

STONE MOUNTAIN PLANNING RETREAT SUMMARY REPORT

MAIN STREET, DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY &
VISITORS CENTER November 16, 2013

Submitted December 23, 2013



SUMMARY AND OVERVIEW

The Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) worked with the City of Stone Mountain to facilitate a planning retreat for their Main Street, Downtown Development Authority and Visitors Center Boards. This retreat was held on Saturday, November 16, 2013, at Confederate Hall at Stone Mountain Park. The goals of the retreat included

- Develop a Work Program for 2014 based on the 2013 Downtown Development Authority, Main Street & Visitors Center Programs
- Engage the Main Street Four Point Approach to Organize all Program and Activities
- Prioritize Programs and Activities Using the Main Street Eight Guiding Principles

ARC developed a series of activities to help prioritize goals and activities, and to begin to think strategically about a work program for 2014. These activities included

- Review of 2013 Work Program and Accomplishments
- Identification of New Work Program Activities for 2014
- Interactive Electronic Voting Exercises to Inform Priorities
- Consideration of Work Program Priorities and the Main Street Eight Guiding Principles

The following pages document the process and outcomes of the retreat activities, including Recommendations for key elements of 2014 Work Program activities.



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2013 WORK PROGRAM REVIEW

SUMMARY

The Retreat began with a review of the Main Street, DDA and Visitor's Center 2013 Work Program. Participants used sticky dots to identify programs they felt were particularly important or successful. There was no limit placed on the number of activities participants could highlight. Votes were tallied, and the group discussed programs that were essential to the success of the organization, as well as those that fell short of expectations.

There was strong support to continue two of the most popular festivals - Blue Grassroots Festival and Oktoberfest - as well as seasonal activities such as the holiday parade. Opinions were mixed about other events such as the Movies on Main, which are labor intensive but don't yield strong financial returns. A balance is needed between events that are financially lucrative and events that generate good visibility and public relations.

Promotions

Program/ Activity		
Increase sales of concessions at all MSSM events	Completed	0 Votes
Refocus on & increase sponsorship fundraising for events	Completed	0 Votes
Conduct Blue Grassroots Music and Arts Festival	Completed	12 Votes
Conduct Oktoberfest	Completed	12 Votes
Conduct Movies on Main	Completed	2 Votes
Conduct Christmas Parade and Fireworks	Completed	8 Votes
Partner with SMart Inc. on upcoming campaign	On Hold	3 Votes
Visitor's Center	Ongoing	7 Votes
Create a promotional package with history, cultural info	On Hold	4 Votes
Wednesday night bluegrass jams @ the Gazebo	On Going	2 Votes
3 Day Breast Cancer Walk 2012 & 2013	Completed	6 Votes
150 Year Anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation	Completed	1 Vote
Classic Car Cruz In	Completed	2 Votes
Main Street and Tucker Arts Guild (TAG) Art Show	Completed	0 Votes
Embrace the Cycling Community in SMV	Ongoing	7 Votes
Investigate Farmers Market	On Hold	10 Votes
Implement new, refreshed look and feel for website	On Hold	6 Votes
Establish press release list of media outlets, contacts & deadlines	Completed	0 Votes
Better utilize social media to promote SMV	Ongoing	7 Votes
Create promotional video for SMV	In process	2 Votes
Promoted the Main Street Program through presentations, interviews	Completed	3 Votes
Purchased and sold promotional items (t-shirts, pens, license plates, etc)	Completed	1 Vote

SUMMARY

The Organization Committee plays a key role in developing strategies that will help foster the success of the other Main Street Committees. The Design Committee crossed over with Economic Restructuring on key projects such as the Train Depot, but had many projects On Hold or Ongoing on 2013. The Design Committee emphasized the importance of creating an attractive aesthetic to draw businesses and patrons to downtown in 2014.

Organization & Design

Organization		
Increase Income From Membership and Donations	Completed	3 Votes
Coordinate and Conduct Annual Retreat and Planning Session	Completed	0 Votes
Support 10 Year Update on LCI Study	Completed	2 Votes
<i>Established volunteer database & web-based sign up system</i>	Completed	2 Votes
<i>Successfully partnered with professional events company</i>	Completed	2 Votes
<i>Engaged ARC to conduct planning retreat for 2014</i>	Completed	1 Vote
<i>Applied for two grants</i>	Completed	3 Votes
<i>Reorganization - integration of DDA, MS & VC</i>	Ongoing	7 Votes

Design		
Coordinate and Implement Phase II & III Streetscape	On Hold	5 Votes
Obtain and Plant Flowers in Pots on Main Street	On Hold	8 Votes
Install large historic photos in empty store fronts	On Hold	2 Votes
Put art in windows of empty storefronts	On Hold	4 Votes
Get Merchants and Restaurants Involved	Ongoing	9 Votes
Partner with Cultivating Creativity to get designs for bldg facades	On Hold	2 Votes
Complete entryway project at South End of Main	On Hold	6 Votes
Secure funding for signage and wayfinding or "Placemaking"	On Hold	2 Votes
Pursue murals for SMV	Ongoing	3 Votes
Install kinetic cycling art around village	On Hold	3 Votes
Install "Traditions" Trolley Sculpture	Completed	0 Votes
<i>Welcome to Stone Mountain entry markers/ boulders installed</i>	Completed	2 Votes
<i>Began work on fundraising for Old Train Depot restoration</i>	Completed	11 Votes
<i>Invited coordination with HPC and Historic Society</i>	Completed	6 Votes
<i>Invited coordination with gardening groups</i>	Completed	4 Votes
<i>Painted and refreshed exterior of Weatherly Building</i>	Completed	5 Votes

SUMMARY

The Economic Restructuring Committee has an ambitious work program. Top priorities include pursuing economic tax credits through Opportunity Zones and making progress on the restoration of their property portfolio, including the Weatherly Building and Train Depot, as well as other aspirational acquisitions.

Economic Restructuring

Program/ Activity		
Partner with Hershon at Stone Mountain Park	Ongoing	7 Votes
Partner with Stone Mountain Memorial Association	Ongoing	8 Votes
Meet with Georgia Pacific Foundation to establish relationship	On Hold	0 Votes
Investigate and gain ownership of Rock Gym	Ongoing	7 Votes
Investigate and seek grants for various Design projects	Ongoing	2 Votes
Create MSSM Trust to solicit funds from wills/ beneficiaries	On Hold	0 Votes
Implement URP or Enterprise Zone to qualify for OZ tax credits	Ongoing	12 Votes
Apply for Opportunity Zone status	Ongoing	9 Votes
Investigate and Implement a Tax Allocation District (TAD)	Ongoing	2 Votes
Establish a Downtown Development Revolving Loan Fund	On Hold	3 Votes
Create documentation of available commercial properties in SMV	Completed	2 Votes
Identify specific business types SMV wants to attract	Ongoing	6 Votes
Conduct "Developers Day"	In Process	4 Votes
Investigate Restoration of Old Train Depot	In Process	11 Votes
Investigate Restoration of Rock Gym	In Process	3 Votes
Investigate lodging options for SMV	Ongoing	0 Votes
Investigate securing MARTA parking lot for development	Ongoing	4 Votes
Partner with State Organizations to identify resources to attract business	Ongoing	4 Votes
Partner with Stone Mountain CID	Ongoing	6 Votes
Partner with GFFPS on Economic Gardening/ Cultivating Creativity	Ongoing	2 Votes
Partner with GSU Hospitality School to improve offerings in the village	Completed	1 Vote
Visitors Center	Ongoing	6 Votes
<i>Engaged DeKalb County to obtain resources for Economic Development</i>	Completed	2 Votes
<i>Conducted economic development training session for SMV leadership</i>	Completed	1 Vote
Specific to DDA		
Call Listing Agents and Brokers	On Hold	0 Votes
Develop Relationships with Building Owners	Ongoing	4 Votes
Meet one-on-one with local businesses quarterly	In process	2 Votes
Capture facility rentals and return to DDA/ Main Street	In Process	4 Votes
Invest in financially viable project	On Hold	0 Votes
Enlist real estate broker to list available space for sale/ lease	Ongoing	1 Vote
Create long term plan for the Weatherly Building	In Process	8 Votes

SUMMARY

Participants recognized that they have an easier time generating new ideas than focusing on a limited number of activities. It was a challenge to identify activities that should drop off work program, even when new ideas were generated for 2014. The table below summarizes new ideas proposed at the Retreat.

Subsequent activities during the day helped to refine program goals and targets to narrow activities in 2014 to a manageable list. An overwhelming work program - with many activities left on hold, on going, or undone - can be discouraging for committee members.

2014 WORK PROGRAM

Program/ Activity	Committee
Develop streamlined organization model/ Fill Main Street Manager Position	Organization
Integrate goals of 10 year LCI Study & URP	Organization
Integrate goals of MS, DDA & VC	Organization
Increase attendance and participation at annual Festivals/ Events	Promotions
Increase engagement/ piggybacking on other events	Promotions
Integrate goals of MS & DDA with Historic Preservation Commission	Design
Engage on Weatherly Building and Depot projects	Design
Complete Opportunity Zone application	Economic Restructuring
Start "selling" Stone Mountain to Developers	Economic Restructuring
Seek out economic development expert to assist	Economic Restructuring
Second Saturday in May - Concerts with the Symphony	Promotions
Introduce concerts with different types of music, such as jazz	Promotions
Cultivate downtown business experience	Organization
Evaluation of the feasibility of a farmers market & adjunct activities	Promotions
Develop a Communications Strategy	Organization
Identify a recreation-oriented development to engage the whole town	Economic Restructuring
Support local businesses through a facade improvement program	Design
Closing of Second Street to create a plaza space	Design
Participate in the 175th anniversary celebration of Stone Mountain	Promotions

COMMUNITY PRIORITIES

SUMMARY

Participants used electronic voting to respond to a priorities from 2013 and new priorities proposed for 2014. Programs and activities were compiled based on the discussion from the morning activities. The electronic voting allows individuals to express preferences for programs that they may not otherwise have articulated during the open discussion.

“Yes” indicates support for the continuation of the program/ activity. “No” indicates a lack of support for the continuation of the program/ activity. “Abstain/ No Opinion” indicates an indifference toward the program/ activity.

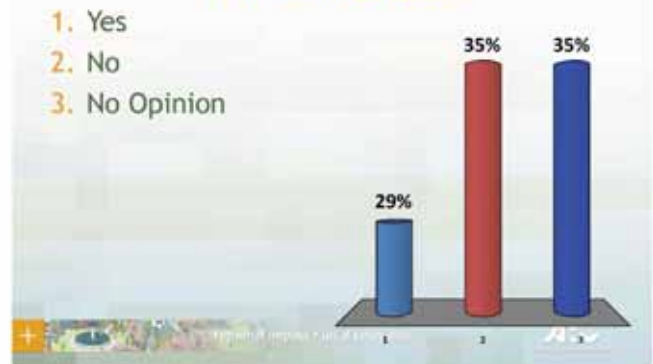
Reorganization - integration of DDA, MS & VC

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. Abstain



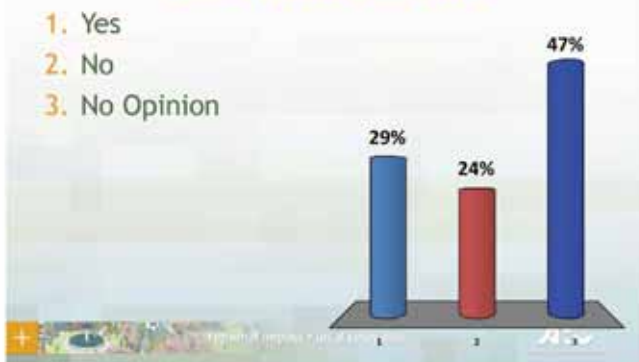
Obtain and Plant Flowers in Pots on Main Street

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. No Opinion



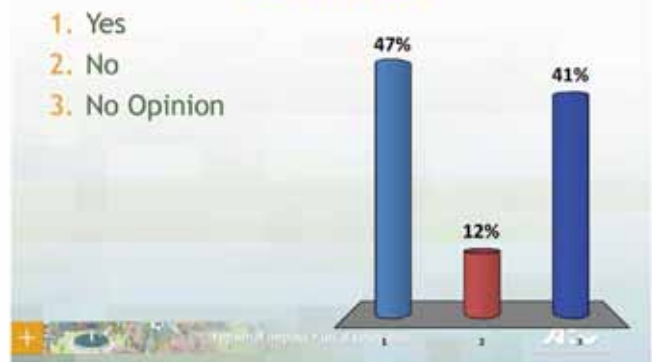
Install large historic photos in empty store fronts

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. No Opinion



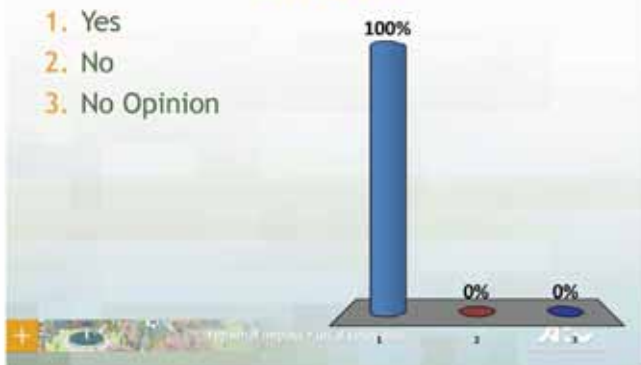
Put art in windows of empty storefronts

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. No Opinion



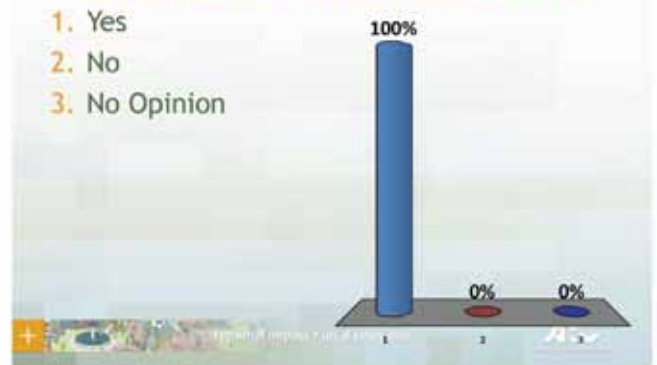
Get Merchants and Restaurants Involved

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. No Opinion



Partner with Cultivating Creativity to get designs for bldg facades

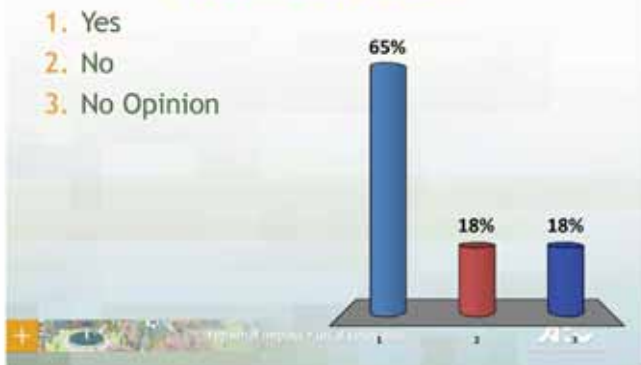
- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. No Opinion



**Clarified that this slide referred to preferences for pursuing a downtown facade improvement program.

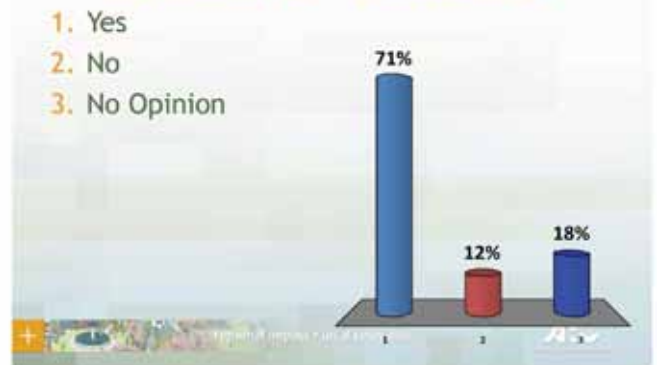
Complete entryway project at South End of Main

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. No Opinion



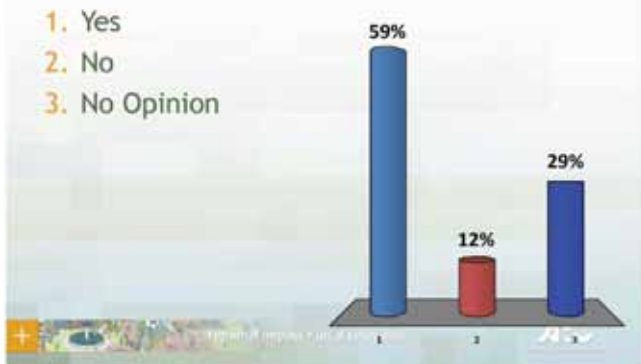
Secure funding for signage and wayfinding or "Placemaking"

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. No Opinion



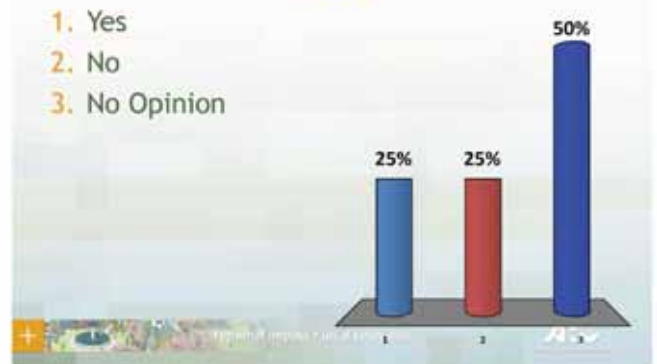
Pursue murals for SMV

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. No Opinion



Install kinetic cycling art around village

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. No Opinion



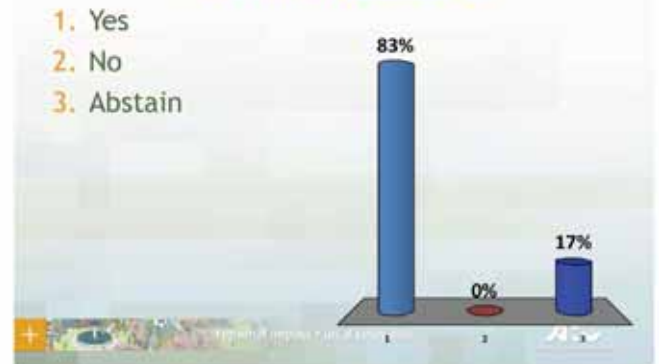
Began work on fundraising for Old Train Depot restoration

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. Abstain



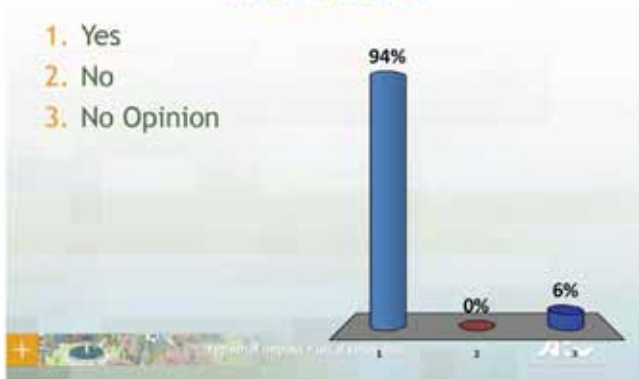
Painted and refreshed exterior of Weatherly Building

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. Abstain



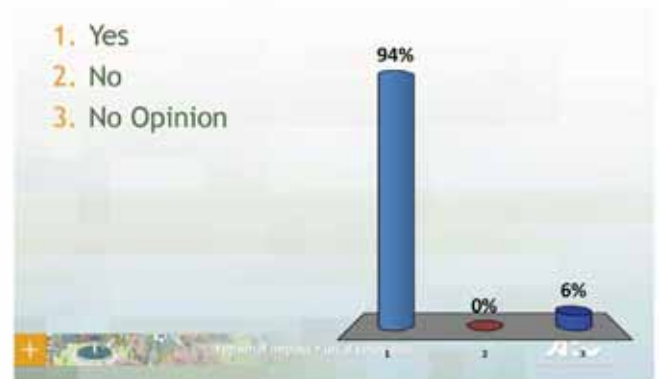
Conduct Blue Grassroots Music and Arts Festival

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. No Opinion



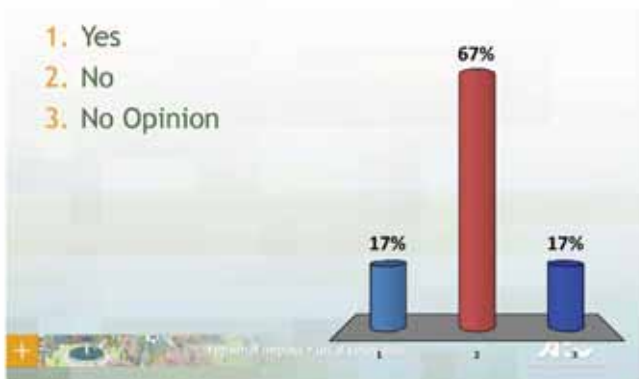
Conduct Oktoberfest

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. No Opinion



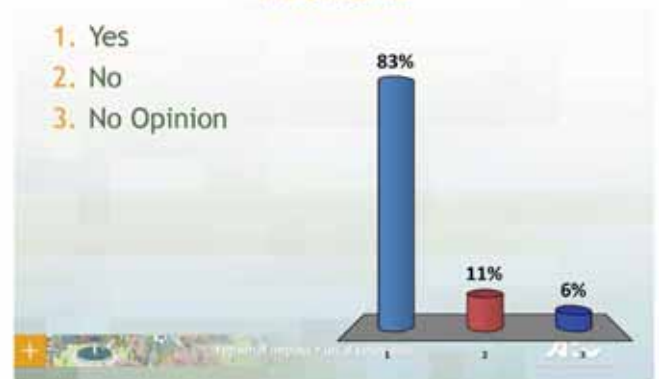
Conduct Movies on Main

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. No Opinion

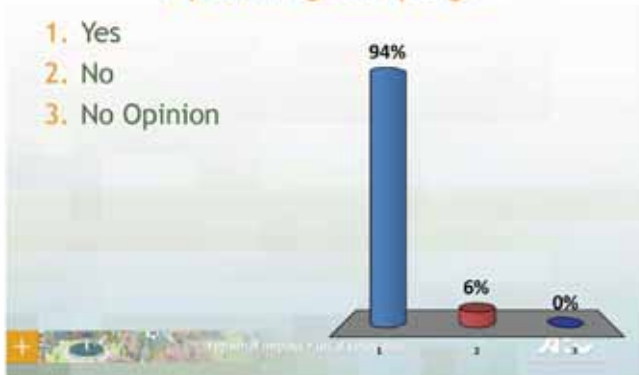


Conduct Christmas Parade and Fireworks

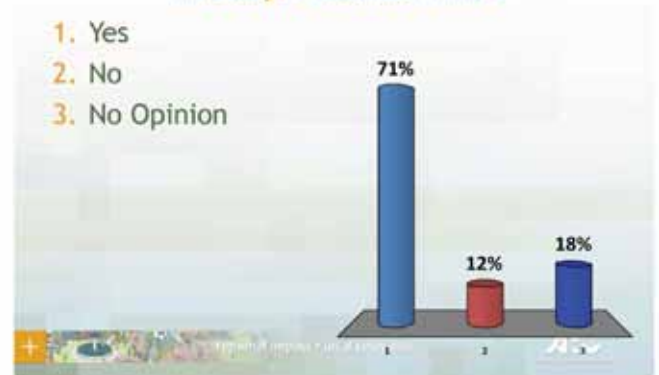
- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. No Opinion



Partner with SMart Inc. on upcoming campaign

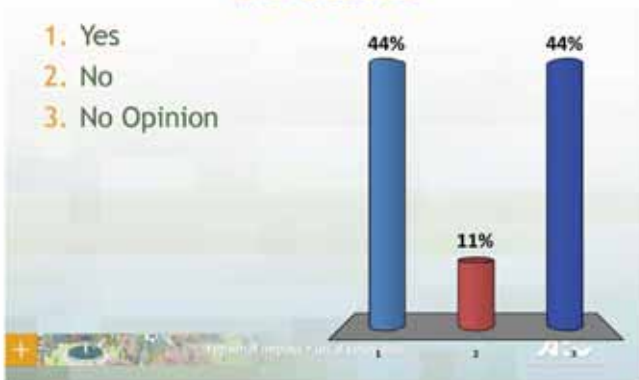


Create a promotional package with history, cultural info

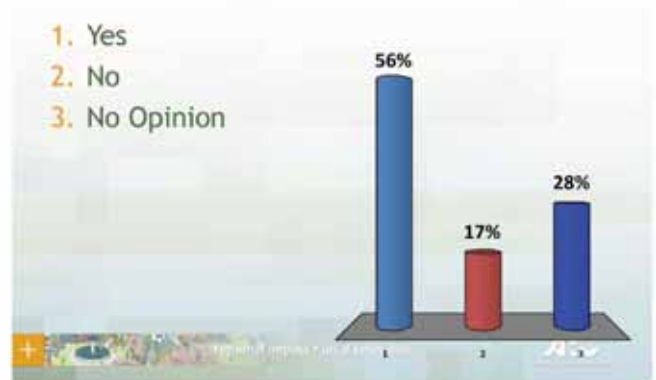


**Clarified that this slide referred to preferences for continuing a partnership with Art Station.

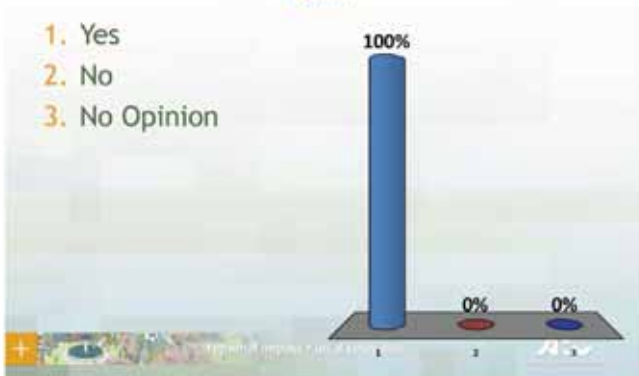
Wednesday night bluegrass jams @ the Gazebo



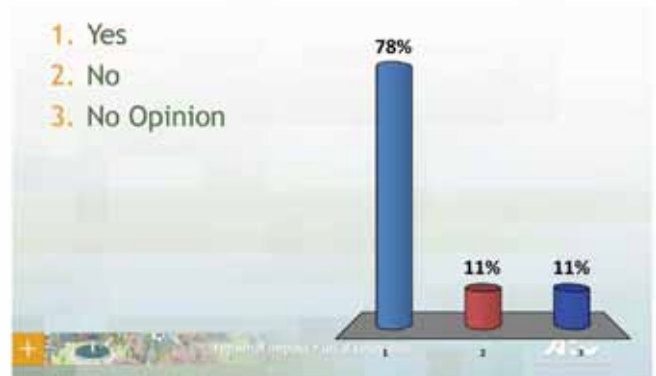
Classic Car Cruz In



Embrace the Cycling Community in SMV

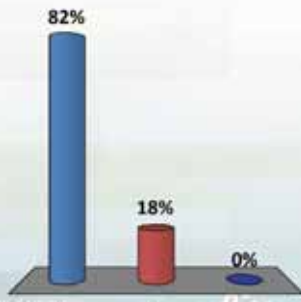


Investigate Farmers Market



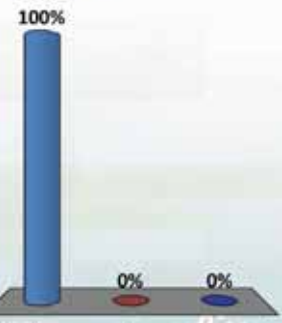
Partner with Hershon at Stone Mountain Park

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. No Opinion



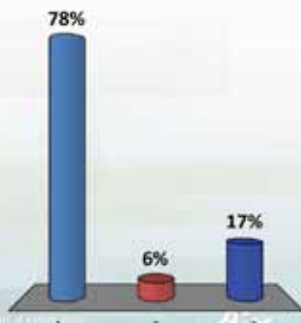
Partner with Stone Mountain Memorial Association

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. No Opinion



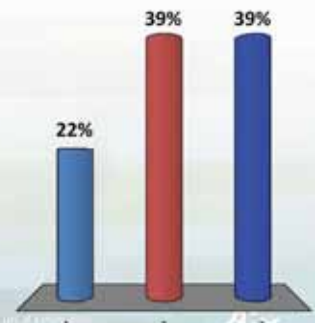
Investigate and gain ownership of Rock Gym

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. No Opinion



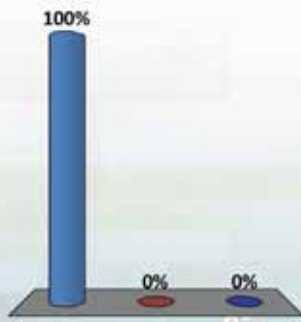
Create MSSM Trust to solicit funds from wills/ beneficiaries

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. No Opinion



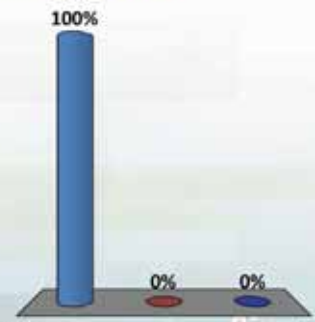
Apply for Opportunity Zone status

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. No Opinion

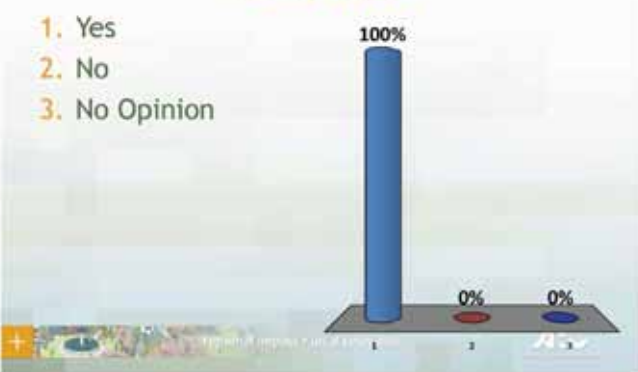


Formalize Business Retention and Recruitment Strategy

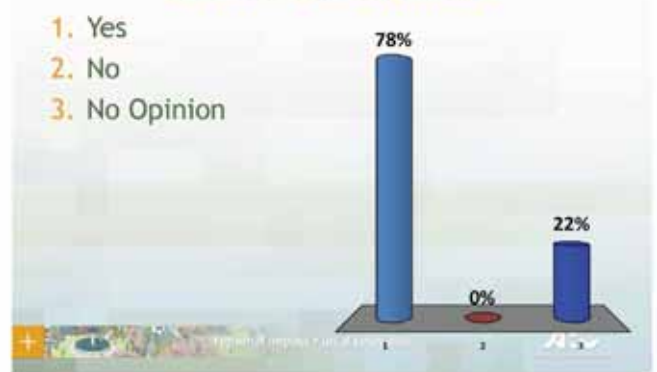
- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. No Opinion



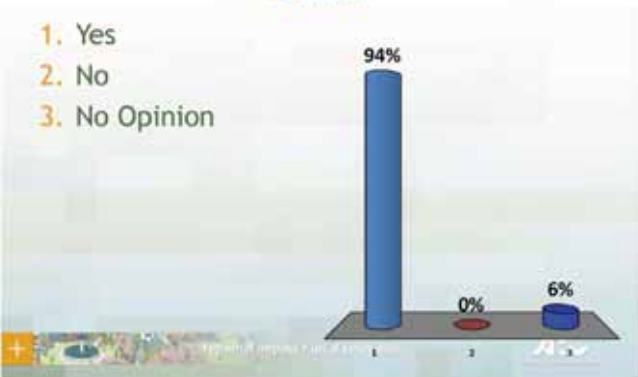
Investigate Restoration of Old Train Depot



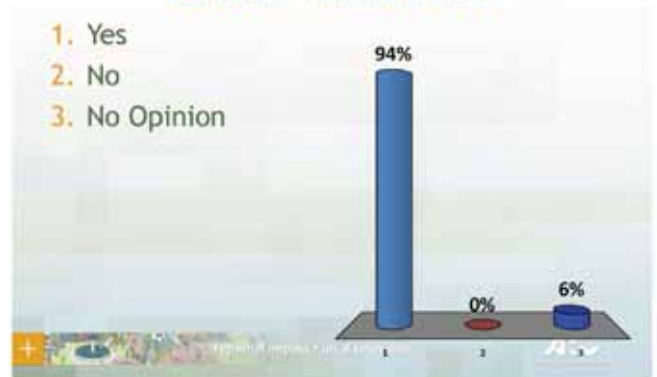
Investigate securing MARTA parking lot for development



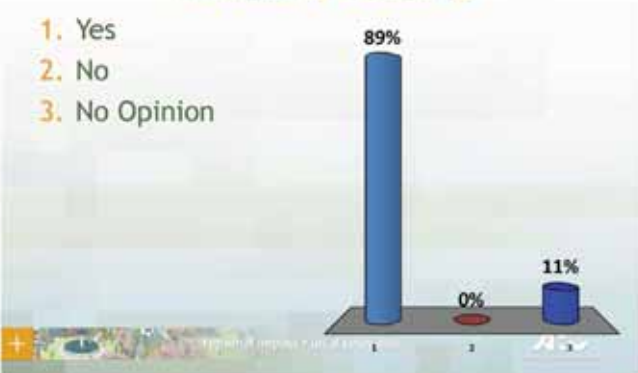
Visitors Center/State Welcome Center



Capture facility rentals and return to DDA/ Main Street



Create long term plan for the Weatherly Building

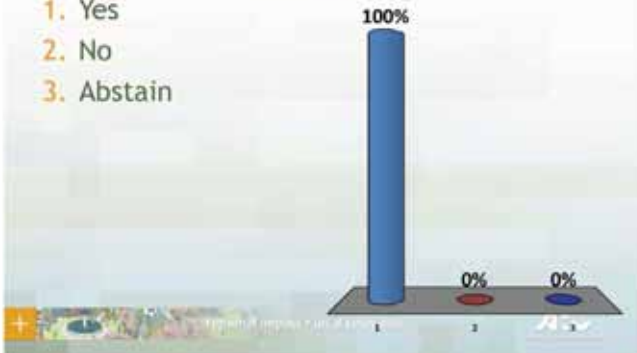


**Clarified that this slide referred to preferences for capturing fees from rentals by the film industry in downtown Stone Mountain.

NEW IN 2014

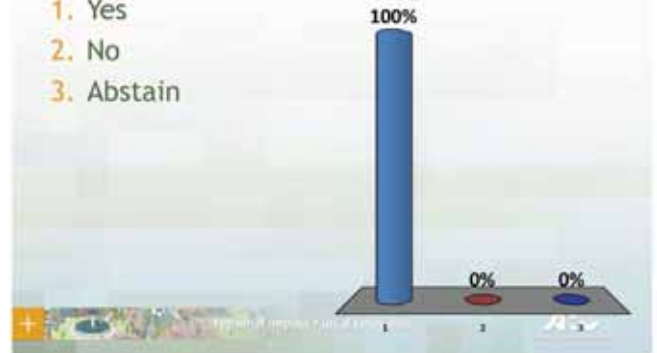
Develop streamlined organization model

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. Abstain



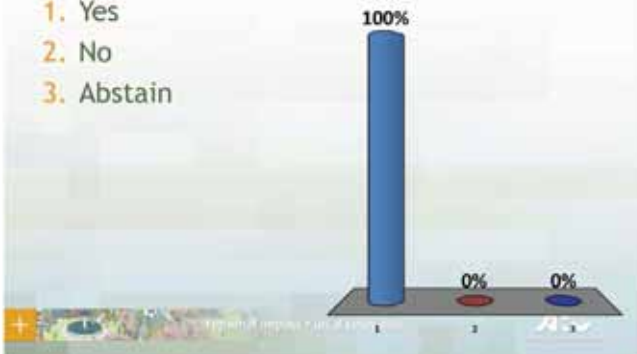
Integrate goals of 10 year LCI Study & URP

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. Abstain



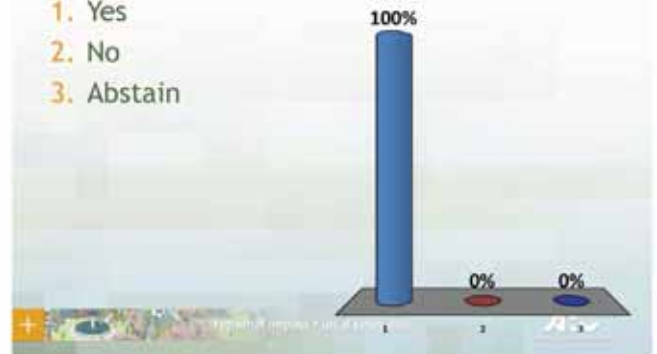
Integrate goals of MS, DDA & VC

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. Abstain



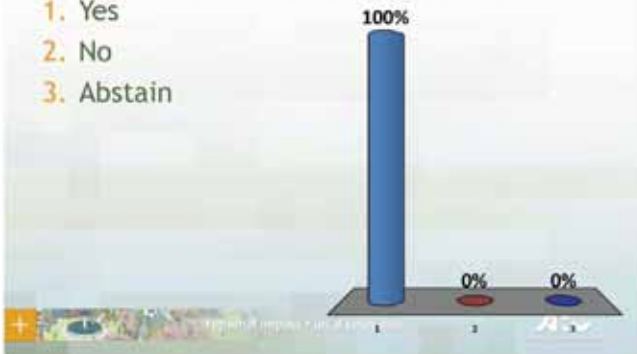
Increase attendance and participation at annual Festivals/ Events

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. Abstain



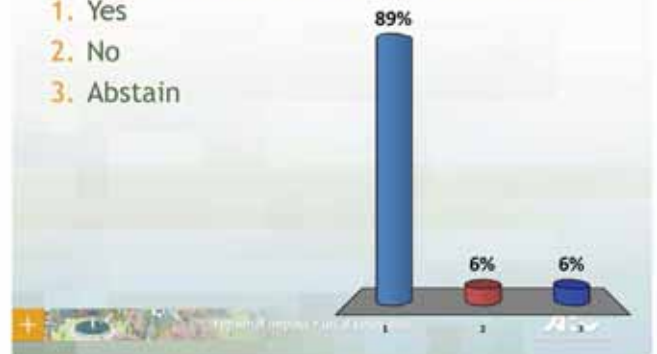
Increase engagement/ piggybacking on other events

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. Abstain



Integrate goals of MS & DDA with Historic Preservation Commission

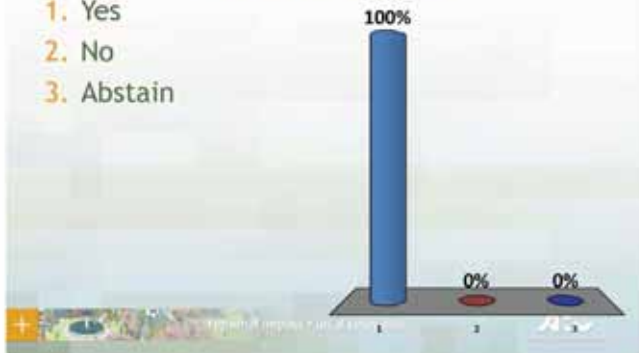
- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. Abstain



NEW IN 2014

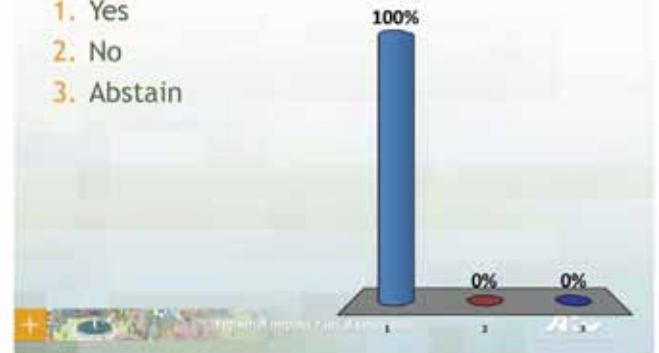
Engage on Weatherly Building and Depot projects

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. Abstain



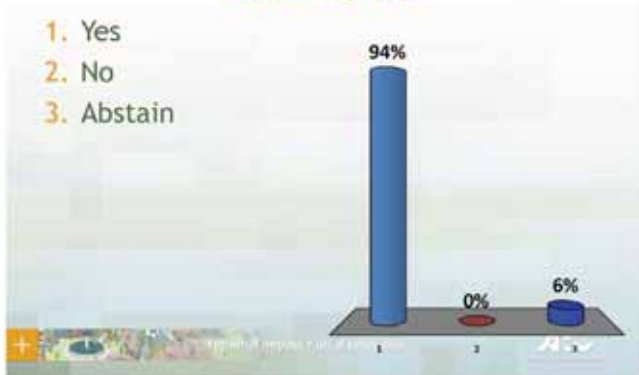
Complete Opportunity Zone application

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. Abstain



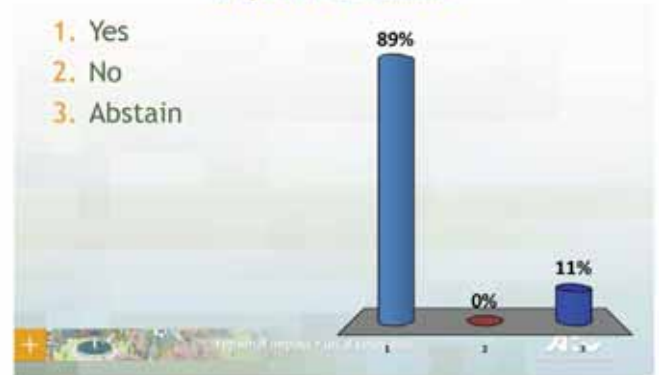
Start "selling" Stone Mountain to Developers

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. Abstain



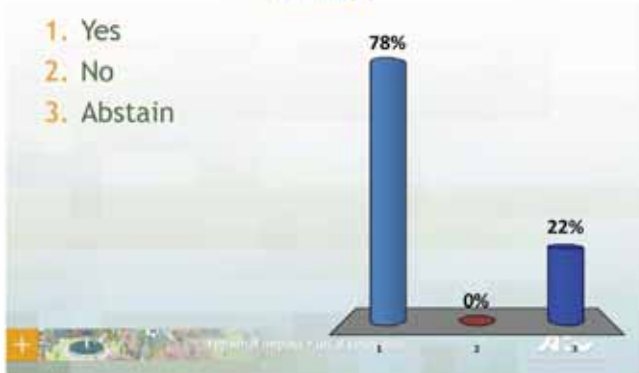
Seek out economic development expert to assist

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. Abstain



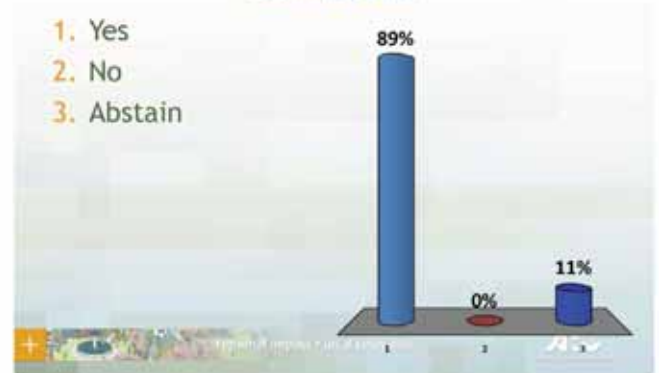
Explore reactivating the symphony in May

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. Abstain



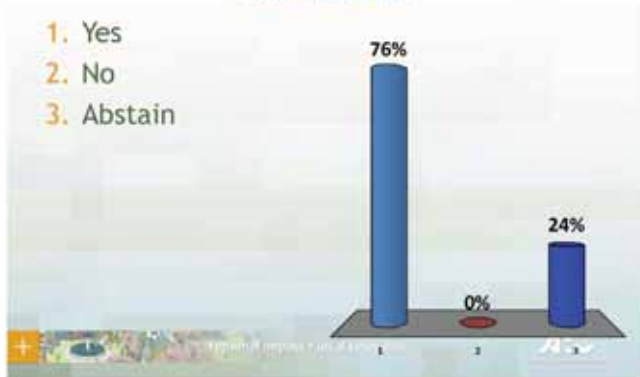
Add different music events in downtown

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. Abstain

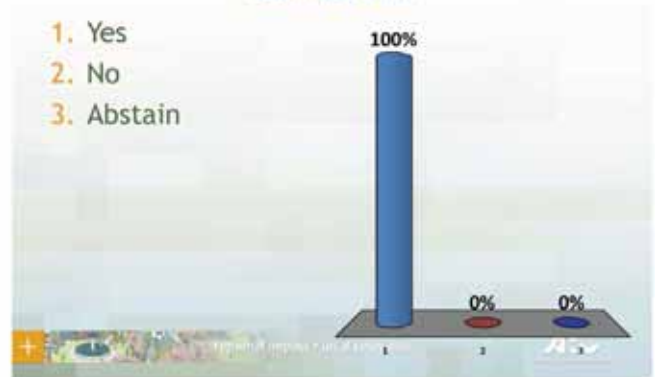


NEW IN 2014

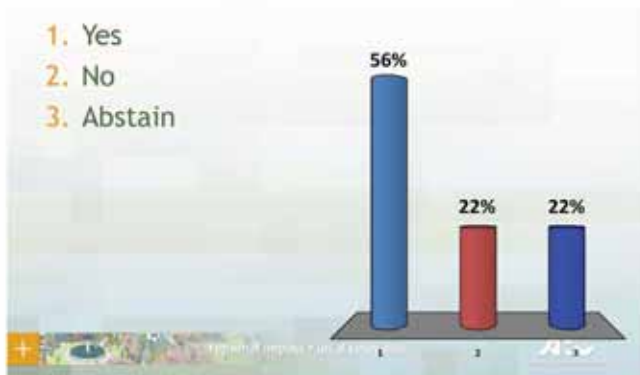
Add recreation experiences downtown



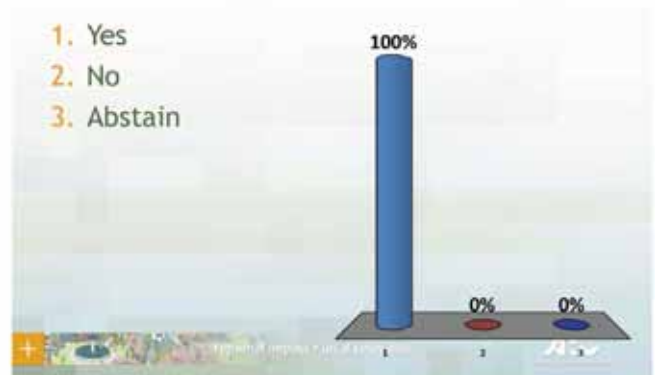
Relocate old artwork back into downtown



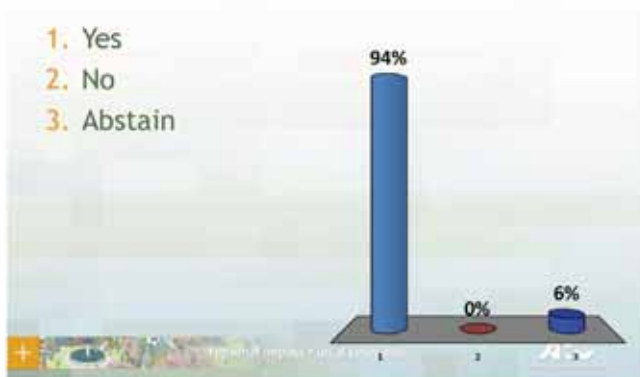
Create 2nd Street Plaza



Create Communication Strategy



Support 175th Anniversary



Acquire greenspace in front of Baptist Church



EIGHT GUIDING PRINCIPLES

SUMMARY

The Main Street Program recommends Eight Guiding Principles that work in conjunction with the Main Street Four Point Approach. Participants were divided into four groups and each given two principles to analyze and discuss. They were asked to identify programs or activities that fell in line with each principle, and then each group reported their findings at the end of the session. A summary of each is included here.

Incremental

Baby steps come before walking. Successful revitalization programs begin with basic, simple activities that demonstrate that “new things are happening” in the commercial district. As public confidence in the Main Street district grows and participants’ understanding of the revitalization process becomes more sophisticated, Main Street is able to tackle increasingly complex problems and more ambitious projects. This incremental change leads to much longer-lasting and dramatic positive change in the Main Street area.

PROGRAM/ ACTIVITIES

- Depot, money, community fundraising, signage (creates unity & branding)
- Façade Grant
- Simple marketing to bicycle group (wheel theme)
- Communications campaign that things are happening
 - Put newsletters in local churches
- Program to identify necessary businesses
 - Survey residents
 - Coffee shop, grocery, pharmacy

Self Help

No one else will save your Main Street. Local leaders must have the will and desire to mobilize local resources and talent. That means convincing residents and business owners of the rewards they'll reap by investing time and money in Main Street — the heart of their community. Only local leadership can produce long-term success by fostering and demonstrating community involvement and commitment to the revitalization effort.

PROGRAM/ ACTIVITIES

- Merchant and Building Owners Involvement
- Streamlining Organization (MSSM, DDA, VC) to become efficient
- Identify, using area resources: ARC, DCA, Ann Arnold, Charles Whatley
- Training for our Individual Missions
- Supporting / Making LCI, URP, OZ work in our community
- Making sure all segments of Stone Mountain have a voice
- Working with major partners: AFFPS, SMMA, Hershon

Quality

Emphasize quality in every aspect of the revitalization program. This applies to all elements of the process — from storefront designs to promotional campaigns to educational programs. Shoestring budgets and “cut and paste” efforts reinforce a negative image of the commercial district. Instead, concentrate on quality projects over quantity.

PROGRAM/ ACTIVITIES

- Weatherly as a model; continuing down Main Street
- Engaging Professional Events Management Company put our events on a whole new level
- Creating professional Communications Plan and Marketing Materials; making sure qualified professionals are involved
- Our contribution (bricks/ landscape) to streetscapes
- Use of granite at our gateways
- Maintain the high quality in all design efforts
- Solidifying our festival efforts: Oktoberfest, Bluegrass, etc/ Quality over Quantity

Partnerships

Both the public and private sectors have a vital interest in the district and must work together to achieve common goals of Main Street's revitalization. Each sector has a role to play and each must understand the other's strengths and limitations in order to forge an effective partnership.

PROGRAM/ ACTIVITIES

- Events – AFPS & SIBA; Merchants
- Merchants
- Stone Mountain Park; SMMA
- DeKalb Convention/ Chamber
- Stone Mountain CID
- Georgia Military College
- ARC/ DCA
- Private Funding Sources
- HPC
- State/ Department of Economic Development
- Cycling Community
- Womens' Club/ Garden Club/ Civic Association
- Area Businesses/ Business Association

Implementation

To succeed, Main Street must show visible results that can only come from completing projects. Frequent, visible changes are a reminder that the revitalization effort is under way and succeeding. Small projects at the beginning of the program pave the way for larger ones as the revitalization effort matures, and that constant revitalization activity creates confidence in the Main Street program and ever-greater levels of participation.

PROGRAM/ ACTIVITIES

- Utilize 2nd Street project – Maintain Alley – Lights
- Complete renovation of Weatherly Building
- Downtown Area – cooperate with local gardening clubs to improve appearance
- Festive Lighting
- Get Womens' Club, Rotary, Masons, etc involved
- South End Board of Civic Organizations and Merchants

Existing Assets

Business districts must capitalize on the assets that make them unique. Every district has unique qualities like distinctive buildings and human scale that give people a sense of belonging. These local assets must serve as the foundation for all aspects of the revitalization program.

PROGRAM/ ACTIVITIES

- Depot
- Weatherly Building
- Blue Grassroots Festival
- Oktoberfest
- History of town – buildings, people, granite industry
- ART Station
- SMMA/ SMV relationship
- The “Rock”
- The Cemetery
- C.I.D
- Rock Gym
- Location – just outside the 2nd most visited attraction in the southeast
- Cycling Community

Comprehensive

No single focus — lavish public improvements, name-brand business recruitment, or endless promotional events — can revitalize Main Street. For successful, sustainable, long-term revitalization, a comprehensive approach, including activity in each of Main Street's Four Points, is essential.

PROGRAM/ ACTIVITIES

- Revitalize Business/ Merchants Association – why don't they want to be involved
- Decide mix of businesses
- Business recruitment strategy
- Work with housing development – new and old
- Work, live and play
- Depot
- Façade projects – plants
 - ?? shed

Change

Emphasize quality in every aspect of the revitalization program. This applies to all elements of the process — from storefront designs to promotional campaigns to educational programs. Shoestring budgets and “cut and paste” efforts reinforce a negative image of the commercial district. Instead, concentrate on quality projects over quantity.

PROGRAM/ ACTIVITIES

- Strategic Plan for each project
- Education program for merchants
- Communication Strategy
- Façade program/ Beautification
- Positive Image Marketing
- Developer Outreach

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the Retreat activities, the following key elements of a 2014 Work Program are recommended.

ORGANIZATION

Organization establishes consensus and cooperation by building partnerships among the various groups that have a stake in the commercial district.

Jan

Complete the reorganization and integration of the governing structure of Stone Mountain Main Street, Downtown Development Authority and Visitors Center.

- Identify new Main Street Manager
- Establish Regular Meeting Schedule for integrated Committee Structure

Work with the City of Stone Mountain to establish a Memorandum of Understand for managing services (such as film locations) that could return fees to Main Street/ DDA/ Visitors Center activities.

Develop a strategy document that identifies key partnerships and organizes the network of relationships that Main Street/ DDA/ Visitors Center rely on for support and potential funding. Understand which Committees are pursuing support through each network and the specific "ask"/ role that the potential partner will play for the Committee's needs and goals.

- Examples identified during the retreat include Hershon at Stone Mountain Park and the Stone Mountain Memorial Association
- Consider assigning a liaison from the Committee to pursue key contacts
- Share the document with other Committees to get buy in and consensus

Jul

Work with the City of Stone Mountain to submit an LCI Supplemental Study

- Key elements should explore the connection between the existing bicycle and pedestrian network and its users; the parking needs in downtown Stone Mountain to support your bicycle/pedestrian network and your businesses; and strategies to integrate these areas through a strong business development strategy that supports the existing network and its users
- LCI applications are generally due in the fourth quarter of the year and require a 20% cash match

Dec

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the Retreat activities, the following key elements of a 2014 Work Program are recommended.

PROMOTIONS

Jan

The goal of Promotions is to create a positive image that will rekindle community pride and improve consumer and investor confidence in your commercial district.

Develop a formal Communications Strategy document. This should not be activities that are "understood" or just exist in the mind of your Main Street Manager. Rather it should formalize ideas separate ideas from the 2013 work program that reflects a deliberate and strategic course of action for promoting activities and events, such as:

- Establish press release list of media outlets, contacts and deadlines
- Better utilize social media to promote Stone Mountain Village

Develop a basic promotional package for events that are supported by Main Street, but not sponsored by Main Street. This includes events such as the Breast Cancer Walk, Bluegrass Jams at the Gazebo, Classic Car Cruz In and Tucker Arts Guild Art Show. This package can be done in conjunction with your Communication Strategy, or as a separate document. The purpose is to help organize work load of you Committee and Main Street Manager, and set parameters for the assistance the Main Street will provide to partner events.

Continue Signature Festivals, such as Blue Grassroots Festival, Oktoberfest and Christmas Parade and Fireworks

- Establish music event as new summer Signature Event
- "Consider "piggybacking" new events such as the 175th Anniversary Celebration and jazz or symphony concerts onto signature events in 2014
- Formalize any new events for kick off in 2015 and stand alone offerings

Jul

Submit a Community Choices Application to ARC to explore the feasibility of establishing a Farmers Market in downtown Stone Mountain

- Community Choices is a technical assistance program that uses graduate student interns supervised by ARC staff to explore a topic of relevance to a local government.
- The application should raise questions including, what other markets currently operate in the other; what is the availability of farmers to serve the market; what would be the investment needed to establish the market; what would be the demand for the market; what ancillary activities should take place at the market; what other types of support should MS/ DDA/ VC be prepared to undertake to support the market?
- Community Choices applications are typically accepted in the fourth quarter and do not require any cash match. A Community Choices application for a Housing Inventory is recommended as a part of the Economic Restructuring Committee, therefore Promotions and Economic Restructuring should coordinate on which application should be submitted in 2014 and which should be submitted in 2015.

Dec

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the Retreat activities, the following key elements of a 2014 Work Program are recommended.

DESIGN

Design means getting Main Street into top physical shape and creating a safe, inviting environment for shoppers, workers, and visitors.

Jan

Identify top priorities for façade restoration in 2014.

- Explore the idea of initiating a façade grant program. Host a peer exchange dialogue with regional partners that manage façade grant programs to understand the pros and cons of the program.
- Set targets for implementation of a façade restoration program.
- Identify partners to assist with implementation of a façade restoration program.

Identify key streetscape improvements in 2014, building on the success of existing streetscape improvements.

- Undertake an inventory of existing public art and streetscape improvements.
- Develop a budget and timeline for new improvements.
- Set specific design standards for desirable streetscape improvements
- Identify partners to assist with implementation of streetscape improvements

Jul

Coordinate with the Organization Committee on fundraising and partnerships for the façade grant and streetscape improvement programs, in the context of their larger effort to develop a partnership strategy for the organization.

Give consideration to implementing a wayfinding signage program in downtown Stone Mountain Way

Undertake a demonstration project by creating a temporary Second Street Plaza for special events

- Coordinate with the Promotions Committee and undertake in conjunction with a Special Event
- Current practices in Tactical Urbanism may offer good examples of creative placemaking opportunities for this plaza.
- See http://issuu.com/streetplanscollaborative/docs/tactical_urbanism_vol.1 and http://issuu.com/streetplanscollaborative/docs/tactical_urbanism_vol_2_final for suggestions.

Dec

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the Retreat activities, the following key elements of a 2014 Work Program are recommended.

ECONOMIC RESTRUCTURING

Economic Restructuring strengthens your community's existing economic assets while diversifying its economic base.

Jan

Work with ARC and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs to achieve Opportunity Zone designation for Stone Mountain.

Coordinate efforts with management of property portfolio and develop a strategic timeline of actions. This could include:

- Focus on the rehabilitation of the Weatherly Building so as to serve as a benchmark for success; this allows the community and investors to see progress and build confidence in future endeavors
- Build off of the success of the Weatherly Building so as to embark on the Depot restoration; develop a strategy with reasonable targets and realistic cost expectations
 - Develop a fundraising strategy (Coordinate with the Organization Committee on fundraising and partnerships for the Depot Rehabilitation, in the context of their larger effort to develop a partnership strategy for the organization)
 - Undertake a historic structure evaluation
 - Identify potential tenants / market strategy (including Visitors Center)
- Investigate the possibility of acquiring an option agreement with the DeKalb Board of Education on the Rock Gym
 - An option agreement would give a right of first refusal in the event another buyer demonstrates interest on the property
 - If an option agreement is on possible, consider holding a façade easement on the property as an interim step prior to acquisition
- Develop a timeline for acquisition of additional real estate interests in other properties
 - Consider options on easements on the MARTA parking lot and the Baptist Church greenspace
- Document the needs for property for the Georgia Military College

Jul

Begin a draft Business Retention and Recruitment Strategy document (to be formalized later as a part of a potential LCI Supplemental Study). This draft strategy should begin to consider/formalize ideas identified as separate work program items for 2013, including

- Identify specific business types Stone Mountain Village wants to attract
- Create documentation of commercial property portfolio in Stone Mountain Village
- Consider tools such as a revolving loan fund or tax allocation district (which could also coordinate with Design Committee in work with streetscape and façade improvements)
- Build relationships with developers, listing agents and brokers (who are also key partnerships)

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the Retreat activities, the following key elements of a 2014 Work Program are recommended.

ECONOMIC RESTRUCTURING

- Identify building owners in Stone Mountain Village and develop relationships
- Meet with local business owners regularly
- Develop relationships with business owners, merchants and restaurateurs

Submit a Community Choices Application to ARC to explore the feasibility of undertaking a Housing Inventory in downtown Stone Mountain (this may be more appropriate for the Design Committee)

- Community Choices is a technical assistance program that uses graduate student interns supervised by ARC staff to explore a topic of relevance to a local government.
- A similar inventory was undertaken for the city of Lithonia in 2013 and can be reviewed online at http://www.atlantaregional.com/File%20Library/Local%20Gov%20Services/community%20choices/cd_comm_ch_lithonia_final_2013.pdf
- Community Choices applications are typically accepted in the fourth quarter and do not require any cash match. A Community Choices application for a Housing Inventory is recommended as a part of the Promotions Committee, therefore Promotions and Economic Restructuring should coordinate on which application should be submitted in 2014 and which should be submitted in 2015.

Dec