It’s Happening!

It’s an exciting time to be a part of our downtown revitalization story! Years worth of hard work is paying off and we are experiencing the results.

We are seeing an increase in overall occupancy, investment in building improvements, and a growing number of small business entrepreneurs set up in our downtown.

Doors are opening for Cambridge and at the same time, a lot of work remains ahead of us.

Downtown Cambridge has been busy leveraging outside resources, identifying solutions for obstacles to revitalization, and positioning itself to tackle challenges.

Outlined here is an overview of our mission and our current efforts.

We would love for you to help!! Become a part of the passion behind our revitalization story and help Downtown Cambridge thrive as the heart and soul of our Cambridge community!

About Main Street

The Main Street Approach is centered around Transformation Strategies.

A Transformation Strategy articulates a focused, deliberate path to revitalizing or strengthening a downtown or commercial district’s economy.
How Are We Doing It?

**Promotions & Marketing Team**
Positions the downtown as the center of the community and hub of economic activity, while creating a positive image that showcases our community’s unique characteristics.

- CO-OPERATIVE MARKETING WITH DOWNTOWN BUSINESSES
- CONSTRUCTION OF A MOBILE STAGE, AND EVENT SIGNAGE
- COMPLETED REGIONAL “EAT DRINK BUY ART” CAMPAIGN
- HOSTED TOURISM HOSPITALITY TOUR OF DOWNTOWN
- UPDATE TO THE DOWNTOWN GUIDE
- EXPLORE NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR EVENTS IN DOWNTOWN

**Streetscape & Green Team**
Supports Cambridge’s transformation by enhancing the physical and visual assets that set the commercial district apart.

- BUILDING IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM FOR 400 BLK RACE ST
- ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING STATIONS INSTALLED
- MOSAIC & PUBLIC ART INVESTMENTS, INCL SUPPORT FOR HARRIET TUBMAN MURAL & A NEW MURAL ON PINE STREET COMING SOON
- DOWNTOWN LIGHTING PROJECT

**Economic Vitality Team**
Focuses on capital, incentives, financial tools to assist new and existing businesses and catalyze property development, and create a supportive environment for entrepreneurs and innovators that drive local economies.

- LAUNCHED BIRE - BUSINESS RETENTION, GROWTH & EXPANSION PROGRAM WITH SBDC
- MEETING WITH PROPERTY OWNERS AND POTENTIAL BUSINESSES
- CO-ORDINATING WITH LOCAL AND REGIONAL FINANCIAL & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES
- DEVELOPING MARKET DATA FOR RETAIL AND RESTAURANTS

Small Business Development Center (SBDC)
Retail and Restaurant Specialist, GARRETT GLOVER

DOWNTOWN CAMBRIDGE hosts SBDC workshop “CLICHES FOR THE HOLIDAYS”
ONE-ON-ONE CONSULTATIONS WITH RETAIL AND RESTAURANT BUSINESSES throughout 2019 (BIRE Program)

Taste of Cambridge featured the VERY FIRST Snakehead Fish Cook-Off Competition | July 13th 2019.
LEADERSHIP MATTERS
Creating a strong foundation

Organization Team
Creating a strong foundation for a sustainable revitalization effort, including cultivating partnerships, community involvement, and resources for the district.

Executive Committee
Valerie Brown, President
Michelle Barnes, Vice-President
Michael Wheatley, Treasurer
Amanda Robinson, Secretary

Board of Directors
Wendy Ashburn
Stephyn Butcher
Judann Culver
Dovile Cropper
Dormaim Green
Cecil Johnson
Sheila Jones
Eydie Kinnamon
Jason Warfield
Tracy Tyler

WHY? Downtown Matters
Downtowns in many American communities have experienced more than fifty years of neglect, abuse, and abandonment. There are a number of factors that have contributed to this indifference toward our central cities. Several decades of bad public policy, private market forces, as well as individual prejudices have all worked counter to the health of central cities.

Fortunately over the last two decades this trend has slowly begun to shift. Today, cities of all sizes have implemented plans to revitalize, re-grow, and reinvent their downtowns.

Why are downtowns important and why the need for all of these revitalization strategies? Because downtowns are the heart of a city and region -- and having a healthy heart is essential to having a strong city and region.

WHY? Rebuild Downtown First
A city’s downtown area has an important and unique role in economic and social development. Downtowns create a critical mass of activities where commercial, cultural, and civic activities are concentrated. This concentration facilitates business, learning, and cultural exchange.

Downtowns are symbolic and powerful symbols for a city and often contain the most iconic landmarks, distinctive features, and unique neighborhoods. Given that downtown is one of our oldest neighborhoods citywide, it offers rare insights into our city’s past, present and future.
Waugh Chapel “Green” Parking Project

The Cambridge Community Garden approached Cambridge Main Street about joining forces to help eliminate remnants of an old structure at 421 High Street, and make improvements that would add to parking in the area serving the Waugh Chapel United Methodist Church, the community garden, and neighboring businesses.

Utilizing grant funds from the Department of Housing & Community Development (DHCD) and Chesapeake Bay Trust (CBT) dangerous elements were removed and the site was converted to a “green” parking area. The project was completed in April 2019.

The project was a partnership between Cambridge Main Street, Waugh Chapel United Methodist Church, Cambridge Community Garden, and Shore Rivers.

Building Improvement Program

In 2018 Cambridge Main Street identified a number of projects in the south end of the 400 block that were “missing links” in the streetscape and which had long been vacant. We established a NEW capital program that would target streetscape and interiors of buildings. Projects selected were based on a targeted, condensed area that would be candidates for occupancy, while also “connect the dots” along the street. The goal is to build greater connectivity with current investments in downtown.

Cambridge Main Street is currently supporting 4 buildings with the awarded funds. Funding will support the facade improvements at 421 & 440 Race Street as well as some interior work at 440 Race Street. Additionally architectural is complete for a facelift at 440 Race Street and are also underway at 444-448 Race Street which was the victim of a fire over 10 years ago.

Some product of this initiative is already visible at 421 Race Street, where pebble panels that covered second floor windows were removed for the first time since the 1970s.

You’ll see more capital improvements as a result over the next 12 months!
Downtown Lighting Project

The motivation for this project was to help create a “destination effect” while also encouraging after hours pedestrians, especially during the darker evenings of winter. We wanted to help downtown feel more “cozy” and to create a draw for residents and visitors alike.

As early as April 2017 we kick-started a Fund-A-Need campaign to install decorative lights across the streets of downtown. We were busy raising funds and support for the project for the next year and in 2018 we finalized the plans, approvals, and final expenses for the project, focused on beginning along Poplar Street.

In early 2019 the lights were installed along our first downtown block, thanks to the services of Kevin and Matt Hill of Hill Kimmel Contracting. The lights are also supported by RAR Brewing who is helping provide the power source for that block. Support has been received from individual donors, The Heart of the Chesapeake Heritage Area mini-grant, and the Nathan Foundation.

WHAT’S NEXT? We are now working on extending the lights along the 400 and 500 block of Race Street. There is a lot of building enthusiasm for the project. Folks can’t wait to see the lights continue down the street.

Interested in helping support this project? Make a contribution to our downtown lighting fund!
BUSINESS REPORT

Learn more about our downtown business milestones

Business Milestone Anniversaries!

SNAPPER’S WATERFRONT CAFE: Celebrating 25 Years on the Cambridge Creek!
SUNNYSIDE SHOP: Celebrating 15 Years in business!
JIMMIE AND SOOK’S RESTAURANT: Celebrating 10 Years in business!

NEW Businesses!

JOHNSON CLEANING SERVICES: 409 Muir Street
AVA’S PIZZARIA & WINE BAR: 543 Poplar Street
THEO’S STEAKHOUSE: 307 High Street
MAIDEN MARYLAND: 501 Poplar Street
MAIDEN MARYLAND SWEATS & TREATS: 315 Gay Street
THE PROPERTY SHOPPE: 541 Poplar Street
BUOYS & GULLS GIFTS & INTERIORS: 519 Poplar Street
SUGER PLUM SHOP: 428 Race Street
MICHELLE FOLLETT TEXTILE TEACHING: 450 Race Street
FAIRWINDS WELLNESS: 417 Academy Street
GROOVE CITY FUNK: 410 Race Street
THE BLUE RUIN: 400 Race Street
CATERPILLAR KIDS BOUTIQUE: 512 Poplar Street
RAR EATS: 508 Poplar Street

Business Departures

In 2019 we said goodbye to several businesses, many for personal reasons. We wish them well in the next phase of their lives and careers! CAMBRIDGE EATERIES, THE WINE BAR, CONFETTI, JEWELRY BY COTTAGE STUDIO.

VAL BROWN & KATIE CLENDANIEL present an award of recognition to Laura Sydnor for 25 years in businesses | April 6th 2019

DOWNTOWNS ARE BACK!

Incubators for the American Dream

More folks are deciding to work for themselves and open a business. Downtown is a perfect place to help them get started and GROW! Downtown is also where remote employees and virtual businesses want to be.

As large, big box retailers fold, smaller footprint businesses are popping back up again. Further, small businesses can now integrate with online retailers. It's a whole new world! But some of us still want to touch, feel, and try on. Or find something unique that tells the story of Cambridge and the Chesapeake Bay.
WE THANK YOU!
To Our 2019 Corporate & Community Event Partners

G & G Distributors
City of Cambridge
1880 Bank
Dorchester County Economic Development
Chesapeake College
Delmarva Power
Shore Craft Beer
Delmarva Public Radio
Mid Shore Graphics
Holiday Inn Express
Hyatt Regency Chesapeake Bay
Rural Maryland Council
Coastal Hospice
Elks Lodge #223
Michelle Barnes Attorney At Law
Benson & Mangold

Cambridge Yacht Maintenance
Delmarva Document Solutions
Hill Kimmel Contracting
Preston Automotive
Powell Realtors
LWRC International
NOVO Properties
Dorchester Banner
Lane Engineering
The Blue Awning
Thomas’s Fine Jewelry
Tidewater Physical Therapy
Choptank Transport
AERO Energy
Tri-Gas & Oil
Choptank Animal Hospital
Chesapeake Utilities

Partner’s 1st Federal Credit Union
Whitten Insurance
Parker Counts Attorneys At Law
Provident State Bank
For All Seasons
Dorchester Seafood Heritage Association

JOIN US!
Get involved and become a part of our community’s revitalization story!

Donate
When you become a donor, you become an investor in our community. Become a part of the transformation of our downtown. Levels begin at $25.

Volunteer
Many hands make light work! Revitalization of the heart of the city takes many minds and many community citizens. All activities, events, and teams are supported with leadership and support of volunteers. Here are a few areas volunteers are supporting:

Event Committees: Become a part of organizing events like Spring Fling, Taste of Cambridge, Groove City Culture Fest, GrooveFEST, and more!

Green Team: Interested in recycling, tree and landscape plantings, projects that mitigate stormwater impacts? This is the team for you!

Economic Vitality: Identify the missing links for downtown economic development, help coordinate a downtown fall/holiday pop-up program, welcome prospective or new businesses to downtown!
So What Is Next?
Learn more about what’s coming in 2020

Public Art Initiative

There is no question art helps to transform our lives. At the April 6th Spring Fling event, we held a kick starter for a downtown Public Art campaign.

We’ve already supported the new Harriet Tubman Mural, located on the side of the Harriet Tubman Museum, and we completed the community mosaic on the 500 block of Race Street.

Next, we are working on moving forward on a mural project on Pine Street, plus getting youth art up on light pole banners! Be on the look out for a few other whimsical public art projects that will be popping up when you least expect it!

Parking Area Revamp

In 2019 a public/private partnership formed to consider improvements to the streetscape along Race Street focused on the parking area between 421 Race Street (old Cambridge Grill and later Jimmie and Sooks) and 429 Race Street (Black Water Bakery).

Cambridge Main Street applied for and was awarded funds to undertake the lot retrofit. The project will install pervious surfaces, add a safe pedestrian walk area and add green elements to the site.

The site is a key access point to an important city owned parking lot and was identified in a recent Shore Rivers Cambridge Creek Watershed Assessment & Action Plan.

The project is funded by Chesapeake Bay Trust - Green Streets, Green Jobs, Green Towns program, and Novo Properties. In-Kind support provided by City of Cambridge.

Fresh Approach to Events

We are taking a fresh look at the events Cambridge Main Street organizes in 2020. With the assistance of a 1 year operating grant, we will hire a part-time Events and Promotions Coordinator to support volunteers and the organization with the coordinatin of festivals, events, and promotional efforts.

While this operating grant support is temporary for 1 year, we will be working on ways to sustain the position. In 2020 we will be focusing on new ideas and ways to draw traffic downtown through events that also financially support the organization.

We look forward to hearing your thoughts during this process! Be sure to reach out to us to tell us what you think and what you enjoy most about events downtown, or what you think could be missing. Events are only possible because of the effort of our committee volunteers! We invite you to join us in 2020! Please email us at office@downtowncambridge.org to join the effort!