	598

Town of Strasburg Downtown Revitalization Survey

Q5 Approximately how often do you come to Strasburg for the following? (Please check one column for each.)

Answered: 603 Skipped: 35

	Weekly	Monthly	4 - 6 times a year	2 - 3 times a year	Once a year	Never	Total
Work	29.89% 168	1.96% 11	0.89% 5	0.71% 4	0.71% 4	65.84% 370	562
School (either as student or parent)	36.25% 203	2.86% 16	2.50% 14	2.14% 12	1.07% 6	55.18% 309	560
Church	23.06% 131	2.99% 17	4.93% 28	4.58% 26	2.11% 12	62.32% 354	568
Sports or Recreation	30.99% 172	11.35% 63	14.59% 81	8.47% 47	2.52% 14	32.07% 178	555
Grocery Shopping	64.15% 374	16.64% 97	6.86% 40	2.57% 15	1.89% 11	7.89% 46	583
Dining	37.97% 221	33.33% 194	15.29% 89	5.15% 30	1.72% 10	6.53% 38	582
Retail Shopping	19.06% 109	21.15% 121	16.26% 93	12.41% 71	4.90% 28	26.22% 150	572
Personal Care (such as a hairdresser)	7.32% 42	20.73% 119	11.32% 65	6.62% 38	3.66% 21	50.35% 289	574
Business with the Town of Strasburg	9.86% 57	28.72% 166	7.27% 42	12.98% 75	8.48% 49	32.70% 189	578
Professional Services	5.68% 32	8.88% 50	11.37% 64	11.55% 65	10.66% 60	51.87% 292	563
Farm/Garden Supplies or Building Materials	5.88% 34	12.46% 72	20.93% 121	16.61% 96	10.55% 61	33.56% 194	578
Entertainment / Music	5.66% 32	6.73% 38	14.16% 80	22.83% 129	16.81% 95	33.81% 191	565
Strasburg Riverwalk	22.61% 130	15.30% 88	16.00% 92	12.17% 70	7.83% 45	26.09% 150	575
Stroll through Historic Downtown	14.94% 85	13.88% 79	12.48% 71	14.94% 85	11.78% 67	31.99% 182	569
Library / Museum / Civic / Volunteering	15.40% 89	11.76% 68	13.84% 80	11.59% 67	11.07% 64	36.33% 210	578
Passing through town	78.96% 439	7.01% 39	3.42% 19	1.26% 7	0.90% 5	8.45% 47	556

Town of Strasburg Downtown Revitalization Survey

Q6 Where do you go most often for the following? (Please check one column for each.)

Answered: 591 Skipped: 47

	Strasburg	Woodstock	Front Royal	Winchester	Norther Virginia suburbs	Other	Total
Groceries	43.44% 255	10.90% 64	16.35% 96	20.95% 123	1.19% 7	7.16% 42	587
Small Household Items & Supplies	25.30% 146	14.73% 85	28.08% 162	27.56% 159	1.73% 10	2.60% 15	577
Clothing & Accessories	1.21% 7	7.63% 44	9.36% 54	72.10% 416	5.03% 29	4.68% 27	577
Furniture, Appliances, and Other Large Items	0.70% 4	7.73% 44	7.73% 44	75.40% 429	4.22% 24	4.22% 24	569
Auto Repairs & Related Items	26.94% 156	15.72% 91	9.15% 53	33.68% 195	5.53% 32	8.98% 52	579
Farm/Garden Supplies or Building Materials	26.10% 148	19.58% 111	24.69% 140	24.34% 138	1.23% 7	4.06% 23	567
Sporting Goods	1.71% 9	4.37% 23	14.07% 74	63.50% 334	6.84% 36	9.51% 50	526
Entertainment / Music	15.28% 81	4.34% 23	5.09% 27	52.26% 277	12.83% 68	10.19% 54	530
Personal Services (such as a hairdresser)	38.80% 220	8.47% 48	10.93% 62	27.16% 154	4.94% 28	9.70% 55	567
Business and Legal Services	21.21% 116	18.28% 100	7.13% 39	35.47% 194	7.50% 41	10.42% 57	547
Medical Services & Supplies	20.17% 116	12.70% 73	5.39% 31	52.52% 302	4.35% 25	4.87% 28	575
Banking, Insurance, and Financial Services	64.19% 371	6.06% 35	7.44% 43	13.32% 77	3.29% 19	5.71% 33	578
Restaurant: Fast Food or Take Out	70.46% 396	4.80% 27	7.65% 43	12.99% 73	1.42% 8	2.67% 15	562
Restaurant: Sit Down (such as diner or buffet)	25.87% 148	5.07% 29	12.06% 69	50.52% 289	2.62% 15	3.85% 22	572
Restaurant: Upscale Dining	5.66% 31	2.19% 12	4.56% 25	62.23% 341	15.69% 86	9.67% 53	548

#	If "other" location was selected, please specify	Date
1	Middletown	7/28/2014 10:05 AM
2	Stephens City	7/24/2014 1:08 PM
3	County	7/24/2014 11:30 AM
4	Harrisonburg	7/24/2014 11:13 AM
5	Vacations	7/23/2014 5:32 PM
6	Harrisonburg	7/23/2014 5:20 PM
7	PA; Tom's Brook	7/23/2014 2:18 PM
8	Stephens City	7/23/2014 2:12 PM
9	Stephens City	7/23/2014 11:59 AM
10	Catalogs; Kernstown;Stephens City	7/23/2014 11:55 AM
11	online	7/23/2014 11:40 AM
12	Online;	7/22/2014 3:53 PM
13	Stephens City	7/22/2014 3:04 PM
14	Flint Hill; Charlottesville; Alexandria	7/22/2014 1:02 PM
15	Culpeper	7/22/2014 12:58 PM
16	Stephens City, New Hampshire, Stephens City	7/22/2014 11:49 AM

Town of Strasburg Downtown Revitalization Survey

17	stephens city, warrenton	7/17/2014 5:56 PM
18	Stephens City	7/16/2014 5:08 PM
19	Tom's Brook	7/16/2014 5:05 PM
20	Stephens City	7/16/2014 2:41 PM
21	Manassas	7/15/2014 5:02 PM
22	Stephens City, Edinsburg	7/15/2014 4:36 PM
23	Stephens City	7/15/2014 12:01 PM
24	Harrisonburg	7/15/2014 11:58 AM
25	Stephens City; NOVA/Richmond	7/15/2014 11:52 AM
26	Charlestown, WV; Frederick, MD	7/15/2014 11:39 AM
27	Varies	7/15/2014 10:57 AM
28	Stephens City	7/14/2014 5:11 PM
29	none specified for any question	7/14/2014 4:41 PM
30	Martinsburg	7/14/2014 4:38 PM
31	Stephen's City	7/14/2014 4:22 PM
32	Tom's Brook	7/14/2014 4:08 PM
33	Are you kidding!	7/14/2014 3:07 PM
34	Ladysmith; Staunton	7/14/2014 1:07 PM
35	Tom's Brook	7/14/2014 10:01 AM
36	Stephens City	7/14/2014 9:41 AM
37	Stephens City	7/11/2014 5:27 PM
38	Stephens City	7/11/2014 5:14 PM
39	Harrisonburg	7/11/2014 5:11 PM
40	Harrisonburg;Stephens City	7/11/2014 5:09 PM
41	Since I CURRENTLY don't live there, I go where I live.	7/11/2014 5:08 PM
42	USAA online	7/11/2014 5:06 PM
43	edinburg	7/11/2014 5:06 PM
44	Online	7/11/2014 5:05 PM
45	Toms Brook/Maureertown	7/11/2014 5:03 PM
46	martinsburg	7/11/2014 4:58 PM
47	DC; DC	7/11/2014 4:57 PM
48	Stephens City	7/11/2014 4:30 PM
49	Family Friend, Toms Brook;	7/11/2014 3:51 PM
50	Online	7/11/2014 3:35 PM
51	Order catalog	7/11/2014 3:30 PM
52	Stephens City	7/11/2014 2:45 PM
53	Stephens City	7/11/2014 11:07 AM
54	Use online financial services	7/8/2014 10:56 AM
55	other because I never do	7/7/2014 11:31 AM
56	Martins in Stephen City	7/5/2014 4:20 PM
57	Cabelas	7/1/2014 7:36 PM
58	Stephens City	6/30/2014 7:07 PM
59	Stephens city	6/30/2014 6:59 PM
60	home	6/30/2014 6:00 PM
61	I do shopping online	6/30/2014 4:12 PM
62	the music because of where the musician plays at. and, the upscale dining because there is none in strasburg.	6/30/2014 10:18 AM
63	Groceries-Stephens City/Sporting Goods-Martinsburg	6/30/2014 9:40 AM
64	Stephens City	6/29/2014 5:13 PM

Town of Strasburg Downtown Revitalization Survey

65	our auto repair in in the country, not in a town. We do not purchase sporting goods, and if we did, there is no place locally to purchase.	6/29/2014 4:11 PM
66	Harrisonburg	6/29/2014 4:06 PM
67	One grocery store is not enough to the entire town; have to shop in two stores for all my grocery needs	6/29/2014 9:07 AM
68	Sperryville	6/29/2014 6:43 AM
69	WV	6/28/2014 10:02 PM
70	Stephen City, Kernstown	6/28/2014 10:00 PM
71	Stephens City	6/28/2014 5:08 PM
72	No Virginia	6/28/2014 12:42 PM
73	Maurertown	6/28/2014 11:35 AM
74	Tom's Brook or Maurertown	6/28/2014 11:16 AM
75	middletown	6/28/2014 10:56 AM
76	on line	6/28/2014 7:58 AM
77	Stephens City	6/27/2014 9:40 PM
78	online	6/27/2014 8:42 PM
79	Charles Town, West Virginia	6/27/2014 6:04 PM
80	Credit Union out of state	6/27/2014 5:58 PM
81	Leesburg, Middleburg, Upperville, Luray, The Plains and sometimes Woodstock	6/27/2014 4:02 PM
82	Stephen City	6/27/2014 3:34 PM
83	Stephens City a must for groceries - Martins!! FL is awful.	6/27/2014 12:41 PM
84	Stephens City Martins Market	6/27/2014 12:17 PM
85	Amazon.com	6/27/2014 11:44 AM
86	rarely/never	6/27/2014 10:54 AM
87	Harrisonburg, Edinburg	6/27/2014 10:43 AM
88	Staunton, Harrisonburg,	6/27/2014 10:39 AM
89	Edinburgh	6/27/2014 10:33 AM
90	Various, including internet, and other states	6/27/2014 9:40 AM
91	No Va	6/27/2014 9:37 AM
92	internet	6/27/2014 9:22 AM
93	Martinsburg, Hagerstown, Harrisonburg	6/27/2014 9:12 AM
94	More than one location	6/27/2014 9:07 AM
95	Baltimore	6/27/2014 9:02 AM
96	don't do these things	6/27/2014 8:56 AM
97	Stephens City	6/27/2014 8:40 AM
98	Middletown or Stephens City	6/27/2014 8:28 AM
99	Martins in Stephens City	6/27/2014 8:27 AM
100	Internet, or don't do these activities	6/27/2014 8:20 AM
101	stephens city	6/27/2014 8:17 AM
102	Metropolitan areas	6/27/2014 8:14 AM
103	do not buy	6/27/2014 7:49 AM
104	Stephen's City	6/27/2014 7:48 AM
105	Toms Brook	6/27/2014 7:47 AM
106	Stephen City	6/27/2014 7:28 AM
107	out of state- retired military	6/27/2014 6:37 AM
108	stephens city, tysons, DC	6/27/2014 4:47 AM
109	Washington D.C.	6/26/2014 8:41 PM
110	various	6/26/2014 6:41 PM
111	online	6/26/2014 5:58 PM

Town of Strasburg Downtown Revitalization Survey

112	south carolina	6/26/2014 5:11 PM
113	Harrisonburg-Dick's Sporting Goods	6/26/2014 1:30 PM
114	We rarely dine out and often order to go	6/26/2014 10:08 AM
115	Toms Brook	6/26/2014 9:36 AM
116	Toms brook for auto repair	6/25/2014 10:58 PM
117	internet	6/25/2014 10:13 PM
118	Various.	6/25/2014 9:42 PM
119	Online	6/25/2014 9:40 PM
120	Mt. Jackson	6/25/2014 9:29 PM
121	N/A	6/25/2014 9:02 PM
122	Leesburg area	6/25/2014 7:52 PM
123	Alexandria	6/25/2014 4:57 PM
124	Mauertown	6/25/2014 4:52 PM
125	Mauertown	6/25/2014 3:48 PM
126	No Upscale Dining	6/25/2014 3:21 PM
127	Middletown, Stephens City, Berryville, DC	6/25/2014 3:16 PM
128	Mt Jackson	6/25/2014 2:14 PM
129	online shopping	6/25/2014 1:54 PM
130	Travel all over VA	6/25/2014 1:38 PM
131	Hair dresser in Stephen City; doctor in Mt Jackson, but BEST dentist is in Strasburg	6/25/2014 1:37 PM
132	UVA	6/25/2014 1:27 PM
133	Toms Brook/Mauertown	6/25/2014 1:09 PM
134	out of state	6/25/2014 12:56 PM
135	Stephens City, or online	6/25/2014 12:54 PM
136	auto repairs middletwon	6/25/2014 12:43 PM
137	LEGALZOOM ONLINE	6/25/2014 12:37 PM

Town of Strasburg Downtown Revitalization Survey

Q7 Strasburg is considering the development of a public space downtown. Please rank your top choices of desired facility using the drop down box. Suggestions can be added in the "Other" space.

Answered: 579 Skipped: 59

Type of Facility Desired												
	Formal Town Square (very landscaped)	Informal Community Gathering Space (open space with benches)	Farmers Market	Playground / Splash Pad	Performance Space / Amphitheater (concerts, outdoor movies, speeches, etc.)	Picnic Space (picnic tables and/or table and chairs)	Festival Space (designated area for tents)	Natural Space	Outdoor Recreation for Youth (frisbee golf, skate park, etc.)	Exercise / Par Course	Other	Total
1st	9.53% 55	6.07% 35	28.42% 164	13.69% 79	14.73% 85	1.04% 6	2.25% 13	4.16% 24	8.15% 47	4.51% 26	7.45% 43	577
2nd	6.00% 33	9.27% 51	24.18% 133	11.09% 61	14.73% 81	3.09% 17	4.55% 25	5.27% 29	11.27% 62	6.00% 33	4.55% 25	550
3rd	9.24% 50	6.28% 34	14.42% 78	7.02% 38	13.49% 73	7.02% 38	6.65% 36	7.95% 43	12.38% 67	9.61% 52	5.91% 32	541

#	Other (please specify)	Date
1	Clean Flea Markets off Main St	7/24/2014 11:33 AM
2	None	7/24/2014 11:30 AM
3	none specified	7/23/2014 5:25 PM
4	PARKING PARKING PARKING!	7/23/2014 2:49 PM
5	Dog Park	7/23/2014 12:56 PM
6	none specified	7/22/2014 3:19 PM
7	Miniature Golf	7/22/2014 3:17 PM
8	none specified	7/22/2014 3:01 PM
9	none specified	7/22/2014 2:57 PM
10	none specified	7/22/2014 12:58 PM
11	none specified	7/15/2014 5:02 PM
12	Poor Choice in all of the above. Why ask? Nothing will change anyway. You'll do what you want and we pay for it. Ask your council where they shop. Wine and wood; Dollar Store unaccessible to anyone who is handicapped.	7/15/2014 4:44 PM
13	Need another Grocery Store or Retail	7/15/2014 11:57 AM
14	Marins Food Store; Something other than Food Lion	7/15/2014 10:48 AM
15	Paved Bike Path	7/15/2014 9:16 AM
16	Chess/Checkers Tables/elders gatherings benches; dog walk paths with benches, potty areas for dogs; Please put restroom facilities at top of list whatever you do; need better parking.	7/14/2014 5:19 PM
17	none specified	7/14/2014 4:41 PM
18	Outdoor permanent art exhibit(sculpture) (user friendly) (metal/concrete locally created)	7/14/2014 4:39 PM
19	These should be consolidated into one are like Beverly Springs Park where they have their tent areas, landscaping, gazebo, etc.	7/14/2014 4:34 PM
20	Need to create Industrial jobs	7/14/2014 4:06 PM
21	Lets do something fo rthe kids for a change. but in a skateboard park to keep them off the streets. everybody likes to complain about the kids but what is there for them to do around here. Every town has something for the kids but STRASBURG!	7/14/2014 3:50 PM
22	Grocery Store	7/14/2014 3:47 PM
23	Additional Parking	7/14/2014 3:39 PM
24	Parking lot other than banks and town hall would enhance businesses; my older friends cannot parallel park	7/14/2014 3:16 PM

Town of Strasburg Downtown Revitalization Survey

25	I would use the Community pool but no umbrellas or chairs are provided. Also pool hours are too short. wouldnt it be nice to extend the pool hours so parents that work can take their kids?	7/14/2014 3:08 PM
26	As today's society leans towards practicality vs extravagance, I would ask only that efforts move in that general direction; Be Practical; We dont need purple and bumpouts. We need stores and shops to generate local revenue.	7/14/2014 1:12 PM
27	have not lived here a year yet. love living here but downtown looks run down. glad it si being developed.	7/14/2014 10:34 AM
28	More Pedestrian Friendly crosswalks at Massanutten & King. Obvious Parking for visitors(sightseers) with better signage directing to the parking	7/14/2014 10:13 AM
29	Add trees to the new sidewalk project - it looks barren	7/11/2014 5:19 PM
30	Upscale Grocery Store	7/11/2014 5:16 PM
31	antique / craft/ yard sale	7/11/2014 5:10 PM
32	sculpture garden	7/11/2014 5:01 PM
33	Indoor Sportsplex for families	7/11/2014 4:59 PM
34	Town Mgr know 1 thing, spend money. You are spending too much money, take care of what we have. get another Grocery Store for competition	7/11/2014 4:37 PM
35	Finish the streetscape project, Then move on to another idea	7/11/2014 3:52 PM
36	Food Lion needs competition	7/11/2014 3:46 PM
37	Too many vacant buildings on King - Theater needs a tenant - visitors dont get out of their cars on the way south on US 11	7/11/2014 3:36 PM
38	Buy Theater, tear down & put in parking and Bandstand	7/11/2014 3:33 PM
39	we need another Grocery Store- People in Strasburg go to Walmart in Woodstock or Front Royal; There is no parking for the businesses that are still Downtown	7/11/2014 3:13 PM
40	Tear down M&R Mart; Need a nice 9 hole golf Course	7/11/2014 2:51 PM
41	Need a store like Walmart built in the areas right off exit 296 on 55 or Rt 11 across from Rite Aid	7/11/2014 2:46 PM
42	I would like a farmers market but you can have one of those in any parking lot/open area like the location across from McDonalds. I would love to have a smaller waterpark like JayDee's in Innwood right here in Strasburg	7/7/2014 11:35 AM
43	Free bus service supported by realestate taxes we already pay	7/1/2014 6:49 PM
44	New Grocery Store	6/30/2014 10:28 PM
45	none	6/30/2014 6:01 PM
46	Parking for all of your crazy ideas that you never seem to think about.	6/30/2014 12:31 PM
47	have a better town park.	6/30/2014 10:21 AM
48	shooting range	6/30/2014 10:02 AM
49	I personally do not believe that any of those wold make our town more "attractive" to our people. Where in teh world would we put those things "in space downtown" We do not need more formal landscaping, no more benhses, we have a lovely little pocket park, We need someplace to SHOP, That is why we go OUT OF TOWN for most all of our purchases.	6/29/2014 4:14 PM
50	Need Quick Emergency Care to come back to Strasburg We need medical care badly	6/29/2014 2:50 PM
51	safe indoor teen hangout	6/29/2014 11:05 AM
52	Don't need something for our dogs before we provide something for our youth!!! Get priorities straight plz!	6/29/2014 9:08 AM
53	We need farm-based businesses -- milk, eggs, pies, produce	6/29/2014 6:47 AM
54	a sheetz or pizza hut or a steak house	6/29/2014 4:42 AM
55	parking	6/29/2014 1:26 AM
56	dog park	6/28/2014 9:23 PM
57	pet park	6/28/2014 9:00 PM
58	Parking For Events (EX Mayfest)	6/28/2014 6:03 PM
59	Park space	6/28/2014 12:46 PM
60	combination/space usable for more than 1 thing	6/28/2014 10:59 AM
61	put more box stores downtown, I have green space in my backyard	6/27/2014 5:37 PM
62	None of the above	6/27/2014 4:36 PM
63	Paint and plant vines on the UGLY railroad bridge near the bottom of Massanutten , such a dismal introduction to our town.	6/27/2014 4:08 PM
64	kroger	6/27/2014 3:35 PM
65	Retail Shopping	6/27/2014 2:49 PM
66	Retail Stores	6/27/2014 12:42 PM

Town of Strasburg Downtown Revitalization Survey

67	restore your historic buildings (i.e...Strasburg Theater, Brills Grocery, Taxi Stand) for dining, shopping, live theater,	6/27/2014 10:43 AM
68	grocery store @martins: Clothing & Shoes:restaurants	6/27/2014 10:39 AM
69	Renovate the exterior of the buildings along King Street	6/27/2014 9:48 AM
70	More public parking, less BUMP OUTS and less in the street festivals	6/27/2014 9:42 AM
71	Major retail shopping	6/27/2014 8:44 AM
72	Farmers market	6/27/2014 8:22 AM
73	How about some shopping besides the Dollar Store?!	6/27/2014 8:22 AM
74	Martins grocery store	6/27/2014 8:18 AM
75	There is a need to get businesses downtown. Beautiful streets cape, but no reason to go downtown without a business to go to.	6/27/2014 8:15 AM
76	More shopping	6/27/2014 4:22 AM
77	Fill the store fronts. Otherwise your downtown projects are pointless. The street scape is the most absurd allocation of funds an ailing town could make.	6/26/2014 8:14 PM
78	I would like to see a Wal Mart Super Store	6/26/2014 6:46 PM
79	More trails similar to river walk. Par course nice, but not necessary.	6/25/2014 6:14 PM
80	more stories. grocery. clothing	6/25/2014 5:03 PM
81	ice skating rink	6/25/2014 4:59 PM
82	Get half moon beach back open	6/25/2014 4:38 PM
83	Sally Beauty Supply Store	6/25/2014 3:37 PM
84	Dog Park	6/25/2014 3:17 PM
85	Fix sewer system first	6/25/2014 2:17 PM
86	businesses!!!!	6/25/2014 2:03 PM
87	Softball/baseball fields	6/25/2014 1:07 PM
88	coffee shop	6/25/2014 12:37 PM
89	Maybe a stallte stations of LFCC for those who can't drive	6/25/2014 12:33 PM

Town of Strasburg Downtown Revitalization Survey

Q8 We thank you for your participation in the Downtown Revitalization Survey. Please Click Here to Enter. GRAND PRIZE: A Season Pool Pass for a Family of Four ADDITIONAL PRIZES: (5) Town Park Pool Punch Passes good for 10 Visits The Pool Pass raffle is completely separate from this survey. Entering your name into the raffle cannot be linked back to this survey in anyway. All answers are confidential.

Answered: 31 Skipped: 607

#	Responses	Date
1	survey didnt say could fill out online	7/17/2014 5:57 PM
2	Kim Cook 540-252-4327	7/11/2014 4:56 PM
3	Carrie Spear 5403356122	7/7/2014 11:36 AM
4	April Bauserman	6/30/2014 1:25 PM
5	Do not include this survey in the raffle. We have our own pool and yard.	6/30/2014 8:16 AM
6	Tina Abbott 540-479-0577	6/29/2014 11:06 AM
7	Regina Stone	6/28/2014 9:24 PM
8	Debra Haubenstein 540 877 6428	6/28/2014 7:59 AM
9	We do not need any more sub, pizza or chinese restaurants in Strasburg. Please, no more of these restaurants!	6/27/2014 11:04 PM
10	GERALD OWENS	6/27/2014 12:14 PM
11	Patrick Bersnak	6/27/2014 11:39 AM
12	not interested	6/27/2014 10:56 AM
13	Katie Shifflett	6/27/2014 9:15 AM
14	Elizabeth Ganzhom	6/27/2014 8:58 AM
15	Will the results of the survey be published?	6/27/2014 7:29 AM
16	Scott Himelright	6/26/2014 5:59 PM
17	Please do SOMETHING about the abandoned construction sites that are blemishing BOTH I-81 exits/entrances to Strasburg. You can beautify downtown, but visitors still have to drive through a whole lot of ugly to get there.	6/25/2014 11:24 PM
18	Amy Kretchman	6/25/2014 2:05 PM
19	Sadly I wish my son and I could visit and enjoy strasburg more, but the racist vipe overshadows any desire to visit. Much luck in your upgrades	6/25/2014 1:57 PM
20	Dana Rush 481-3561	6/25/2014 1:48 PM
21	Couldn't enter because link did not work, my name is Kim Carter	6/25/2014 1:44 PM
22	Tried to enter for passes but wont load page Jessica Turner 278 Cardinal St Strasburg 540-975-1172	6/25/2014 1:17 PM
23	Enter to Win page not available. Please enter: Jim & Sue Shipp, PO Box 223, Strasburg, VA 22657, 540-465-8298.	6/25/2014 1:16 PM
24	Elizabeth Russell Russell4@shentel.net Link to enter did not work for me	6/25/2014 1:14 PM
25	Tried to click for the free Family pool pass and it says Oh bananas! Sherri Walker 5403257001 (would love to win these) lol	6/25/2014 1:03 PM
26	The page won't open on the click to enter . Kelly Honaker (kelly.bly@kohls.com)	6/25/2014 1:02 PM
27	Jeannebroy@yahoo.com	6/25/2014 12:50 PM
28	Won't let me enter to win prizes	6/25/2014 12:46 PM
29	I couldn't enter to win the grand prize because the site isn't available. Renae Carey 540-325-2442 342 Alsberry St. Strasburg	6/25/2014 12:43 PM
30	THE ENTER TO WIN PAGE ISNT WORKING SO HERES MY INFO : JESSICA VINCENT 133 E QUEEN ST STRASBURG VA 22657	6/25/2014 12:39 PM
31	Please click here to enter to win take you to a 404 page	6/25/2014 12:34 PM

APPENDIX C