



DOWNTOWN EXECUTIVE TEAM MTG: July 23rd, 2020 Special Meeting – Ongoing COVID-19 Response

Historic Downtown Hendersonville Vision Statement: Downtown Hendersonville offers an authentic small-town atmosphere, unparalleled pedestrian experience, multiple options for urban living and a vibrant small business community.

9:00: Call to Order

9:00 – 10:15: For Discussion & Possible Action

- **Open Streets Weekend Conversion** - Following on-going feedback from the business community we want to discuss a series of changes to the Open Streets Weekend and determine whether the Executive Team is supportive of these changes.
 - Convert the event to an evening only activity
 - ✓ Instead of being closed throughout the day, closures would only occur in the evening.
 - Reduce the activity to only one evening per weekend, this would effectively reduce the closure from 60 hours to 12 hours. Streets would close Friday and reopen first thing Saturday morning. We would rename the Open Street Weekends to “First Fridays.”
 - Maintain the once a month occurrence moving forward.
 - Work with businesses interested in “Parklets” as an alternative to the larger open street’s concepts. Parklets are where a business takes over a parking space(s) during open streets or on a longer-term basis.

Suggested Motion: I move that the Friends of Downtown recommend that the City scale back the Open Streets weekends to include a simplified “First Friday” street closure, to occur on the First Friday of each month and that staff work towards opportunities for parklets. The closures would begin at 5:00 pm and the street would reopen first thing Saturday morning. The Friends are supportive of this beginning in August.

- **Friends of Downtown Hendersonville Pivot Fund** – Discuss interest in and need for a micro-grant program designed to support small business in both districts in making operating changes necessitated by the COVID-19 pivot.
 - See attached for staff concept; timelines and details will need to be finalized. This is a draft document.

10:15 – 10:30: Closing Remarks/Adjourn



Business Innovation Incentive Grant Program

Internal/Staff Tasks & timeline:

- Program announcement date: TBD
 - including online donation campaign – goal to raise \$5000 for first round – facebook fundraiser, gofundme?
 - Announcement could include about the mask sales, Van Winkle Sponsorship, etc for match?
- TDA Application
- Speak with Ben Smith on concept
- Aug. 3 – First applications due
- Aug. 10 – Infrastructure team meeting
- Aug. 11 – DT Executive Team meeting
- Aug. 12 – Notify grant awards to give time for preparation and promotion for Labor Day weekend

Description of Grants:

A microgrant program to allow businesses creativity when testing reopening strategies to minimize risk. This program will provide up to \$1000 (?) in funding for businesses within the downtown and 7th avenue districts to try something new in response to restrictions related to Covid-19, particularly related to Open Streets or outdoor activation.

Purpose: As Phase 2 extends, and the threat of further negative economic impacts from Covid-19 continues for an unknown time, the Friends of Downtown believe it is important for downtown businesses to pivot their business models to brace for a new normal way of doing business. The Business Innovation Incentive Grants allow businesses and nonprofits that provide downtown experiences an opportunity to test updates to their business while reducing some of the financial risk.

Funding Sources:

- Confirmed - \$1000 - LoveHendo mask sales (include Bryan Byrd as a sponsor?)
- Confirmed (\$ but not for the specific project) - \$1000 - Van Winkle Sponsorship
- Potential - \$15,000 – Henderson County TDA
- Potential – Lowes, Home Depot, Ace Hardware – in kind supplies
- Potential – realtors, Blue Ridge Community College SBC (in kind?) First Citizens Bank, PNC, Wells Fargo
- Potential – Henderson County Community Foundation response fund?
- Potential – \$5000 online donate here button where people can contribute

Projects can fund:

- Extra staffing for execution
- Purchase of supplies or new inventory related to project
- Purchase or rental of outdoor seating or other equipment
- Website updates or added social media marketing advertising or fees

Project examples:

- Purchasing additional outdoor seating for restaurants to expand outdoor dining
- Additional staffing needs to create an outdoor expansion of your space during Open Streets Weekend
- Building a parklet or deck on existing parking spaces for expanded outdoor dining

Selection Requirements:

The following measures will guide the selection of grants:



1. Connection with Open Streets Weekends
2. Potential for long term viability
3. Following social distancing and mass gathering guidelines
4. Enhancement of the outdoor environment

The Friends of Downtown Executive Committee (or Infrastructure committee?) will serve as the grant committee and will review applications on a monthly basis. The first round of applications will be due August 3, prior to the Infrastructure and Executive Committee meetings. The selection committee reserves the right to offer a partial grant based on the selection criteria.

Application questions:

Applicant Name:

Business Name:

Proposed Project:

Project Budget:

Expenses:	
Total Expense:	

Grant Amount Requested:

If grant does not cover total cost of project, do you have the funds to complete the project?

Please describe how your project proposal meets the selection criteria:

1. Connection with Open Streets Weekends
2. Potential for long term viability
3. Following social distancing and mass gathering guidelines
4. Enhancement of the outdoor environment