



Positively Eden! Strategic Plan
Annual Report Year 2

Goals and Idea Boxes

Broaden the Impact of Downtown

Goal DT-1

Re-energize Downtown Eden's Main Street Program (Main Street is a national program that embraces a 4-point approach to downtown redevelopment): good design (develops space), an organization (develops partners) to do the work, events and materials for downtown promotion (develops markets), and economic vitality (develops businesses and uses) to harness the opportunity.

Idea Box

- Hire a Full Time Main Street Manager.
- Invite staff from the NC Main Street Program to facilitate Main Street Program Action Plan.
- Report progress through an annual "State of Downtown" luncheon to celebrate successes and share emerging opportunities.

Actions Taken

Year 1:

- Randy Hunt was hired July of 2017 as full time Main Street Manager.
- NC Main Street Program Director Liz Parham directed a program on Main Street principals to all merchant and building owners in Eden's Main Street and the Cook Block and Boulevard. Over 40 attended; unfortunately no one represented the Cook Block or Draper Section. Plans are made to continue this event on an annual basis. Each September, this event will be held to share the recently completed Eden Main Street statistics from the previous August to July period. This will show the progress made in the downtown areas for the previous year.

Goal DT -2 Moved to Branding

Goal DT-3

Expand private investment incentives to improve Downtown's public space.

Idea Box

- Continue the current façade grant program; involve downtown building owners to evaluate the façade grant program, and make changes as needed (e.g. evaluate use, funding limits).
- Consider other matching grants, such as a storefront signage matching grant, mini-streetscape improvements.
- Work with the Economic Restructuring Committee to identify other needs for which incentives and/or public private partnerships will improve downtown's public space.
- Fund a downtown incentive grant to help encourage building renovations.
- Target coveted businesses specifically for downtown areas, such as microbreweries, restaurants and retail stores.

Actions Taken

Year 1:

- The façade grant was renewed for the 2017-18 year and four downtown businesses qualified for them.
- A paved parking lot was constructed off Bridge Street that continues behind Washington Street.
- The City is researching ways in which incentives and partnerships can be developed to promote downtown investment. One project involves an artist who is interested in developing an artist's school. The City is seeking a way to make this partnership workable for both parties.
- The City of Eden Building Rehabilitation Grant (BRG) was adopted. Grants range from \$500 to \$5,000 and was also included in the 2018-19 budget. Four grants were awarded in 2017-18. The Main Street Manager works with local developers on targeting key businesses. There are some existing property owners who have expressed an interest in seeking microbrewery and restaurant tenants. We will also recruit from neighboring areas for coveted businesses. A team of UNC Chapel Hill graduate community development techniques students researched 622 Washington Street. They chose Eden as a project to research city and regional planning. They proposed best usages for the property in keeping with accepted design practices.
- The City of Eden Development Improvement Grant was adopted and two applications were started before July 1, 2018. The first was for Ashley Latham Photography and the other was from Mark Bishopric for the Spray Mercantile Property.

Year 2:

- The façade grant was also in effect for the 2018-19 year with two recipients, Trey Wyatt at 622 Washington Street and Mitchell's Drugs at 544 Morgan Road. Storefront signage was already an approved use of the façade grant.
- 622 Washington Street was saved, rehabilitated and sold to an individual who plans a meadery and tapis bar. As of June of 2019, the front façade had been improved and exterior painted. Completion is expected in early 2020.
- A Jacksonville, FL developer purchased 618 and 624 Washington Street and plans apartments, a coffee shop, a walkway to the Bridge Street municipal parking lot, and a restaurant. He also has plans for additional downtown properties.
- The Development Incentive Grant was ruled illegal by the School of Government and is no longer available.

Goal DT-4

Annually update and distribute Downtown Eden and other key area market data (retail sales and leakage, area income, available properties, etc.).

Idea Box

- Purchase and analyze ESRI market data to identify market opportunities to share with existing and potential business owners.
- Incorporate ESRI data and other sources to bolster economic vitality efforts.

Actions Taken

Year 1:

- Each March, the City purchases ESRI data that reveals the retail marketplace potential for business categories within one, three and ten miles of the City. This information is shared with existing and potential business owners.

Year 2:

- **The package was again purchased.**

Increase Economic Vitality

EV-1 Moved to Place Making

EV-2

Increase Eden's competitiveness in broader markets (region, state, nation, etc.)

Idea Box

- Continue working with county and regional partners on traditional economic development activities and initiatives.
- Enhance and develop additional business incentives, with prioritization on business startups and small, local, business.
- Support Rockingham County Economic Development for industrial development and recruitment efforts.
- Aggressively work with partners to ensure that Eden has an educated and skilled workforce.
- Participate in local/regional efforts to expand broadband options.
- Develop and provide site, financial, technical product and resources to support entrepreneurs and business growth in Eden.
- Continue regional collaboration efforts such as the Berry Hill Regional Mega Park, Dan River ST8 Crossings marketing campaign, workforce education, including reciprocal tuition with VA educational institutions.
- Identify and solve broadband deficits within the community and county.
- Continue working with county and regional partners on traditional economic development activities and initiatives.

Actions Taken

Year 1:

- The countywide ¼ cent sales tax was passed in May of 2018 for a workforce development center thanks to a dedicated cast of volunteers. This group is working with RCC staff on a plan to provide a pipeline to the center when it opens its doors in 2019-2020. Plans are also being made to reach students as early as elementary school to discuss the importance of education for career success.
- The building rehabilitation grant was successfully launched in 2017-18. The Development Incentive Grant will be promoted aggressively in 2018-19. Randy Hunt attended specialized entrepreneurship training to help him work with aspiring and existing entrepreneurs. He is also working with Adam Mark of the Rockingham County ED department.
- Broadband coverage is comprehensive in most areas of Eden. We do not have an influence on the county broadband coverage.

Year 2:

- **Regional efforts for economic and tourism development continue. The funding procurement process and engineering for the Berry Hill mega park water line continued during 2018-19. In early 2019-20, the pre-construction meeting was held with a tentative start date of August 12, 2019. The water line will be completed within a year of this time. It appears that the first mega park tenant will be announced in September of 2019.**

EV-3

Objectively weigh the opportunities or challenges of attracting industrial prospects to the City of Eden and its economic region.

Idea Box

- Tailor Eden's traditional economic development strategy and efforts using the provided economic development data.
- Using the Industry Targeting data provided, build the internal "business case" for attraction and additionally provide valuable facts for external marketing efforts

Actions Taken

Year 2:

- **Eden continues to be plagued by its location away from interstate highways. This has been an impediment in marketing the MillerCoors and Powell Furniture sites. However, Eden is also home to Gildan Activewear, the largest U.S. distributor and Mabe Trucking which ships across the country from our city. The success of these companies will be used to "sell" the benefits of locating in Eden.**
- **A virtual shell building concept will be used in marketing the 12.7 acre Eden Industrial Center site instead of investing in a traditional shell building.**
- **The City is working with Duke Energy to help market the New Street properties to data center clients.**

EV-4 Moved to Education/Schools

EV-5

Continue to make progress on major infrastructure projects.

Idea Box

- Continue to move forward with improving the City's water extension to the Berry Hill Mega Park and correcting the sewer system per the EPA Administrative Order. Continue to aggressively recruit a high-water user for the MillerCoors site.

- Continue to advocate for high-profile transportation projects through NCDOT's SPOT process to improve access into and out of Eden, with a high priority on access to the Berry Hill Industrial Park / Pursue transportation funding designed to four lane Route 14 from Eden to US 220 and offer support for transportation improvements in Virginia as it relates to the Berry Hill Mega Park.
- Work hand in hand with our partners in Virginia on the development of the Mega Park.

Actions Taken

Year 1:

- Phil Berger provided an additional \$1 million to the Berry Hill water line project in the 2018-19 NC budget bringing grant funding to more than \$4 million. We are awaiting confirmation of the EDA and other state grants after project revision documents were submitted to the respective agencies.
- MillerCoors was marketed aggressively by Jones, Long, LaSalle, the county and city. As of August 2019, two companies are seriously considering the site. Both have the potential to be large water users.
- Transportation improvements have been achieved regionally with I-73 and I-785. This will continue with I-785 extended to exit 153 and I-73 extended to the Hwy 135 exit.

Year 2:

- **The water line construction will begin on August 12, 2019 and be completed within a year.**
- **This is being done on an on-going basis. The City partnered with its Virginia neighbors and want to thank the VDOT area representatives for expediting funding for the Berry Hill Connector Road to the Danville Expressway in March of 2019. This project could be operational by 2025. The following day, Senator Berger's staff was approached about expediting the I-785 extension. In a subsequent meeting, NCDOT Division 7 staff reiterated the plan to expedite the extension if possible.**

EV-6

Continue to improve Eden's road and transportation infrastructure.

Idea Box

- Continue to allocate annual funding to the road network by implementing Eden's repaving and road maintenance schedule and promoting other transportation projects.
- Remain aware on NCDOT's paving schedule and coordinate Eden's repaving projects when appropriate.
- Continue support and possible expansion of the SKAT Bus.
- Provide the required funding to maintain City roads, water and sewer systems, City properties and other infrastructure

- Promote walkability through the maintenance and construction of additional sidewalk networks.
- Investigate the creation of bike paths/lanes.

Actions Taken

Year 1:

- Street repaving falls under Engineering Dept.
- SKAT bus continues to be supported by Eden and an earlier route was started in the spring of 2018 to accommodate workers trying to reach the Eden industrial area by 7:00am for morning shifts.
- Additional sidewalk is budgeted for each year. Part of the Dan River Nature Trail includes a new sidewalk on Bridge Street connecting the trail to King's Hwy.
- Bike paths are being explored, but there is no available space for such routes on Washington Street.

Year 2:

- **The City Economic Development Department provided letters of support for the effort by the Planning Department to explore bike paths within the City.**

EV-7 Moved to Place Making

EV-8

Promote commercial areas as small business job centers.

Idea Box

- Identify, approach, and recruit retail and restaurant franchise businesses appropriate for Eden.
- Establish a small business support program in collaboration with existing community college and Rockingham County economic development department.
- Cultivate through incentives, technical support, training, and promotions a broad range of independent/small business.
- Develop promotional materials and an outreach strategy to share the business case for supporting small business (buy local) and the business case for building rehabilitation.
- Cross train key City departments to instill the value of small business/entrepreneurial support (e.g. permitting, police, streets)
- Form better links and increased involvement between the City's big events and local businesses.
- Act as a connector to link local small businesses to the City's (and region's) big businesses.
- Host regular business owner round tables to generate ideas and respond to concerns.
- Determine and meet the needs of existing businesses for retention and expansion.

- Pursue businesses that are not currently in Eden; those that will fill local needs.
- Promote Eden as an entrepreneurial and business-friendly environment.

Actions Taken

Year 1:

- Randy Hunt took entrepreneurship training in June of 2018 and is authorized to teach entrepreneurship training classes at RCC. He is working with Rockingham County Small Business Coordinator Adam Mark on a program to help existing and aspiring entrepreneurs.
- The Eden business rehabilitation grant was successful in year one and we expect it to continue to help business owners.
- Many Eden businesses take advantage of local events, such as the Martinsville Speedway races and Dixie Youth Tournaments. Many downtown businesses actively engage with events such as RiverFest, but some do not, even closing during the event. It is the responsibility of local business owners to seek ways to benefit from events the City facilitates.
- Kelly Stultz held a business roundtable and it did not accomplish its desired goals. Business people should consider such events as opportunities to seek resolutions to issues and suggest ideas. Unfortunately, that was not what happened.
- Randy and Mike use ESRI (Environmental Systems Research Institute) data to determine what businesses the Eden market will support and actively pursue those businesses. Recently, a formal wear shop closed in Downtown Eden and contacts were made throughout the Triad to determine if an existing formal wear shop would want to expand in Eden. That did not materialize but the effort was made. It should be noted that this is a changing time in retail as a result of the e-commerce infringement on brick and mortar businesses. We are promoting ways for local businesses to take advantage of on-line sales opportunities.

Year 2:

- **That Little Pork Shop opened in 2018 and has become one of the most popular restaurants in the City. A meadery and tapis bar will open in early 2020. A third restaurant is under construction in Historic Downtown Eden. Planet Fitness will open by December of 2019 and provide jobs for local residents. Zips Car Wash and Ample Storage will also open by December of 2019.**
- **Randy is working with Susan Reagan of the RCC Small Business Center in establishing entrepreneurship classes in connection with the Rockingham Entrepreneurial Assistance Program (REAP). Ms. Reagan started in the spring of 2019 and has programmed a series of entrepreneurial assistance classes. A fall 2019 series for Eden is being proposed.**
- **An Eden industry video was added to the City web site and a small business video was finalized in the spring of 2019.**
- **The Development Incentive Grant was ruled illegal at the county level and is no longer available.**
- **Retail stores Southern Julep and Preppy Pirate Outfitters have located in downtown Leaksville.**

EV-9

Foster and support a local community of developers.

Idea Box

- Focus on incremental (small scale) development to improve neighborhood centers.
- Invite the Incremental Development Alliance to the City to educate developers and those interested in development on small scale development options.
- Host a developers' round table to share goals and solicit development ideas and identify barriers to development.
- Connect skilled labor/trade training programs to local development projects.

Actions Taken

Year 1:

- The City always seeks opportunities for developers to locate Eden projects. For example, Hull Properties of Augusta, GA was contacted to determine their interest in redeveloping the Eden Mall. They have done projects in Danville and Martinsville, so another opportunity in close proximity to their existing projects made sense. The Eden Mall owner, despite constantly complaining that this was a bad investment for him, refused to pursue this opportunity. The City can only recommend opportunities to local developers and property owners; it is their decision to accept or reject those recommendations.
- As noted above, RCC will build a workforce development center that will provide skilled training. In the fall of 2018, they are offering a plumbing course. RCC needs students to be interested in such programs for them to be successful. A common complaint we hear from local businesses is they have a very difficult time finding people willing to work, especially in the construction industry.

Year 2:

- **The mall owner auctioned the property in July of 2019. It is reported that a Greensboro resident has purchased the facility. The City is working with a developer on a light manufacturing facility in the former K-Mart building that has been vacant since 1992. If environmental issues can be resolved, it will be purchased and up to 50 jobs will be established there.**

Neighborhoods and Housing

NH-1 Moved to Branding

NH-2

Restore housing market demand in residential areas close to Downtown Eden and other neighborhoods (historic Spray and Draper).

Idea Box

- Identify incentive areas and incentives to prioritize development in neighborhoods closest to commercial areas.
- Prioritize public space investments in these areas: sidewalk and infrastructure repair, lighting, etc.
- Prepare materials that state the business case for investing in areas walkable to commercial centers, first.
- Aggressively use available code enforcement tools to improve neighborhood appearance.
- Host a developers' round table to share goals and solicit development ideas and identify barriers to development in our neighborhoods.
- Continue to be active in historic preservation.
- Promote and market the strengths of Eden's neighborhoods.

Actions Taken

- **In year 2 the City Council funded our local code enforcement program at more than double the rate of previous years in the amount of \$160,000. This amount was continued for Year 3. We are now surveying all sections of the City's jurisdiction on a systematic basis. We are seeing greater success and compliance. For the 2018-2019 year, the 952 notices were mailed by certified mail and first class mail:**

Building Code Violations	192
Building Code Violations and High Grass	6
Disabled Vehicles	34
High grass and Weeds	428
High grass and Disabled Vehicles	14
High grass and Junk storage	28
High grass, Junk storage and Disabled Vehicle	5
High grass and Zoning Violation	2
Junk Cars	44
Junk Cars and Junk Storage	23
Junk Storage	169
Junk Storage and Zoning Violation	3
Miscellaneous violations (sewage, blocking drainage ditch)	10
Zoning Violations	33

Integrate Recreation and Health

REC-1

Rely on the 2017 Parks and Recreation Master Plan to guide recreation investments.

Idea Box

- Give higher priority to Parks and Recreation Master Plan items that have a greater impact on economic vitality (e.g. community members prioritized Freedom Park improvements).
- Implement recommendations of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Studies have shown that recreational amenities make a real difference.
- Pursue recreational offerings that will be attractive to all age groups within our community.

Actions Taken

Year 1:

- The Freedom Park Dog Park, Nature Trail Improvements and RV Pads were completed during fiscal year 2017-2018.

Year 2:

- **The Bridge Street Recreation Center and the Mill Avenue Walking Tracks were resurfaced this past year.**
- **The Bridge Street Tennis Courts were resurfaced this past year.**
- **The Freedom Park Splash Pad was built and opened to the public last year.**

REC-2

Expand and enhance trails, greenways, and parks both as a health promotion and quality of place strategy.

Idea Box

- Pursue river activities that will enhance Eden's image as an ideal location for outdoor recreational activities.
- Promote the on-going park activities within Freedom Park so people are aware of the popularity of this Eden facility and encourage more usage of its amenities.
- Support the Eden Trails Group that has just been established.
- Pursue gathering spaces on the Smith and Dan Rivers.
- Continue seeking funds for trails to increase connectivity to the City.

Actions Taken

Year 1:

- The City pursued and received Duke Energy-funded grants that added the Grogan Park Nature Trail, Matrimony Creek Nature Trail, and the Freedom Park Nature Trail. The City also received grant funding to restore the Draper Landing and add the Klyce Street river access point. A grant to fund the Dan River Nature Trail, a 1,600 linear foot trail running from the Leaksville Landing to Bridge Street has been submitted to the Duke Energy Water Resources Fund. The City should know by August of 2018 if the grant has been approved. A wildflower section of the clear space at the Smith River Greenway is supposed to be created in the summer of 2018. More funds will be pursued as they are available and the City agrees that the maintenance of these projects can be effectively incorporated into the City regular maintenance schedule. The Eden Trails Group meets on a monthly basis and identifies opportunities for trails and gathering spaces.
- An offer was made on the White Rental location behind Simply the Best Florist in February of 2018. This was to be used as a small event center on the Smith River. The offer was not accepted although it reflected fair market value for the property. If the property owner cannot find a buyer at their desired price, there could be an opportunity for the City to further pursue this property.
- The Matrimony Creek Nature Trail ends at the waterfall near Price Road. This waterfall will be a gathering space for trail users. There is even a small area where visitors can wade in the creek.
- Phase I of the Matrimony Creek Greenway Project was completed this past year with assistance from the North Carolina Community Foundation and Duke Energy (\$100,000 Grant)
- Staff attended the Eden Trails Group this past year, and continued to look at expanding trails and waterways in the City
- There were over 40 weekend events scheduled at Freedom Park this past year, that included a North Carolina Dixie Youth Baseball State Tournament.
- Staff continued to apply for grants through the North Carolina Community Foundation and other Grant Resource venues.
- Staff continues to identify areas along the Smith and Dan Rivers to install River Access areas and nature trails.

Year 2:

- **A sunflower field was planted along the Smith River Greenway. Cindy Adams placed flags, trivia signs and a large metal sign to enhance the project.**
- **Cindy Adams crafted and installed an amenities package along the Matrimony Creek Nature Trail. It included a trail head sign, kiosk, two information panels, five benches and trail distance markers. Local craftsmen were used to create the elements of the package.**
- **Work began on Phase II of the Matrimony Creek Greenway Project and this will be completed sometime in August 2019.**
- **The parking lot at Leaksville Landing was paved during the past year.**

- **Work began on the Klyce Street River Access and this is scheduled to be completed in the summer of 2019.**
- **Staff attended the Eden Trails Group this past year and continued to look at expanding trails and waterways in the City.**
- **There were over 40 weekend events scheduled at Freedom Park this past year, that included a North Carolina Dixie Youth Baseball State Tournament.**
- **Staff continued to apply for grants through the North Carolina Community Foundation and other Grant Resource venues.**
- **Staff continues to identify areas along the Smith and Dan Rivers to install River Access areas and nature trails.**

REC-3

Tap in to Eden and Rockingham County's existing health networks to implement strategies identified in the Health Impact Assessment.

Idea Box

- Create a Healthy Living Initiative within the City: Develop and promote Bikeways, Greenways, Parks and Sidewalks;
- Explore partnerships with Rockingham County, Morehead Hospital, and other organizations; and Encourage and support the recruitment and retention of high quality healthcare professionals for local medical services.
- Encourage and support the efforts of local medical facilities to improve the quality of medical services available to Eden citizens.
- Support a local farm-to-table food program (networking local growers with local restaurants, grocery stores and citizens).

Actions Taken

Year 1:

- The City pursued a countywide fitness program called Get Fit Rockingham, an expanded version of the successful Get Fit Eden campaign. A Kate B. Reynolds grant was awarded to support this campaign that now is running in Eden, Madison/Mayodan, Reidsville and Stoneville.

Year 2:

- **Cindy Adams conducted a Spring 2019 Grown and Gathered event that featured local foods, growers and producers. The Morehead High School jazz ensemble provided musical entertainment.**
- **Staff continued to look at new sites for greenways, parks, sidewalks, and river areas in the City of Eden.**

- **Staff is part of the Be Healthy Rockingham County and this group works to improve the overall health of all of Rockingham County.**
- **Staff collaborated with UNC-Rockingham County Health Care to offer information on creating a healthy lifestyle for the citizens in the City of Eden.**

Engage Citizens

EC-1

Create opportunities for everyone to participate.

Idea Box

- Identify 1-2 community place making projects annually to build an active citizen base.
- Tailor outreach strategies to target groups: youth, young people, working people, seniors, cohesive neighborhoods/HOAs, and organizations.
- Adopt a “go to the people” outreach strategy to solicit feedback on important issues: attend events, work places, restaurants.
- Identify a communication liaison within the City – a single point person to push communications consistently (or who establishes and monitors communication protocol) AND/OR Develop a communications plan for all City departments
- Better market the Citizen’s Academy and consider adding a place making project for each class to complete (e.g. a class could build and install a temporary park-let); Use former participants to recruit new ones.

Actions Taken

Year 1:

- Cindy Adams has control of the LED sign in front of City Hall. She publicizes local events and activities on a weekly basis on the sign. She also maintains the Explore Eden Facebook page that has more than 6,000 followers. Eden events and special news is posted there.
- Mike Dougherty manages the Explore Eden Business Facebook page and uses his personal FB page to promote businesses and activities within the community.
- The City of Eden offices are open Monday-Friday 8:00am-5:00pm. All city staff can be reached then or via cell phone at other times. Monthly City Council meetings at which citizens can express their concerns are publicized monthly. All staff communicate via email and their contact information is on the City web site. There are multiple opportunities to reach staff to express concerns or offer ideas.

Year 2:

- **Eden Downtown Development, Inc. oversees the management of the Eden Main Street program and has sub-committees for Design, Promotion, Economic Vitality and Organization, the four tenants of Main Street. These subcommittees meet after regular meetings as needed.**

EC-2

Continue to encourage youth and young adult involvement.

Idea Box

- Enlist the Youth Advisory Council and Young Adult members to participate in place making projects.
- Develop City sponsored youth internship opportunities.
- Actively recruit young adults to serve in city volunteer/appointed positions.
- Engage with “Year of Service” programs.
- Evaluate City meeting schedules to ensure that community events and input opportunities align with schedules of youth, young adults, and families.

Actions Taken

Year 1:

- The Youth Council has been asked to nominate a member to be a part of the Eden Rivers and Trails Committee.

Year 2:

- **The Youth Council helped plant the Sunflower Field along the Smith River Greenway.**

EC-3 Moved to Branding

EC-4

Share information effectively and regularly with personal contact, using tools added with Eden’s 2016 website and traditional methods.

Idea Box

- Personally make contact with hard to reach groups at events – welcome them when they show up.
- Include more information about city council and other city board/commissions/organizations activities in City communications – make the information fun and accessible and communicate why it matters (and connect to Eden’s brand).
- Market existing community programs that are under the radar (many times we heard people say, “I didn’t know about ...”).
- Cross post information and ask other organizations to do the same (e.g. schools post City events, City posts school events) and share communication networks.
- Promote the new City of Eden website along with the Eden Tourism website (ExploreEdenNC.com) which includes a community calendar that is the “go to” location to learn about all Eden upcoming events.
- Pursue innovative ways to communicate Eden initiatives to more effectively disseminate information. An example includes the installation of an electronic messaging sign at the corner of Stadium Drive and Pierce Street.
- Focus on building Eden’s image telling Eden’s story and further defining its sense of place.

Actions Taken

Year 1:

- Brad compiles the City Managers Report each month that is presented at the City Council Meeting and published in Eden's Own Journal. This document is a compilation of projects from each city department and their progress.
- We send our event information to other organizations to be placed in their newsletters. We utilize the Eden Chamber of Commerce, Rockingham County Economic & Tourism Development, Rockingham County, Rockingham County Arts Council and others.
- We have over 7,000 followers on our Explore Eden Facebook page that is utilized almost daily.
- The LED Sign in front of City Hall has been very effective and is changed weekly if needed.
- Text Message Marketing has been implemented as another way to reach citizens and inform them about special meetings, events and opportunities for involvement. These messages come directly to the citizens phone.
- 15 "Did You Know" videos have been created by CTT Productions and are on our websites and are viewed on WGSR weekly.
- An Economic Development video was created by CTT Productions to be used on websites, Facebook, etc. This was very well done!
- We utilize the following media outlets for all or most events:
 - Social Media
 - Eden's Own Journal
 - Rockingham Now
 - RCENO
 - Rockingham Radio
 - Banners
 - Newsletters
 - Community Calendars
 - 2 Facebook Pages
 - 2 Websites
 - City Managers Report
 - LED Sign
 - Danville Newspaper
 - Martinsville Newspaper
 - South Boston Newspaper
 - News & Record
 - Leaksville Merchants Sign
 - Draper Merchants Sign
 - WGSR TV
 - News 2

- Posters
- Destination Magazine
- Our State Magazine
- We have implemented “A Few Minutes with the Mayor” on WGSR that airs the last Thursday of each month at 6:15 p.m. Citizens can email in questions that will be answered live by Mayor Neville Hall.

Year 2:

- **A new “Did You Know” video was created in July of 2019 to publicize the splash pad at Freedom Park.**
- **Cindy worked with Our State Magazine to create an exciting video promoting Eden. The video was launched in July of 2019.**
- **A new tourism brochure was created.**
- **Several events were boosted on Facebook providing significantly more coverage than normal.**
- **Randy speaks to civic groups when requested or necessary.**

Sub-Category Branding

B (DT-2)

Develop a Downtown Eden Branding and Marketing Strategy, with associated brands for Eden's defined small areas (Leaksville, Draper, Spray, designated historic areas).

Idea Box

- Issue an RFP to hire a professional branding and marketing firm.
- Develop reflective “sub-brands” for the defined small areas.
- Coordinate a downtown branding and marketing strategy that includes “sub-brands” for defined smaller areas incorporating Land of Two Rivers, Small Town – Big Outdoors and Dan River ST8 Crossings themes. This brand should be consistent across all government and Chamber of Commerce promotions and marketing.
- As part of the branding effort, facilitate discussions to determine the City's assets that can be destination points and unique locations on which to build marketing strategies.
- The Main Street Manager will be responsible for a more aggressive social media and web site marketing campaign including videos of Eden economic development assets and success stories.

Actions Taken

Year 1:

- A RPF was created detailing results expected including sub-brands for defined small areas in Eden. The firm of Arnett, Muldrow and Associates was ultimately chosen for the project. The study was completed in June and an official role out was held July 10. The effort produced desired results including our natural and designed characteristics.
- Significant destination points have been identified to highlight such as a bridal promotion initiated at the request of merchants.
- A more aggressive social media and website marketing campaign has been performed by the City Tourism Director and Administration Department.

Year 2:

- **The Draper Public Space was completed in 2018 – 2019 and is a great example.**

B (NH-1)

Develop coordinated neighborhood (e.g. Leaksville, Spray, Draper) brands.

Idea Box

- In coordination with Eden's overall branding effort, involve neighborhoods to develop complementary identities.

- Promote and market the strengths of Eden’s neighborhoods (promotional materials, website, etc.)

Actions Taken

B (EC-3)

Develop and Promote an Eden brand.

Idea Box

- Conduct a marketing opportunity study.
- Widely market quality of place amenities to attract workers, businesses, and new residents.
- Publicize in regional/state media.
- Create distinctive Eden products (similar to the ST8 Crossings promotions).
- Identify a single location (part of the communications protocol) to promote community events, activities, and opportunities to be involved; ensure that the location is usable across many platforms and ways.

[Longer Term] Update wayfinding to reflect updated marketing and branding efforts.

Actions Taken

Year 1:

- Cindy Adams has control of the LED sign in front of City Hall. She publicizes local events and activities on a weekly basis on the sign. She also maintains the Explore Eden Facebook page that has more than 6,000 followers. Eden events and special news is posted there.
- The City of Eden offices are open Monday-Friday 8:00am-5:00pm. All city staff can be reached then or via cell phone at other times. Monthly City Council meetings at which citizens can express their concerns are publicized monthly. All staff communicate via email and their contact information is on the City web site. There are multiple opportunities to reach staff to express concerns or offer ideas.

Year 2:

- **Cindy Adams created a new tourism brochure.**

Sub-Category Place Making

PM-1 (EV-1)

Focus on quality of place as the core economic development strategy.

Idea Box

- Favor budget items dedicated to improving quality of place in the annual budgeting process.
- Develop quality of place benchmarks [Key metrics to measure the City's progress]. Share and celebrate results.
- Identify initiatives to improve attractiveness of the City, gathering spaces, outdoor recreation and trails.
- Continue to support multi-cultural events and festivals.
- Encourage more outside dining opportunities.
- Encourage public art projects.
- Explore the feasibility of creating an event center.
- Eden was a Keep America Beautiful community, but nothing has been done in several years. This needs to be reestablished and projects identified to help improve the physical areas of Eden.
- Promote a "Pride in Eden" campaign to encourage citizens to stop littering and to improve their properties and neighborhoods (Ex: Peter Hill Park).

Actions Taken

Year 1:

- Currently, there are the Eden Ball Room, Wright Event Center, Grogan Park and Freedom Park at which to hold indoor and outdoor events.
- A quilt square was placed in Grogan Park as part of the Rockingham County Quilt Trail.

Year 2:

- **Cindy Adams held the second annual Hispanic Heritage Festival in the spring of 2018 and 2019. The event was very successful both years.**
- **Cindy and Randy are working on several potential public art projects. Cindy completed the City's first public art display at Grogan Park during the 2018 - 2019 year. The project involved wire animals strategically placed in the park. It has attracted many visits from citizens.**
- **Randy solicited artists to paint fire hydrants in the downtown areas. He has also facilitated a new mural in Downtown Draper and the replacement of the Washington Street Park River Boatman Mural. A new mural will be unveiled in September of 2019.**
- **The City boosted its campaign against littering by (1) adding a LED sign at the Kings Highway/NC 14 intersection, (2) adding videos to Facebook to make people aware of the increased emphasizes on littering, (3) putting up cameras in spots around the City**

known for public dumping and (4) increasing the City sweep by Code Enforcement Inspectors.

- **A microbrewery is planned near the Smith River Greenway in the property originally occupied by Fieldcrest Mills, Inc. as its water treatment plant.**
- **Talk Positive Eden Facebook page was created.**

PM-2 (EV-7)

Enhance the public realm by identifying and implementing small win projects (e.g. plantings, street furniture, pedestrian/bicyclist, parks improvements).

Idea Box

- Develop a public arts plan and aim for 1 public art project annually.
- Seek out and apply for small grants, such as NC Forest Service Urban Forestry Grant.
- Incorporate quality of place projects (e.g. bicycle lanes, pedestrian crossings, streetscape improvements) with new infrastructure and maintenance projects (e.g. road resurfacing).
- Cross train City departments to look for opportunities to improve quality of place in department projects.

Actions Taken

Year 1:

- A NC Forest Service Urban Forestry Grant was pursued for the Draper outdoor space but was not funded. City funds were used to complete the project.
- Bike lane funding comes from NCDOT and the City is pursuing those opportunities. One thing to realize is that some streets, like Washington Street, are too narrow to accommodate bicycles.

Year 2:

- **Cindy established the first public art initiative in the City at Grogan Park. Randy solicited artists to paint fire hydrants in the downtown areas. He has also facilitated a new mural in Downtown Draper and the replacement of the Washington Street Park River Boatman Mural. A new mural will be unveiled in September of 2019.**
- **Cindy worked with Reidsville artist Teresa Phillips and Karastan employees on the Karastan Mosaic that will be located in Grogan Park and unveiled on August 12, 2019. This was a true community project with citizens given multiple opportunities to participate in the construction of the mosaic.**

Sub-Category Education/Schools

ES (EV-4)

Become an active partner to promote and support the performance of Rockingham County Schools and promote / support Rockingham Community College.

Idea Box

- Identify ways to promote Rockingham County School's three strategic focus areas: 1. Graduation and beyond, 2. Safe, resources, supported & equipped schools, and 3. Stakeholder involvement and engagement.
- Link promotional materials (video, anecdotes, success stories) and relevant materials to supplement Eden's Economic Development web presence and promotional materials; including up-to-date data about school performance and initiatives.
- Through joint marketing efforts, connect Eden's Community Vitality / Quality of place initiatives to Rockingham County School's teacher recruitment efforts (e.g. housing, things to do, events, etc.)
- Add a section about schools / school performance to Eden's Citizen Academy curriculum.
- Work with the local community college and Rockingham County Schools to promote higher education and vocational training, especially our community college. Only 20% of county high school students enter RCC, a number that must increase if citizens are going to qualify for higher paying, skilled occupations. RCC needs to be considered the best, first option for higher education, not a fallback position.
- Appoint an elected official as a liaison to the Rockingham County School System.
- Promote mentorship, apprenticeships, and internships among high school students with RCC graduates, local industry and businesses.
- In collaboration with Rockingham County Schools, Eden should promote and market the successes of the school system to bolster economic development and the overall quality of life in Eden.

Action Taken

Year 1:

- The City has supported the Rockingham County Rock-a Top apprentice program which has been very successful in its inaugural year.
- The City of Eden led the charge for the ¼ cent sales tax initiative that will result in a new workforce development center for RCC. This will be coupled with a more aggressive RCC public relations campaign to promote vocational training.

Year 2:

- **The City has spearheaded an effort to seek a federal Economic Development Administration (EDA) grant to help fund the workforce development center. It has also pledged to work with the college to obtain sponsorships and equipment donations from**

area and national companies to stretch the ¼ cent sales tax revenue further and collaborate with area industry.

- **During the spring of 2019, Morehead High School students shadowed various City departments to help them understand the workings of the City and determine if they had an interest in pursuing positions within the organization.**