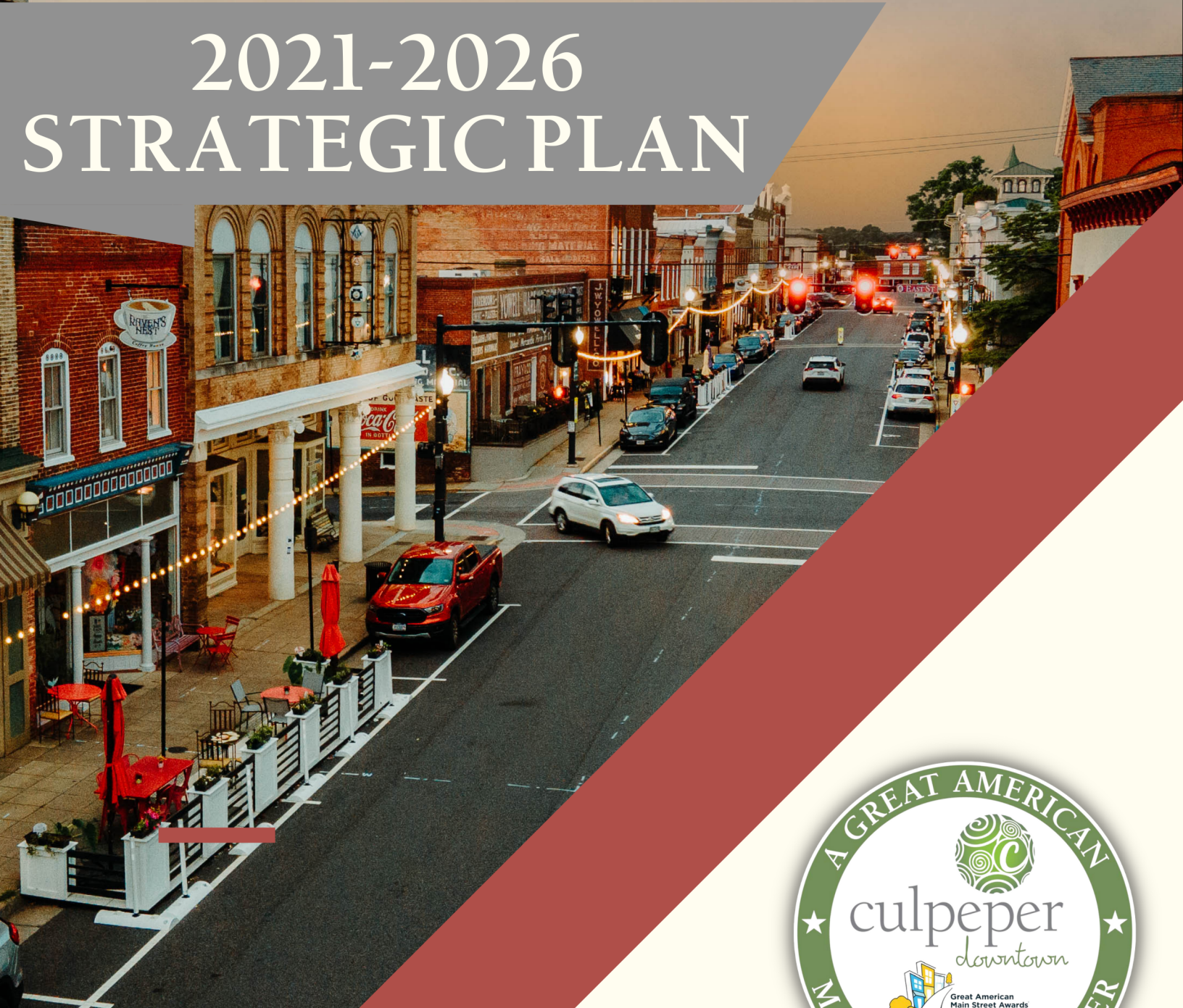




culpeper renaissance  
*the world's one and only*

# 2021-2026 STRATEGIC PLAN





## *About Culpeper Renaissance, Inc.*

Designated in 1988, Culpeper Renaissance, Inc. (CRI), a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, is a member of the Virginia Main Street program. The main street program was organized by the National Trust for Historic Preservation to help revitalize the economic vitality of downtown commercial districts using the National Main Street Center's successful Four-Point Approach® of Promotion, Organization, Design, and Economic Vitality.

# Vision and Mission



## Vision

Culpeper Renaissance, Inc's vision for Culpeper is an Enjoyable, Vibrant, and Walkable Downtown that actively leverages its cultural assets to connect businesses with visitors and residents, and is WELCOMING TO ALL.

## Mission

Culpeper Renaissance, Inc's purpose is to stimulate a growing and stable commercial center in downtown Culpeper by:

- Increasing the use of downtown as a destination for local residents and visitors
- Promoting and developing a diversified business mix
- Fostering residential opportunities in and near downtown
- Continuing to strengthen a unified and enduring sense of place

# Strategic Planning Goals & Objectives

Adopted October 21, 2021



The 2021-2026 Strategic Plan for Culpeper Renaissance, Inc. (CRI) is intended to guide programming efforts of the organization over the next 5 years with strategized goals. Each year the CRI committees review the organizations vision, mission, and goals while planning their yearly workplan. Each project, event and program must meet at least two of the five goals. The CRI Board of Directors holds a Board Retreat every 3 years to review the vision, mission and goals for updates based on stakeholder feedback, market trends, economic and global impacts, and best practices from comparable downtown markets.

A Culpeper Downtown Market Assessment and Enhancement Strategies was prepared by John Accordino, Ph.D, FAICP, Jeff Milner, and Fabrizio Fasulo, Ph.D with the Center for Urban and Regional Analysis at VCU a division of the L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs Virginia Commonwealth University in May 2015. A Strategic Planning Visit with completed Culpeper Transformation Strategies was held in 2018 with Kathy La Plant with the National Main Street Center and Kyle Myer with Virginia Main Street.

The CRI Board of Directors is looking towards the future. Based on the 2023 CRI Service Plan with VMS, the CRI Board of Directors will hold a Strategic Market Planning in 2023. The Strategic Market Planning will define our organizations transformation strategies to ensure CRI maintains a strong market-based understanding that informs the organization's project development and downtown vitality efforts. In partnership with Main Street America (MSA), Virginia Main Street (VMS) will provide support to help CRI translate market data and community visioning into district-specific strategies that spur transformative, measurable change and to guide our organizations work.

## Goal 1

### **Expand physical and economic revitalization along entry corridors & secondary streets**

- Provide ongoing support and advocacy for existing storefront businesses
- Proactively recruit diverse and targeted businesses to fill vacant spaces
- Provide wayfinding signage through various methods – banners, sidewalk signage, and kiosks
- Animate and enliven public spaces through small-scale activations and programming increasing the use of downtown as a destination for local residents and visitors
- Placemaking through public art projects such as murals and power box art wraps
- Provide supplemental cleaning for areas in need of improvement
- Provide beautification such as flower baskets, planters, and banners
- Provide temporary beautification such as First Friday String Street lights, and seasonal decor

## Goal 2

### **Expand the volunteer base by 25%**

- Create volunteer opportunities through event and programming efforts
- Create an easily accessible online volunteer sign up form
- Hold an annual volunteer appreciation event with yearly awards for volunteer of the year, champion of the year, and partner of the year.
- Share cross promotional requests for volunteers with partnering entities
- Create a fun and organized experience where volunteers know what is expected of them and know what to expect from CRI



## Goal 3

### **A diversified funding stream including: Raise \$25,000 in private donations & increased grant funding**

- Implement a Friends of CRI Campaign
- Increase Town of Culpeper budget request by \$50,000
- Hold two online auctions
- Participate in Give Local Piedmont and Giving Tuesday
- Apply for available local, state, and federal grants to assist in projects and programming efforts.
- Maintain and grow a digital presence and CRI brand
- Elevate CRI's profile and influence in the community
- Increase sponsorship opportunities through various CRI events and projects
- Integrate storytelling that celebrates and promotes CRI's history and ongoing downtown revitalization efforts
- Highlight successful projects and partnerships of those projects through various social media outlets, press releases, and website postings annual

## Goal 4

### Maintain and increase the success of Downtown's retail market

- Provide ongoing support and advocacy for existing storefront businesses
- Collect, maintain, and disseminate key downtown market data
- Provide ongoing support to downtown property owners through assistance in filling vacant properties located within the downtown district
- Distribute pertinent grant, loan, and training opportunities to downtown businesses via CRI Culpeper Downtown Business Private Chat Room, email, and the CRI website.
- Advocate for policies important to downtown's future and that align with CRI's mission
- Provide various promotional opportunities for downtown businesses



## Goal 5

### Building a strong community connection that establishes Downtown Culpeper as a destination for visitors, businesses, and residents

- Maintain and grow a digital presence and CRI brand
- Create and maintain a new and mobile friendly Culpeper downtown website
- Integrate storytelling that celebrates and promotes Culpeper Downtown and its local merchants and small businesses
- Increase promotional efforts in key locations denoted by zip code survey results of identified possible promotional gaps
- Create and/or encourage other events and festivals that will bring people downtown throughout the year
- Encourage, assist, and promote storefront businesses in their own programming and special event efforts, and the production of the Culpeper downtown shopping and dining guide
- Continue the production of CRI's signature calendar of events
- Maintain a strong relationship with the Town of Culpeper and other key partner organizations.
- Be a catalyst for priority strategic initiatives and projects that CRI's constituents want to see in our downtown

# Work Plan

July 2023 - June 2024  
Adopted: January 26, 2023

Designated in 1988, Culpeper Renaissance, Inc. (CRI) is a member of the Virginia Main Street program. The main street program was organized by the National Trust for Historic Preservation to help revitalize the economic vitality of downtown commercial districts using the National Main Street Center's successful Four-Point Approach® of Promotion, Organization, Design, and Economic Vitality.

In partnership with the Town of Culpeper, CRI will provide the following services:

- Coordinate a corps of volunteers to assist in the work of the organization and maintain a record of the total number of volunteer hours worked.
- Organize, advertise, and promote events, activities, promotions, shows, ribbon-cuttings for new businesses and festivals in the downtown area.
- Promotion Purpose: Marketing the traditional commercial district's assets to customers, potential investors, new businesses, local citizens and visitors.
  - Orchestrate the following Special Events:

The CRI Special Events highlight the downtown district by showcasing a vibrant and appealing retail enterprise on Main Street sending a signal to commercial interests with an eye on Culpeper, that the downtown historic district is a good place to do business. The Events create a gathering place and central hub of activities in the community pulling a greater collaboration of community involvement through volunteers and local organizations, resulting in joint ventures that will bring greater awareness, foot traffic, and revenue to Culpeper.

    - Downtown Culpeper Carnival – February
    - Downtown Restaurant Week – March
    - Gnarly Hops & Barley Fest – April
    - 3rd Thursday Summer Concert Series – May, June, July, August (Rain Date September)
    - Culpeper Downtown First Fridays – Merchants Open late 'til 8pm – May, June, July
    - Culpeper Block Party: Hop N Hog – October
    - Downtown Restaurant Week – October
    - Downtown Trick-or-Treat – October
    - Downtown Holiday Open House - November
    - Community Tree Lighting – November
    - Small Business Saturday, Pink Friday, Black Friday, Cyber Monday – November
  - Develop the Culpeper Downtown Farmers Market as a major on-going event May 1 – October 31

The CRI Downtown Farmers Market highlights local farmers in the area creating awareness to consumers of the importance of buying locally produced goods. The market makes downtown alive with social and economic activity with direct benefits to local farmers, artisans, business owners in the downtown district and has become an incubator for potential business owners. The market increases job creation and employment. Growing our market from 8 full time vendors to 30 full and part time vendors, the market has made downtown the place to be on

Saturdays, resulting in greater foot traffic and revenue for our downtown merchants and therefore the Town of Culpeper.

- Develop a packet for the new vendors of rules & regulations and other pertinent information
- Provide a paid Market Manager
- Focus on unique local producers
- Recruit new vendors
- Promote regionally
  - Printed Market Guide
  - Live Radio Remotes
  - Radio Co-op Advertising
  - Social media pages
  - CRI website
- Partnership with Piedmont Environmental Council with the Buy Fresh Buy Local campaign
- Special Events/Activities
  - Kids Farm Fresh Dollars Program
  - Various children's cooking classes
  - Scheduling live entertainment on various days
  - Grand Opening Celebration of the Market
    - ❖ Live entertainment
    - ❖ Live Radio Remote
    - ❖ Children's Face Painting
    - ❖ Caricature Artist
  - Customer Appreciation Day
    - ❖ Live entertainment
    - ❖ Children's Face Painting
    - ❖ Caricature Artist
    - ❖ Drawing for a Gift Basket Give Away
    - ❖ Various items being given away
  - National Farmers Market Week
    - ❖ Live entertainment
    - ❖ Children's Face Painting
    - ❖ Caricature Artist
    - ❖ Drawing for a Gift Basket Give Away
    - ❖ Various items being given away
  - American Grown Flowers Week
    - ❖ Live entertainment
    - ❖ Children's Face Painting
    - ❖ Character Artist
- General promotion of downtown through
  - Website
  - Facebook
  - Twitter
  - Instagram
  - Snapchat
  - Monthly Newsletter





- Teacher Appreciation Program – 10% discount to participating downtown businesses
- Destination Downtown Culpeper – a 16 page Quarterly Downtown New publication, mailed to every home in the county (dependent upon merchant advertising buy in)
- Printing of 28,000 Culpeper Downtown Shopping & Dining Guides
- Paid advertisements in local and regional print, radio, and social media outlets
- In partnership with Culpeper Times, create a new 32 page magazine to highlight downtown business called “THRIVE”

➤ Organization Purpose: Building consensus and cooperation among the many groups and individuals who have a role in the revitalization process

- Staff, Board, Volunteer and Merchant trainings
  - CRI staff and Board of Directors to attend VMS/DHCD webinars
  - CRI staff and Board member to attend the National Main Street NOW Conference - March
  - CRI’s Executive Director to attend the Annual Virginia Main Street Directors Retreat – October
  - Staff and Board members to attend VMS online Regional Rev Up
- Grants
  - Staff and board members to research grants that can be applied to 2023-2024 projects
  - Staff to apply for the grants
- Develop a strong volunteer base
  - Annual Volunteer Appreciation - May
- Build/Maintain Good Community Partnership
  - Attend various partnering entities meetings:
    - Culpeper Economic Development Advisory Council
    - Culpeper Chamber of Commerce
    - Parking Authority meetings as needed
    - Town Department meetings as needed
  - Work with community groups with various events and programs including:

A Little Magic Therapy Horses  
 Blue Ridge Chorale  
 CCHS Band  
 Culpeper Center  
 Culpeper County Library  
 Culpeper Festival Committee  
 Culpeper Master Gardeners  
 Culpeper Police Department  
 Culpeper Tells a Festival of Words  
 Culpeper Toy Chest  
 Department of Human Services  
 Department of Tourism  
 Fauquier Times  
 Parks and Rec.  
 Piedmont Virginian  
 Shenandoah Garden Spot

Burgandine House/ OTT  
 Culpeper Airport  
 Culpeper Chamber of Commerce  
 Culpeper County Public Schools  
 Culpeper Garden Club  
 Culpeper Media Network  
 Culpeper Sheriff’s Department  
 Culpeper Times  
 Department of Economic Dev.  
 EVHS Band  
 Museum of Culpeper History  
 Piedmont Communication WJMA  
 SAFE  
 Soapbox Derby



Stage Works  
Virginia Cooperative Extension  
Welcome Wagers Therapy Dogs

Town of Culpeper  
Virginia Family Nutritional Program  
Windmore Foundation for the Arts

- Personnel Management
    - Ongoing oversight
    - Perform annual reviews
    - Raises/Bonuses
  - External Reporting
    - Quarterly reports required by Virginia Main Street for Culpeper to be a designated Main Street community for the state of Virginia
    - Year end Data required by Virginia Main Street for Culpeper to be a designated Main Street community for the state of Virginia
    - Quarterly reports to Town Council
  - 2024-2025 Workplan
    - Set Goals/Mission
    - Set Priorities
    - Committees Develop Workplans with ALL columns filled.
    - Committee review and prioritize
    - Compile present to the Board for approval
  - As a designated Virginia Main Street Community CRI is entitled to Virginia Main Street Services (please see attached a full list)
- Design Purpose: Enhancing the physical appearance of the commercial district by rehabilitating historic buildings, encouraging supportive new construction, developing sensitive design management systems and long-term planning.
- Encourage pedestrian-friendly streets
    - Creating pedestrian-friendly streets increases attractiveness of the area to visitors and improvement of the overall environment attracting increased social interaction in the community by creating a space resulting in increased revenue to Culpeper
  - Upkeep of the E.B. Wood Community Park for use by both locals and visitors
    - South wall repair work for public safety
    - Parging and painting of the South wall as needed
    - Placement of a cap on top of the South wall
    - Replace spring and fall plants as needed
    - Spring clean-up – removal of leaves and debris
  - Hanging flower baskets and other plantings
    - Purchase replacement hardware
    - Purchase plants
  - Seasonal banners
    - Purchase banner hardware replacements as needed
    - Purchase banner replacements as needed
  - Hometown Heroes banners highlighting those in our community who have served
  - Expand physical and economic revitalization along entry corridors & secondary streets
    - Sidewalk Directional Signage Second Phase Expansion



- Research addition wayfinding programs to increase foot traffic to secondary street businesses
- Purchase Holiday decorations
  - Purchase nylon cable ties
  - Purchase C-7 replacement bulbs for all lighting décor as needed
  - Purchase replacement hardware as needed
  - Purchase replacement ornaments as needed
  - Purchase additional and replacement “Snow Fall” lights
  - Purchase additional wreath bows
- Holiday Door and Store Front decorating contest for downtown businesses
- Harvest streetlamp décor (cornstalks and bows)
- Downtown Business Harvest Light Pole Decorating Contest
  - Possible partnership with local schools & organizations for participation
- Free Façade design services provided to property owners
- Free Feasibility Study Grant(s) available
- Façade, Sign and Awning Grant program in the amount of \$10,000
- Implementation of at least one additional mural for the Culpeper Downtown Walls Mural Program
- CRI Website updates as needed
- Power Box Art Wraps
- Provide a pet waste unit in the Grassy area at the Depot

➤ Economic Vitality Purpose: Strengthening the district’s economic base while finding ways to meet new challenges from outlying development.

- Provide assistance to new and existing businesses
 

As a key component of Virginia Main Street, we provide opportunities to merchants for continuing education in best business practices. This helps to increase revenue in downtown businesses and to the Town of Culpeper.

  - Identify appropriate marketing strategies
  - Merchant driven zip code survey – 2 times per year.
  - Secret Shopper Program
  - Offer free educational seminar(s) for downtown businesses and property owners.
  - Provide Ribbon Cuttings to new businesses
  - Manage the historic downtown commercial district to ensure economic stability and to continue growth
  - Provide free available retail space listing on the CRI website
  - Cooperative advertising opportunities
  - Downtown Business Welcome Packet New Design
- Maintain and market inventory/data base of occupied and free vacant properties listing in downtown on the CRI website
  - Refer prospective tenants to property owner
- Research and apply for small business relief grants – implement grant programs for downtown businesses
- Redesign of the CRI Project Sponsorship Packet
- Projects to be determined



# culpeper renaissance

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## Economic Vitality



## Design



## Promotion

## Organization

