

Downtown Cordele 2021 Strategic Work Plan

Vision

In 2031, Downtown Cordele is lively and thriving - offering its residents and visitors an attractive center that is clean and well-maintained. People are visiting, shopping, and dining in a walkable, safe environment. It is bustling with activities that include riding and watching trains.

Downtown Cordele is a showplace for beautiful landscaping and historic preservation; buildings are restored and attractive and filled with businesses that cater to families, young professionals, and retirees.

Downtown Cordele is a great place to live, work, shop, and play.

Community Transformation Strategies

1. Beautification Initiatives and Design

2. Business Activation and Development

Rationale

In the summer of 2021, the Cordele Main Street office conducted two surveys: 1) Community Input survey and 2) Downtown Leadership survey. Survey responses clearly identified *Beautification Initiatives and Design* and *Business Activation and Development* as Cordele Main Street's top priorities (or community transformation strategies) for the next two-three years. Data pointed to the need to create a more inviting esthetic for visitors and residents and to support existing businesses while seeking to recruit new businesses and fill vacant spaces.

Wildly Important Goals

Wildly Important Goals	
Beautification Initiatives and Design	Business Activation and Development
<p>Goal</p> <p>Improve the appearance of private and public downtown properties</p>	<p>Goal</p> <p>Retain, Expand, or Recruit (RER) businesses for the downtown district (entertainment, dining, followed by retail)</p>
<p>Definition for Success</p> <p><i>25% of private properties and <u>all</u> public properties are cleaned and/or painted, repaired, and beautified by January 2024</i></p>	<p>Definition for Success</p> <p><i>Retain 100% of current businesses; expand two current businesses, and recruit four new businesses by January 2024</i></p>
<p>Lead Board Member</p>	<p>Lead Board Member</p>

Community Transformation Strategy

Beautification Initiatives and Design

Goal

Improve the appearance of private and public downtown properties

Definitions for Success

25% of private properties and all public properties are cleaned and/or painted, repaired, and beautified by January 2024

Partners

- Industrial Development Authority
- City/code inspector
- City of Cordele
- River Valley Regional Commission
- County Government
- Chamber of Commerce
- Community partners
- Cordele Preservation Board
- Department of Community Affairs

Tasks	Person Responsible	Due Dates (Start & Complete)	Partners	Budget
Walking audit	Monica	Oct 2021 – Mar 2022	Joel	
Clean alleys (reline parking, resurface) and maintain public spaces (Railroad property)	Steve	Jan 2022 – Jan 2024	City of Cordele, DOT, Code Enforcement	
Develop and promote a “beautification” contest, with rules	Gail	Develop rules by Oct 2021 Conclude contest by May 2022	Home Depot, Sherwin Williams, Cobb Nursery, and CCB	
Create five (?) selfie spots and hashtags (like the “hole in the wall”)	Miriam	Sept 2021 – Sept 2022	Local artists, SGT, business owners, CCHS Marketing class	
Award the Downtown Business Spotlight, focusing on storefronts and backs	Rick Smarr	May 2022	Business owners, local media, CCHS Marketing class	

Community Transformation Strategy

Business Activation and Development

Goal

Retain, Expand, or Recruit (RER) businesses for the downtown district (entertainment, dining, followed by retail)

Definitions for Success

Retain 100% of current businesses; expand two current businesses, and recruit four new businesses by January 2024

Partners

- Industrial Development Authority
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Tasks	Person Responsible	Due Dates (Start & Complete)	Partners	Budget
Update incentive package	Monica, Gail, and Roland	Dec 2021 – Jan 2022	DRC, City, CCPC, WSST, DDA, EZ	
Recruit chefs	Monica and Gail	2022 spring semester	SGTC	
Identify “pop-up” spots for food trucks and events, like “sip-n-strolls”	Steve and Roland	Jan 2022 (and ongoing for events)	Owners, City Code Enforcement	
Expand sidewalk dining opportunities	Steve and Roland	Sept 2021 – Sept 2022	Owners, City Code Enforcement	
Research funding opportunities from private and public sources	Lauren, Lin, and Monica	Sept 2021 – Sept 2022	EZ, Fox Institute, ACEloans.org,, IDC, DDA, Newtown	
Identify possible business expansions	Grant and Christy	Sept 2021 – Sept 2022	IDA, Chamber, CCPC, City Permits	
Support small business development	Lin, Monica	Sept 2021 – Sept 2022	SBA, Chamber, SBDC, IDA, CCPC	
Produce the 2022 Crawl, ending at the museum with a photography exhibition event, highlighting historic photos	Miriam	Jan 2022	Main Street and Albany State	