

# DOWNTOWN ITHACA ALLIANCE

## 2022 WORK PLAN

### WORK TASKS, ACTIVITIES, AND PROGRAMS

November 15, 2021  
(Draft)

Each year the Downtown Ithaca Alliance undertakes a number of tasks, activities, and programs designed to advance and support downtown revitalization, management, and promotion. These actions comprise this 2021 Downtown Ithaca Alliance Annual Work Plan.

The Downtown Ithaca Alliance Work Plan follows the organizational calendar fiscal year (January to December). This work plan works in tandem with the annual budget to guide and direct the organization in its tasks and activities for the year. When creating an annual work plan, we outline recurring tasks and programs for continuation and we study the approved 2020 Strategic Plan and draft 2030 Strategic Plan, selecting elements from that plan for implementation or attention. Among the 2020/2030 Strategic Plan topics to be covered in this 2022 Work Plan are:

- Ongoing Commons maintenance and repair
- Conference center development
- Transportation and transportation demand management
- Business retention, attraction and recruitment
- Facilitation of new development projects
- Parking and parking policy
- Corridor connections between Downtown and CU, IC, and the waterfront

Each and every work program element is designed to reinforce and support the goals of the overall strategic plan. The programmatic work of the Downtown Ithaca Alliance has been organized by committee. In 2022, these committees will be:

- Business Retention and Development
- Retail
- Downtown Operations
- Special Events
- Marketing
- Transportation
- Night Economy
- Downtown DEI
- Governance & Strategic Planning

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# **DOWNTOWN BUSINESS RETENTION & DEVELOPMENT**

## **2022 Work Plan**

November 15, 2021

### **The DIA and Downtown Retention & Development**

The DIA assumes a key role in understanding, monitoring, and assisting in the enhancement and growth of Downtown Ithaca. We work closely with the City and other business and development partners to plan and facilitate business and investment growth. We seek to advance and implement the aspects of the Downtown 2020 Strategic Plan pertaining to economic and business development. We are keenly interested in supporting and retaining our existing businesses. We are likewise interested in the growth and development of Downtown and serve as facilitators for projects, investment, and opportunities.

This work is overseen and monitored by the Downtown Business Retention & Development Committee. This committee is currently chaired by Board member Megan Vidler and staffed by Kristina Thelen and Gary Ferguson.

### **Priority Recommendations**

*Each new and priority task in the work plan will be ranked by the DIA Board of Directors on a scale of A, B, or C, with A being highest and C being lowest. The compiled mean rankings are listed and will be used by staff when issues of resource allocation arise. Every effort will be made to fulfill the highest ranked tasks. Lower ranked tasks would be the first to be postponed.*

### **Work Tasks for 2022**

#### **1. Retail Recruitment Collateral Package**

The DIA will be undertaking a retail attraction program in 2022. Part of this effort includes the preparation of a new 2022 retail recruitment information collateral package. This package will be designed to allow for mixing and matching of various information sheets on topics of interest to prospective businesses.

#### **2. Retail Attraction Strategy and Action Plan for 2022**

We will prepare and implement a retail attraction strategy and action plan in 2022, to address street level vacancies. The strategy will outline the types of businesses sought, the outreach strategy and action tasks for each type of business, and a schedule and set of goals. Recruitment trips will be planned to visit business prospects. The goal for 2022 is a minimum of six (6) new retail businesses.

#### **3. Pop-Up Retail Program**

Based on our efforts from 2020-2021, the DIA will continue to offer a pop-up retail storefront program in 2022, but without any additional program dollars. The goal will be to help interested parties connect with available spaces on a short-term basis.

#### **4. Office Attraction Collateral Package**

The Downtown office market is currently experiencing its highest office vacancy in years, driven by the new addition of product and the impact of the pandemic. To assist with our office attraction program, the DIA is producing collateral materials and creating a new data base web site for office recruitment (vendor- Location One). These materials will work both virtually and in hard copy. They will provide needed information to help prospects understand and appreciate the Downtown office market.

#### **5. Office Attraction Strategy and Action Plan for 2022**

The DIA will prepare and implement an office attraction strategy and action plan in 2022 designed to help reduce the current office vacancy rate. The strategy will outline types of businesses sought, outreach plans and tasks, and a schedule and set of goals. The 2022 goal is a minimum of (6) new and/or expanded office businesses.

#### **6. 2022 Office Visitation program**

We will conduct retention & expansion (R&E) visits to a sample of downtown office businesses during 2022. These targeted businesses will be selected based on risk factors for leaving as well as the potential for growth and expansion. There is a 2022 goal of visiting at least 25 businesses (approximately one every two weeks).

#### **7. Small Scale Manufacturing – Downtown Implementation**

Utilizing the work accomplished in 2021, DIA staff will work with the City small scale manufacturing work group to create a project and/or program for encouraging and incentivizing small scale manufacturing in Downtown. While this program is working in a broader target area, we will focus on efforts to attract more small-scale manufacturing to the BID.

#### **8. Retail incubator strategy**

We will work with economic development and community partners on a plan for a downtown area business incubation program that would focus on retail, food and beverage, and other front facing operations.

#### **9. Conference Center Planning and Development**

The DIA will continue its role as a convener and facilitator of the downtown convention center project. This project is linked and affiliated with the Green Garage redevelopment initiative, and is being built by The Vecino Group. The DIA will participate in the leadership of the center, helping to planning, fund, and oversee the construction, as well as bring on board professional operations management.

#### **10. 2022 Major Property Owner meeting**

During 2021 we plan to hold at least one feedback meeting with major Downtown property owners to discuss current issues and review strategic plan elements.

#### **11. Main Street program implementation**

Working with our consultant (LaBella Planning), we will implement the NY Main Street award we won in 2021.

#### **12. Comparable cities visit**

The DIA skipped it's 2020 and 2021 comparative city visits, due to pandemic restrictions. Assuming public health permits it, we would look to visit a city within a reasonable drive time. Lead candidates include Providence, RI and New Haven, CT in 2022. This visit will provide an opportunity for the DIA and its community partners (City, County, Chamber, CVB, CU, and others) to learn about best practices and new ideas. The DIA will organize and host this trip for staff, board, and community officials.

#### **13. Co-host a succession planning workshop**

In 2022, we will work with the Tompkins County Chamber of Commerce and other economic development entities to provide a new succession planning workshop and information.

#### **14. Continue to upgrade our directories and rosters of available space**

The DIA maintains hard copy and on-line directories of both office and retail space. In 2022, we will continue update these formats. This will be accompanied by changes to the DIA web site to make these listings more accessible and dynamic.

#### **15. ARPA economic development funding**

The DIA has been working with a group of area economic development organizations to come up with a menu of recovery economic development projects and programs that can provide benefit to Downtown as well as the larger community. The City of Ithaca has approved several of the proposals. We hope Tompkins County will follow suit. We will work with the City and the other economic development partners on implementation of these programs.

#### **16. DRI (Strategic Planning) work on key future projects for Downtown**

At this writing it is still unknown if Ithaca will be selected as a recipient of a DRI award. If awarded, the DIA will work closely with the City on implementation of the program process. If we are not selected, we will use the application as well as our 2030 Plan to begin the process of identifying and preparing future projects for implementation.

### **Tools/Tasks to Support Business Retention & Development**

#### **17. Staff the BRD Committee**

We will organize and staff the standing BRD committee.

#### **18. Convene an office forum**

We will convene an office forum consisting of downtown office sector leaders to meet twice during 2022.

#### **19. Convene a tech business forum**

We will convene a forum for downtown tech and creative businesses to meet annually.

**20. Convene an arts and entertainment forum**

We will convene a forum of downtown arts and entertainment leaders to meet annually.

**21. Convene a hospitality forum**

We will convene a forum of downtown hospitality leaders to meet twice annually.

**22. Convene a restaurant forum**

We will convene a forum of downtown restaurant owners/managers to meet twice annually.

**23. Nielsen Data Updates (ongoing)**

We will purchase 2022 market data to assist the DIA in recruitment and in planning efforts.

**24. Participation in New York Urban Council (ongoing)**

The DIA will participate in the New York Urban Council, the statewide organization devoted to providing networking and assistance to downtown organizations and programs across New York State.

**25. Participation in International Downtown Association (ongoing)**

The DIA will continue its long-standing participation in the International Downtown Association, attending the annual conference and using the organization for networking and information sharing.

**26. Participation in International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC) (ongoing)**

The DIA will continue to participate in programs and activities of ICSC.

**27. Fund for Business Recruitment marketing (ongoing)**

Funds are reserved for specific business recruitment and attraction activities.

**28. Fund for Business Recruitment outreach (ongoing)**

Funds are reserved for more generic business outreach and networking activities in the community.

# **DOWNTOWN RETAIL**

## **2022 Work Plan**

November 15, 2021

### **The Downtown Retail Committee**

The Downtown retail sector is a highly visible and important part of the Downtown landscape. Recognizing the importance of serving this sector, the DIA is creating a new committee devoted exclusively to retailers and downtown retail affairs.

This work is overseen and monitored by the Downtown Business Retention & Development Committee. This committee would be chaired by Board member Megan Vidler and staffed by Kristina Thelen.

### **Priority Recommendations**

*Each new and priority task in the work plan will be ranked by the DIA Board of Directors on a scale of A, B, or C, with A being highest and C being lowest. The compiled mean rankings are listed and will be used by staff when issues of resource allocation arise. Every effort will be made to fulfill the highest ranked tasks. Lower ranked tasks would be the first to be postponed.*

### **Work Tasks for 2022**

#### **1. Retail Visitation**

We will engage in a yearlong program to systematically visit all front facing downtown street level businesses. Visits will be check-ins to with management. Any issues or problems encountered will be logged and addressed as possible and/or referred to other staff and community resources. The goal will be to visit each business twice a year.

#### **2. Retail Workshops**

Funds have been set aside to conduct four (4) merchant workshops on key issues and topics selected by the Retail Committee.

#### **3. Retailer networking events**

We will provide regular afterhours networking events for downtown merchants, using the successful 2019 pre-pandemic model for meeting and socializing.

#### **4. Retail mini-grants (Coop marketing/promotion)**

We will continue the cooperative marketing and promotion mini-grant program from previous years. Our goal is to encourage businesses to generate more foot traffic through these targeted small scale events.

#### **5. Retail mini-grants/training (online sales/marketing)**

We will continue the online sales and marketing training and mini-grant program initiated in 2021, in cooperation with the SBDC.

6. Retail mini-grants (City program)

The City of Ithaca has approved the use of ARPA funds to support a mini-grant program for retailers and small businesses in downtown and throughout the City. The DIA will work with the City on design and implementation of this initiative and will offer to assist in administration, as warranted.

7. Planning for retail friendly events

Continuing upon our efforts in prior years, we will work with the Retail Committee on creative ways to help make our DIA events more retailer/merchant friendly, to the extent practicable. We will work closely with DIA Special Events staff.

8. Ongoing retail technical assistance and referral

Throughout the year DIA staff will be available for limited one-one confidential technical assistance with downtown merchants. This technical assistance is intended to provide a quick, short term solution to possible issues/tasks. When possible, staff will refer merchants to other technical assistance providers from other organizations and institutions in the community.

9. Retail promotions for 2022

The Retail Committee will work with staff to select 2-3 retail-oriented promotions to undertake in 2022, within the limits of the 2022 budget. These promotions should be scalable to the available resources and will require the assistance of other DIA staff, such as marketing and communications.

10. Ithaca Loves Teachers promotion

Business Development will work with Marketing and Communications staff to implement the annual Ithaca Loves Teachers promotion in 2022. The Retail side of this effort is to work to enroll merchant participants and communicate with them about the promotion.

11. Welcome Back Students promotion

The expected live Welcome Back Students promotion at the start of the school calendar will likewise be a DIA project led by Marketing but involving other staff, including Business Development. The Retail side of this effort is to work to enroll merchants and communicate with them about the promotion.

12. Merchant newsletter

A periodic newsletter devoted specifically to the merchant community will continue in 2022.

13. Retail Committee (approx. 6X annually)

Staff will support the Retail Committee, helping to attract, engage, and retain members.

# **DOWNTOWN DEI**

## **2022 Work Plan**

November 15, 2021

### **The Downtown DEI Committee**

The Board of Directors has expressed a desire for the DIA organization to work toward a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive Downtown and DIA organization. In recognition of this goal, the DIA is creating a new committee devoted exclusively to advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion in Downtown Ithaca and at the DIA organization. The following work plan tasks represent first steps working toward this goal.

This work is overseen and monitored by a new Downtown DEI Committee. This committee would be chaired by Board member \_\_\_\_\_ (TBD) and staffed by \_\_\_\_\_ (TBD).

### **Priority Recommendations**

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### **Work Tasks for 2022**

#### **1. POC Commons Marketplace**

The DIA will partner with a lead organization from the POC community to organize and promote a POC vendor marketplace on the Commons in 2022. The DIA will provide technical assistance and training, along with some financial assistance for a market manager. At this juncture, we will partner with Black hands Universal on this project.

#### **2. BIPOC Business Support**

The DIA will work with UPI, BLOC, and BHU on specific project opportunities. We will enter into a MOU with UPI on items to pursue. We will work with BLOC on technical assistance initiatives for Downtown POC businesses. We will be pursuing a mentorship program and POC pop-up opportunities.

#### **3. Pride Event**

We will work with community groups to organize a Downtown focused Pride event (series of events). This will include leveraging a modest amount of DIA funding to obtain sponsorships for this event.

#### **4. Monthly campaigns**

DIA staff will be featuring underserved populations on a regular basis, promoting and highlighting information and programming obtained from other community groups



## **5. Staff DEI committee**

The DIA staff ha organized an internal DEI committee that meet regularly to discuss ways to advance DEI in the organization.

# **DOWNTOWN OPERATIONS & INFRASTRUCTURE**

## **2022 Work Plan**

November 15, 2022

### **The DIA and Downtown Operations**

Each year the DIA seeks to improve and enhance the Downtown environment by providing supplemental assistance and support that positively affects Downtown operations and infrastructure. The goal of this work is to create a more attractive, livable, and workable environment for the people who patronize, work, visit, and reside downtown. The DIA also works to ensure that public policy aligns with the needs and opportunities of a fully functional and enhanced Downtown environment.

This work is overseen and monitored by the Downtown Operations Committee. This committee is currently chaired by Board member Nicole Pagano and will be staffed by Olivia Pastella.

### **Priority Recommendations**

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### **Work Tasks for 2022**

#### **1. Home Dairy Alleyway light installation (grant funded)**

Working with the City and abutting buildings, the DIA will facilitate the installation of permanent decorative and functional lighting in the Home Dairy alleyway.

#### **2. Downtown Pedestrian Wayfinding planning**

During the pandemic the TC Tourism Program zeroed out its fund established for communitywide wayfinding, effectively ending any opportunity for such a program. The entity has now decided to reestablish this fund and work toward a community goal of wayfinding. In Downtown, we will support this regional effort and plan for a downtown pedestrian component that can be implemented with or without a full regional effort.

#### **3. Public WIFI**

DIA staff will continue to work with Sky Packets on the implementation of a Downtown/Commons free public WIFI access program. This would be accomplished with the help of a national vendor experienced in providing WIFI service to public spaces nationwide. Prep work for this project occurred in 2021 and the required four host buildings have been procured. Costs will be partially offset with advertising income.

#### **4. Utilizing the Reimaging Public Safety Plan Report**

The City will be releasing its detailed Reimaging Public Safety Plan in 2022. The DIA will work to integrate some of the findings and recommendations of this plan for its own Downtown public safety initiatives.

#### **5. More Commons tree & entrance lights**

While there are already strings of permanent white light across the Commons and in select trees, in 2022 we will add white lights in Commons trees and entrances that are equipped with electricity. This will add more light in dark months and add more accent year-round.

#### **6. Downtown Clean Team (grant funded)**

DIA and City staff have been working together on the maintenance of the Commons public space and surrounding downtown blocks. This clean team program will continue in 2022 for both 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> shifts, subject to the availability of funding from the City for 2<sup>nd</sup> shift services as well as adequate funding from the Tompkins County Tourism Program and from TCAT for downtown bus station cleaning. Work to be undertaken includes, but is not limited to, trash pick-up, planter watering, litter patrol, graffiti removal, and weekend cleaning. In 2022, we will regular coordinate with City DPW staff to ensure that base level services are being maintained and that DIA supplemental service can be most effectively deployed.

#### **7. Downtown Hospitality Team (grant funded)**

The DIA will organize and manage a Downtown Hospitality ambassador program in 2022 designed to serve as a sidewalk concierge for visitors and tourists. Based out of the DIA's mobile red cart, the program will provide seven day a week service to visitors from May through October.

#### **8. Rebuild the Pay It Forward Program (grant funded)**

In 2022 the DIA will work with the Community Outreach Worker program to broaden the Pay It Forward Program. This program provides direct emergency assistance in form of food and personal care items for downtown people in need. The program is being revised to add new providers and to modify the rules of assistance, to ensure equitable access.

#### **9. Downtown Community Outreach Worker program (Grant funded)**

The DIA, in partnership with the City and Tompkins County and other community entities, funds and monitors the Downtown Community Outreach Worker Program. This program, managed and administered by Family & Children's Service Inc., provides two full-time persons to work 9-5 Monday – Friday providing direct, on-the street outreach service and support to the homeless and to people in-need. This program will also provide the direct outreach for the DIA's Pay It Forward Program

#### **10. Holiday Decorations**

The DIA will continue its program of providing Downtown holiday/winter decorations. Decorations will be installed in mid/late November and would remain in place until March.

#### **11. Continue Commons Banner Program (Sponsor Funded)**

The DIA will continue its seasonal banner program on the Commons, creating and installing new banners 3 times a year. All 2022 banners have been sponsored.

#### **12. City/DIA MOU monitoring**

The City and the DIA share a memorandum of understanding that spell out the base line services provided by the municipality and also summarizes the various roles and responsibilities of both the City and the DIA in Downtown. It is proposed that the DIA and City re-examine the MOU in 2022 to reflect changes that have occurred over the past five or so years and re-draft a new/revised version for Board and City approval.

#### **13. Continue IPD liaison and formal meeting at least twice in 2022**

It is important for the DIA and the Ithaca Police Department (IPD) to maintain close and regular lines of communication. To that end, there will be at least two meetings between the Operations Committee and the IPD representatives. One of these sessions should be a larger meeting open to the general downtown stakeholder population to meet with IPD leadership.

#### **14. Mural art program**

The DIA will look to add one new mural in 2022, by soliciting interest from property owners with locations for highly visible mural art. The DIA Operations Committee will select a preferred location and funds from the DIA budget used to help underwrite the cost of the art. We will also provide funding to the Ithaca Murals Program and will receive one mural in downtown from that program.

# **MARKETING & MEMBER SERVICES**

## **2022 Work Plan**

November 15, 2021

### **The DIA and Marketing & Member Services**

A key goal of the DIA is to position and market Downtown Ithaca as a place to shop, dine, visit, and partake in entertainment offerings. It is also a place to market for people live and work. The DIA will undertake a program to accomplish these goals.

Marketing, working together with communications is charged with managing and overseeing integrated advertising, marketing communication strategies among events, projects, and programs from other departments within the organization to ensure the visual and written message to public and among stakeholders retains the voice and brand of the DIA organization or of the Downtown Ithaca destination. This work is overseen and monitored by the Downtown Marketing Oversight Committee. This committee is currently chaired by Board member Abby Peterson and will be staffed by Allison Graffin and Lora Morrow

### **Priority Recommendations**

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### **Work Tasks for 2022**

#### **1. Downtown gift card promotion and administration**

The marketing and management of the gift card program will reside with marketing. We will be reviewing our gift card contract with our vendor and determining if we will stay with the current vendor or seek a new option. Special marketing attention will be paid to specific times of the year--- end of school (May/June) and the November /December holiday season. Our 2022 goal is to attain at least \$70,000 in sales.

#### **2. Mitigation -Continued branding campaign**

Our marketing staff will plan and implement a strategic downtown branding campaign in 2022 to help people overcome any concerns about visiting downtown during construction.

#### **3. Mitigation Marketing for 2022**

During 2022 we will continue our additional district marketing to help offset any consumer hesitancy created by the ongoing Green Garage rebuild construction.

#### **4. Contract for Placer Marketing data**

We will be entering into a contract with Placer AI to provide us with state of the art marketing data and analytics that will assist us in advertising placement, in designing programs and events, and business development (both recruitment and retention).

#### **5. Faces of Downtown Program**

Downtown is distinguished by its diverse and eclectic collection of business owners and managers. We will continue to feature this campaign designed to put a face onto downtown- the faces of our businesses. The campaign will be primarily on social media.

#### **6. Welcome Student Weekend**

The DIA will seek to work with Cornell University and Ithaca College to plan for the re-start of Welcome Student Weekends. In addition to a day for Cornell students, we also schedule an IC day and integrate TC3 into the IC day. These days are intended to be welcoming orientations to the community and Downtown for new students, providing them with an opportunity to learn how to navigate Downtown and how to access Downtown via TCAT. Key partners for these weekends will be TCAT, CU, IC, and TC3. Full execution of this task will depend on resumed participation from the institutions.

#### **7. Co-Produce and Promote Winter Recess**

Partnering with the Tompkins County CVB and the Chamber, the DIA will continue the Winter Recess teacher recognition and marketing promotion undertaken each February. We provide interface with the downtown business community and take the lead on visitor/teachers guide preparation.

#### **8. Pedestrian counter project**

In 2022 we will continue our contracts with Springboard for our current pedestrian counter locations. We will provide period reports to committees and make data available to downtown businesses and prospects.

#### **9. Complete and Distribute District handbook (how to use DIA, City and DT resources)**

In 2022, we will complete this project and distribute copies to downtown businesses.

#### **10. Students: participation in Ithaca College Back-to-School Student Orientation**

We will work with IC administration on opportunities to reach students during their new back to school campus orientation. The nature of this orientation will depend upon pandemic protocols and IC decisions regarding student orientations in 2022.

#### **11. Continue working with conference attendees**

There continue to be periodic conferences in the community that can provide more foot traffic for our Downtown businesses. We will identify and work with several of the largest events, including a 2022 District Rotary conference, providing information on downtown shopping, dining, and entertainment and assisting with tours of downtown for delegates.

**12. Visitors: Continue working with non-downtown festivals or events (grant funded)**

As other non-downtown festivals and events re-emerge from the pandemic, we will seek to first identify them and then work to provide them with information about shopping, dining and entertainment in downtown.

**13. Visitors: Continue publishing and distributing seasonal guides (Revenue Generating)**

Twice each year DIA staff will produce seasonal visitor guides that highlight downtown attractions and offerings and provide a directory of downtown businesses. These guides will be supported by paid advertising.

**14. Re-build our downtownithaca.com web site**

DIA staff will work with our consultants to re-build our existing organization web site to make it more responsive, searchable and user-friendly. This work will also include enhancing our business development and organization portions of the website.

**15. Annual marketing plan**

The DIA Director of Marketing will prepare an annual marketing plan in January 2022 that outlines the advertising and marketing strategy for the organization during the calendar year. The plan will be vetted and reviewed by the Marketing Oversight Committee. Lead Staff:

**16. Continue implementing an ongoing seasonal advertising program**

Throughout the year, the DIA marketing staff will create and manage a seasonal advertising program that fulfills the annual marketing plan, utilizing electronic, print, and social media as appropriate. Lead Staff:

**17. Continue employee discount card program**

The DIA will continue the downtown employee discount program, distributing new cards during the office worker appreciation week. Our 2022 goal is to distribute at least 1,500 cards.

**18. Annual meeting**

During the month of April, the DIA will host the annual business meeting of the organization. In 2022, we hope to be able to host a live event, but will also plan for a virtual back up.

**19. Annual dinner/awards**

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In 2022, the DIA will organize and host an annual dinner and awards event for downtown stakeholders and interested community people. In 2022, we will feature the theme of 25 years of BID service.

## **20. Updated Style Guide**

In 2022, DIA marketing staff will undertake an updated definitive style guide for branding Downtown Ithaca as a destination and Downtown Ithaca Alliance as an organization.

# **COMMUNICATION SERVICES**

## **2022 Work Plan**

November 15, 2021

### **The DIA and Communication Services**

The DIA is charged with communicating with the various stakeholders of Downtown. The organization will plan and implement effective communications strategies that both reach Downtown stakeholders and the consumers/users of the business improvement district.

This work is overseen and monitored by the Downtown Marketing Oversight Committee. This committee is currently chaired by Board member Abby Peterson and will be staffed by Darlene Wilbur and Allison Graffin.

### **Priority Recommendations**

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## **Work Tasks for 2022**

### **1. Continue to manage a regular downtown blog**

The DIA staff will maintain and populate a regular downtown blog, providing information and perspective on downtown to readers and the local community.

### **2. Continue quarterly e-newsletter to stakeholders**

Each quarter we will produce a newsletter summarizing pertinent downtown and DIA interested stakeholders. Limited paper copies will be available.

### **3. Continue consumer weekly e-news**

Each week the DIA will produce a consumer-oriented e-news bulletin that highlights downtown activities, events, and promotions. Our e-news goal is to maintain a list of over 10,000 subscribers.



#### **4. Continue archiving communication materials on web site**

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The DIA will continue to update its on-line archives of Board agendas, minutes, financial reports, along with other notable press releases, reports, and other downtown relevant documents on the DIA web site.

#### **5. Continue Face Book management and updating**

The DIA will continue its strong Face Book presence, providing regular Face Book updates and entries to encourage our 10,000+ viewers to stay connected. Our 2022 goal will be to grow our Facebook viewers to at least 5%.

#### **6. Continue social media management**

The DIA routinely uses YouTube, Instagram, Twitter, and Snapchat as additional tools for communication and marketing. We will continue this effort in 2022. Social media has proven to be a cost effective, high targeted, and effective tool for communicating messages and events.

#### **7. Continue a systematic public relations/press release program**

In early January, the Director of Communications will a public relations/press release plan for 2022. This plan will serve as a blueprint for the entire year. We average at least press release per week over the course of the year- for events, ribbon cuttings, and self-generated topics about downtown.

#### **8. Continue ribbon cuttings and project celebrations**

The DIA will work with the City, the Chamber and IAED on ribbon cuttings, grand openings, and special project recognitions/celebrations.

#### **9. Continue to provide monthly meeting notices to all members**

Each month, we will provide information for our members about upcoming Board meetings, committee meetings, and activities.

#### **10. State of Downtown Report**

During 2022 we will research and prepare a State of Downtown report. It is hoped this will become an annual publication designed to provide a statistical snapshot of key metrics, indicators, and trends.

#### **11. Grant Preparation**

The Director of Communications, Research, and Grants will also undertake a program of grant application research and writing for 2022. Approximately four (4) grants will be solicited. Determination of which grants to pursue will be done in consultation with the Executive Director and will be based on

the needs of both the DIA and Downtown and the opportunities available for 2022.

## **SPECIAL EVENTS**

2022 Work Plan

November 15, 2021

### **The DIA and Special Events**

For many people Downtown is associated with its special events. The DIA undertakes an annual special events program that is designed to attract people to Downtown. The goal of these events is to provide a fun, pleasant, and memorable experience in Downtown that will cause people to return. Events are targeted to both local residents and visitors. They tend to be large, making use of the excellent venues and facilities available for special events in Downtown. Special events can also bolster the bottom lines of businesses and the DIA works to ensure that its events maximize opportunities for downtown businesses, to the greatest extent possible. The DIA is seen as a leader in event planning and manages the Tompkins County Festivals Program.

In 2022, we expect to return to live, in-person events. Should there be a significant recurrence of COVID, we would work closely with the County Health Department to either modify events or convert to a remote format.

This work is overseen and monitored by the Downtown Special Events Committee. This committee is currently chaired by Board member Joseph Wetmore and will be staffed by Scott Rougeau and Danny Palmer.

### **Priority Recommendations**

*Each new and priority task in the work plan will be ranked by the DIA Board of Directors on a scale of A, B, or C, with A being highest and C being lowest. The compiled mean rankings are listed and will be used by staff when issues of resource allocation arise. Every effort will be made to fulfill the highest ranked tasks. Lower ranked tasks would be the first to be postponed.*

### **Work Tasks for 2022**

#### **1. Work with the City on Special Event Policy**

The City of Ithaca has been re-examining its personnel and fiscal commitments to events held in the City. DIA staff will work with the City to help develop policies that can both assist the City meet its goals while ensuring that events will be able to survive and be implementable.

#### **2. Chili Cook-Off (revenue generating)**

It is expected that the 2022 Chili Cook-Off will be implemented live and in-person. We plan to also provide restaurants with the opportunity to sell product in the week leading up to the Saturday event. This is a money-making event for the DIA and supports other DIA activities.

#### **3. Summer concerts (revenue generating)**

Building upon the successful live concerts of 2021, we are planning for live, in-person summer concerts for 2022. We will seek to expand the concert schedule to include more dates. We will continue our successful beer/wine sales at the events to help underwrite the costs of these concerts.

#### **4. TC Tourism Program Training and Education for event planners**

As part of the DIA's obligation to provide the County with education and training on event planning, the DIA will plan and host workshops in cutting edge topics, advice and case examples on event planning in wake of the pandemic.

#### **5. Sponsorship program for events and promotions**

In 2022, we will continue to expand our sponsorship offerings for Downtown special events and other DIA program suitable for sponsorships. Effort will be placed in recruiting additional sponsors in an effort to grow our special and promotions (sponsorships include marketing activities as well as special events). Our goal for 2022 is to have a cash and a media sponsor for each of our events and applicable programs.

#### **6. Work on policies to better guide County Festivals program**

DIA staff will work with the County Festival Program advisory committee to devise revised policies and procedures that will better align the program with tourism initiatives and will improve operational efficiency for the DIA in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and municipal concerns.

#### **7. Add an emerging minority entrepreneur category to our craft fair events**

We will continue to work to create a program that will assist and bolster emerging/minority craft business entrepreneurs and feature them at our Ithaca Festival and Apple Harvest Festival craft shows as mass gatherings become possible and practicable.

#### **8. Ithaca Festival Craft Fair (Rev. Generating)**

We expect that the Ithaca Festival will proceed live and in-person in 2022. The DIA will continue to work with the Ithaca Festival organization on logistics for the downtown portion of the Festival. We will also oversee the craft fair portion of the festival, according to the MOU with the Ithaca Festival organization.

#### **9. Apple Harvest Festival (Rev. Generating)**

The Apple Harvest Festival will celebrate its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2022. We expect this event to be live and in-person and will reflect the milestone of 40 years as a community event.

#### **10. Chowder Fest (Rev. Generating)**

In December, the DIA will continue to organize and host the Chowder Cook-Off event as part of its annual holiday package of activities.

#### **11. Winter Light and Ice Fest (Grant funded)**

Utilizing our experience of 2021, we will seek to grow the Light and ice Fest in 2022, featuring local and regional artists and highlighting light and ice displays, as well as seasonal programming.

## **12. Santa's Arrival**

We will undertake our traditional Santa arrival event.

## **13. Gallery Night/First Friday Growth (grant and sponsor funded)**

In 2022 we will continue to grow our Gallery Night/First Friday event. This event recurs every month on the first Friday and engages galleries and well as participating businesses. We are looking to add more programming and attract a broader cross section of the community.

## **14. Pride event**

The DIA will launch a new event in 2022 to celebrate Gay Pride. The event is likely to consist of several smaller subevents. It will be planned in conjunction with other community groups and will be centered in Downtown.

## **15. BIPOC Market Technical Assistance**

DIA staff will work with BHU and others to help launch and sustain a new Downtown/Commons BIPOC market. The market will occur through the summer and fall.

## **16. Continue engaging downtown businesses into events**

We will continue to examine our special events and investigate opportunities for engaging downtown businesses in more direct ways and communicate opportunities to the downtown merchant community.

## **17. Continue to administer the Tompkins County Festivals Program (Grant funded)**

DIA staff will continue its contract work with the County STPB program to oversee and administer the Room Tax Festivals program, providing technical assistance, workshops, a web site/Facebook site, and handbook updates, and other support. The program also maintains and manages a lending library of event equipment, that is also used for DIA events. Room tax funds provide resources to hire the DIA special events assistant director position.

## **18. Continue festival technical assistance for the City**

As applicable due to the pandemic, the DIA will provide technical support to the City Clerk's office and to applicants for downtown event permits during 2022. The DIA Special Events Director also sits and participates on the City's Special Event Interdepartmental Review Committee.

## **19. Halloween**

If feasible, the DIA will plan/organize Downtown community Halloween activities and trick-or-treating for area children. This will be undertaken in conjunction with GIAC.

# TRANSPORTATION, PARKING & MOBILITY

## 2022 Work Plan

November 15, 2021

### The DIA and Transportation

Transportation is a crucial part of the Downtown landscape. Key transportation issues affect the future of Downtown and the DIA is committed to working with community partners to navigate these topics. These include: an intercity bus station/depot, transportation demand management, transportation connections between Downtown and other key centers of commerce, micro-mobility as an option for Downtown mobility, improved transit mobility in the greater Downtown area, and parking supply, demand and management.

This work is overseen and monitored by the Downtown Transportation Committee. This committee is currently chaired by Board member Fred Schoeps and will be staffed by Gary Ferguson and Go Ithaca staff, including Jane Brady.

### Priority Recommendations

*Each priority and new task in the work plan will be ranked by the DIA Board of Directors on a scale of A, B, or C, with A being highest and C being lowest. The compiled mean rankings are listed and will be used by staff when issues of resource allocation arise. Every effort will be made to fulfill the highest ranked tasks. Lower ranked tasks would be the first to be postponed.*

### Work Tasks for 2022

#### **1. Education/Learning Forums**

The Transportation Committee will continue its focus on educational and learning sessions pertaining to key issues and opportunities related to the future of transportation in Downtown Ithaca. These sessions will invite speakers from across the region and the country. The sessions will be developed based on their applicability to the 2030 Plan and to the Future of Downtown Transportation white paper.

#### **2. Advocating for a Downtown Intercity Bus Facility**

The DIA will work with the City, County and other stakeholder community organizations to advocate for a permanent Downtown intercity bus facility. This facility should also be multi-modal in practice and allow for appropriate and efficient use of multiple modes of transportation. The DIA will help to organize tours of best practice facilities in other cities, assist the City in evaluating potential sites, and help solicit funding for a downtown project.

### **3. Remote parking**

We will continue the Wegmans remote parking demonstration into 2022 and seek to replicate this pilot with other remote parking opportunities.

### **4. On-Demand Urban/Downtown Demonstration**

The DIA will work with TCAT and other stakeholders help to create and market an urban on-demand pilot. TCAT has previously published its interest in a late night on-demand program for downtown.

### **5. TDM Program Management**

The DIA will continue to serve as the managing entity for the Go Ithaca TDM program. The program, funded by a DEC grant, has specific metrics and goals and objectives. We will work to achieve these grant goals and work to transition the program for a permanent, sustainable home.

### **6. TDM policy for City**

In 2022, the DIA will conduct research on appropriate and feasible municipal TDM policies and make recommendations to the City. This work will include researching best practices in cities across the United States. The intent is to encourage the City to include new TDM policy into its Site Plan Review process and into its Green New Deal agenda.

### **7. Downtown/Flats Shuttle feasibility**

Working with TCAT, the DIA will continue to facilitate a process to assess the feasibility of creating a new downtown/flats shuttle route.

### **8. Develop a funding framework and plan for an ongoing TMA**

We will be working to develop a plan for a fiscally sustainable transportation management association (TMA) to manage transportation demand management efforts in downtown. This could include the relocation of the TDM/TMA program to a permanent new home with another entity, with DIA continued participation.

### **9. Monitor and assess parking policy**

The City began a comprehensive parking study of its entire system, including downtown in 2019. Delayed by the pandemic and now wrapped into a larger City transportation study, the DIA will closely monitor this work, participating as possible and providing input as appropriate. As the City finalizes its parking and transportation studies and subsequent recommendations for changes, the DIA will closely monitor and participate as possible in this effort, in order to help assess their impact on the downtown community.

### **10. Continue to work with major new projects -ongoing**

The DIA will work closely with the City and new Downtown projects on devising and implementing TDM plans that will reduce their reliance on parking and automobiles.

**11. Continue to work with TCAT and other stakeholders on transit corridor planning.**

The DIA will continue to work with the City of Ithaca, TCAT, Tompkins County, IC, and Cornell on ongoing efforts to create transit corridors between downtown and South Hill, East Hill, West Hill, and the Waterfront.

**12. Work with City and Bike/Walk Tompkins on Bike/Scooter Share**

The DIA will provide assistance and support as appropriate to community efforts to bring a second round of bike share and initial scooter share to Ithaca. We will also examine and propose possible downtown options for better day to day managing bike/scooter share vehicles.



# **ORGANIZATION GOVERNANCE & ADMINISTRATION**

## **2022 Work Plan**

November 15, 2021, 2021

### **The DIA and Organization Governance**

The DIA is an organization comprised of stakeholders representing all aspects of the Downtown district. Like other nonprofits, the organization is governed by a Board of Directors elected from the BID membership. Nurturing and fully utilizing this Board is a prerequisite for a successful and viable organization. Administrative functions pertaining to effective management are also included in this section.

This work is overseen and monitored by the DIA Executive Committee. This committee is currently chaired by the Board Chair and will be staffed by Gary Ferguson

### **Priority Recommendations**

*Each priority and new task in the work plan will be ranked by the DIA Board of Directors on a scale of A, B, or C, with A being highest and C being lowest. The compiled mean rankings are listed and will be used by staff when issues of resource allocation arise. Every effort will be made to fulfill the highest ranked tasks. Lower ranked tasks would be the first to be postponed.*

### **Work Tasks for 2022**

#### **1. Collaborate with the City on the Completion of the 2030 Downtown Strategic Plan**

Building upon the work already undertaken, the DIA will collaborate with the City Planning Department on completing the drafting of the 2030 Plan.

#### **2. Prepare a DIA Downtown 2030 Plan implementation strategy**

The 2030 Downtown Plan will contain many different recommendations and tasks for implementation over the ensuing decade. During 2022 the DIA will prepare a strategy for implementation, identifying and selecting key items for priority attention. This strategy will also identify possible funding and partnering opportunities.

#### **3. Disseminate the 2030 Plan**

During 2022 we will work to disseminate the 2030 Plan to stakeholders and the broader community.

#### **4. Create an ad hoc committee to research the expansion of the BID**

This effort would investigate the feasibility of either BID expansion or the creation of sister BIDs that could be managed cooperatively.

**5. Continue transitioning the organization's financial system**

We will continue to transition to a new, hopefully efficient process for financial processes and record keeping in the organization.

**6. Institute annual evaluations of programs and activities.**

A schedule for program evaluation will be prepared in January of each year. The Board of Directors will receive presentations/reports on key programs and activities throughout the year and each program should receive regular Board evaluation and assessment. This schedule would be set by the Executive Committee.

**7. Organize an ongoing board meeting education program.**

Each December the Executive Director will propose a roster of board education programs for the coming year, based on feedback and input from the Board.

**12. Database (ongoing)**

The DIA staff will continue to refine and update its "Insightly" database and CRM system of businesses and buildings, to make it a more useful tool for the communications, research, and technical assistance.

# **NIGHT ECONOMY**

## **2022 Work Plan**

November 15, 2021

### **The DIA and the Night Economy**

The DIA recognizes the significant importance and impact of the night economy on the Downtown district and has organized an effort providing assistance and support to this key sector of the marketplace. This is a relatively new initiative and the details of DIA engagement and involvement are still being determined.

This work is overseen and monitored by the DIA Executive Committee. This committee is currently chaired by Board member Ashley Cake and will be staffed by:

### **Priority Recommendations**

Each priority and new task in the work plan will be ranked by the DIA Board of Directors on a scale of A, B, or C, with A being highest and C being lowest. The compiled mean rankings are listed and will be used by staff when issues of resource allocation arise. Every effort will be made to fulfill the highest ranked tasks. Lower ranked tasks would be the first to be postponed.

### **Work Tasks for 2022**

#### **1. Late night ambassadors (safe harbor presence)**

As the Downtown late-night economy restarts after the pandemic we will launch a pilot program aimed at providing a late-night presence on the busiest evenings .... Thursday, Friday, and Saturday nights. The late-night ambassador team will provide assistance and support to people, and will act to deescalate problems or potential problems. The team will be trained in de-escalation procedures.

#### **2. Training for establishments**

Working with the Watershed and other entities that have successfully adopted enhanced training, we will refine and make available training modules for late night businesses. Businesses will be expected to pay for this training.

#### **3. Lighting improvements**

During 2022, the NEC will lead an effort to inventory and catalogue locations in Downtown where there is insufficient nighttime pedestrian lighting. This work will be shared with the City of Ithaca for subsequent capital or operating improvements.

#### **4. Cameras in other locations & possible camera networking**

In a similar vein, the NEC will also lead an effort to inventory and determine additional locations where cameras could assist with nighttime pedestrian safety. We would also determine whether these sites would require public or private investment to purchase and install cameras and if various camera installations could be networked together to make a more usable and responsive too.

#### **5. Staffing Late Night Economy Committee**

We will staff the Late-Night Economy Committee, provided support to the Committee chair.