



Waynesboro City Council Agenda Briefing

Meeting Date:	November 25, 2019	Staff/Council Member(s): Director of Economic Development and Tourism, Greg Hitchin
Agenda Item #	7	
Resolution#		
Department:	Economic Development and Tourism	
Subject:	East Main Street – Branding and Economic Analysis	

Background: As detailed in the recent Comprehensive Plan, the East Main Street Corridor is a critical element to future success. It has recently become home to additional businesses in the craft beverage cluster, complementing the long-standing outdoor outfitter business, but still has underutilized buildings and greenfield opportunities. East Main Street is the main entrance road for potentially tens of thousands of visitors from Blue Ridge Parkway and Shenandoah National Park and the City was recently awarded a VDOT Smart Scale Grant for improvements. City Departments including Economic Development and Tourism, Planning, and Parks and Recreation, view improvements to this corridor as an important link between current assets, future endeavors, and vast opportunities.

Creative Economic Development Consulting is an Economic Development Consulting firm based in Elkin NC. Annually they sponsor a “Creative Give Back” contest in which the winner receives a suite of economic development consulting services at no charge. Economic Development Organizations submit potential projects through a highly competitive application process. The City of Waynesboro, Economic Development and Tourism Department was honored to have been selected as the 2019 Creative Give Back winner and has been working with the firm all year.

Tonight, City Council will receive a presentation with the final report and recommendations from Crystal Morphis, CEcD, Founder and CEO.

City Manager’s Recommendation:

Receive Presentation, no action is requested

Attachments:

- Executive Summary (2 pages)

“Gateway Parkway”
Redevelopment Strategy & Marketing Plan

**Goals to Redevelop Waynesboro’s
“Gateway Parkway”**

Make Hwy 250 the tourism gateway for Waynesboro

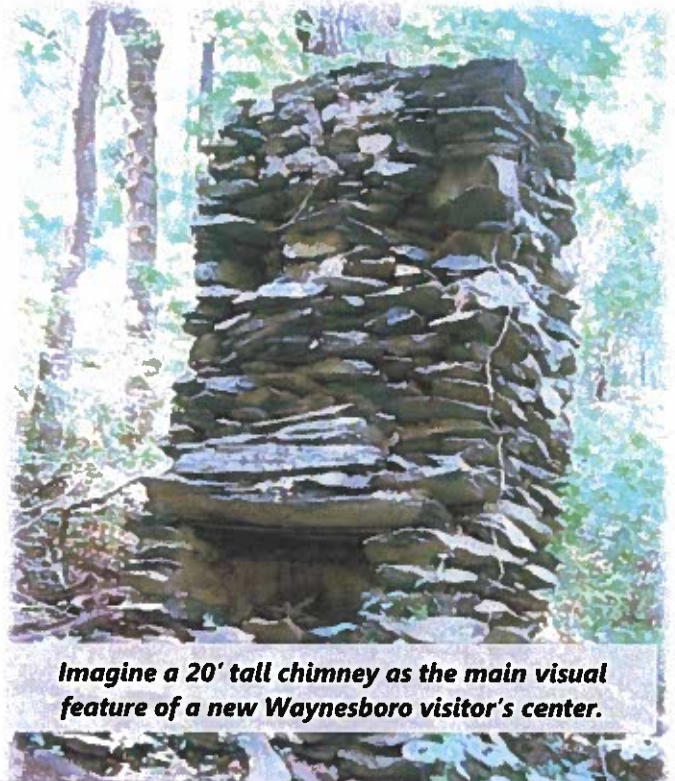
- Relocate the Visitor Center on East Main Street near the entrance to the City
- Coordinate with partners to develop a long range strategy for a regional visitor center
- Strategic property redevelopment
- Use public investments to leverage private investment

Establish thriving businesses in the redeveloped corridor

- Deploy business development strategies in the corridor
- Align city policies to support redevelopment in the corridor

Brand the corridor to draw businesses and people

- Market the competitive position of the corridor
- Brand the corridor for marketing and promotion
- Market business opportunities
- Internal marketing



Imagine a 20’ tall chimney as the main visual feature of a new Waynesboro visitor’s center.

Competitive Position of Waynesboro and the Corridor

Market Opportunity

- ⊙ \$381M regional tourism expenditures
- ⊙ 3% growth in tourism expenditures 2017-2018
- ⊙ \$1.5B regional retail market
- ⊙ \$109M regional food and beverage market

Visitors

- ⊙ \$25M spent on entertainment and recreation in the region
- ⊙ Lodging demand up 3%
- ⊙ Occupancy rate 73%
- ⊙ 20,000 cars a day traffic count
- ⊙ 120,000 people in the MSA

Incentive programs for new, start-up, & growing small businesses

- ⊙ Grow Waynesboro
- ⊙ Tourism Development Zone
- ⊙ Enterprise Zone

Tourism Destinations (and others)

- ⊙ Blue Ridge Parkway
- ⊙ Shenandoah National Park
- ⊙ Appalachian Trail
- ⊙ Virginia Museum of Natural History
- ⊙ Crozet Tunnel
- ⊙ Urban Fishery
- ⊙ Shenandoah Valley Art Center
- ⊙ Waynesboro Heritage Museum
- ⊙ Historic Wayne Theater
- ⊙ P. Buckley Moss Gallery

Workforce

- ⊙ 47,000 regional workforce
- ⊙ 3,200 employed in tourism in the region

Site & building inventory and availability

- ⊙ www.waynesborobusiness.com/sites-buildings/

Retail Leakage

- ⊙ Specialty Foods
- ⊙ General Merchandise
- ⊙ Clothing
- ⊙ Food Services

Economic Impact of 3 Example New Businesses in the Corridor



131
jobs



\$11.4 M
annual output

Implementation Plan

Getting Started Projects:

- ⊙ Marketing property redevelopment opportunities
- ⊙ Enhance incentives for the corridor and lower grant matches
- ⊙ Targeted business recruitment
- ⊙ Pop-up businesses and events in the corridor
- ⊙ Special assistance to new businesses in the corridor
- ⊙ Incorporate competitive position in marketing by updating websites, materials, social media content
- ⊙ Adopt a corridor brand and integrate into "Where Good Nature Comes Naturally"
- ⊙ Activate corridor with events, meetings, festivals, cultural programs
- ⊙ FAM tours for local stakeholders

Start Planning Projects:

- ⊙ Interim visitor center in East Main Street corridor and gateway/pull-in lot at Hwy 250/64/BRP interchange
- ⊙ Extend streetscape throughout the corridor and to the Hwy 250/64 interchange with Augusta County support
- ⊙ Long-term investments in trail and greenway connectivity
- ⊙ Public art program
- ⊙ Retail incubator feasibility
- ⊙ Open house marketing/recruitment event in the corridor
- ⊙ Co-op advertising grant program
- ⊙ Social Toaster or similar ambassador program to amplify marketing messages

Building Consensus for the Vision Projects:

- ⊙ Regional visitor center at Hwy 250/64/BRP interchange
- ⊙ Mentoring program as part of Grow Waynesboro
- ⊙ Centrally located city development services

The Creative Give Back

The City of Waynesboro was selected as the 2019 Creative Give Back winner because of the potential for the corridor to transform the economy. The Creative Give Back is Creative Economic Development Consulting's way to give back to the field of economic development. Starting in 2014, Creative EDC began giving away one consulting project a year through a competitive application process.

