



# Town of Cheraw

## Downtown Master Plan

2021

Prepared by:

**BOUDREAUX**  
inspired design

+



THE LANDPLAN GROUP SOUTH  
Landscape Architecture | Engineering | Planning

+

FRED DELK

# Town of Cheraw

## Downtown Master Plan 2021

### TABLE OF CONTENTS

---

Introduction	Page 3
Summary of Public Input	Page 20
Recommendations & Opportunities	Page 36

# Introduction

Introduction	Page 4
Acknowledgements	Page 6
Project Schedule	Page 7
A Modern Fable: A Tale of Two Downtowns	Page 8
Downtown Vision	Page 18



# Introduction

With one of the best preserved historic districts in South Carolina and plentiful natural assets surrounding the Town, how can the elected leaders, residents and business owners reestablish downtown as the heart of Cheraw? Town Council made the revitalization of downtown the priority for the year by supporting a master plan for downtown.

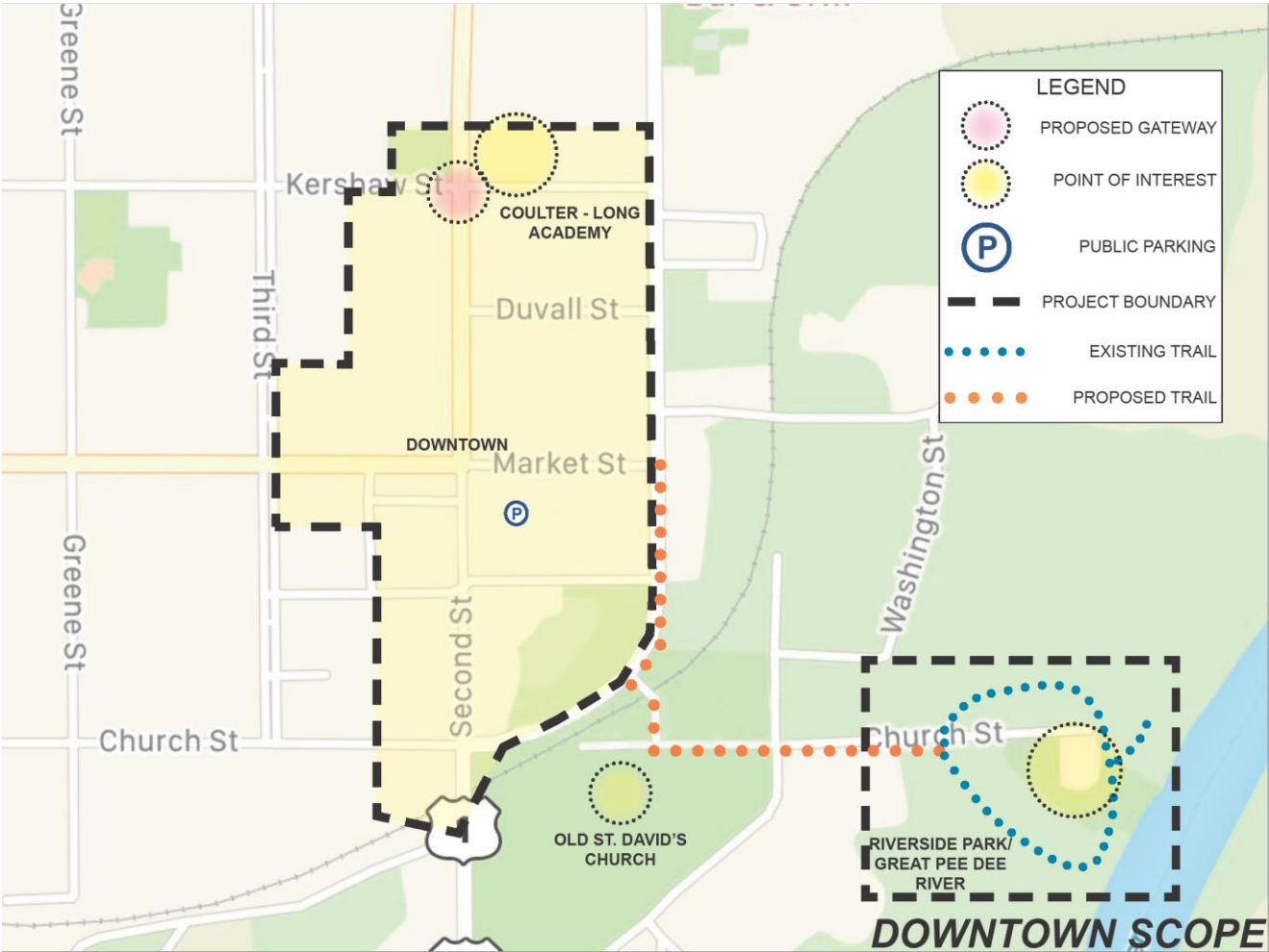
During the master planning process, the Town hosted a charrette and a series of focus groups and stakeholder meetings to allow the planning team to listen. Participants, both in person and through the online survey (351 respondents!), shared their love for Cheraw and their ideas for her future. Residents and business owners want a vibrant downtown where they can walk, shop, eat, meet friends, and welcome tourists.

Investors in the new Springhill Suites Hotel believe that downtown will deliver a sustained return. Historic homes have sold in record numbers during the COVID-19 era. People are choosing to live here.

Yet, downtown languishes with empty buildings, many of them deteriorating. This may deter many as too daunting of an enterprise – to reverse the trend, to right the ship. But Town Council and Staff committed to downtown through support of this master plan and the Main Street Program.

The recommendations presented in this report are based on community input in concert with our professional expertise and provide a framework with actionable steps to revitalize downtown.

Revitalization takes time. Revitalization takes a commitment of resources, both financial and human. Town leaders need to commit what is needed to propel this work forward to successful implementation. This master plan presents a long-term vision but focuses on what needs to be done in the next three years. In three years, the Town should be celebrating numerous successes and be ready and willing to update the master plan for the next three years.



*“It all starts with drawing people here.”*

*-Cheraw residents*

The “Downtown Scope” map highlights the project area and the sites and features within. Featured on the map are proposed trails and pedestrian connections, proposed gateways, and points of interest in the project area.



The original intent going into the charrette focused on three elements:

- 1. streetscape, connectivity and beautification
- 2. key downtown properties and buildings
- 3. economic development and implementation framework.

The master plan touches on each of these. However, through the planning process, the planning team identified four focus areas that are inclusive of all elements, providing the framework, the roadmap for project prioritization and implementation. These Focus Areas are:

- 1. Main Street Program: Fully participate and activate the Main Street Program in Cheraw.
- 2. Market Street redevelopment and recruitment: With the opening of the Springhill Suites Hotel within a year, the Town must do all that it can to ensure Market Street is vibrant, safe and welcoming for hotel guests the day the doors open.
- 3. Rehabilitation and redevelopment of the historic commercial buildings in downtown: The Town needs to educate, promote and create incentives for the reuse and rebirth of these valuable assets. All participants agreed that the condition of the majority of buildings in downtown is contrary to the vision of a revitalized downtown.
- 4. Develop and Promote the Half-Mile History Story: Cheraw’s strongest economic engine is providing **Authentic Experiences of Place**. The Half Mile History Story (needs a great name to brand) is the story of America over the past 400 years. Build this and leverage with all assets in town. People will come to Cheraw for this, support the local downtown economy and come back for more.

Town Council and staff, by focusing resources and effort on these three areas, will inspire residents and business owners to become a part of the team to transform downtown as the heart of Cheraw. Revitalization of downtown will take the community.

As shared by a resident during the focus group meetings,

*“If we want it, let’s do it.”*

This master plan report presents the vision of what the people of Cheraw want and a framework for getting there. Do it!

Respectfully submitted,

The BOUDREAUX Team

**BOUDREAUX**  
Irene Dumas Tyson, AICP, Associate AIA  
Rachel John  
Michael Salois

**The LandPlan Group South**  
Rick McMackin, RLA, ASLA  
Olivia Etheredge, ASLA

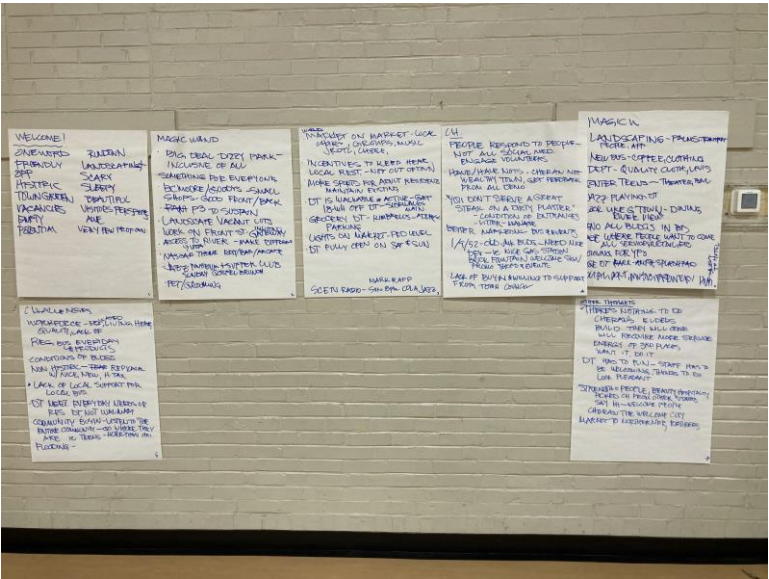
**Fred Delk**

Focus group participants were asked what success will look like in one year if the town implements the master plan recommendations. Many were skeptical that a plan would have any impact, yet there is a sense of hope that the master plan can inspire action to transform downtown.

THE MASTER PLAN WILL BE A SUCCESS  
IF IN ONE YEAR...

- Downtown is flourishing because the phased plan is being implemented.
- Leadership has vision, is willing to change, is committed to implementing the master plan and goes after funding to make it happen.
- There is a dedicated tourism department that is focused and active.
- Buildings and downtown are cleaned up and look nice.
- The thousands of travelers passing through Powell Street and Highway 9 on their way to the beach are stopping in downtown Cheraw and shopping and dining.
- Seven renovations of historic buildings in downtown that are occupied by thriving businesses; seven more done each year.
- Public Private Partnerships in place to help fund building sales and renovation, attract more grants and provide incentives for buildings with existing businesses.
- There are new jobs beyond retail in downtown such as local satellite offices for major HQs since people can work anywhere or need less space, co-working space.
- Residents and business/building owners are more passionate about Cheraw.

# Acknowledgements



## Town Council

Andy Ingram, Mayor

Jacqueline A. Ellerbe-Shannon, Mayor pro tempore

Jim Crawford, III

Billy Wallace, Jr.

Cherryl Melton

Robby Bennett

Richard White

## Town Staff

Mike Smith, Town Administrator

Rob Wolfe, Main Street/Planning/Tourism Director

## Steering Committee

Phil Powell

Axel Speer

Karen Wilkerson

Brian Rogers

Blake Tillman

JD Wentz





# Project Schedule

## Wednesday, April 14

10:30 am	Team meeting with Mayor Ingram, Mike Smith and Rob Wolfe to review schedule and team's initial thoughts
12:00 – 1:00 pm	Public Input Session at the Community Center
1:00 – 2:45 pm	Team Lunch and Work Session (box lunches at the Community Center will work best)
3:00 – 4:45 pm	Stakeholder Interviews
5:30 – 6:30 pm	Public Input Session at the Community Center
6:45 – 8:30 pm	Team Working Dinner with Project Advisory Committee (PAC)
8:30 pm	Team Work Session

## Thursday, April 15

8:30 am – 12:00 pm	Team Work Session
12:00 – 1:30 pm	Team Lunch with Mayor Ingram, Mike Smith and Rob Wolfe
1:30 – 4:15 pm	Team Work Session (Council members invited to drop in)
5:00 – 6:00 pm	Public Presentation of Draft Master Plan





# A Modern Fable: A Tale of Two Downtowns

## *Waiting on the Golden Egg, a modern fable*


To borrow (a bit) from an Aesop’s Fable, the Town of Cheraw has come into the possession of the most wonderful Goose you can imagine: Springhill Suites Hotel. The town’s people were overjoyed to have such a fine Goose, for the Goose was promised to lay a golden egg. This golden egg, they were told, would bring the town riches and save the pretty downtown from the Ogre Ruin. For months, the town’s people talked about what a fine Goose they have and dreamed of the day the golden egg would arrive. They even talked of planning a party to celebrate the day with balloons and ribbon cuttings and general merriment. They talked and talked and preened, especially the day an interesting visitor came to town.



Oh, we have a very fine goose.

"See what a fine goose we have? Our goose is going to lay a golden egg."

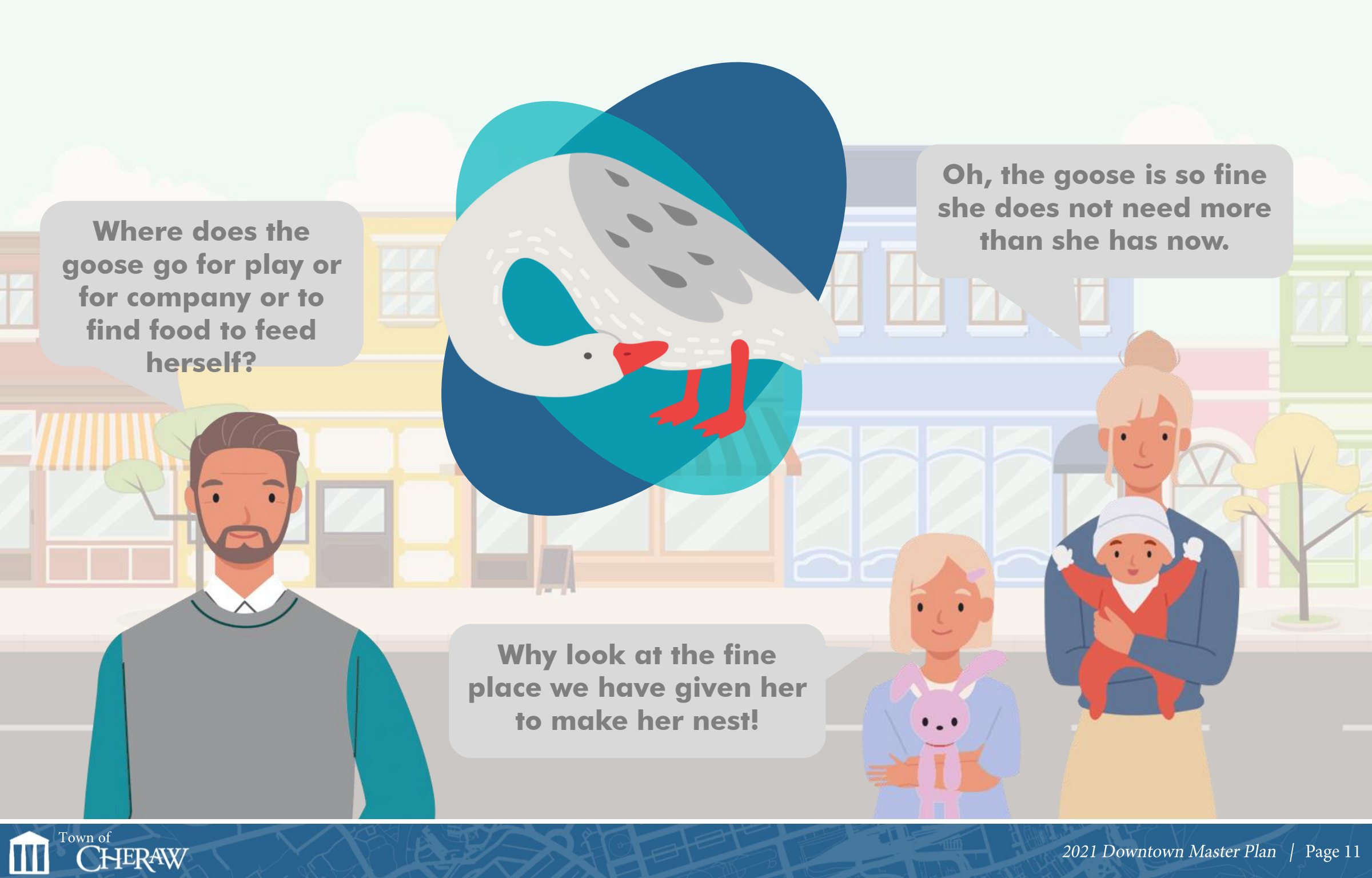


An illustration of three people standing on a street in a town. On the left is a man with a beard wearing a grey vest over a teal shirt. In the center is an older woman with grey hair wearing a red sweater. On the right is a man with brown hair wearing a blue blazer over a white shirt. Above them, a large goose with a white body, teal and dark blue wings, and a red beak is flying. The background shows colorful buildings and trees. Two speech bubbles are present: one from the man on the left and one from the man on the right.

**That is a fine goose.  
What do you feed  
your goose that  
makes her lay a  
golden egg?**

**Oh, we don't have to  
feed our goose. She is so  
fine, she takes care of  
herself.**






Where does the  
goose go for play or  
for company or to  
find food to feed  
herself?

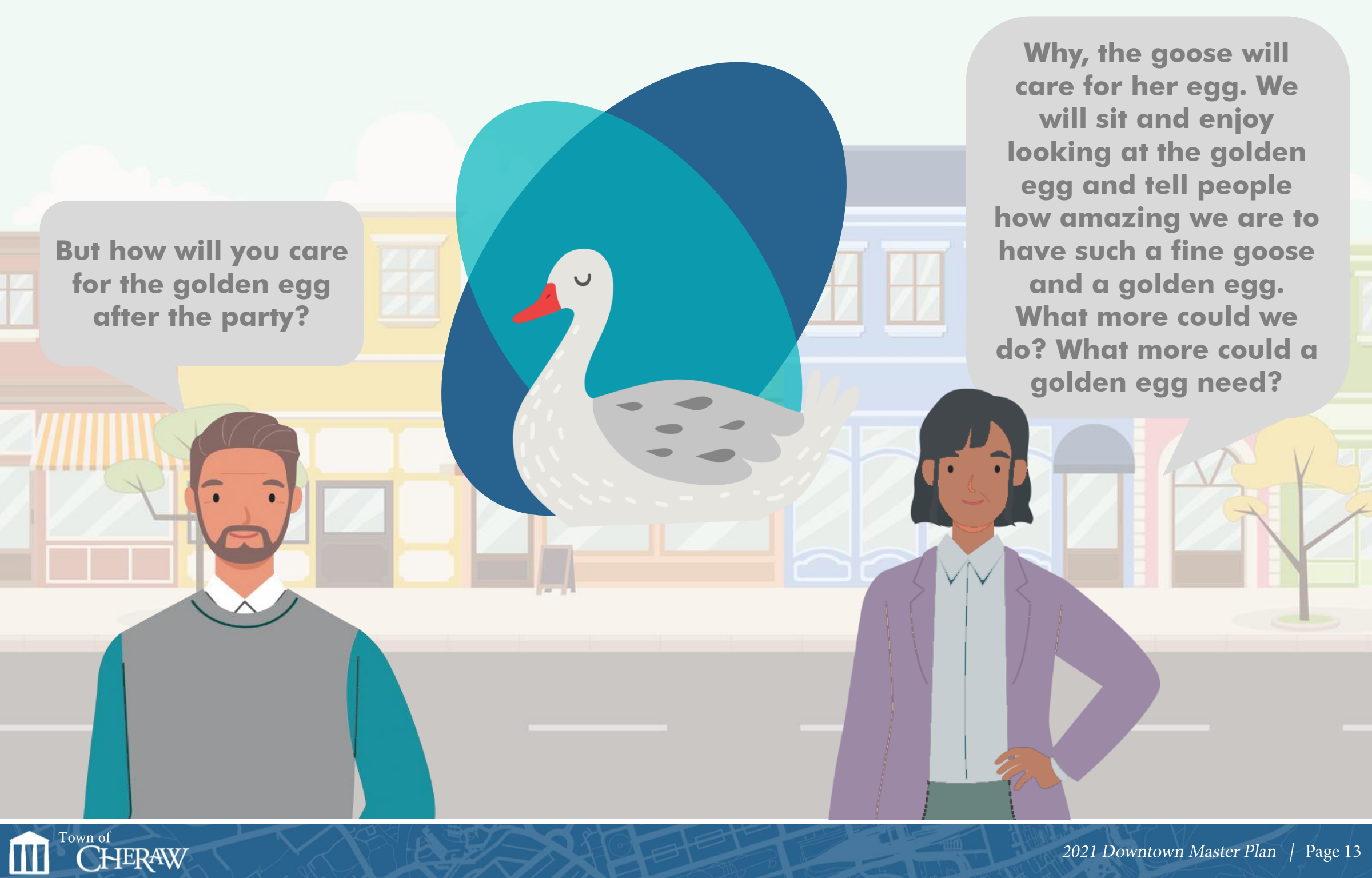
Oh, the goose is so fine  
she does not need more  
than she has now.

Why look at the fine  
place we have given her  
to make her nest!



What will you do with  
the golden egg once  
she has laid it?

Oh, we will throw such a  
fine party and give our  
fine goose a key to the  
city!

An illustration of a man and a woman standing on a city street. The man, on the left, has a beard and is wearing a grey sweater over a white collared shirt. The woman, on the right, has dark hair and is wearing a purple blazer over a light blue shirt. In the background, a large, stylized goose with a white body, a red beak, and a large blue and teal wing is floating. The street has buildings with windows and awnings in the background.

But how will you care  
for the golden egg  
after the party?

Why, the goose will  
care for her egg. We  
will sit and enjoy  
looking at the golden  
egg and tell people  
how amazing we are to  
have such a fine goose  
and a golden egg.  
What more could we  
do? What more could a  
golden egg need?



**Fools.  
They are handing  
the town to me on  
a golden platter.**



The visitor shook his head and turned to walk away. As he neared the edge of town, the visitor transformed back into the Ogre Ruin and smiled a wicked smile.

The fable of *Waiting on the Golden Egg* illustrates the danger of resting on the laurels of a valuable asset, waiting for it to save the town without doing anything to prepare for the gift or to take care of it, nurture, expand and leverage its opportunities.

Will Cheraw face the Ogre Ruin by resting on the laurels of landing the hotel, waiting for it to save downtown? Or will the people of Cheraw recognize the value of this unique asset and work intentionally and tirelessly to be ready for the day the golden egg is laid, when the doors of the hotel open? Will downtown Cheraw be a safe, welcoming, fun and vibrant place for those who come to enjoy the golden egg? Or will downtown, particularly Market Street, remain a lifeless and dark street?

Cheraw is a Tale of Two Downtowns. The town and industry leaders had great vision and commitment to recruit Springhill Suites to downtown. Without a doubt, the positive impact of the hotel can be extraordinary, exponentially growing the local, downtown economy. However, this growth and impact will happen only if the leaders, stakeholders and residents of the town invest in making Market Street and the rest of downtown a welcoming, safe and interesting place for guests in the hotel to explore and enjoy.





# THE DOWNTOWN THAT *RESTED* ON ITS GOLDEN GOOSE

Consider the options of a woman staying at Springhill Suites for a few days. She is an executive with Schaeffler, traveling from their office in Bühl, Germany. After her first day of meetings, she looks forward to returning to her hotel and exploring this charming town. She has heard a lot about Cheraw from those who work here. She needs to stretch her legs and get some dinner. She walks downstairs and asks the hotel clerk for recommendations for dinner and a fun, safe route to walk.

What downtown will be introduced to her?

Will she be told at the front desk that she can walk all around the historic neighborhoods, but just not to go too far on either end of Second Street. “For dinner, well, there’s Leo’s pizza. It’s the only place open on Tuesdays. But, you can always drive out on Highway 9. There are a few places out there.”

She takes her chances on Leo’s and figuring out where the historic neighborhoods are. It will be dark in about half an hour, so she doesn’t want to walk too far. She walks out the front door of the hotel and looks left and then right. There are a few street lights and a couple of storefronts with lights on to the right, so she walks that way. She begins to feel uneasy because there are very few cars on Market Street, most of the storefronts are empty, and the few businesses that seem to be in business are closed. A lone man walks on the other side of the street, but does not acknowledge her. She continues to Second Street but decides not to walk around since she does not know where the historic district is. She see Leo’s and walks to it. After looking at the menu, she orders take out because she does not want to walk back alone in the dark.

As she is walking back, she decides that she needs to explore other places to stay where she has options for dining and feels safe going on a walk or run.







## OR... THE DOWNTOWN THAT *FED* THE GOLDEN GOOSE

Will the hotel clerk say to her, “Let me give you a copy of our historic district map, which has different paths with the distances noted. If I were you, I would walk straight up Market Street for a few blocks. There are several historic homes that have gorgeous gardens and some beautiful churches. You can turn on any block and always circle back to Market Street.”

“That sounds perfect,” the guest says.

“Now, for dinner,” the clerk smiles, “my favorite meal of the day... We have a lovely restaurant right over to your left – nice cocktails, wine list and a fun selection of beers from our local brewery. But, if you prefer to walk to dinner, our brewery, Blue & Boogie, is right across Front Street – an immediately left out of our door. Or there are two local cafes to the right. One is a farm-to-table – really good. The other is known for its collard green spring rolls.”

The guest raises her eyebrows, “Collard greens?”

“Oh, my goodness, they are to die for! Collard greens are kind of like kale. Delicious! You can get those for lunch, too. We have a new Italian restaurant right up Market and left on Second Street. Go hungry there, or Leo’s across the street has amazing pizza. Just depends on what you’re hungry for.”

“Well, this is great. Thank you. I think I’ll work up an appetite walking and decide. I’ll be here a few nights, so will have to try them all.”

“Well, good. You let me know if you need anything else.”

The guest walks out of the hotel and turns right for a walk through the historic district. There are so many people walking around, enjoying the restaurants and window shopping like her. She is charmed by the shop windows: art, a nice boutique, an ice cream shop, a landscape architect’s office, one of the cafes. She would definitely have to do some shopping before going home. “What a pretty town!”





# Downtown Vision

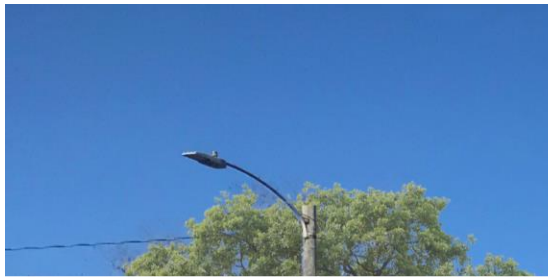
Downtown Cheraw is a vibrant center of authentic experiences for all. Whether residents or visitors, young or been-around-awhile, Cheraw offers a beautiful and welcoming downtown for people to explore history, the arts, local cuisine, architecture, and shopping. History comes alive through the unique half-mile story of America, and the future is on display in the windows on Market Street and Second Street. Cheraw is where people choose to live because of the town's commitment to innovation, preservation, access to natural resources, top schools, diverse, quality housing, and jobs that meet present and future needs.

*Downtown Cheraw is writing authentic new stories for the history books.*



POSSIBILITIES







## Summary of Public Input

Challenges  
Online Survey

Page 21  
Page 23

# Challenges

Residents and stakeholders shared their opinions on the challenges facing the town relative to downtown revitalization, which are summarized on the next two pages.

## Lack of Workforce

There was unanimous agreement that downtown Cheraw needs more restaurants to bring more people downtown and to enhance the experience of those visiting. However, several owners of restaurants shared that the lack of a qualified and dependable workforce limits the days and hours of operations. Cheraw is not alone in this as most municipalities are suffering from the same.

- Lack of educated and quality workforce living here to serve local industry and downtown restaurants.
- Lack of social, recreational, housing and jobs for younger people. Younger people need more than bars to recruit and keep them in Cheraw.

## Condition and Appearance of entrances into Town and the buildings in downtown

- “You don’t serve a great steak on a dirty platter,” as shared by a resident during a focus group. His comment addresses the challenge of improving downtown buildings and streetscape, yet the drive into downtown is not maintained.
- The condition of and litter at the entrances does not convey a positive image of Cheraw. The town needs to commit to maintaining the entrances, ensuring they are clean and welcoming from the town limits unto downtown. Local businesses and organizations can be recruited as volunteers to help with this.
- Highways 1/9/52: This is a major gateway into Cheraw and for people passing through. This intersection needs nice, well-designed development such as a high end gas station, brick fountain and welcome sign that promote and directs travelers downtown to local businesses and events.
- The condition of the historic commercial buildings in downtown: The costs of renovations and purchasing buildings is detrimental to investing in new businesses. The number of dilapidated and empty buildings deters investments and creates a “closed for business” feeling in downtown.
- Lack of code enforcement for buildings (historic and non-historic) in downtown.
- Lack of education and awareness of façade grants, historic tax credits, hospitality tax revenues, and other incentives to support redevelopment of historic commercial buildings in downtown.





**Cheraw has historically lacked dedicated and visionary leadership toward downtown revitalization.**

There is a perception that town leadership has not been willing to support new projects, particularly downtown revitalization. Participants in the focus groups shared that they want Town Council to take the lead in enforcing codes equitably and working on absentee landlords and to be willing to be more progressive and innovative in promoting downtown revitalization. Some feel that leaders accept the status quo and have not been aggressive in economic development, allowing Hartsville and Chesterfield to get ahead on major quality of life and economic development projects.

Town Council supported the downtown master plan and should continue this support by investing in the infrastructure necessary to implement the master plan recommendations, particularly fully supporting the Main Street program and building partnerships to propel private investments, tourism and economic development.

**Lack of Civic and Community Engagement**

- People respond to people. The Town, Chamber of Commerce and the Arts Council cannot rely on social media to engage volunteers and the community. A coordinated effort to promote downtown – the businesses, events, opportunities to provide input and serve, and the master plan recommendations is necessary.
- Cheraw is a town of haves and have nots, according to many who participated in the focus groups. Residents see a lack of people participating and want the town to be more inclusive. Listening to the entire community is important. Go where the people are to get their ideas.
- The population is shrinking. Therefore, implementation of the master plan recommendations is vital to attracting more people to live and work in Cheraw. This is a critical element to revitalizing downtown.

**Other**

- The frequent flooding at Riverside Park deters people from using the park as much as they should. The park is a beloved asset and long-term efforts should be taken to improve the walking trails along the river and throughout the park (such as the powerline right-of-way), connecting to other parks and to downtown.
- The town needs to enforce the through-truck traffic laws in downtown. Transport trucks create an unsafe environment for pedestrians and frequently damage curbs, light fixtures and the decorative crosswalks.





# Online Survey

In addition to hosting in-person meetings, we created an online survey for those that could not attend or chose not to for health reasons. This online survey allowed us a flexible platform for valuable feedback. The following pages summarize the survey responses.



April 2021 Survey

351

Participants

The majority of respondents surveyed have lived in Cheraw for more than 20 years.

1-10 Years	10-20 Years	20+ Years
50	62	234

19% of respondents surveyed, own business or property in downtown Cheraw.





1

# What ONE word best describes downtown Cheraw?

Size of Word = Frequency of Responses



## 2 Where is the HEART of the Town, the place that best represents Cheraw?

69% Intersection of Market & Second Street – The Town Green

10% Town Hall

6% Centennial Park

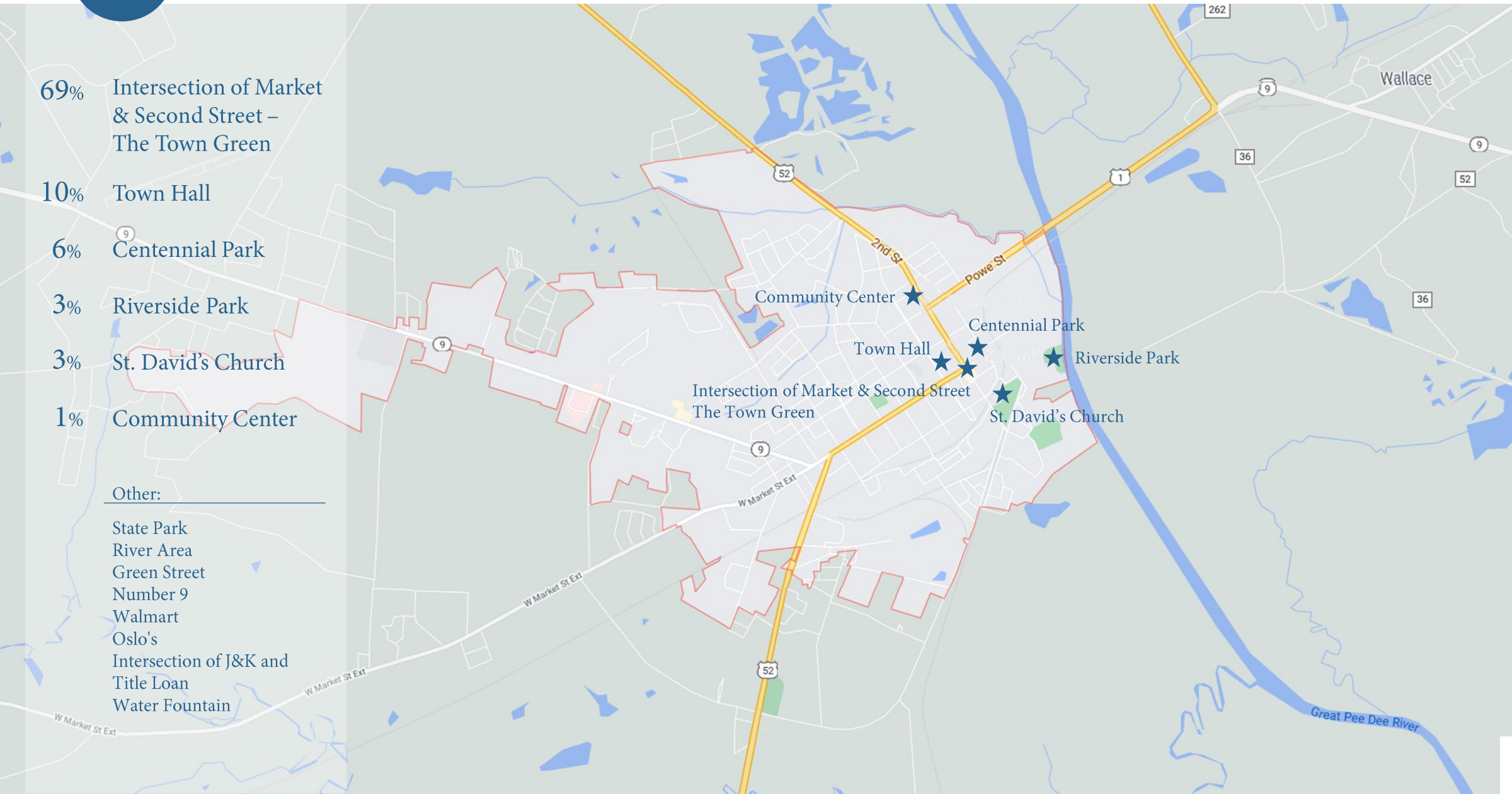
3% Riverside Park

3% St. David's Church

1% Community Center

Other:

State Park  
River Area  
Green Street  
Number 9  
Walmart  
Oslo's  
Intersection of J&K and  
Title Loan  
Water Fountain





# 3

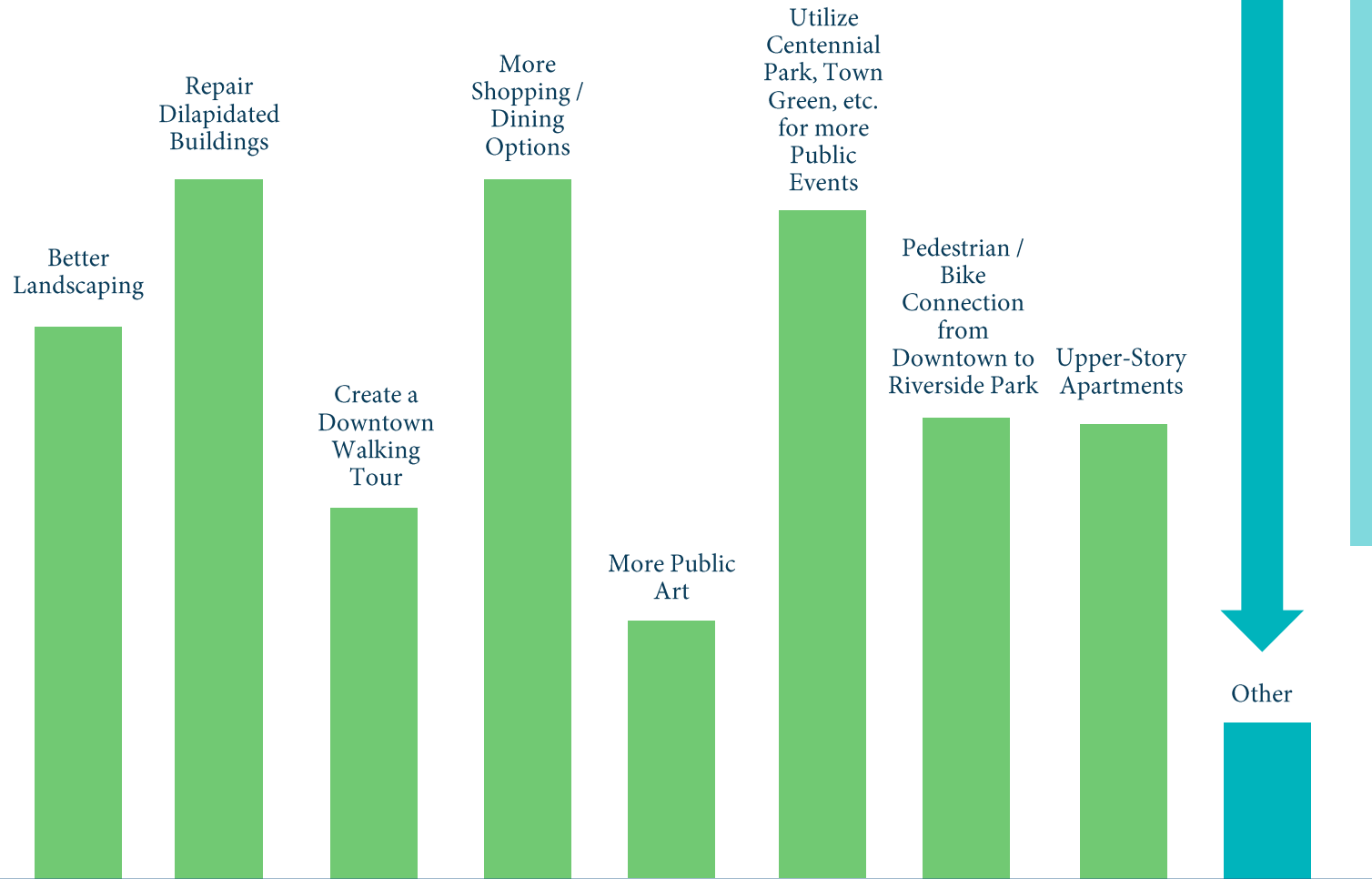
## Where is your favorite place in downtown?

Size of Word = Frequency of Responses



# 4

## We are giving you a magic wand. What one thing would you do to improve downtown?



### Ideas generated during the survey from Cheraw residents:

1. More bars and performing arts club
2. Give incentives to businesses to update business fronts
3. Discourage loitering, pan-handling, and littering in front of businesses
4. Tree planting on Huger
5. More community centered activities
6. Embrace musical significance, host bands downtown
7. Betting lighting
8. Use social media to engage the community
9. Develop a Visitors Center with bike, canoe or kayak rentals
10. We need a movie theater, bowling, skate rink, and more grocery stores
11. Develop a walking tour and scavenger hunts, activities for locals and visitors
12. We need a much larger museum



## Vision for Cheraw

Highest ranked answers from survey:

- Keep historic character, modernize and rehabilitate buildings downtown
- Fill the empty buildings downtown
- Cheraw needs a movie theater
- Encourage variety in business types
- Allow restaurants to setup outdoor seating areas
- Make downtown feel safer and more walkable
- Start a weekend/monthly Farmers Market
- Incorporate art into downtown
- Create social settings for people to gather

*“Cheraw should be thriving and open for everyone. A place where people can go shopping during the day or meet their friends for a night on the town. Somewhere we can enjoy ourselves. Turn it into something like downtown Hartsville or Rock Hill, places where people want to come visit.”*



Hartsville, South Carolina



Rock Hill, South Carolina

Leadership

Money

Lack of  
InterestLack of  
RetailHours of  
Operation for  
downtown  
businessesRegional  
Competition

Other



Downtown Cheraw

Ideas generated during the survey from Cheraw residents:

1. Lack of community involvement
2. The condition of the buildings is stopping growth
3. Not enough events or places to gather



# TOP 3

- 1. Entertainment  
(bowling alley, mini golf, small movie theatre, etc.)
- 2. Microbrewery
- 3. Gourmet Market

## Dining Requests:

Steakhouse	Rooftop Dining	Ice Cream Shop
Seafood	Local	Bakery
Farm to Table	Vegan	Buffet
Jazz Supper Club	Pizza	Coffee Shop

- 25% Entertainment
- 12% Microbrewery
- 11% Gourmet Market
- 11% Coffee Shop
- 9% White Table Cloth Restaurant
- 7% Women’s Boutique
- 7% Grocery Store
- 5% Sports Bar
- 5% Children’s Store
- 2% Gift Shop
- 2% Art Gallery
- 1% Sporting Goods
- 1% Bakery
- 1% Drive-in Movie Theater
- 1% Family Clothing Store
- 1% Music Store
- 1% Children’s Museum
- 1% Department Store
- 1% Apartments Downtown
- .5% Non-Chain Boutiques
- .5% Performing Arts
- .5% Indoor Playground
- .5% Antiques



Preservation of  
Historic  
Buildings

Outdoor  
Seating for  
Dining

Downtown  
WiFi (free)

Dog Park

Better  
Signage

Public Art

Improved  
Landscaping

Other



Ideas generated during the  
survey from Cheraw  
residents:

1. Galleries and Museums
2. Grocery Store
3. More restaurants
4. Youth Recreation Programs





Spring Festival



Market on Main



Jazz Festival



Christmas Lighting

3<sup>rd</sup> Thursdays

Fourth of July



10

# What type of downtown events would you like to see?

Size of Word = Frequency of Responses





# TOP 10

---

1. Historic Buildings
2. Scenic Charm
3. Dizzy Gillespie History
4. Town Green
5. River's Edge
6. Local Businesses
7. Old St. David's Church
8. Water Fountain
9. Great State Park
10. The People

Nice Landscaping Compact Dated Very few property owners  
Potential Beautiful Empty Scary Opportunity  
Sleepy **Downtown Cheraw** Sad  
Town Green Friendly Alive Rundown Historic  
Visitors' perspectives more positive than residents' Vacancies





# Recommendations & Opportunities

Most Impactful Strategies	Page 37
Streetscape Recommendations	Page 43
Economic Development Recommendations	Page 51

# Most Impactful Strategies

The recommendations of this master plan take a long view toward downtown revitalization, providing projects and strategies that can be implemented over the next few years. We believe, however, there are key projects and efforts that can start now and have a meaning impact in the next three years. The town cannot undertake all of these projects due to staff, financial and time limitations. The recommendations of this master plan are grounded in ideas from residents and stakeholders who participated in focus groups, so there is a good starting place of support for the master plan recommendations.

The town can and should prioritize actions in each of the following recommendations, accomplishing something in each. Town Council should, as a start, agree that these recommendations are a pathway to action and commit to following the path with leadership, staff and financial resources and building necessary partnerships. More specific strategies and recommendations are provided throughout this plan.

No one thing will revitalize downtown. Sustained and authentic revitalization will require a multi-faceted and multi-year commitment and approach. The Main Street Program framework is a very good place to start.

Put the Main Street Program into Action	Implement a Shop Local Campaign	Enforce Local Laws & Ordinances	Renovate Historic Buildings & Improve Downtown Appearances	Improve Town Entrances
Invite & Encourage Community Engagement	Make Cheraw a Preferred Place to LIVE	Educate Downtown Property Owners	Recruit & Retain Businesses	Leverage History, Arts, and Tourism Opportunities



Put the Main Street Program into Action

The Town committed to the program. Now, it is time to put the program to work for downtown. Successful implementation of the master plan recommendations needs the framework of the four committees, the volunteers of each committee, the financial and staff investments of the town, and the accountability inherent in the Main Street Program. The director of the Main Street needs support to focus on the program and to staff the program as necessary.

Shop Local Campaign

During each of the focus group sessions, residents shared ideas for the businesses they want in downtown. They expressed frustration with having to drive to Hartsville or Florence or Walmart to shop for basic needs. They want to be able to buy groceries and quality clothing downtown. They want nice restaurants, a microbrewery, coffee shops and bakeries. They want a theater and entertainment such as a bowling alley. Yet are residents ready to support these new businesses? Downtown has faltered in large part because these same residents do choose to shop elsewhere.

The responsibility of a vibrant downtown is shared by residents and by business owners.

Business owners need to be open when people can and need to shop. Residents need to commit to shopping locally. Also, residents need to be willing to invest in starting these new businesses. No one from the outside is going to come in and invest if there is no evidence of the local community investing.

Start a “Shop Local” campaign, as Hartsville did and continues. Educate residents about their responsibility. Encourage business owners to do their part and be open. Invest where your heart is... downtown!

- Provide incentives to keep people here, to support local restaurants and businesses so people don’t have to go out of town for basic needs, dining or entertainment.
- Encourage better and more consistent merchant hours so that businesses are open when people can shop, especially on weekends. Residents would like to buy basic and specialty goods downtown, but the short hours force them to shop at Walmart or out of town.
- Residents want downtown to be a place where people want to come because all services are there and people can buy most of what they need.
- The town needs quality, affordable and diverse housing in downtown for young professionals, young families and retirees.
- Create a vibrant, up-to-date website to promote downtown businesses and opportunities to spend time in downtown (beyond Facebook).
- The town needs better marketing to capitalize on people moving here and to encourage residents to shop locally downtown.





## Enforce local laws and ordinances equitably and consistently to improve downtown safety, appearances and economic development and tourism opportunities

- Enforce policies that ensure downtown is walkable - safe and accessible for pedestrians with well-maintained sidewalks, lighting, parking, and landscaping.
- Enforce laws that limit 18-wheelers in downtown, commit to enforcing the use of the bypass.
- Consider a sliding scale with codes and incentives to enable more investments and new businesses.
- Use Town Council's strength to enforce clean-up of properties, including building façades and entrances, landscaping, signage, and all areas in downtown.
- Enforce speed limits throughout downtown and the residential neighborhoods adjacent to downtown. This will create a more welcoming and safer environment for residents, shoppers and tourists walking the historic districts.
- Enforce adherence to pedestrian crossings.
- Town needs to crack down on drug activity, particularly behind downtown buildings.
- Town needs to manage the homeless.

## Renovate Historic Buildings and Improve Appearance of Downtown

- Install nice landscaping in vacant lots until lots are redeveloped.
- Make Front Street an inviting gateway into downtown.
- Install lights on Market Street, particularly pedestrian-scaled, to create a sense of safety and welcome.
- Plant more trees downtown, ensuring they are appropriate street trees that reflect the character of Cheraw.
- Provide access to the river and daylight the great vista to the river from the lot and hill next to the BC Moore marketing building.
- Leverage outdoor dining and tourism opportunities with river access and views to maximize the town's river asset.
- Focus on the renovation and redevelopment all buildings in downtown by educating property and business owners, providing incentives, and enforcing codes and ordinances.
- Maintain and promote existing parks and recreation facilities.





### Improve entrances coming into town

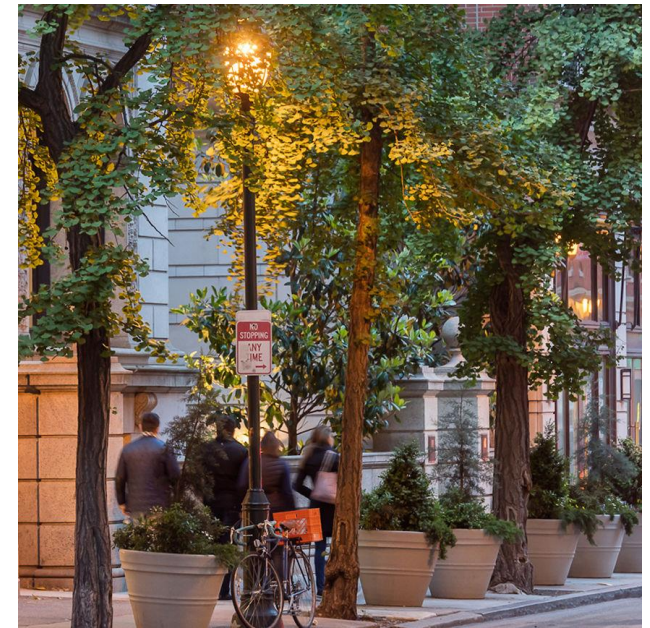
- Remove overgrown landscaping in downtown
- The town entrances are not appealing or welcoming. Focus on cleaning up litter and maintain the landscaping at the entrances.
- Create a beautification plan for the entrances and downtown and apply for beautification grants.
- Design and construct more attractive town entrance ways into Cheraw from US 52 (from the north), US 1 (from the south), #9 (from the east).

### Community Engagement

- Start the Main Street program by recruiting diverse members of the community for each of the four committees. Ensure inclusivity on each committee and reach out to residents who have not been engaged in the past. Suggest ways to communicate inclusivity
- Develop a program to reach out to more volunteers and put the program to work.
- Rob Wolfe and town staff cannot do the very important work of downtown revitalization alone. This is a community effort.
- Talk to high school seniors and find out what they want the Town's future, then engage them to help.

### Make Cheraw the preferred place to LIVE

- Create a town that is attractive to young professionals and buyers, otherwise they will continue to live in Hartsville. Hartsville had to do this a few years ago because everyone was living or moving to Florence.
- Need social drivers for attracting the young: bowling alley, movie theater, clean, great schools (#1 draw - Cheraw's schools are so-so); build up the recreation department to include more sports and programming for all ages; promote Cheraw State Park assets.
- Create a partnership with the Town, local industries, the school district, and Northeast Technical College (NETC) to determine ways to collaborate on elevating the quality of education, workforce readiness and retention, entrepreneurial opportunities, community engagement and contributions to downtown revitalization. Town Council needs to lead this effort.
- The experience of downtown needs to be fun! Create an 18-hour cultural hub for young and old to enjoy downtown, providing social meeting places for music, art, and community as well as authentic local shopping options.
- Downtown Cheraw should be the one-stop-shop for coffee, beer, music, bread, food, art, retail, and friends.
- Identify sites for buildings workforce/retiree housing in downtown. Require the housing to be well-designed and constructed, reflecting the authentic character of Cheraw.



## Educate downtown property and business owners

- Downtown must be welcoming and fun. This begins with staff in all businesses, whether on the bypass or in downtown. All staff, employees and business owners are ambassadors for the town, so need to be pleasant and practice good customer service. The town, through the Main Street Program, could conduct monthly programs on customer service and how to promote the town.
- Downtown is suffering from unconscious neglect. Property owners need to be educated and reminded of their responsibilities to the public.
- There needs to be an educational/promotional campaign for the public and residents on opportunities in Cheraw, their role in supporting local businesses and their roles as ambassadors for the town.
- Realtors are important to promoting preservation. They can help educate buyers on preservation guidelines and town ordinances and codes.
- Host a preservation workshop for building owners, realtors, business owners, contractors, and potential developers. DONE!



## Recruit and Retain businesses that appeal to all and bring people downtown every day and from morning through evening

- Build a strategic relationship with NETC: the school can be a tenant and investor in downtown, bringing students and faculty downtown throughout the week.
- Consider redeveloping the BC Moore/Goody's building as a business incubator with maker space, co-working space, artists' studios, food start-ups (commercial kitchen). This building has good access with front and back entrances.
- Create a public private partnership to help sustain new development and revitalization in downtown.
- Consider a NASCAR-themed restaurant/bar/arcade to build on local racing heritage.
- Expand Market on Market with more local choirs, performing groups, music, JROTC, cheerleaders.
- Recruit a downtown grocery store, perhaps in the Kimbrell's building.
- Downtown needs to be fully open on Saturdays and Sundays to build a vibrant downtown and attract tourists.
- Need a department store with quality clothing for the whole family, such as able to buy a nice pair of Levi's.
- Need entertainment for teenagers such as a theater or bowling.
- Play jazz downtown on speakers (such as Florence's rock-designed speakers) and include holiday music when appropriate.
- Need a large downtown park with amphitheater and splashpad uphill from the river, behind the Baptist church.
- Need a social hub with art, music, brewery, coffee, and entertainment (theater, bowling) to support residents and the new hotel.
- Need a Wellness Center downtown.
- Encourage and incentivize upper story housing in downtown.
- Recruit businesses that encourage walking downtown.
- Encourage and promote more outdoor dining, drinking. People need to see people enjoying themselves in downtown. This is great recruitment.



## Enhance and Leverage the History, Arts and Tourism Communities

- New developments, such as the hotel, should be encouraged to include local arts. develop program to promote local artists.
- Leverage Dizzy Gillespie by creating an inclusive Dizzy Gillespie Park, incorporating history, music, programming, and tourism opportunities. Also, consider a new arts/music venue, restaurant or supper with a Sunday jazz or gospel brunch and museum with great acoustics to build on the jazz, gospel and music heritage.
- Cheraw Arts Commission and the Chamber of Commerce should create a strategic plan for how they can best collaborate and leverage resources to expand and promote the history, arts and tourism opportunities for the good of the community. This collaboration will ensure that local artists are considered for new developments and that resources are open, accessible, and welcoming to visitors.
- This collaboration can recruit arts-related businesses into downtown such as a sip-and-paint store, galleries and artists' studios.
- Look at Springdale, NC, which is close to Lake Lure.
- This collaboration can coordinate events such as the Art Walk and Market on Market, promoting beyond Cheraw and ensuring that local businesses and restaurants are open.
- Town needs to pay staff or organize volunteers to staff historic buildings. Currently, access to these buildings is not consistent or accessible to visitors. These buildings are significant assets to Cheraw and can contribute significantly to economic development and tourism if they are open consistently and promoted.
- Golden Spike: the meeting of US Route 1 from Maine to Miami is in Cheraw. There was a 50 year celebration. This bit of history needs to be told and promoted.
- There is an annual choral service in Old St. David's performed by a Florence choir. This has the potential to be a tremendous draw for more visitors due to visiting choirs and Old St. David's. Involve more choirs throughout the year and promote. Do this more often with local choirs. People will come. Make this a thing that draws visitors.
- The State Park brings in lots of people. Promote Langley Landing and the golf course with the hotel.
- Package, promote, share the 400-year history of Cheraw!



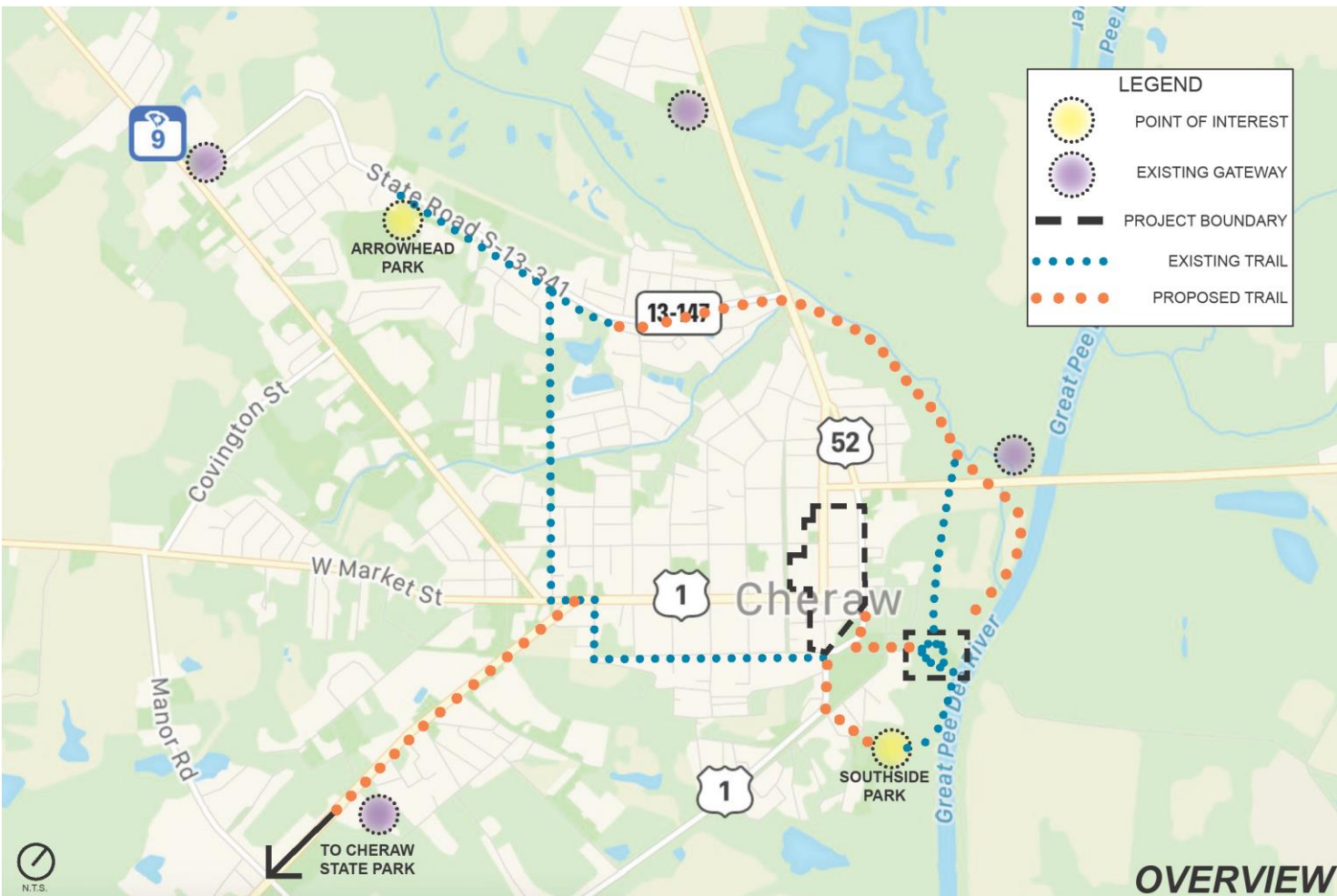
# Streetscape Recommendations

A community’s greatest potential for change is within its public realm. Streets make up the largest portion of the public realm. The character and allocation of space on a street plays a key role in user experience. Streets should be attractive, inviting, accessible, safe, and comfortable for all users. Cheraw has invested in streetscape improvements over the past several years with positive impacts. This plan focuses on improving pedestrian connectivity and access to parking in downtown. Safe and welcoming pedestrian access is key to downtown revitalization. The key areas addressed are the following.

- 2nd Street Streetscape Improvements
- 2nd Street and Kershaw Street Improvements
- Market Street Pedestrian Crossing
- Church Street Pedestrian Crossing
- Parking Lot behind Market Street: access and visibility improvements
- Analyze Downtown Street Tree Conditions

Gateway and signage improvements are important for the Town to consider in the future. First, the Town should invest in general landscaping and maintenance improvements, particularly at the main entrances into town. Many people noted that the lack of maintenance creates a negative impression of the town. Creating a comprehensive design and approach to gateways and signage will serve the Town well.

Riverside Park and trail improvements should remain a focus for the Town, particularly connecting Riverside Park with downtown, Arrowhead Park and, eventually, Cheraw State Park. This expansion of the trail system in Cheraw will elevate the nature-based tourism opportunities as well as the health and wellness of residents with improved pedestrian connectivity.



The “Overview” map defines the focus of the master plan project while providing a glimpse of the greater Cheraw area and some of the important features. The map displays existing and proposed trail systems, town gateways, and points of interest.





An underutilized asset to the Downtown District is the existing parking lot which serves 2nd Street Market Street, Front Street, and Marlboro Street. There are currently 3 primary vehicular access points and one secondary access point which is along Front Street. All four entrances lack visibility and signage making them less inviting to pedestrians.





*The existing access from 2nd Street into the existing parking lot provides little to no pedestrian facilities and is poorly lit resulting in an area that feels unsafe and unappealing.*



*Proposed parking lot access improvements could include archway entry signage, pedestrian zones defined by concrete sidewalks, festival string lighting, and landscaping for an inviting and safe pedestrian experience.*





*Proposed improvements along N. 2nd Street include intersection improvements at the Kershaw Street and 2nd Street intersection, reducing the number of lanes from 4 to 2, and adding angled parking along both sides of the road as well as several parallel spots. These changes would make the street more inviting and walkable and would also provide easily accessible parking for the businesses along N. 2nd Street.*

*The existing layout of 2nd Street provides a limited number of parallel parking spaces and the expanse created by the 4 lanes make the street feel unsafe and uninviting to pedestrians.*







*Proposed improvements at the intersection of Kershaw Street and 2nd Street include decorative brick crosswalks, mast arm signaling, and lighting to match the Market Street and 2nd Street intersection. This proposed intersection would provide a more welcoming and attractive gateway for visitors and residents accessing 2nd Street. The improvements would also serve as an inviting entrance to the Coulter-Long Academy complex.*



*The existing Kershaw Street and 2nd Street intersection is not welcoming to those entering downtown, and it feels disconnected from the rest of 2nd Street. The utility lines block the view down 2nd Street as well as of the Coulter-Long Academy Complex, and the existing crosswalks do not provide an experience for pedestrians.*





*Proposed pedestrian access at Market Street and Front Street would include decorative brick crosswalks, mast arm signaling, and lighting to match the other intersections in downtown. The crosswalks at both sides of Market Street would provide a safe and inviting way for residents, hotel guests, and other town visitors to access the Great Pee Dee River and the trails and parks along its banks. This intersection would also serve to highlight the B.C. Moore building and make this end of Market Street a destination area of town. The proposed intersection would also help control speeding along Front Street making the area safer for pedestrians and drivers alike.*



*The existing intersection of Market Street and Front Street does not provide any pedestrian access therefore eliminating a safe connection point from downtown to the surrounding parks, trails, and river. The B.C. Moore building also sits alone at the end of Market Street without a safe pedestrian access. The hotel site feels somewhat isolated from the rest of downtown due to the lack of connectivity and activity on the Front Street side.*





*Proposed improvements at Church Street and Front Street include a new four-way intersection and road access to the open space which currently serves as the site of the Cheraw Farmers Market. The intersection features decorative brick crosswalks, lighting, and mast arm signaling. The crosswalks would provide safe and inviting pedestrian access to Old St. David's Church, the Great Pee Dee River, Riverside Park, and the surrounding trails and parks. The proposed intersection would also serve as a way of slowing the traffic on Front Street.*

*The current intersection of Church Street and Front Street does not provide any pedestrian crosswalks or traffic signaling, effectively separating the river side of Front Street from the rest of downtown. The lack of safe access greatly reduces the amount of people who visit the surrounding sites and amenities Cheraw has to offer.*





## STREET TREES

Street trees play an important role in downtown urban areas. Some of the benefits of street trees are known to include reducing stormwater runoff, increasing air quality, providing shade and reducing heat island effects. Chinese Elms, as the ones planted in downtown Cheraw, are a popular selection for street tree applications. Considered as a large deciduous shade tree with an attractive exfoliating bark, the Chinese Elm has an upright, semi-vase shape branching pattern desirable for urban areas for allowing open views to downtown storefronts while also providing a rounded tree canopy cover for pedestrian and parking areas. These existing Elms are relatively young currently but as they mature, properly pruning the lower limbs will assist in improving visibility to the existing storefronts for years to come.





# Economic Development Recommendations

Downtown Cheraw is poised for one of the most consequential economic developments in decades. Staybridge Suites, a hotel within the International Hotel Group (IHG), is slated to open in mid-2022 in the center of Downtown Cheraw.

With the advent of such an investment, the Town of Cheraw faces significant opportunities and challenges. Is it prepared to provide the appropriate support and sufficient resources to ensure the hotel’s success and offer the guests of Staybridge Suites and other travelers a distinct, safe, and comfortable visit? Will these individuals want to return to Cheraw in the future? Can Cheraw and the Staybridge Suites create a new tourist market based on the wealth of historical, cultural, and recreational assets that abound in the area? Cheraw must fully commit to delivering the infrastructure, incentives, and marketing assistance to undergird the hotel’s economic investment and to spur new investments.

This economic development plan identifies several recommendations for Cheraw to collaborate with Staybridge Suites and other developers to create and sustain a viable and vigorous economic development climate for the future. The suggestions fall within three categories.

1

A one-year plan for economic development programming, specifically tasks and benchmarks geared toward community enhancements in advance of the opening of the Staybridge Suites

2

Utilize historic and natural resources already in the area to build a weekend and summer tourist market

3

Creation of a long-term and permanent plan for economic development and assistance to build the tax base and job opportunities for residents and businesses in Cheraw





## A ONE-YEAR PLAN TO CREATE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MOMENTUM

The next year is crucial for Cheraw leadership to develop the framework for economic development success. For each area below, council and staff must work in partnership with developers and the community to secure buy-in and enthusiastic endorsement.

### Provide Training on Tax Incentives for Local Developers and Property Owners.

There are numerous tax incentives to spur historic preservation. Local, state, and federal tax credits and abatements can be layered to drive down the overall development cost of appropriate historic rehabilitation. Some tax credits can be sold, converting to equity to help fund a project. Although tax credits can be complex, both town staff and developers who learn how to use these incentives can drive down costs and make historic preservation projects affordable and successful. Historic preservation is good for business and good for creating sustained prosperity.

### Enhance and Promote the Downtown Façade Program.

The Town of Cheraw should commit to prioritizing the entire façade loan program for buildings near the new hotel (Market and Second Streets) and consider adding additional monies to the fund. A creative use of the current façade program could focus on enhancement projects, like sight screening for empty buildings, use of art to decorate storefronts, lighting public and private areas to improve safety and appearance and connections between major streets and parking lots. Special funding might boost funds available on a one-time basis with a requirement that projects will be completed prior to the hotel opening of the new hotel.

### Consider the Provision of Additional Clean Up Services.

While the Town of Cheraw provides exemplary street cleaning services, alleys and rear entrances have accumulation of refuse and junk. Some empty storefronts have trash and apparent storage of unused materials. The town might consider scheduling clean up days when it will assist in disposal of these items at no cost, in advance of enforcing the commercial maintenance code that requires owners to maintain their properties or face penalties.

### Provide Merchant Training on Merchandising and Window Display.

While Cheraw has several buildings in the downtown area with exceptionally well-merchandised window and store displays, other businesses will need training. With the assistance of Main Street South Carolina (MSSC), identify consultants who provide advice and guidance on window displays and store merchandising.

# TOP 10

## Basic Rules of Every Good Storefront

1. A clear vision and concept will tie the entire store together.
2. A good, epic story will guide the design, service ethics, mood and in-store experience.
3. The store is a stage for a performance
4. The façade and the sidewalk should create an outside room to make people feel like they already stepped in.
5. Design proportions are not just pretty.
6. The path through the store should feel like a parade with highlights, landmarks, and pauses.
7. Every aspect of the store should amplify the message.
8. A good display window where things happen will engage people and make them look in.
9. A coherent brand will make the message easy to understand.
10. The best thing to attract people is more people.

Reference: @StorefrontMastery

**Creatively Market to Hotel Guests and Tourists.**

Both online and written marketing materials specifically geared toward hotel guests and tourists should be created and disseminated immediately using social media such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube. This should be a collaborative effort of the town, Arts Council, Chamber, and downtown businesses as well as historic and civic organizations, Chesterfield County and Northeast Technical College.

Guests at the new Staybridge Suites hotel are a captive audience and, as such, will need printed information on dining, recreational, historic sites, and cultural activities and events. This marketing package must be available prior to the hotel opening. Of course, other business, corporations, real estate companies, and non-profits can benefit from and might be sponsors for the creation and production of these materials.

**Seek Out Businesses and Services to Enhance the Tourism Experience**

Cheraw should identify businesses and individuals that can provide services and assistance to tourists. Some entrepreneurs may already exist who can provide tours and information on the amazing historic and recreational/sporting resources of Cheraw. Hotel guests may desire special food service, meeting spaces, a river or state park excursion, historic walking tour or many other services that can be identified and provided by local entrepreneurs or non-profit organizations.

**Enhance and Market Downtown Outside Activities and Events.**

Cheraw should consider ways to maximize outdoor activities in the downtown and promote sidewalk dining and appropriate sidewalk retail displays. Waiving the fees for street encroachments and providing festive lighting to decorate the dining areas might encourage new street activity, attractiveness, and safety.

**Expand the Historic District to include the Coulter School property.**

Adjacent to the current downtown historic district, the Coulter Memorial Academy is an important part of African American history in Cheraw, Chesterfield County, the Pee Dee region, and South Carolina. The Academy, founded in 1881 to provide education to African Americans, presents a unique opportunity for preservation and redevelopment. The addition of the Coulter Academy to the Cheraw Historic District will expand tourism, economic development, and historic education and preservation. Expansion of the district to include this landmark is a demonstration of diversity and inclusion and will enhance opportunities for preservation of this historic property.



*Case study of Appropriate Facade Design:  
Off-Square Books  
Oxford, MS*



## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY: CELEBRATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION AND NATURAL RESOURCES TOURISM

Cheraw, as one of South Carolina’s earliest settlements, has a history that spans every major historic era and event in American history: Native American and African American history; Revolutionary War; early river transportation; Civil War; Reconstruction; Civil Rights; and the explosion of Jazz. The community’s vision in preserving the architectural history in the downtown and the beautiful historic house district have kept intact one of the most charming towns in South Carolina.

Cheraw also has extensive natural recreational resources (Cheraw State Park) and sporting events (H. Cooper Black Recreation Area with equestrian and retriever competitions). The town should consider ways to build on and take advantage of these economic development drivers to attract people already attending these events to enhance the downtown area and expand the economic base of the community. Entice these visitors by offering unique experience to enhance their time in downtown, beyond their main reasons for being in Cheraw.

Cheraw should create a tourism development strategy to attract tourists already visiting the state parks and create new markets for historic preservation travel. Celebrating the history and natural environment and capturing an unexploited market for business in the community. Tours of the historic district, lunch at a downtown restaurant, an overnight stay at the new Staybridge Suites Hotel and respite from a hard day of equestrian activities at the state parks are attractive leisure-time activities for tourists within a two-hour travel time. Tourism might significantly add to the economy of downtown Cheraw, especially on weekends and in the summer months with unique experiences of place.





# A LONG-TERM ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR CHERAW

With the completion of the one-year fast-track plan to prepare for the opening of the Staybridge Suites Hotel, Cheraw should consider establishment of a long-term and more permanent strategy for economic development. Town Council might consider creation of a quasi-public agency, establishment of loan pools and other resources to carry out this development effort.

## Create an Organization to Manage Public-Private Partnerships.

It would be helpful to consider reorganizing the Cheraw Economic Development Corporation or another organization such as Cheraw, Inc. to manage more sophisticated economic development partnerships. Such an agency, in conjunction with the Town of Cheraw, would be allowed to own property, help fill gaps in development with public-private partnerships and provide other economic development strategies. An economic development organization can be part-time and staffed by city employees and guided by a non-political board of directors.

## Create a Revolving Loan Program.

Cheraw should consider the creation of a Capital Revolving Loan Pool to incentivize and provide equity to targeted projects. Investments should be short-term (two to five years), personally secured by the developers and used to cover a development funding gap after all private funding sources have been explored. Projects should be carefully selected, representing only those that will serve as catalysts for additional investment and provide substantial community benefit.

## Review Sources for Economic Development Funding.

Cheraw is fortunate to have an incredibly strong industrial base. Stories of the hey-day of industrial and town relationships were common in meetings with business and community leaders. Cheraw should create a special task force to begin calling on these industries to foster cooperative community-enhancement relationships. Most large businesses invest in their local communities with grants and community investment funds. Industries might be a prime source of funding for projects from parks to staff positions to promote and enhance the community.

Local and regional foundations, community development organizations and even state agencies might be sources for economic development assistance, with services and potential funding (e.g., historic and tourism enhancement plans, tourism development, and even local development funds).





**Apply for funding for an EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant.**

The Brownfields program from the US Environmental Protection Agency can assist developers by paying for expensive but required initial testing to determine viability of redevelopment of buildings and properties. The program can provide master planning services for targeted areas. The Brownfields Grant can provide much needed tools for any revitalization strategy.

**Create a Business Recruitment Plan for Downtown Cheraw.**

As downtown Cheraw grows, the town should begin a retail and office recruitment plan. Partly due to COVID-19, the retail industry in the US is undergoing unprecedented change from brick and mortar to online. As a result, downtown storefronts, most likely, are best targeted for service and office businesses rather than majority retail. To attract more tourism, Cheraw should consider the recruitment of restaurants and hospitality businesses, outfitters, antique and specialty shops. Cheraw should look to surrounding communities for small specialty businesses that can expand into the downtown market.

**Code Enforcement is Critical to Maintain Property Value.**

While Cheraw is taking admirable steps to provide façade incentives to enhance the downtown area and the promotion of new businesses, code enforcement is imperative, especially targeting the most egregious violators. Sadly, downtown Cheraw is threatened by several buildings with roofs that have collapsed, providing a public safety risk and loss of value to surrounding property owners who appropriately maintain their buildings. The Town of Cheraw must prohibit demolition by neglect and enforce minimal standards for property maintenance.

**Connect Downtown Cheraw to the Great Pee Dee River.**

A visitor to downtown Cheraw may never know that the Great Pee Dee river is only a short walk away from the historic district. Pedestrian connections from the downtown to the Great Pee Dee should be established as a community-wide priority. Utility rights-of-way might be improved to allow for pedestrian and bicycle trails. Sidewalk improvements could be made along existing roads, and directional signs could help increase use of river recreation and provide additional activity downtown.





Create Market Rate Housing in Downtown.

Cheraw has a shortage of market-rate housing in the downtown area. The town should identify potential sites for housing opportunities, particularly concentrating on workforce housing, conversion of upper-story spaces in the downtown area, and carefully designed infill residential downtown. There also may be a market for higher-end retirement homes near the historic district. All residential in the area should be carefully designed to enhance the character of the downtown.

Preserve Historic Buildings and Buildings of Character.

Cheraw has done an admirable job preserving some of the communities most significant structures. Town Hall, The Lyceum, Market Hall, and buildings along Market and Second Streets frame the historic district and create an area of unique heritage and character. As economic development efforts continue, it is imperative that Cheraw commit to preserving the most important commercial buildings and homes in the district, if necessary, through acquisition.

*The Master Plan team and Cheraw city staff have identified several especially important buildings that should be targeted for preservation and redevelopment in the downtown area.*

Commit to the Main Street Four-Point Approach.

Cheraw is a member of Main Street SC, a service of the SC Municipal Association and accredited by the National Main Street Center. As a member of MSSC, Cheraw has numerous resources available to guide downtown revitalization. The first step is to create, activate and support a Main Street Cheraw board and the four committee, representing the Four-Point Approach.

The Main Street Approach works when a town works the program. The Main Street board and committee should be up and running by November 2021.



The Main Street  
Four-Point Approach

A Transformation Strategy for  
Downtown Revitalization

*Created in 1980 by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the Main Street Four-Point Approach has successfully guided the revitalization of over 2,000 downtowns throughout the United States.*

**ORGANIZATION** involves creating a strong foundation for a sustainable revitalization effort, including cultivating partnerships, community involvement, and resources for the district.

**PROMOTION** positions the downtown or commercial district as the center of the community and hub of economic activity, while creating a positive image that showcases a community’s unique characteristics.

**DESIGN** supports a community’s transformation by enhancing the physical and visual assets that set the commercial district apart.

**ECONOMIC VITALITY** focuses on capital, incentives, and other economic and financial tools to assist new and existing businesses, catalyze property development, and create a supportive environment for entrepreneurs and innovators that drive local economies.



Develop, Fund and Promote a Small Business Entrepreneurial Start Up Program.

Based on public input and the public’s vision for downtown Cheraw, there are numerous businesses they want and need in downtown. This is an exceptional opportunity for local entrepreneurs to start new businesses. The most successful new businesses will most likely be inside jobs: local people can best serve local people. Setting up local entrepreneurs to start new businesses and to succeed is a far more worthy investment than chasing outside, regional or national businesses. Outside investments will follow local investments.

Start a Shop Local Program.

Residents were clear on the business they want and need now. They clearly stated that want to be able to buy more day-to-day products, clothes, gifts in downtown Cheraw. It is time to challenge residents to put their money where their visions and mouths are: SHOP LOCAL. This should be a collaborative program and campaign of the Town, the Chamber, downtown merchants and businesses. Think creatively about promoting existing businesses and how to train existing businesses to compete and to be more customer friendly. Go full force in support of local businesses while holding them and residents accountable. Hold monthly workshops to listen to merchants and to educate them. Revitalizing downtown Cheraw is an all-out, game-on challenge. It’s battle time. Rally the troops, hold them all accountable. Downtown revitalization is the responsibility of all.



# TOP 10

## Ways to Support Main Street

1. Walk downtown. Fight the "drive-thru" mentality by parking and walking downtown to run your errands. Your local economy (and waistline!) will thank you.
2. Pick up someone else's litter. So what if it's not your trash? Pick it up and throw it away. One small step for man. One giant leap for beautification.
3. Act like a realtor and sell your community. Tell visitors about places to see and visit that are unique to your community. And by all means, don't tell them there is nothing to do! Think of all there is to do in Cheraw now... be creative.
4. Tell your history. Know and tell your town's history well, and be sure to tell where you are now!
5. Volunteer. On a committee. For an event. Or just be a friendly ambassador and give someone directions.
6. Celebrate the arts. Every town is home to artists, craftsmen, writers and musicians. Showcase and support your local talent!
7. Eat local. It's all about eating local! Research top dining and food trends for 2021.
8. Encourage entrepreneurs. Host a competition or seek local angel investors and cool work places to make available.
9. Support existing businesses. Sure, we want new businesses but let's not forget to support the ones we already have!
10. Think creatively. Empty storefront? Ask a local artist or school to display their art as a makeshift window display. Vacant alleyway? Create an attractive walk-through! Blank wall on a building? Work with the creative sector (and students) to paint a mural that reflects the character of your town.

*Excerpted from the Mississippi Main Street Newsletter*





# Town of Cheraw

## Downtown Master Plan 2021

