



## 2023 Year in Review

### Organizational Structure and Development

- Coordinated with the NC Main Street & Rural Planning Center on meeting all benchmarks for program designation including the April site visit. Completed all outstanding requirements to receive designation as a North Carolina Main Street community in July.
- Hosted a Mebane Main Street Celebration that brought more than 400 community members together to celebrate Main Street designation.
- Held monthly board meetings, executive committee meetings and a first board retreat.
- Kicked off meetings for all three committees in March and began recruiting members from the community. Committees are centered around three economic development strategies: Center for Community Engagement and Inclusivity; Hub for Regional Leisurely and Recreational Activities; and Rich with Diverse Small Businesses, Nightlife and Dining Options.
- Kicked off program subcommittee meetings in January, February and March and began recruiting members. The three subcommittees are History, Public Arts, and Downtown Businesses.
- Completed required NC Main Street training in Promotion, Design, Organization and Accreditation Standards. Attended state Main Street conference in March, executive directors conference in August and participated in regional meetings. Attended Certified Local Government workshop in September.
- Completed the annual NC Main Street Program Assessment and received feedback from the state program office.
- Initiated a communications internship program and hosted a spring semester intern from the University of Central Florida (remote) as well as an Elon University summer intern with the Campus Alamance program.
- Joined Mebane Business Association and Alamance Chamber of Commerce.
- Received 501(c)(3) tax exemption approval.
- Received program contributions of \$6,500 from DMDC board members.
- Adopted work plan and budget for FY24 and held board and officer elections in June.
- Drafted Mayor's proclamations for Historic Preservation Month in May, Mebane Main Street Day in July, and Huey's Restaurant Appreciation Day in December.
- Observed Public Works Week with an appreciation gift to City staff.
- Completed the required annual statistics reporting to the state Main Street office in July.
- Adopted an events policy and expenditures policy to guide board decision making.
- Recorded more than 500 volunteer hours for the year.

### Branding & Marketing

- Starting from zero, grew Facebook followers to 1,600 and Instagram followers to 725 in first year.
- Began using "Little Surprises. Big Charm." theming to tie back to "Biggest Little Town on Earth" tag line from 1940-50s.

- Continued the “Covid Catch-Up ribbon cutting” series into 2023 and celebrated new Downtown businesses L.A.K.E. Designs, Crafted - Art of the Taco, Sister’s Full of Flava, Lucky Penny Nutrition, Clay Street Antiques & Treasures, QB Designz and Edward Jones.
- Hosted new business ribbon cuttings for Lou’s Bakery, Josh’s Hope, La Boardega and The Wooden Nickel and held grand re-openings for Impulsive Creativity, Farm Bureau Insurance and Carolina Pickin’.
- Compiled a listing of more than 120 events planned in and around Downtown.
- Supported/promoted Downtown events including:
  - Cupid Shuffle & Galentines
  - Mebane Train Show at Mebane Train Museum
  - Community with a Cause/St. Baldrick’s Foundation fundraiser
  - Mebane Historical Museum events including *George Washington’s 1791 Southern Tour* author’s program
  - Mimosas with Mom
  - Dad is Rad
  - Fourth of July Parade (Mebane Historical Museum) with DMDC providing a \$250 parade sponsorship and challenging Mebane Business Association to provide a match.
  - Red, White & Local
  - Christmas in July
  - Wine Down Wednesdays
  - Summer Sidewalk Sale
  - Stuff the Camper (for E.M. Yoder school supplies drive)
  - Flavors of Fall
  - Alamance Adventure Race
  - AutumnFest
  - Chili Cookoff
  - Hometown Holiday
  - Dashing Through Downtown
  - Jingle and Mingle
  - Holiday Reveal
  - Meet Me at Midnight
- Contracted for photography services with Andre’ Watson Photography. Events covered included the Mebane Train Show, Community with a Cause/St. Baldrick’s Foundation event, Eggstravaganza & Bunny Hop, Dogwood Festival, Lantern Festival, Farmers Market, Makers Market, Shop Small Saturday and Always Christmas-Corbett Family tree display. In addition, Andre’ Watson Photography held two sessions with individual businesses.
- Participated in Alamance County Visitor’s Bureau training and networking (Marketing College, FAM tour).
- Placed an *Our State’s Let’s Explore* email newsletter ad.
- Facilitated the purchase of a quarterly Tanger Outlets directory ad (funded by Destination Downtown).
- Kicked off the Umbrella Art Project displays in July with 20 artists’ umbrellas hosted at 15 Downtown businesses. This year’s Umbrella Art Project sponsor (\$500) was Junction on 70.
- Launched July “Anti Boredom Month” social media campaign that highlighted one or more Downtown businesses each day along with a call to action.
- Added an events section to the Downtown Mebane webpage and included listings through the end of 2023.
- Ordered refrigerator magnets with QR code linked to the Downtown Mebane website’s events section. Magnets were free to Downtown businesses for distribution to customers.

- Participated in the first edition of the City's *Mebane on the Mic* podcast in July.
- Interviewed by Spectrum News for a story on Main Street designation.
- Started "What's happening this weekend in Downtown Mebane" weekly posts in August.
- Conducted a planning meeting with Downtown business owners to establish short- and long-term advertising and marketing priorities.
- Purchased an Efland Rodeo sponsorship.
- Submitted Downtown Mebane information for the Main-to-Main Trail website.
- Supported summer Musical Chairs concerts and weekly Farmers Market through promotion and coordination with Downtown businesses.
- Contracted for *Our State* digital and print ads with digital ads beginning in fourth quarter 2023.
- Coordinated the display of the "Always Christmas - Corbett Family Holiday Tradition" Christmas trees at 200 N. Fifth Street. Secured insurance through Destination Downtown and received a \$500 contribution from a DMDC board member. Received media coverage from WXII Channel 12, *Mebane Enterprise*, and *Burlington Times-News*.
- Partnered with a local antique car owner to show a "Mebane Main Street" entry in Christmas Parade and distributed Downtown events magnets along parade route.
- Participated in Maverick Radio interview.
- Facilitated a three-way partnership with Mebane Merchants, Destination Downtown and DMDC to promote Downtown's Shop Small Saturday event.
- Created a Giving Tuesday Givebutter campaign.
- Promoted DMDC's second-annual VIP View fundraiser.
- Coordinated a visit by an architect/historic properties renovation expert to tour the Greenway building in August to gather information for creating a feasibility study and proforma on the building.
- Contracted for a Downtown Mebane billboard at Exit 154 at I-40/I-85 for three months beginning in November.
- Applied for and received a \$10,000 Alamance County Visitors Bureau grant for *Our State* advertising.
- Conducted a series of social district meetings featuring a presentation by Burlington's Main Street director with Downtown businesses and City staff.

### **Initiatives**

- City liaison efforts by DMDC included:
  - Requested street closures for the Community with a Cause/St. Baldrick's Foundation event, Mebane Main Street Celebration, Autumn Fest and Jeepers Creepers. Requested liability insurance through Destination Downtown on behalf of the Community with a Cause/St. Baldrick's Foundation and Jeepers Creepers event planners.
  - Promoted the City's Clay Street construction public information sessions with Downtown businesses and provided timely updates as construction progressed.
  - Promoted the City's façade grant program with Downtown business owners.
  - Attended BPAC meetings and provided connection between the committee and Downtown businesses on related initiatives.
- Worked with business owners to evaluate available lease space.
- Attended REAC meeting in August. Encouraged future partnerships as well as potential DMDC board and/or committee participation by REAC members.
- Gave away flags to Downtown businesses for Pride Month.
- Began exploring a potential "crazy quilt" project with Alamance Arts as well as Legacy NC mural project.
- Began early planning efforts on temporary art displays, train tunnel mural series, walking tours, history pop-ups and cultural programs.

- Coordinated getting teacher door prizes for back-to-school event at Eastern Alamance High School.
- Hosted Alamance Chamber's Tuesday Tours for Teachers event at Downtown businesses.
- Worked with the City to market available properties to potential new businesses.
- Joined in a countywide history consortium to foster collaboration among Alamance history groups.
- Created a Facebook post series that pairs a historic building photo with its present-day location. DMDC's Sugaree Thornton is the selfie host.
- Began researching street furniture for additional seating Downtown.
- Established ongoing collaboration/networking with Destination Downtown Mebane, Mebane Merchants, Mebane Business Association, Alamance Chamber, Mebane Historical Museum, Mebane Train Museum, Mebane Trail Rangers, Mebane Public Library, Alamance County Visitor's Bureau and Elon University.
- Continued quarterly meetings with Main Street directors in Elon and Burlington and hosted Pittsboro Main Street group tour.