CHARLES TOWN, WV
ARTS & CULTURE DISTRICT PLAN
2016

powered by evolveEA

CONTENTS

WHAT IS AN
ARTS & CULTURAL DISTRICT?

AN ARTS & CULTURE DISTRICT IN CHARLES TOWN

Arts and culture district is a designation used to describe a cluster of creative activity and the efforts to support and promote that activity. They might be centered on an anchor institution or a series of pop-up events, but the district is understood as the place or area where the activity occurs. Districts can have hard boundaries, be centered on certain key institutions, or be identified with other features like corridors or landmarks.

A strong and distinct sense of place is important, as are the programs and events that give energy to a district. Activities might be short term events or festivals, repeated engagements with a museum or theatre, or ongoing classes and opportunities for creative production.

Arts and culture districts are used as economic development tools that benefit individuals, institutions, and municipalities. Direct support of the arts creates a healthy environment for venues and artists to thrive. In turn, this vitality spills over into increased activity for non-arts businesses, real estate

transactions, and an increased tax base. Economic opportunity creates a culture of innovation and risk taking, further driving entrepreneurial energy.

Identity is created through a district's programs and events as well as through its physical places. Identity is what gives a district desirability and becomes its competitive advantage. Strong arts districts give high visibility to the arts, whether by encouraging informal sidewalk activities, institutional programming, or through the preservation of unique historical assets.

Districts are created to serve multiple purposes, including strengthening a community's competitive position by attracting visitors and increasing spending and thus the municipal tax base. They create supportive cultures that strengthen artistic production, raise the profile of the arts, and bring the arts into the lives of the community. Arts and culture districts can yield plans to make physical improvements to an area and activate it with programs and events that maintain lasting vitality.

THE START OF A **STRATEGIC PLAN**

Arts and cultural districts are known for their physical amenities as well as the energy of the people and events. Charles Town will invent and reinvent its places through a Cultural Real Estate Strategy focused on its core.

The Charles Town community has envisioned a future that celebrates arts & culture. This strategic plan will help the community grow and sustain a robust arts & cultural district.

PLACE
WHERE does the activity happen?

BRAND
HOW do we get the word out?

OUR CURRENT FOCUS

PROGRAMMING
WHAT activities define our district?

ORGANIZATIONS
WHO organizes the activity?

MAKING+HISTORY
THE CHARLES TOWN ARTS
& CULTUREw DISTRICT

+5 YEARS

Charles Town is known as a place where **MAKING MEETS HISTORY.**

PLACE quick, low cost installations that become prototypes for long term improvements.

BRAND a **campaign** to establish CTown events and activities.

+10 YEARS

Charles Town's main street has become an **ARTS DESTINATION.**

PLACE includes **public and private sector projects** to create density of improvements and activity.

BRAND could be in service to the establishment of a staffed **organization** and keystone events.

+15 YEARS

Charles Town's arts district has matured through **DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT.**

PLACE includes a layering of continued reinvention as well as long term projects in a **mature real estate market**.

BRAND will be well established for the district and may have a **family of associated brands** for events or venues.

CREATING A DISTRICT WITH PLACE + BRAND

Charles Town's core could be the center of activity in the district, with businesses, events, and physical improvements that become the district brand. In the short term, the District Core can be activated with events led by one or more organizations around a central theme or branding campaign. However, to be sustainable in the long term, the district will need a Cultural Real Estate Strategy that is incremental and driven by economic development as well as the arts.

As the District matures, a staffed team with arts administration and real estate expertise can drive programming as well as nurture a community welcoming to artists. The dual focus on community development and arts can invite infill redevelopment along the Main Street while supporting the artists, organizations, and events who will fuel transformation of the district core.

Leaders will have to closely partner with the business community, property owners, economic development organizations and officials, as well as arts organizations. These collaborations can lead to broader funding opportuntiies.

PRINCIPLES FOR:

PLACE
Creating Place

CREATE CENTERS OF ACTIVITY
Areas with a density of activity can begin to have their own unique sub-identities, and will focus the attention of residents and visitors. The centers will invite others to participate with activity occuring in a consolidated area.

CELEBRATE SIDEWALK CULTURE
Create spaces and adjacencies that allow for chance encounters and invite visitors to stay and enjoy for awhile. Make arts and culture visible, cluster entries, and keep first floors visible and visitable.

ENHANCE CONNECTIONS
Create and enhance connections between centers and/or landmarks, eventually becoming a sequence through the heart of Charles Town.

DENSITY
Densify the District core with infill of existing parking lots and empty lots.

BRAND
Branding & Marketing

CAMPAIGN
Campaigns are ideal to create buzz around ideas that are in the early stages of development. The campaign for the Charles Town Arts and Cultural district would promote the ideas, events, and places under a common brand and with a call to action.

ORGANIZATION
As the district evolves, an organization or coalition of organizations will likely develop as the force behind the district efforts. As that coalition or entity develops, the identity and branding will give it a public face.

DISTRICT
The district will be better defined as activities are established and physical improvements are made. The identity of the district will capture some of these improvements and extend its brand to emerging activities and places.

OUR CURRENT FOCUS

PROGRAMMING
Cultural Planning & Events

ORGANIZATIONS
Organizational Capacity

THE DISTRICT TODAY

Charles Town's historic core has a unique confluence of making and craft and historical legacy. The identity and strategy of the District needs to build upon both.

STRENGTHS

Charles Town has many assets that the District should strengthen and build upon, including many historically significant buildings, an intact main street, exposure to incoming/outgoing traffic, and affordability compared to local markets. In addition to this, the region is home to a handful of successful arts-related organizations, including galleries, coops, and a theatre. Emerging restaurants in the area support these existing assets.

CHALLENGES
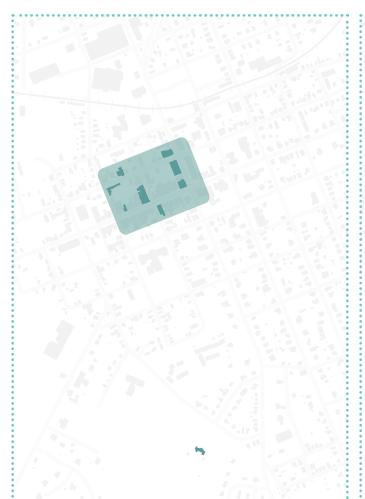
The challenges that Charles Town will face includes the fact that the town is not a first day attraction, there is no critical mass of stores or restaurants, and Washington Street is a state highway and not currently pedestrian-scaled. Additionally, owners of vacant properties on Washington Street are holding on until conditions improve, large parking lots seperate the main street from the Downtown fabric, and many of the existing businesses are not stable.

RECONFIGURED
CROSSWALKS

HISTORIC
STOREFRONTS

EXISTING SIGNAGE

OCCASIONAL
SIDEWALK ACTIVITY

HISTORIC INSPIRED
STREETLAMPS

NEW WASTE
RECEPTACLES
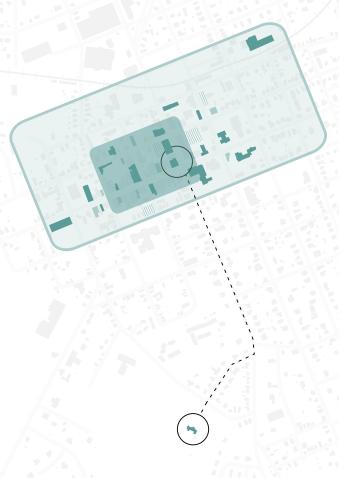
DISTRICT PHASING

Charles Town's Arts & Culture District will evolve according to three phases of development.

5 YEARS
SHORT-TERM

During the first five years, the Charles Town Arts and Culture District should focus on stengthening their existing assets and should build excitement by deploying a branding campaign.

10 YEARS
MID-TERM

During the first ten years, the Charles Town Arts and Culture District should work to build upon existing assets, cultivate additional assets, densify Downtown Charles Town with infill of existing under utilitzed parking lots, hire official District staff, and develop and deploy a cultural real estate strategy. Additionally, the District should build from the success of the branding campaign to formalize and promote a District identity.

15 YEARS
LONG-TERM

In the next fifteen years, the Charles Town Arts and Culture District will continue to strength and cultivate new and existing assets in the District Core. Additionally, the District should expand through an incoming Anchor Institution, and/or through the creation of an Art Trail along Evitts Run, leading to Happy Retreat.

ANCHOR INSTITUTION
A new organization moves into Charles Town that anchors the District. This organization collaborates with existing assets **(see page xx for more information)**.
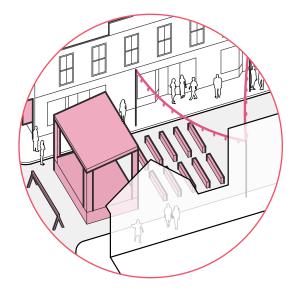
ART TRAIL
An Art Trail is developed along Evitt's Run, strengthening the connection between the District and Happy Retreat George Street and S. West St. act as connections to Happy Retreat as well. **(see page xx for more information)**

THE DISTRICT IN 5 YEARS
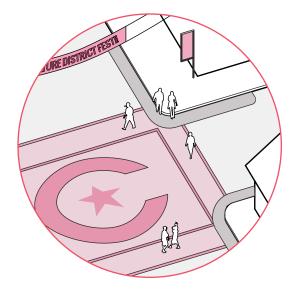
In 5 years, the Charles Town Arts and Culture District will be known as a place where making meets history.

PLACE +5

Through a series of regular and special events, the business district is creatively transformed into a lively venue. Charles Town's businesses have created a sidewalk culture that attracts residents and visitors, even on non-event days.
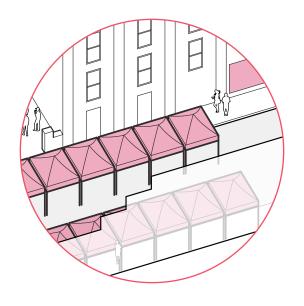
- Deploy complete streets principles to Washington Street, making the road safer for pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and cars alike.
- Encourage tactical urbanism in the District, including quick, cheap, and often temporary urban interventions.
- Deploy traffic calming techniques such as plantings, road bumps, narrow roads, or other measures to slow car traffic and make the streets more pedestrian friendly.

BRAND +5

The District has deployed a tribe-building and district branding campaign and call to action.

- Deploy the C Town branding campaign for the launch of district development efforts. Apply the brand for district events, programs and destinations.
- Identify a lead organization in charge of marketing, including media relations, graphic design and social media strategy.
- Align public art initiatives with the C Town brand.
- Develop a suite of branded online media and other marketing collateral.

PROGRAMMING +5

The District has coordinated calendars with aligned organizations to create an ecosystem of events and venues.

- Cultivate relationships to develop a strategic menu of events that have a regional and local draw. Bring all events into the brand.
- Include large major events and festivals and create unique branded experiences downtown (regional).
- Develop regularly held events to bring visitors to the three anchors (theatre, Charles Washington Hall, and Happy Retreat), such as monthly restaurant/theatre nights, weekly events at CWH such as farmers market, and monthly concerts at HR (locally serving).
- Include smaller events with arts and nonarts organizations and encourage and enable the creative use of downtown sites.

ORGANIZATIONS +5

District coalitions have been formed and assets have been aggregated.

- Meet regularly with business and property owners to plan events and programming.
- Create an alliance and MOU for businesses, arts organizations, and others to outline the benefits of participation in district formation.
- Build coalitions based on aligned purpose or available resources, such as grants.
- Hire a staff person to curate and support initiatives and cultivate partnerships.
- Seek organizational and program funding for a staff person to support deeper engagement, investment and long term projects (see Midterm District outcomes).
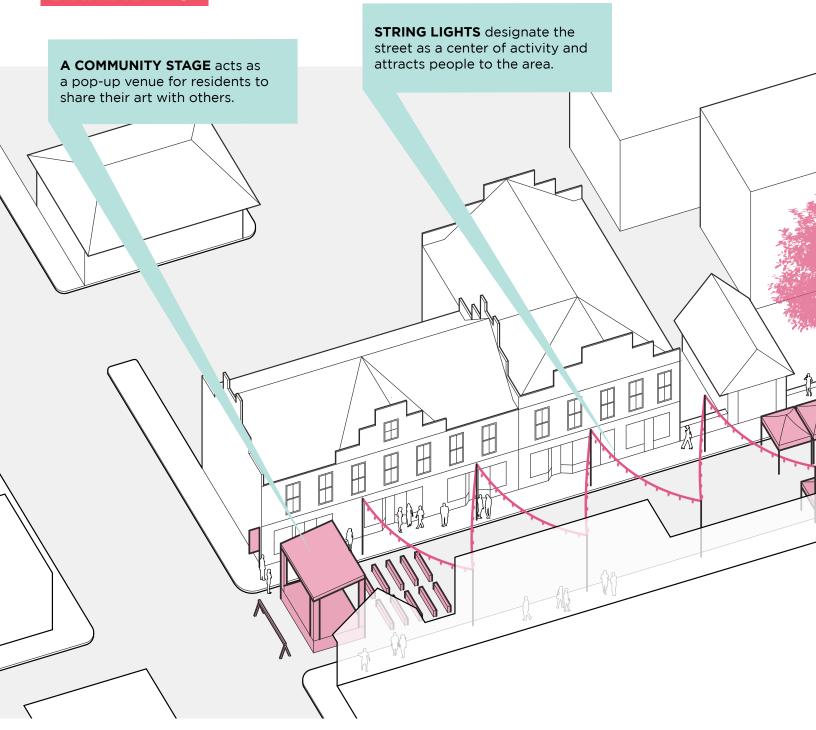
PLACE +5

The District is activated through a series of events and the businesses have contributed to a sidewalk culture that attracts residents and visitors.

INSTALLATIONS such as benches and murals contribute to street activation.

STOREFRONTS activate the street with awnings and big windows.

A **FESTIVAL OR MARKET** closes down Charles Street weekly and fills the road with activity.

TACTICAL URBANISM refers to quick, cheap, and often temporary urban interventions to improve the urban environment. This can include pop-up parks, guerilla gardening and more!

COMPLETE STREETS are designed to be safe for pedestrians, bicyclists, auto drivers, transit riders, roller bladers, runners, unicyclists and everyone in between!

An underutilized alley can be transformed into an **ART ALLEY!**

SIDEWALK ACTIVITY contributes to a lively District.

C★TOWN

ULTURE DISTRICT FEST!!

A COMMUNITY STAGE acts as a pop-up venue for residents to share their art with others.

STRING LIGHTS designate the street as a center of activity and attracts people to the area.

In 5 years, C Town might be activated through...

Night Market
Paint and Drink Event
Street Artists and Musicians
Special Interest Tours
Maker Fair
Scavenger Hunt
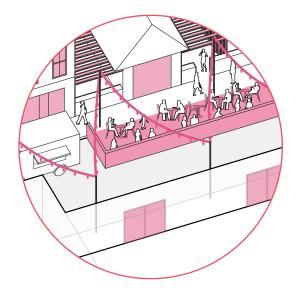
Art Classes
Art and Dance Flash Mobs
Ideas Competition
Poetry Readings
Art Festival
Pop-up Installations

MURALS, BENCHES, and other installations encourage activity on the street and can act as a canvas for artists.

POP-UP EVENTS such as monthly festivals or night markets bring the community together for arts-related events.

ARTS & CULTURE DISTRICT FEST!!

wayfinding

WELCOME TO C★TOWN!

★ OLD OPERA HOUSE
★ CHARLES WASHINGTON HALL
★ HAPPY RETREAT

C★TOWN
ARTS &
CULTURE
DISTRICT
CHARLES TOWN, WV

Construction Site Art
Vacant Lot/Storefront Installations
Murals and Integrated Public Art
Creative Crosswalk

THE DISTRICT IN 10 YEARS

In 10 years, Charles Town's main street will be known as a rich and exciting arts destination.

PLACE +10

Charles Town's main street has become a destination, as its record of successful events has brought many visitors to the main street and created a more retail-friendly environment. The district has an active real estate strategy to increase investment, enliven street activity, and implement permanent improvements.
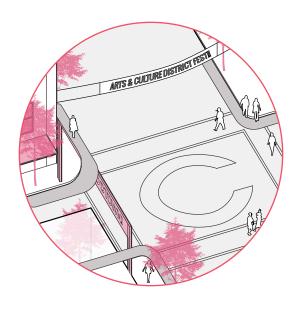
- Create an Arts Incubator to nurture arts organizations by facilitating their organizational growth and development.
- Establish an office for the Arts District staff in the heart of the District, easily accessible to the public.
- Locate related businesses near to each other as part of an aligned business cluster, so they can share resources and more effectively attract customers.
- Construct upper floor live/work units in the heart of the District as affordable space for artists to live and use as studio space.

BRAND +10

The District has extended the campaign identity to a District identity.

- Review district assets to create a district identity.
- Coordinate branding with campaigns or events.
- Expand and update offerings such as maps, and web based tools.
- Explore cobranding with major partners and institutions.
- Assist smaller organizations or campaigns with media support.

PROGRAMMING +10

The District has grown and expanded it's cultural offerings.

- Formalize and expand events calendar, continued arts curation.
- Explore and execute longer term or larger scale projects (alliances with institutions, regional initiatives, etc.).
- Eductional programs, cultivation of key institution, larger grants.
- Plan for expansion of district and pursue resources.

ORGANIZATIONS +10

The District has invested in real estate improvements and economic development strategies.

- Increased staff capacity to execute real estate analysis and strategy, including economic development expertise such as promotion and assistance with tax credit or other incentive programs.
- Increased staff capacity to plan for district expansion and connection to other Charles Town and regional assets.
- Increase offerings of services available to public to assist with relocating and making improvements to downtown.
- Inform next iteration of comprehensive planning to see how main street successes might catalyze further downtown development and densification.

PLACE +10

Charles Town's main street has become a destination, as its record of successful events has brought many visitors to the main street and created a more retail-friendly environment.

Reclaim parts of the road for continued **INSTALLATIONS AND TACTICAL URBANISM.**

Continue activating **STOREFRONTS** and urban infill.

Install **SCULPTURES AND BENCHES** throughout the District.

Construct an **ARTISTS' FLEX SPACE, INCUBATOR OR PERMANENT PRESCENCE FOR ARTS GROUPS** in the District.

Encourage **ALIGNED BUSINESS CLUSTERS** so that complimentary businesses can share resources and better attrach customers.

Continue implementing **COMPLETE STREETS** principles.

Designate an upper floor for a **STAFFED OFFICE FOR THE ARTS DISTRICT.**

UPPER FLOOR LIVE/ WORK UNITS provide affordable places for artists to live and work.

BRAND +10

A COMMUNITY GATEWAY signals entry to the street and indicates that activity occurs here.
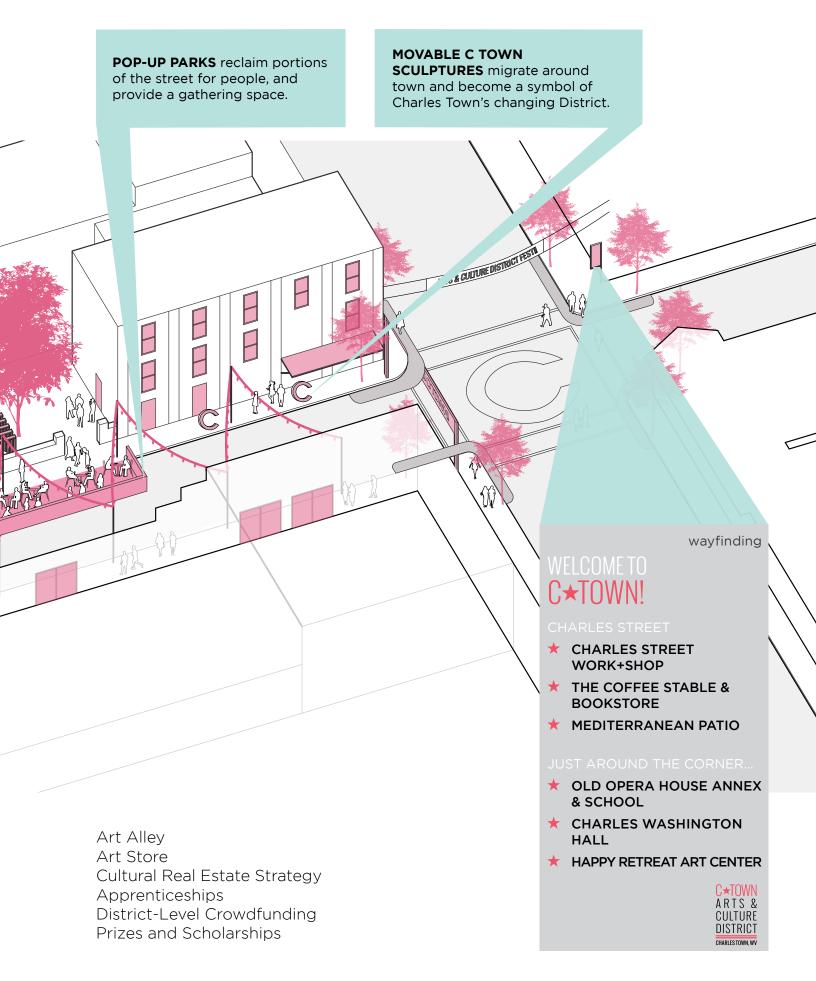
FOOD TRUCKS attract residents and visitors in addition to supporting surrounding activities.

In 10 years, C Town might include...

Seasonal Arts Festival
Children's Art Program
Art All Night
Art Classes
Gallery Crawl
Audience-Specific Art Festival

Creative Skill Exchange
(Arts) Open Streets
Bookstore/Performance Space
Live/Work Studios
Creative Storefronts
Public Art

POP-UP PARKS reclaim portions of the street for people, and provide a gathering space.

MOVABLE C TOWN SCULPTURES migrate around town and become a symbol of Charles Town's changing District.

wayfinding

WELCOME TO
C★TOWN!

CHARLES STREET

★ **CHARLES STREET WORK+SHOP**

★ **THE COFFEE STABLE & BOOKSTORE**

★ **MEDITERRANEAN PATIO**

JUST AROUND THE CORNER...

★ **OLD OPERA HOUSE ANNEX & SCHOOL**

★ **CHARLES WASHINGTON HALL**

★ **HAPPY RETREAT ART CENTER**

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ARTS &
CULTURE
DISTRICT
CHARLES TOWN, WV

Art Alley
Art Store
Cultural Real Estate Strategy
Apprenticeships
District-Level Crowdfunding
Prizes and Scholarships

THE DISTRICT IN 15 YEARS

In 15 years, Charles Town's Arts and Culture District will have matured through Downtown development.

PLACE +15

Charles Town's main street has matured and been bolstered by walkable low-impact Downtown development.
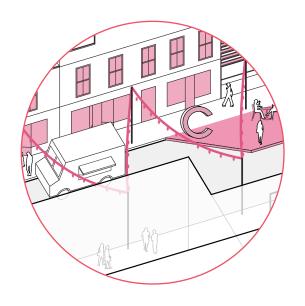
- Implement green infrastructure improvements such as stormwater bump-outs along primary and secondary roads.
- Consolidate parking into a few structured lots and street parking, opening up surface lots for development.
- Connect to anchors outside of the District core such as Happy Retreat, the Zion Cemetary, several African American historical sites of interest, and the future Evitt's Run Art Trail.

BRAND +15

The District identity and branding has been renewed and refreshed as needed.
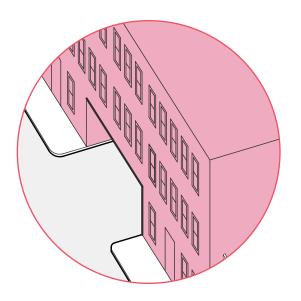
- Renew district identity as district evolves.
- Lead with district identity as smaller campaigns develop.
- Marketing will need to evolve with demographic trends and technologies. Plan for periodic reinvention.

PROGRAMMING +15

The District has maintained it's growth and has stewarded new initiatives.

- Continue coordination and support of art initiatives and organizations as demographics change.
- Continue events coordination and planning, educational programming, and arts curation.
- Execute expansion of district and regional scale or infrastructure related projects.

ORGANIZATIONS +15
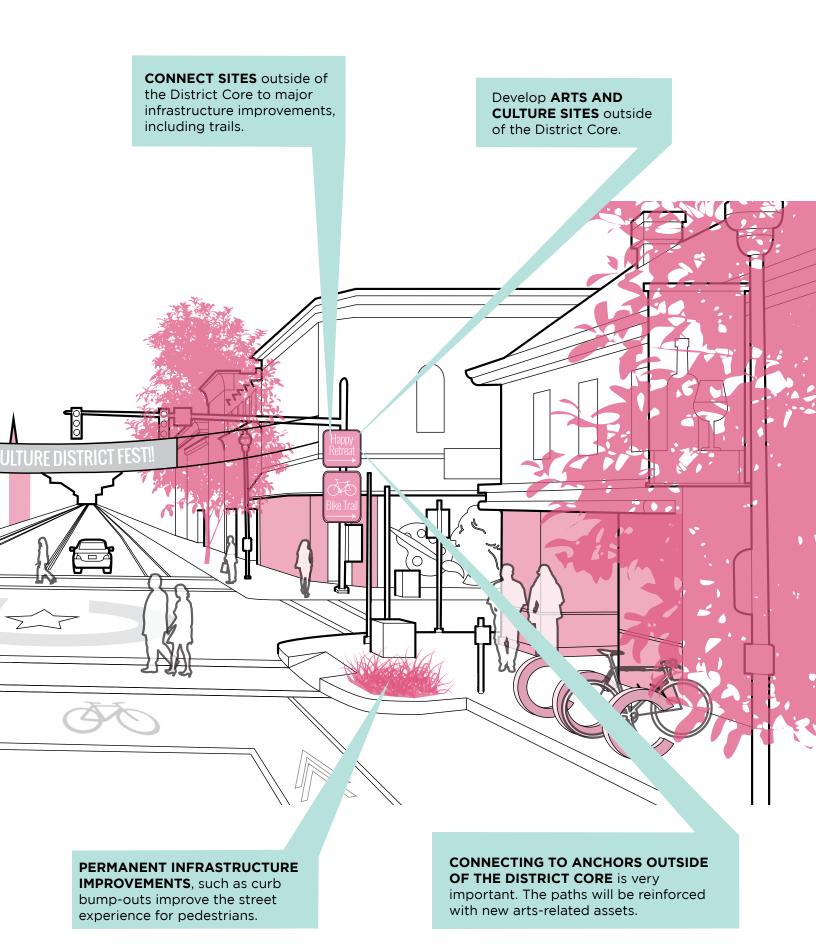
The District has remained a trusted and effective partner for regional economic development.

- Staff capacity to advocate for arts and culture in regional growth and development.
- Staff capacity to spin off and/or coordinate with district expansion efforts (Evitts Run trail, African American historic district, etc.,).
- Direct services to artists may be less than in growth stage (mid term) but may still be necessary.
- Staff capacity to coordination with regional or infrastructure projects such as trails and transit oriented developement.

PLACE +15

The Arts and Cultural District has attracted a major institutional anchor and the District is networked with other sites such as bike trails, art trails, and historic districts.

STREET ACTIVATION continues with pop-up events and street furniture.

PARKING has been consolidated into structured and street parking.

The District has densified with **INFILL DEVELOPMENT** of existing parking lots.

CONNECT SITES outside of the District Core to major infrastructure improvements, including trails.

Develop **ARTS AND CULTURE SITES** outside of the District Core.

PERMANENT INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS, such as curb bump-outs improve the street experience for pedestrians.

CONNECTING TO ANCHORS OUTSIDE OF THE DISTRICT CORE is very important. The paths will be reinforced with new arts-related assets.

ULTURE DISTRICT FEST!!

Happy Retreat →

Bike Trail →

BRAND +15

INFILL DEVELOPMENT replaces surface parking lots and increases the District density.

SIDEWALK EXPANSION in certain areas reclaims the road for artists and creates centers of activity.

In 15 years, C Town might include...

Art School
Visiting Artist Program
Art Supply/Tool Lending Library
Maker Roundtable/Coop
Art Trail/Art Tour
Art Museum

Artist Coop
Arts Incubator
Art Park
Themed Sculptures
Maker Space
Tamarack Outpost (Artisan Shop)

EXPANDED CURBS make crossing the strees friendlier for pedestrians.

DISTRICT SIGNAGE direct visitors to nearby attractions and trails.

ARTS & CULTURE DISTRICT FESTI

wayfinding

WELCOME TO C★TOWN!

CHARLES STREET

★ **CHARLES STREET WORK+SHOP**

★ **THE COFFEE STABLE & BOOKSTORE**

★ **MEDITERRANEAN PATIO**

★ **COLD TREATS @GALLERY C**

JUST AROUND THE CORNER...

★ **OLD OPERA HOUSE ANNEX & SCHOOL**

★ **CHARLES WASHINGTON HALL**

★ **HAPPY RETREAT ART CENTER**

★ **BIKE TRAIL AND HOSTEL**

★ **AFRICAN AMERICAN DISTRICT GALLERY**

C★TOWN
ARTS &
CULTURE
DISTRICT
CHARLES TOWN, WV

Artist Micro-Residencies
Arts District Tax Credit
Artist Support Grant
Artist Loan Fund
Teaching Artist Grants
Arts Development Model
Business Mentors for Artists

DISTRICT TIMELINE

+ 5 YEARS

+ 10 YEARS

PROGRAMMING

To grow our cultural offerings we will...

Coordinate calendars, create an ecosystem of events and venues.

- Cultivate relationships to develop a strategic menu of events that have a regional and local draw. Bring all events into the brand.
- Include large major events and festivals and create unique branded experiences downtown (regional).
- Develop regularly held events to bring visitors to the three anchors (theatre, Charles Washington Hall, and Happy Retreat), such as monthly restaurant/theatre nights, weekly events at CWH such as farmers market, and monthly concerts at HR (locally serving).
- Include smaller events with arts and nonarts organizations and encourage and enable the creative use of downtown sites.

Grow and expand cultural offerings.

- Formalize and expand events calendar, continued arts curation.
- Explore and execute longer term or larger scale projects (alliances with institutions, regional initiatives, etc.).
- Eductional programs, cultivation of key institution, larger grants.
- Plan for expansion of district and pursue resources.

ORGANIZATIONS

To power the efforts we will...

Create coalitions and aggregate asstes.

- Meet regularly with business and property owners to focus on events and programming within downtown fabric.
- Create an alliance and MOU for businesses, arts organizations, and others to outline the benefits of participation in the district formation.
- Build coalitions based on aligned purpose or available resources, such as grants.
- Hire a full time staff person, to curate, promote, support events and planning, relationship cultivation and project incubation.
- Seek organizational and program funding for a staff person to support deeper engagement, investment and long term projects (see Midterm District outcomes).

Invest in real estate and economic development strategies.

- Increase staff capacity to execute real estate analysis and strategy, including economic development expertise such as promotion and assistance with tax credit or other incentive programs.
- Increase staff capacity to plan for district expansion and connection to other local and regional assets.
- Increase services available to public to assist with relocating and making improvements to downtown.
- Inform next iteration of comprehensive planning to see how main street successes might catalyze further downtown development and densification.

BRAND

To invite others to join our efforts we will...

Deploy a campaign identity and call to action.

- Deploy a visual and thematic identity for the launch of the district effort. Apply the brand to all district events.
- Identify a lead organization in charge of marketing.

Extend campaign identity to a district identity.

- Review district assets to create a district identity.
- Coordinate branding with campaigns or events.
- Expand and update offerings such as maps, and web based tools.
- Explore cobranding with major partners and institutions.
- Assist smaller organizations or campaigns with media support.

+ 15 YEARS

METRICS

Maintain growth and steward initiatives.

- Continue coordination and support of art initiatives and organizations as demographics change.
- Continue events coordination and planning, educational programming, and arts curation.
- Execute expansion of district and regional scale or infrastructure related projects.

and type of events held downtown
locations of events
award for unique branding/use of downtown space
award for most creative storefront display
# of visitors, regional & local
social media and other indicators
# of organizations participating in events

Remain a trusted and effective partner for regional economic development.

- Staff capacity to advocate for arts and culture in regional growth and development.
- Staff capacity to spin off and/or coordinate with district expansion efforts (Evitts Run trail, African American historic district, etc.,).
- Direct services to artists may be less than in growth stage (mid term) but may still be necessary.
- Staff capacity to coordination with regional or infrastructure projects such as trails and transit oriented developement.

and type of events held downtown
locations of events
award for unique branding/use of downtown space
award for most creative storefront display
# of visitors, regional & local
social media and other indicators
# of organizations participating in events
# storefronts renovated
$ spent in investment
$ grants/loans secured
# second floor occupancy
# arts living in 5 mins of downtown
# arts/culture groups with downtown presence
# full time staff people supporting the ACD

Renew and refresh as needed.

- Renew district identity as district evolves.
- Lead with district identity as smaller campaigns develop.
- Marketing will need to evolve with demographic trends and technologies. Plan for periodic reinvention.

and type of events held downtown
locations of events
award for unique branding/use of downtown space
award for most creative storefront display
# of visitors, regional & local
social media and other indicators
# of organizations participating in events
# storefronts renovated
$ spent in investment
$ grants/loans secured
# second floor occupancy
# arts living in 5 mins of downtown
# arts/culture groups with downtown presence
# full time staff people supporting the ACD
# of infrastructure dollars for arts/culture project integration
financial and programmatic stability of major anchors

FUTURE MODELS FOR EXPANSION

Charles Town has a unique confluence of making and craft and historical legacy. The identity and strategy of the district needs to build upon both.

ANCHOR INSTITUTION

Anchor institution may generate buzz and traffic but will likely rely on other organizations for collateral cultural development. Anchor institution administration may be parallel to local efforts. Local efforts may be similar to those described in District Core or Art Trail.

Cultvating a possible anchor institution will take coordinated effort and require cultural and economic backing as well as real estate expertise. Though some institutions have found their satellite homes without an invitation (as Dia found Beacon, NY), CT will have to promote its proximity to the DC market and regional attractions, its access and its relative affordability.

Charles Town may be more attractive to West Virginia institutions (such as Tamarack) looking to enter the DC market, than to DC institutions looking to establish an exurban outpost.

State support could be critical to attracting and maintaining an anchor.

Attract a renowned entity such as Tamarack or Smithsonian to create a destination or outpost in Charles Town. May also be a new institution but with umbrella organizational responsibilities for the district.

The institution's presence catalyzes partnerships that facilitate new kinds of cultural events, foster a network of groups and engage individuals.

CHARLES TOWN IS A REGIONAL ATTRACTION AROUND **WV'S LEGACY OF MAKING**
- Tamarack @ Charles Town
- Mountain Studio Tours
- West Virginia Heritage Days
- Residennce (multiday) craft camps & classes

KEY DEMOGRAPHICS
Visitors, all ages (regional/national)
Families and youth (local)
University community (local/regional)

PLACES
Underused industrial structure(s)
Landmarks such as
Old Opera House
Charles Washington Hall
Happy Retreat

FUNCTIONS
Maker spaces
Visiting artists/performers
Visiting museum shows
Regional festivals
Art school/classes

PRIORITIES

- Regionally known and promoted
- Landmarks are connected to or occupied by institution(s)
- Institutions may coordinate multiple functions
- (educational classes, performances, event host, etc.,)
- Known for regional/national attractions
- Branding is aligned with the institution

ART TRAIL

The Art Trail needs the support of a strong district core and/or anchor institutions and in that sense, it can become a programmatic extension of one or either.

The art trail staffing may be part of one of these organizations, and will be connected to the parks department as well as businesses and facilities that benefit from proximity to the park.

Key staff competencies will likely include fundraising for infrastructure, coordination of large regional events and small local programs. It is likely that project management will be needed to help steward public realm (park and otherwise) improvements over a number of years.

State and national support might be essential to infrastructure improvements. Support for the arts would likely be for site specific installations and not for operational funding.

Happy Retreat and the District act as nodes on a loop that connect an Evitt's Run trail to Main Street, to a route through the residential historic core to Retreat grounds. The entire town becomes a setting for art.

Public art and other cultural destinations are added along the trail, creating places that provide an engaging setting for tours, events and other programming.

CHARLES TOWN HAS REGIONALLY ATTRACTIVE EVENTS IN ITS **CONNECTED SETTINGS**

- Families and youth (local)
- Visitors, all ages (regional/national)

KEY DEMOGRAPHICS

Visitors, all ages (regional/national)
Families and youth (local)
University community (local/regional)

PLACES

Sculpture Park/Trail
Cafe/Restaurant
Artist Studios
Outdoor Flex Spaces

FUNCTIONS

Art + Studio Tours
Light Show
Walk/Bike/Horseback Tours
Outdoor Movies
Theme Sculpture Series

PRIORITIES

- Depends on investment in trail infrastructure as well as arts and cultural programming and artifacts

- Need to strengthen connection between district and trail through a landmark, gateway, or adjacent subdistrict

- Programming can include the incremental accumulation of artifacts, but should be programmed with powerful branding events

...the vibe on the streets and sidewalks

...a name and slogan

...a reputation for creativity and fun

...public art

...environmental graphics

What
BRANDS
an arts & cultural district?

...a strong online presence

...printed marketing materials

...the physical environment

...the people

CREATING A DISTRICT IDENTITY

Alongside the development of programs, events and places in the Charles Town Arts & Culture District, developing a visual identity and a brand for the district is important to engaging the community in district formation.

The short term goals of the district plan draw primarily upon community involvement and building organizational capacity. Based on interactions with Charles Town's community and creative network, a community activation campaign was designed to attract broad participation in the district.

Campaign Purpose

TRIBE BUILDING
COMMUNITY ACTIVATION
CAPACITY BUILDING
[short term]

ACTIVATING + BRANDING PLACES
BRANDING PROGRAMS + EVENTS
CATALYZING DEVELOPMENT
[mid term]

MARKETING
TOURISM
ATTRACTING NEW RESIDENTS,
INSTITUTIONS, BUSINESSES
[long term]

A brand can represent one of three things for Charles Town:

CAMPAIGN

- addresses place, duration, and a call to action

- is dynamic and flexible in its application

- will ACTIVATE the community and serve long-term goals of establishing a DISTRICT and potentially a district management ORGANIZATION or coalition

ORGANIZATION

- several groups already operate in the c-town arts+culture space

- a central organization for district management may take shape in the future but is not yet a formal entity

DISTRICT

- district boundaries are "soft" or dynamic and can remain this way indefinitely

- the downtown district core as of now is underdeveloped and needs activation before it becomes a place worthy of long term branding

[temporary]..[permanent]
short term   long term

C Town Arts & Culture District

The name and identity of the district reflect themes extracted from community meetings and focus groups.

The C Town concept is versitile enough to be applied across a variety of media and to brand events, programs and places that contribute to the development of the district.

At the same time, the C Town campaign expresses a distinct local identity that will champion district assets—particularly people, their crafts and the region's legacy and culture of making.

Charles Town Arts & Culture Identity Imagery

History Of Making	**Where the Mountains Meet the Piedmont**	**Our Legacy - Past to Future**
Hands	Landscape/ Mountains	Horse(s) on Main (district core scenario)
Tools	Stripes	Hitch
D.I.Y. look & feel	Geography	Washington Family Seal (three stars over two stripes)
Making the old new again	Celebrate adventure in a scenic setting	"C" town
People (Diverse array of creative people, making and doing things)	People	People

---

Visual themes explored by the design team after working with the community to understand its identity. The highlighted themes were chosen as focal points for the C Town campaign graphics because the design team and district planning committee determined that these were the most relevant concepts for Charles Town's arts and culture community today.

is for Campaign.

C★TOWN
ARTS &
CULTURE
DISTRICT
CHARLES TOWN, WV

WHAT IS C TOWN?

The campaign aims to advance the district's 5-year vision:
In 5 years, the Charles Town Arts and Culture District will be known as a place where making meets history.

To that end, the C Town campaign shall be deployed with thoughtful attention to:

PLACE the sidewalks, streets, alleys, retail and cultural destinations, historic landmarks and entertainment venues of Charles Town are exciting and creative places to be!

DURATION the campaign can consist of phases that change the focus over time to align with specific district development goals.

ACTION campaign communications should revolve around a clear call to action, whether it's simply visiting the district, attending an event or

What will make the C Town campaign successful?

The campaign is versitile. In service to achieving the 5-year district vision, the C Town campaign will present an identity consisting of visual, verbal and experiential branding. The brand is flexible enough to be applied to all kinds of media and built environment uses, and it can evolve over time to incorporate new elements as the district develops. Progress should be evaluated every 18 months to gauge the campaign and its success, while considering how and when to extend the branding campaign or how it might change in the future.

The campaign is multi-faceted. The C Town brand design revolves around some foundational components that can be mixed and matched to build a cohesive look and feel. These components are exaplained in the following section, along with principles for using them effectively and examples of applications.

The campaign is visible. Campaign components have been designed to elicit broad attention in a competitive entertainment and tourism market. Supporting the campaign with funding that can extend the reach of C Town media and communications across West Virginia and major population centers near by will increase visibility.

This may involve hiring marketing staff to increase C Town's online presence and boost its reputation by working with regional and national news, entertainment and arts media.
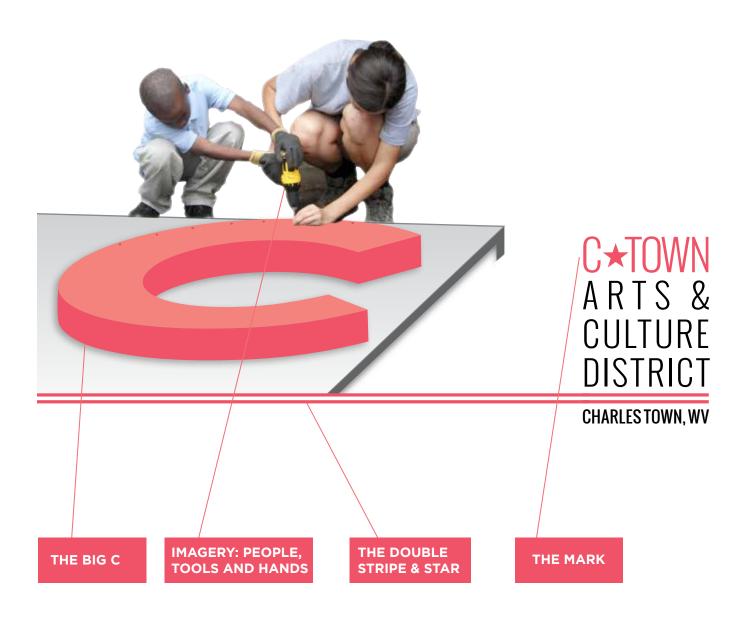
The campaign is actionable. The campaign must put forward an inclusive attitude that invites participation from all members of the community and regional network in forming a district.

A strong tribe will champion the activation of places in the district, enriching the community by introducing programs and events.

Community and organizational capacity needs to develop over time in order to effectively serve tourism, new visitors, businesses and residents.

PRIMARY COMPONENTS

The building blocks of effective campaign materials: an overview

C★TOWN
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CULTURE
DISTRICT

CHARLES TOWN, WV

THE BIG C

IMAGERY: PEOPLE, TOOLS AND HANDS

THE DOUBLE STRIPE & STAR

THE MARK

is for Choreography.

PRINCIPLES

- the big C is the "star of the show"
- strive for solid and original concept and execution
- use the bright red color sparingly for emphasis
- think in 3D

IDEAS FOR USING THE BIG C

As the campaign evolves, the Big C can be referenced in a variety of ways. For example, a series of "C is for…" pieces can be created to promote programs, events and places in the district. Campaign launch materials such as banners and t-shirts will align with this format. Moving forward, new ideas for slogans to integrate with the Big C may emerge.

is for Cooking.

INTEGRATING IMAGES & THE BIG C
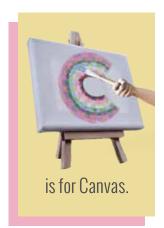
campaign graphics bring focus to the letter C in clever and
engaging ways. these are some thematic ideas for integrating
the C with images:
• working on/ building the C
• crafting the C
• C made of objects, hands or tools
• foreground/background play to make the C part of an image
• think in 3D

is for Choreography.

is for Collaboration.

is for Canvas.

is for Ceramics.
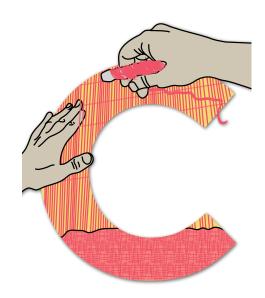
GRAPHIC STYLES

there is no fixed medium or style for campaign graphics, however, some consistency is necessary in composing images that will be shown as a series.
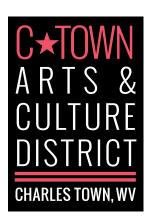
types of media that can work well to create engaging campaign graphics:
• studio photography
• illustration
• photo-manipulation
• handmade

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DISTRICT
CHARLES TOWN, WV

the standard C Town mark

C★TOWN ARTS & CULTURE DISTRICT
CHARLES TOWN, WV

C★TOWN ARTS & CULTURE DISTRICT
CHARLES TOWN, WV

alternate C Town marks for layouts that require a horizontal header

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the reverse C Town mark for dark backgrounds

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monochromatic C Town marks for grayscale or 1-color applications

PRINCIPLES

- the mark needs to be versatile:
  works in monochrome
  legible at small scale
  vertical and horizontal formats
- the mark must not overpower the art it accompanies
- the mark almost never appears by itself and is secondary to
  other components

the mark can be relatively small, but legible with
plenty of empty space around it

maintain the integrity of the mark—avoid changing the spacing and scale of
the lettering, recoloring, stretching, crowding or obscuring it.

THE DOUBLE STRIPE AND STAR

C★TOWN ARTS & CULTURE DISTRICT

CHARLES TOWN, WV

C is for Celebration!

HERITAGE FESTIVAL JUNE 18TH

Charles Town Heritage Festival is set for Saturday, June 18th, 2016.
This is an annual event which draws on the community's unique history. Experience the live music, craft vendors, walking tours, colonial workshops, children's activities and farmers market.
Visit the festival website for a list of activities and performances!

JOIN IN

volunteer to staff the Ctown district mural project table at the festival

sign up for the Ctown district steering committee

sponsor an artist made city bench in downtown charles town

C★TOWN STAR
firehouse gallery

C Town Star decals feature the double stripe and star

the double stripe can be used as a divider between header, body, and footer content
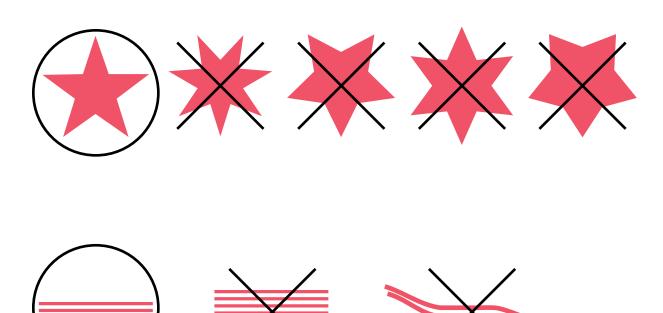
USING THE DOUBLE STRIPE AND STAR

the campaign look and feel is rooted in Charles Town's historic identity. the double stripe and star references the Washington family seal in a way that is fresh and contemporary, and compliments the Big C with secondary graphic elements to form a distinctive visual brand.
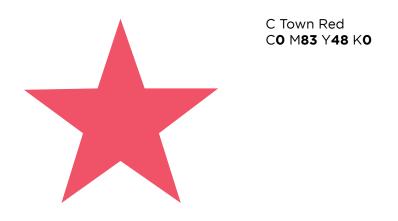
PRINCIPLES
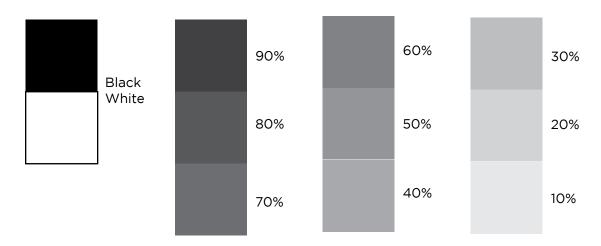
- the double stripe and star are secondary to the Big C and should not compete with it for visual prominence
- these elements should be colored in the standard bright red, however, some applications may allow for stars to be used in a variety of other colors or as a mask with patterns or images inside them
- Use only the 5-pointed star provided in the C Town graphics package—stars in different proportions can create inconsistencies that may cause brand confusion
- Similarly, do not distort the stripes or add to them

COLORS

C Town Red
C**0** M**83** Y**48** K**0**

Black
White

90%

80%

70%

60%

50%

40%

30%

20%

10%

PRIMARY PALETTE ↑

the primary campaign palette consists of "C Town Red"—a bright red/pink hue that is a new take on the town's traditional red and white seal. black, white and grey accents should be used to support bright red elements, and colorful, artistic imagery is always encouraged.

SECONDARY PALETTE →

a secondary palette has been selected with bright and muted tones that pair well with the striking C Town Red and won't compete with bold artistic imagery. these can work for backgrounds or type headlines and the occasional illustration or pattern.

Ctown's annual celebration of regional history and culture is coming soon!   Click to view this in your browser

C★TOWN ARTS & CULTURE DISTRICT

CHARLESTOWN, WV

is for Celebration!

HERITAGE FESTIVAL JUNE 18TH

JOIN IN

volunteer to staff the Ctown district mural project table at the festival

the secondary palette is intended for backgrounds or type headlines

is for Columns.

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C21 M6 Y0 K0	C45 M8 Y32 K0
C6 M8 Y45 K1	C41 M7 Y63 K0
C13 M2 Y8 K0	C4 M34 Y65 K0
C25 M32 Y40 K16	C15 M15 Y26 K4
C15 M3 Y18 K0	C34 M6 Y28 K0
C2 M37 Y7 K0	C14 M6 Y7 K6
C55 M15 Y5 K0	C2 M2 Y47 K0
C33 M0 Y23 K0	C50 M0 Y20 K0
C0 M61 Y42 K0	C0 M21 Y39 K0
C36 M34 Y19 K38	C22 M11 Y56 K0

TYPOGRAPHY

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DISTRICT
CHARLES TOWN, WV

the C Town mark is mostly in Oswald Light font, with the bottom line in Oswald Book

oswald light

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz 1234567890 &

oswald book

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz 1234567890 &

oswald bold

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz 1234567890 &

the primary campaign typeface, used for the C Town mark, is called Oswald. for C Town brand collateral, mainly the light font weight should be used. sometimes small bits of emphasized type need more weight, but use the book and bold weights sparingly.

PRINCIPLES

- **breathing room.** be sure to provide ample white space between lines and around blocks of text.
- **less is more.** avoid over-emphasis such as combining all caps, bold, and underline for a single line of type.
- **legibility is key.** for smaller text, it is easiest to see black type on a white background.

oswald light
(header and title)

display font for
branded program &
event headlines

oswald book
(sidebar highlights)

cambria
(serif font for body copy)

Ctown's annual celebration of regional history and culture is coming soon!   Click to view this in your browser

C★TOWN ARTS & CULTURE DISTRICT

CHARLESTOWN, WV

is for Celebration!

HERITAGE FESTIVAL JUNE 18TH

JOIN IN

volunteer to staff the Ctown district mural project table at the festival

sign up for the Ctown district steering committee

sponsor an artist made city bench in downtown charles town

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Visit the festival website for a list of activities and performances!

Ctown Arts & Culture District ★ Charles Town, WV   contact us ★ unsubscribe

additional typefaces are usually unecessary for campaign applications like banners, ads and t-shirts. publications or flyers that have multiple levels of typographic hierarchy can incorporate a serif font for body copy, as shown in the newsletter example here.

CAMPAIGN APPLICATIONS

GOALS
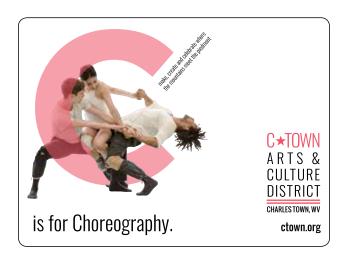
- The design and production of campaign collateral and district branding applications should be approached as a Tribe Building activity.

- District brand applications create opportunities for placemaking and activation.

- The district brand is dynamic and evolves over time in a way that tells the story of Charles Town's past, present and future.

STRATEGIES

- Engage local artisans and creatives in the design and production process for campaign content and district branding applications.

- Over the coming 5-15 years, incorporate some focus on relationships with out-of-town artists who will contribute to cultural exchange as a potential driver of district development.

ACTIONS

is for Choreography.

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CHARLES TOWN, WV

ctown.org

COMMUNICATIONS

Initiate a **media project** supported either by a grant or a partnership with an educational institution or corporate entity and/or a crowdfunding campaign. Engage a studio photographer to shoot a series of portraits featuring craftspeople and artisans from around the region practicing their crafts and artforms. The images can be shot or subsequently manipulated to incorporate the Big C and used in a series of billboards, ads, murals, posters and web-based promotions.

The images will provide a resource library for the C Town branding and tribe building campaign, presenting a distinct visual style that tells the story of Charles Town's contemporary arts and culture community. Over time, the images can be incorporated into various types of district program, event and place promotions and marketing campaigns.

Another component of the project could be to work with professionals and students in the field of media arts to produce video art for a C Town YouTube channel supported by other C Town social media accounts.

ENVIRONMENTAL

Initiate a **sculpture project** to infuse physical C Town district branding around Downtown Charles Town's emerging cultural centers. Seek funding to support a regional artisan as well as a future call for proposals for a national or international artist to create three-dimensional, place-based art, including pieces reflecting the C Town brand. A big C sculpture project, or C TOWN lettering may be the place to begin.

Ctown's annual celebration of regional history and culture is coming soon!   Click to view this in your browser

C★TOWN ARTS & CULTURE DISTRICT

CHARLES TOWN, WV

C is for Celebration!

HERITAGE FESTIVAL JUNE 18TH

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JOIN IN

volunteer to staff the Ctown district mural project table at the festival

sign up for the Ctown district steering committee

sponsor an artist made city bench in downtown charles town

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NEWSLETTER TEMPLATE

PHOTOGRAPHY
feature images should incorporate the appropriate principles for integrating images and the Big C (pg. 48). the image in this example has been manipulated to accentuate the musicians. by desaturating the background and masking the musicians, the letter C and the band are brought into the forefront and a thoughtful relationship between the two is established.

COLOR
the template's minimalist color palette allows the more colorful festival name and date to stand out along with the musicians and their instruments in the picture.

CALL TO ACTION
messages should always feature at least one opportunity for recipients to get involved

CTOWN.ORG OR CTOWN.WV WEBSITE

FULL WIDTH IMAGES
use high quality pictures of C Town's artists, performers, makers, events and festivals in a format that features these subjects front and center, integrated with a Big C and a call to action.

NAVIGATION
the district's online presence should present a menu of ways for artists, merchants, visitors and community members to engage. it's important to present this information in a simple and intuitive format.

FRESH CONTENT
today's webstes compete for search engine traffic by maintaining a constant flow of relevant and engaging information. make sure that the site is kept up to date with upcoming events and programs, and that old information is appropriately archived.

sign up for a
community cooking class
with the charles town farmers market

third thursdays
august 18
september 15
october 20

ctown.org/farmersmarket

is for Cooking.

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DISTRICT
CHARLES TOWN, WV

C★TOWN MAKER SPACE
grand opening event for all ages

saturday, november 12
328 north charles street

ctown.org

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DISTRICT
CHARLES TOWN, WV

POSTCARD INVITES

KEEP IT SIMPLE
postcards should promote a single call to action, using minimalist design principles to draw subjects in and promote the action.

NEGATIVE SPACE
the campaign look and feel relies on thoughtful use of negative space to build visual integrity around the central element: the letter C. keep this in mind when composing all marketing collateral, espcially formats that provide limited space.

is for Columns.

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is for Ceramics.

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CHARLES TOWN, WV

T SHIRTS & MORE

C Town imagery can be used in a series of shirt designs to promote various aspects of the district. these designs can also be adapted to other types of apparel.

As part of the short term campaign, the following quick and low-cost environmental graphic applications should be deployed in phases following the C Town campaign launch:

PHASE ONE THIS YEAR
- C Town Stars markers at district retail and cultural destinations
- C Town Mural Stamp on all new public art in the district
- One C Town Banner in a central district location, such as on the façade of Charles Washington Hall
- [C Town Community Bulletin Board?]
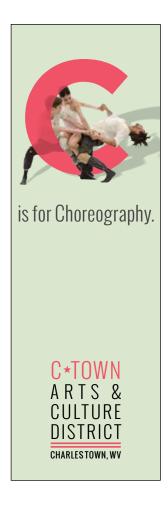
C TOWN STARS

these markers can be produced as decals with a place to print the destination name using an office laser printer; alternatively, they can be printed on regular paper and posted in the windows at district destinations
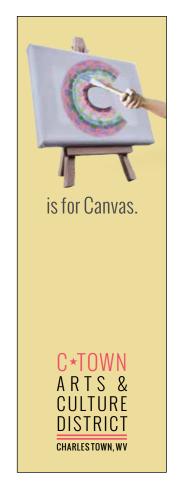
MURAL STAMP
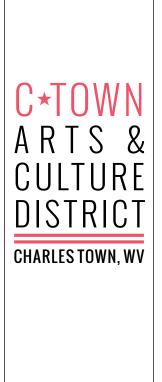
the "stamp" is actually a stencil or template that mural artists can fill in by hand, adding their name, funder information and the year

is for Choreography.

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is for Collaboration.

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is for Canvas.

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BANNERS

C IS FOR CLEVER
banners can be products of a campaign cycle
that brings new interpretations of a theme over
the course of several seasons. a creative team
can build on the concepts presented here.

MULTIPLE SCALES
make an impact and call attention to landmark
buildings using very large banners on the façade.
later, develop smaller lamp post banners that.
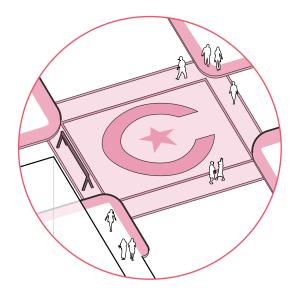
WAYFINDING & SIGNAGE

In the long term, wayfinding and signage will be essential in supporting the district identity and enhancing the experience for visitors. Destinations will need to be marked, infrastructure will need to be visually incorporated into the brand and the growing district made accessible to an increasing diversity of users.

PHASE TWO +5 YEARS
- A C Town District Directory Kiosk at the intersection of Charles & E. Washington Streets that features a map and list of key destinations
- Additional C Town Banners
- C Town Branded Street Paint either at the intersection of Charles & E. Washington Streets or along Charles Street

An example of branded street paint, functioning as a crosswalk while also creating a branded public space

wayfinding

WELCOME TO
C★TOWN!

CHARLES STREET

- ★ **CHARLES STREET WORK+SHOP**
- ★ **THE COFFEE STABLE & BOOKSTORE**
- ★ **MEDITERRANEAN PATIO**
- ★ **COLD TREATS @GALLERY C**

JUST AROUND THE CORNER...

- ★ **OLD OPERA HOUSE ANNEX & SCHOOL**
- ★ **CHARLES WASHINGTON HALL**
- ★ **HAPPY RETREAT ART CENTER**
- ★ **BIKE TRAIL AND HOSTEL**
- ★ **AFRICAN AMERICAN DISTRICT GALLERY**

C★TOWN
ARTS &
CULTURE
DISTRICT
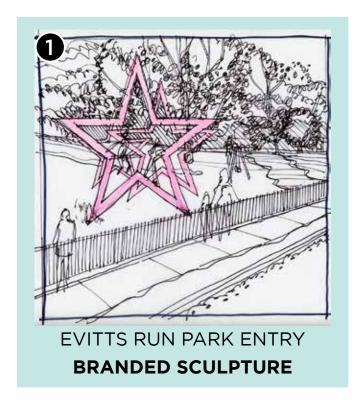CHARLES TOWN, WV

DISTRICT DIRECTORY

within a couple years, design a branded kiosk in a central location would direct visitors to key destinations around the district. this could be a digital display that also advertises upcoming events, or just a light box to display graphics printed on film that can be updated every year or two.
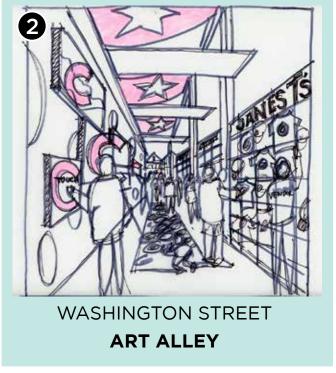
BRANDED PUBLIC ART
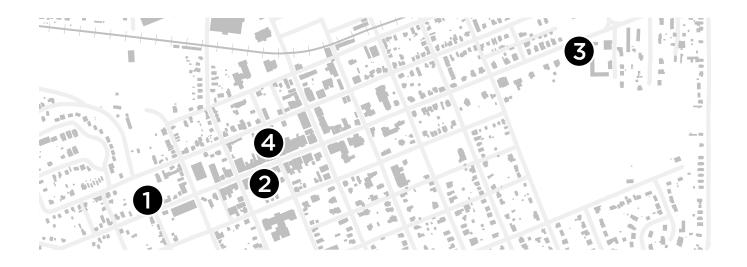
The C Town visual identity can be expressed through large-scale installations in key locations that are on the edges of the district and in its central core.

EVITTS RUN PARK ENTRY
BRANDED SCULPTURE

WASHINGTON STREET
ART ALLEY
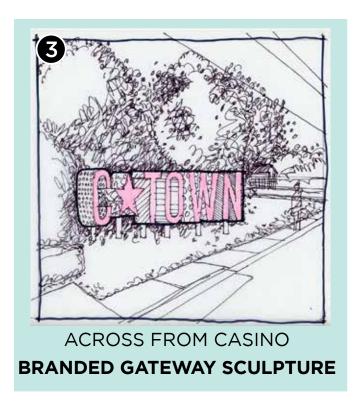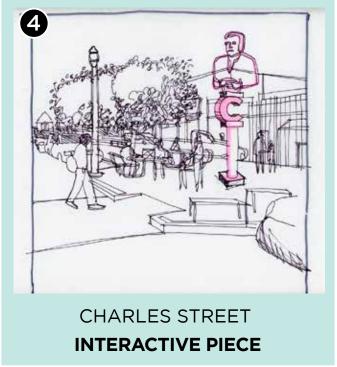
connect Charles Town's expanding network of green spaces to the district with large scale pieces at the district edge

develop an interactive alley using one of the narrow outdoor spaces inside the district core.

ACROSS FROM CASINO
BRANDED GATEWAY SCULPTURE

CHARLES STREET
INTERACTIVE PIECE

there is potential to draw people in from the district's eastern edge by creating a vibrant C Town gateway.

integrate public art with pedestrian infrastructure improvements on district side streets,

CTOWN CAMPAIGN DEPLOYMENT

DESIGN

LAUNCH

INWARD EXPANSION

Work with a professional designer to fine-tune the design of some intial collateral to launch the campaign:

• Newsletter
• Banners
• C Town Stars

Align a campaign launch with a community event, such as the Charles Town Heritage Festival. Amplify the effort with PR and social media. The launch should invite the public to get involved in district formation through a simple action:

• Volunteering
• Connecting their creativity to the campaign (perhaps using a social media hashtag)
• Wearing a button or displaying a decal in their shop or restaurant window

Engage artists and other creatives in creating public art and media that promotes the campaign and compliments its messaging. Continue to align launches and installations with festivals and large-scale events:

• Photography or illustration for integration with Ctown online and print media
• Exhibitions or projects that highlight regional heritage and celebrate the community
• Artisan-made signage and utilitarian objects around the district, like street furniture, bike racks, lampposts, or painted streets/ sidewalks

START NOW

THIS SUMMER

9 MONTHS

OUTWARD EXPANSION

RELAUNCH

Continuing the expansion of C Town branded media, release an expanded set of campaign material, such as:

- Website [ctown.org]

- Apparel [t-shirts, hats, hoodies]

- Advertising [seek funding for professionally designed billboards & media ads]

Assess the effectiveness of the campaign using tools such as website analytics, gauging attendence at events, business district revenue, media presence or other metrics. Consider the campaign focus—has a local tribe developed enough for the campaign to shift outward?

Evaluate the campaign's branding and consider adjustments to messaging while adding some more permanent applications:

- Enhanced signage and wayfinding system

- A district guide, in print and/or as an app

12 MONTHS

18 MONTHS

ARTS & CULTURAL DISTRICT
BACKGROUND

...fostering a unique character

...steps to revitalize the community

...prioritizing next steps

...creating significant economic impact

...branding and marketing

What does a
STRATEGIC
PLAN
include?

...funding strategies

...identifying organizations to manage district activity

...deciding what kind of activity should occur

...ways to measure success

...ways to bring community focus

CREATING A STRATEGIC PLAN

The most successful Arts and Cultural Districts are established according to a strategic plan that articulates the District's vision and plan to achieve it.

Americans for the Arts, one of the leading advocates of Arts and Cultural Districts (ACDs), defines six types of ACDs:

    Cultural Compounds
    Major Cultural Institution Districts
    Downtown Area Focus Districts
    Cultural Production Districts
    Arts and Entertainment Focus Districts
    Naturally Occurring Focus Districts

The type of district that is most likely to succeed depends on the existing assets and the aspirational goals of the community. Districts often have elements of more than one model and indeed, early assessment of Charles Town's assets and goals suggest that a CT Arts and Cultural District might most resemble elements of the Cultural Production Model and the Naturally Occurring Focus District.

The Cultural Production District is described as a district that serves artists and the local community through community centers, artist studios, and educational arts centers and media facilities. They often exist in areas with affordable housing and commercial space. These districts create a cultural hub and enhance city livability for residents of a neighborhood rather than attracting tourists.
(americansforthearts.org)

Naturally Occurring Focus Districts are grassroots, community-based efforts that build on the community assets and may also serve other holistic goals such as community empowerment. They are highly diverse and led by local empowered leadership. Generally they are neighborhood based and artist driven.

Once the type of District has been established, an Arts and Cultural District Strategic Plan should be formed. This document should intentory and build from the District's existing assets, consider challenges, and establish specific goals for the District.

There plan should establish what the District boundary is, where activity should occur within that boundary, and how the built environment will support it. The plan should consider what kind of activity should occur, including events, pop-up programs, and permanent places. Organizational capacity, including who will organize and run the district, is an important part of the strategic plan. Lastly, the plan should consider how the District will get the word out. What branding and marketing strategies will the District employ?

Arts & cultural districts mean many things to many people.
Here are some things they have in common...

ARTISTS & ENERGY
[arts are infused into a community, a critical mass of people with a shared purpose]

ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY
[foster innovation, made possible through economic opportunity & affordability]

UNIQUE SENSE OF PLACE
[cultivation of a strong identity through community engagement & branding]

INVITING TO PEOPLE
[programs and places to create a destination and expand the sense of community]

district
places
+
events
programs

IDENTITY

communicated through

WORD OF MOUTH

PRINT, WEB, & SOCIAL MEDIA

SIGNS & MARKERS

SETTINGS

DISTRICT GOALS + ASSETS = DISTRICT FORM

Our task in Charles Town is to create an arts and cultural identity by looking at events and programs, in addition to creating a critical mass of places to give a sense of the district. This will form the basis of an identity that Charles Town will use as the core of their communications strategy, including traditional media, social media, and by creating a word-of-mouth buzz about the district.

Through interviews, focus group discussions and observations, we have preliminarily identified Charles Town's assets, challenges and possible goals. These have been discussed through a community process and compared to models and precedent districts to create a unique strategic plan.

Charles Town's **assets** include:
- Historically significant landmarks and high quality architecture
- Low cost of living
- Available and affordable storefronts and real estate
- Transit access (highway and limited train) to Washington DC metro area
- Ethnic and cultural diversity
- Existing arts landmarks such as the Old Opera House
- Close to "first day" tourist attractions
- Existing arts activities and artist organizations
- State support for the arts

Charles Town's **challenges** include:
- Lack of density for major sights and in business district, too many parking lots
- Existing assets not stitched together in urban fabric
- Lack of "sidewalk culture" in business district
- Civic/legal zone of town serves a single purpose
- Historic sites are "second or third day" sites compared to other regional attractions
- Lack of existing arts place or anchor
- Low visibility or lack of young people involved in the arts
- Existing identity (racetrack/casino) is not likely to contribute to arts district
- Arts efforts are loosely coordinated
- Surrounding community lacks culture of participation in the arts
- Local disposable income levels low

Charles Town has expressed the following **goals** for their district:
- support artists (creative culture of making)
- improve quality of life for residents
- preserve historic assets
- fill vacant buildings
- increase transactions for businesses and artists
- create a competitive identity for CT
- attract people to CT
- attract artists
- act as an economic hub

When people communicate their positive experiences they create buzz. Encouraging buzz is difficult but can be a very effective means of building identity.

Print and virtual media are key to reaching diverse audiences, to provide a depth of information when needed, and to archive the activity and emerging identity.

Signs and markers formally define the district identity and enable activities and wayfinding.

Settings are the formal and informal places where people experience, produce, or share the arts. Places become the strongest element of district identity.

CENTRALLY PLANNED OR ORGANICALLY FORMED?

Arts and cultural districts can evolve as a centrally planned district or can be more organically generated from grassroots efforts. Most districts have elements of both. This contrast can be seen on a single street, Penn Avenue, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Penn Avenue in the central business district of downtown Pittsburgh, and acts as the epicenter of the Cultural District, a regionally serving arts district. First started in 1984, with significant foundation and civic support, the Cultural District is considered a matured example of a centrally planned district, which contains numerous major theatres, galleries, an African American cultural center, and even an arts-focused public high school within its boundaries. The district was begun by a specially formed organization, the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust, who simultaneously curated the arts as an economic development strategy while also forwarding a real estate strategy to save major theatres and the urban fabric to transform the formerly red light area of the city. The district eventually influenced other major reinvestment strategies, including the construction of a baseball stadium and convention center. As might be expected, it required decades to get to the level of success it enjoys today.

The Penn Avenue Arts District can be found four miles east of the Cultural District, which was created to use the arts to stitch together two city neighborhoods, Garfield and Friendship. The District grew out of the 1998 Penn Avenue Arts Initiative and was more loosely defined as a set of programs and events that tied together arts and commercial businesses in the area. Like the Cultural District, the PAAI was also begun with foundation support and received other funding including federal Main Street designation. However, the Initiative did not focus on bricks-and-mortar real estate strategy as much as programmatic energy. The programs were focused on attracting artists to live and

http://pennavenue.org/unblurred

work in the area's vacant storefronts and in the adjacent neighborhoods. Redevelopment efforts were spearheaded by the Friendship Development Corporation and the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation as part of larger neighborhood strategies. The PAAI succeeded in attracting a few larger anchors, including a nationally recognized glass studio and dance company headquarters, as well as smaller galleries, architecture studios, a make shop, restaurants, cafes, and other entrepreneurial arts businesses.

Now beyond its start up phase, the PAAI and the Arts District has spawned other efforts such as the 6% Project. The 6% project builds from Richard Florida's "creative class" theory, originated in the 1990s. Beginning in 2011, Eve Picker's 6% Project addresses the unequal market development with a targeted effort to recruit creatives in the Garfield neighborhood, building on the belief that an economic tipping point occurs when a neighborhood's creative population reaches 6%.

GETTING STARTED: COLORADO'S STORY

Whether begun through grassroots efforts or centrally planned, Arts and Cultural Districts are most successful when they are structured around a strong vision and plan. These plans address the shape and capacity of the district's organization, short term and long term plans for physical development of the district, the intentional shaping of the district culture, and the branding and marketing of the district.

Arts and Cultural Districts evolve over time. When Colorado created a statewide program supporting the creation of certified Creative (or Arts) Districts, they created a training regimen for applicant districts. This mandatory process required each District to:

- access expertise that related to their unique needs (downtown revitalization, zoning, finance, etc.)

- capture cultural heritage assets through a community process

- participate in a cohort of other districts to share knowledge and develop strategic partnerships, such as an artists exchange between urban and rural districts

- accesss webinars, books and other resources to harvest best practices

- budget for travel to conferences or to bring experts to share best practices

- create a website and identity

- measure against a Cultural Vitality Index to set goals and key performance indicators

The Colorado state-wide program excelled in articulating the many dimensions that need to be considered to establish a successful district. Their hard work paid off - of the 14 districts that began the process, 12 districts were established in Colorado in the first year, with seven more joining in the next year. It is good to note that the state-led project aligned foundation and state support as an economic development strategy.

Colorado's funding proved to be a powerful incentive for local communities and they were responsible for concrete deliverables in the categories of District Characteristics (event calendars, quantification of economic development as a result of the arts investment, articulation of their cultural heritage, branding

www.facebook.com/ColoradoCreatives/

and identity, and physical placemaking), Management and Planning (paid staff, governing body, budget, progress tracking and reporting), and Community Buy-In (active involvement of local government, the arts and culture sector, youth, residents, businesses, institutions, and other stakeholders).

Although there is no similar centralized process in West Virginia, Charles Town is embarking on a similar process, and has some similar support resources. The West Virginia Division of Culture and History works with artists, arts organizations, schools, and community groups to foster a fertile environment for the artistic, cultural, educational and economic development of the state. Another valuable resource, the Allied Artists of West Virginia, works to encourage, nurture and present the work of West Virginia artists to the community. Although not a West Virginia organization, the Maryland State Arts Council could become a useful partner and resource as well.

DOWNTOWN FREDERICK MD	DEL RAY ALEXANDRIA VA	PENN AVE PITTSBURGH PA	MAIN ST BEACON NY	DOWNTOWN WHEELING WV

PHYSICAL PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

Intentional, comprehensive street design & historic restoration	Strong on historic preservation of architecture, competitive real estate market, main street driven	Poorly maintained infrastructure promotes DIY, grassroots revitalization	Local gov't & chamber of commerce foster Main St. sidewalk culture, promote mixed-use historic urban fabric	Connected to trails & waterways; celebrating industrial past through place-making; murals, new sculpture park

CULTURAL PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

Emphasis on small/local retail; Vibrant mix of festivals & programs	Community driven programs & events, distinctive local business culture	Programming & events are core drivers of the corridor; inclusive atmosphere	Vibrant local arts community are impacting physical & cultural environment	Many programs and festivals, inclusive art scene, active community of artisans & craftspeople

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

Strong district management by official coalition with state support	High capacity network of neighborhood associations, but no official district management	Grassroots community management by core stakeholders (medium capacity)	Beacon Arts is a high capacity non-profit; local & regional gov't & business network are supportive	Anchor institutions, local arts & culture commission & downtown CDC demonstrate high capacity

BRANDING & MARKETING

No visible brand identity specific to district; approach to marketing primarily word-of-mouth, with some basics like street banners and websites.	Strong neighborhood identity. Mount Vernon Ave.'s Art Deco look echoed graphically on *visitdelary.com*, street banners, various media. Neighborhood slogan: "Where main street still exists."	An evolving, dynamic brand. Visible online presence and an occasional flyer or pamphlet, but marketing is mostly word-of-mouth.	Not visibly branded as arts district, but abundant public art and simple wayfinding signs contribute to rich Main Street experience. Internet-savvy Beacon Arts has well-branded programs: Second Saturdays, Beacon 3D, etc.	Plenty of online marketing, overlapping brands come through in wayfinding signs, street banners, fliers and more. Currently implementing a "community image campaign."

PRECEDENTS

Arts & cultural districts take on many forms, whether in small towns or big metropolitan areas, managed by an official entity or a grassroots community. What lessons can we learn from other districts?

Urban design goals typically include the creation of diverse, mixed use, walkable communities, the identification of economic drivers, and improved connectivity. We looked at the following communities and identified some key characteristics, strategies and takeaways that can inform Charles Town's effort to establish a vibrant arts and cultural heritage district.

ASSESSING THE BIG PICTURE

CHARACTER is it an urban village? a suburb? a town?

GENESIS what started all the buzz about this place?

POWERED BY who or what is driving its success?

DESIGNATION & FUNDING does the district have an official designation? one that includes funding or other benefits?

MANAGEMENT who manages the district?

KEY TAKEAWAYS the most important & relevant lessons

DOWNTOWN FREDERICK, MD
From its thriving business and tech climate to a vivid arts scene, growing culinary culture, and a brilliant revitalization of its 40-square block downtown, Frederick offers everything residents could want in a small city of 62,000.
— Livability.com,
'Why Frederick, MD, Is a Best Place to Live 2015', 2015

DEL RAY, ALEXANDRIA, VA
Eclectic shops and signature events like Art on the Avenue contribute to an artsy ambiance. Del Ray hosts the popular "First Thursday" events, in which every first Thursday of the month a new festival takes to the streets, attracting visitors and locals alike in search of family fun and a splash of local culture.
— VisitAlexandria.com, 2014

PENN AVENUE, PITTSBURGH, PA
"The artists that Garfield attracted were all artists that wanted to buy into a place that they wanted to live," adds Nina. *"It's not just a money investment; it was: 'I want to live here and I believe in these people and what we can build.'"*
— Popcitymedia.com, 'Artists help rebuild and unify up-and-coming neighborhoods across Pennsylvania', 2014

MAIN STREET, BEACON, NY
...through the influx of galleries, craft beer breweries, organic food shops and more, the town has harmoniously kept its industrial character while also preserving the natural beauty of the Hudson Valley.
— DesignSponge.com, 'City Guide', 2015

DOWNTOWN WHEELING, WV
"Thinking about Wheeling in that context has made me more excited about it. This can be a cool place for artists, especially if that's what we acknowledge that's what we want to be."
— TheIntelligencer.net, 'A Splash of Sidewalk Scenery: Meter Mural Project to Spread the Love', 2015

DOWNTOWN, FREDERICK, MD

Nearly 30 years after the flood that almost destroyed them, practically all of Downtown Frederick's 2,500-plus historic properties have been renovated for modern use and include stunning examples of mixed-used development. The city is an arts and entertainment destination, vacancies stand at less than 10 percent, and the Creek that once threatened to destroy it has become the centerpiece of the city's successful revitalization efforts. The National Trust for Historic Preservation has recognized this success, and named Frederick one of its Dozen Distinctive Destinations in 2002 and a Great American Main Street in 2005.

HIGHLIGHTS

PLACES

- Carroll Creek promenade
- Community Bridge Mural
- Church spires
- MD ensemble theatre
- Griffin art center
- Weinberg center for the arts
- Independent galleries & shops

PROGRAMS

- Easels in Frederick
- Annual Arts Festival
- Art in the Park (with baseball)
- International Kids Film Fest
- Alive@Five (live music happy hours)
- Arts Hall of Fame
- Film Festival

ORGANIZATIONS & INSTITUTIONS

- Frederick Arts Council
- Delaplaine Visual Arts Education Center
- Downtown Partnership

MORE INFO & SOURCES

- easelsinfrederick.org
- downtownfrederick.org
- visitfrederick.org

CHARACTER town
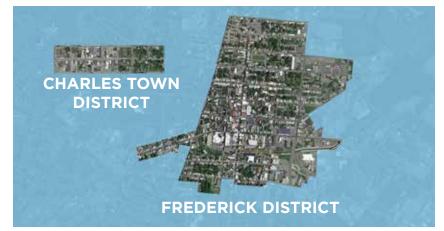
GENESIS history

POWERED BY market & local anchor institutions

DESIGNATION & FUNDING maryland arts & entertainment district

MANAGEMENT co-managed by downtown frederick partnership and the frederick arts council

KEY TAKEAWAYS intentional, comprehensive street design and strong official district management

Scale comparison of Frederick's Arts and Entertainment District and Charles Town's Arts & Cultural District

MANAGEMENT AND BRANDING

Frederick benefits from its proximity to the DC-Baltimore corridor, drawing visitors from densely populated wealthy suburbs. Its success is several decades in the making, with support from state and local government. The downtown arts and entertainment district is one of a few dozen Maryland districts that receive marketing support and financial benefits, some of which are extended to artists themselves who choose to live and/or work in the district.

DEL RAY, ALEXANDRIA, VA

Del Ray is a centrally located neighborhood that extends along the Mount Vernon Avenue corridor and is commonly referred to as a place "where Main Street still exists." The assortment of independently owned specialty food shops, art galleries, yoga studios, and coffee houses gives Del Ray its artistic vibe and community-oriented atmosphere. Music venues, businesses and other attractions contribute to a vibrant main street that spans several neighborhoods along Mount Vernon Avenue. The group Del Ray Artisans fosters community based arts activities, events and organizations, and the community's annual arts festival, farmers market, craft markets and architectural history tours attract a large diversity of visitors from the around the area.

HIGHLIGHTS

PLACES
- Del Ray Artisans Gallery
- Upcycle Creative Reuse Center
- Clay Queen Pottery
- Historic Art Deco Buildings & Victorian Homes
- Del Ray Performing Arts Center

PROGRAMS
- Art on the Avenue
- Art Market
- Farmers Market
- House & Garden Tour
- Oral History Project
- First Thursdays
- Holiday Craft Market
- Residential Architecture Conference
- Cinema Del Ray

ORGANIZATIONS & INSTITUTIONS
- Del Ray Artisans
- Del Ray Citizens Assoc
- Del Ray Business Assoc
- Alexandria Historical Society

MORE INFO & SOURCES
- visitdelray.com
- thedelrayartisans.org
- artontheavenue.org
- capitalbikeshare.com/news/2015/ 05/06/destination-del-ray
- dc.urbanturf.com/articles/blog/del_ray_virginias_small_town_near_the_big_city/2903
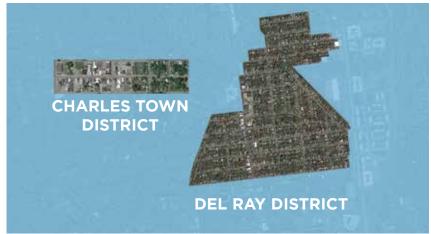
CHARACTER urban/suburban

GENESIS art+history

POWERED BY grassroots + market driven

DESIGNATION & FUNDING town of potomac historic district; trust for architectural easements

MANAGEMENT co-managed by municipal agencies, community associations and arts organizations

KEY TAKEAWAYS community programs, local independent businesses & historic preservation are a great mix

Scale comparison of Mount Vernon Avenue in Del Ray and Charles Town's District

MANAGEMENT AND BRANDING

While not an official arts district, neighborhood associations have established a brand and a reputation centered around creativity, holistic wellness, and locavore lifestyle. The neighborhood slogan and use of Art-Deco era type come through in a lot of communications, such as the Del Ray Business Association's website, visitdelray. com, and in the physical environment through signs, banners and murals.

PENN AVENUE, PITTSBURGH, PA

Penn Avenue has small anchors such as the Kelly Strayhorn Theater (KST) and the Pittsburgh Glass Center, but the art scene on the avenue is largely grassroots with a post-industrial, d.i.y. urban edge. There are several non-profit visual art spaces, vibrant "first fridays" events, annual festivals, and public art pieces along the avenue. Penn Avenue is a main artery through the city, and acts as a seam where several distinct neighborhoods converge. This brings a lot of economic, cultural and racial diversity to the events and programs and general atmosphere of the district.

HIGHLIGHTS

PLACES
- KST & Alloy Studios
- Pgh Glass Center
- Assemble (maker space)
- Boom! Concepts
- Bunker Projects
- Irma Freeman Center for Imagination
- Museum of Post-Natural History
- Most Wanted Fine Art
- Public Eco-Art

PROGRAMS
- Garfield Night Market
- First Fridays Unblurred
- GAGI Festival
- Pittsburgh Art Car/ Arts-in-Motion Festival
- Friendship House Tour

ORGANIZATIONS & INSTITUTIONS
- Bloomfield-Garfield Corp
- Friendship Development Associates
- Penn Ave Arts Initiative

MORE INFO & SOURCES
- pennavenue.org
- popcitymedia.com/features/artsdistricts050814.aspx

CHARACTER urban

GENESIS arts

POWERED BY grassroots

DESIGNATION & FUNDING main streets usa & pittsburgh URA main streets

MANAGEMENT penn avenue arts initiatives (committee of volunteers)

KEY TAKEAWAYS with a physical environment lacking conventional beauty, the community focused on programming and events with much success

Scale comparison of the Penn Avenue Arts District and Charles Town's Arts & Cultural District

MANAGEMENT AND BRANDING

The Penn Avenue Arts Initiative brand is loose and dynamic, without much environmental or media reinforcement—there is not a widely-used logo or graphic look. Publicity is mainly word-of-mouth and online, with an occasional flier, district map pamphlet, or poster for special events.

MAIN STREET, BEACON, NY

The Hudson Valley region is home to a strong network of cultural tourism destinations. Beacon's anchor institution is the internationally famous DIA:Beacon, which was a major catalyst in the revitalization of the town's Lower Main Street district. According to the *New York Times*, "The mere anticipation of its arrival turned empty storefronts into gleaming galleries and coaxed residents of Williamsburg, Brooklyn, and other artistic enclaves in New York City to relocate here." Over a decade later, New Yorkers are increasingly appreciating the town's unique independent shops and local creative culture. High-quality public art is sprinkled along a bike and ped-friendly Main Street, and a successful non-profit organization leads arts programming and collaborates with local government and businesses to foster a vibrant cultural scene with a strong presence in the media.

HIGHLIGHTS

PLACES

- Electric Windows project
- Artisanal shops & galleries in 19th-century buildings
- "Market Square" retail project
- Lofts at Beacon: live-work studios with exhibition spaces
- Howland Cultural Center
- Open Space
- DIA:Beacon
- Beacon Theatre

PROGRAMS

- Beacon 3D (public art initiative)
- Open Studios
- Beacon Riverfest
- Windows on Main
- Indie Film Fest
- Second Saturdays

ORGANIZATIONS & INSTITUTIONS

- Beacon Arts
- Art Talk Local (arts publication)
- Sherbert Magazine
- Historical Society
- Beacon Music Factory
- Chamber of Commerce
- BeaHive
- Beacon CityArts

MORE INFO & SOURCES

- nytimes.com/2009/03/29/nyregion/westchester/29Rtownwe.html?_r=0
- beaconarts.org
- nearbyescapes.com/Beacon_NY_Day_Trip-10-Detour_from_DiaBeacon_to_Main_Street.html
- designsponge.com/2015/06/beacon-new-york-city-guide.html
- cntraveler.com/galleries/2015-01-30/10-things-to-do-in-beacon-new-york
- artalongthehudson.com
- beaconchamber.org/notes-from-main-street

CHARACTER town

GENESIS arts

POWERED BY anchor institution

DESIGNATION & FUNDING new york main street grant + decentralization grant program of ny state council on the arts + national register historic (multiple small districts & sites)

MANAGEMENT unofficial/collaborative, with beacon arts (a 501(c)3) & municipal agencies

KEY TAKEAWAYS a vibrant, community-led main street creative culture is complementary to a big institutional anchor

Scale comparison of Beacon's Main Street and Charles Town's Arts and Cultural District

MANAGEMENT AND BRANDING

While not visibly branded as arts district, abundant public art and simple wayfinding signs contribute to a rich Main Street experience. Internet-savvy Beacon Arts has well-branded programs like Second Saturdays and Beacon 3D.

MAIN STREET, DOWNTOWN WHEELING, WV

Downtown Wheeling's Main Street is part of an arts and historical ecosystem of regional attractions, anchored by a few institutions, most notably the near by Ogelbay Institute & Glass Museum. The Wheeling National Heritage Area celebrates the town's industrial history with its "Made in Wheeling" campaign and online product database. Downtown reflects the same sense of pride by showcasing artisans at venues such as Centre Market and the Wheeling Artisan Center, and with programs that engage amateur and professional artists and craftspeople in beautifying the Main Street - Market Street corridor.

HIGHLIGHTS

PLACES
- Artisan Center
- Blue Church
- Fort Henry
- Stogie Factory
- Centre Market
- Stifel Fine Arts Center
- Towngate Theatre
- Smart Centre
- Wheeling Heritage Port Amphitheater, Park & Sculpture Garden
- Capitol Theatre
- Suspension Bridge

PROGRAMS
- Meter Mural Project
- OglebayFest
- Heritage Music BluesFest
- Festival of Lights
- Wheeling Art Beat (online);
- Wheeling Arts Fest
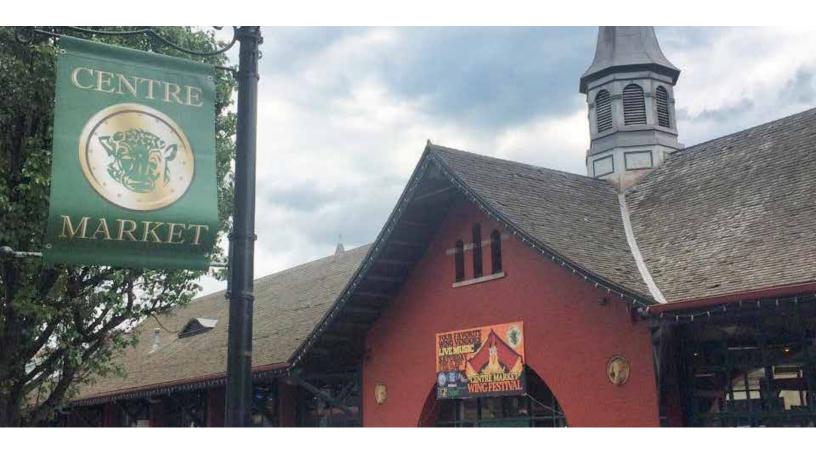
ORGANIZATIONS & INSTITUTIONS
- Ogelbay Institute & Glass Museum
- Wheeling Artisan Center
- Independence Hall of WV
- Centre Market
- Toy & Train Museum
- Symphony

MORE INFO & SOURCES
- wheelingheritage.org
- wheelingcvb.com
- theintelligencer.net/page/content.detail/id/644236/A-Splash-of-Sidewalk-Scenery.html
- http://ht.ly/JcLkL
- weelunk.com

CHARACTER town

GENESIS history

POWERED BY mid-size anchor institutions & grassroots hybrid

DESIGNATION & FUNDING national heritage area + north wheeling historic district + downtown historic district

MANAGEMENT collaborative: wheeling cvb, heritage area corp, arts & cultural commission, reinvent wheeling design committee (downtown wheeling, inc.);

KEY TAKEAWAYS strong sense of identity and heritage

Scale comparison of central Main Street, Downtown Wheeling and Charles Town's Arts and Cultural District

MANAGEMENT AND BRANDING

Wheeling districts along Main and Market streets are marked with banners and promoted online. The iconic suspension bridge is a central element in a lot of marketing communications, the area's industrial & artisan-rich history is celebrated in a variety of events, venues, media and programs. A campaign to develop and promote a new district brand is currently underway.

HOW
WE GOT HERE

What are
Charles Town's
existing
ASSETS?
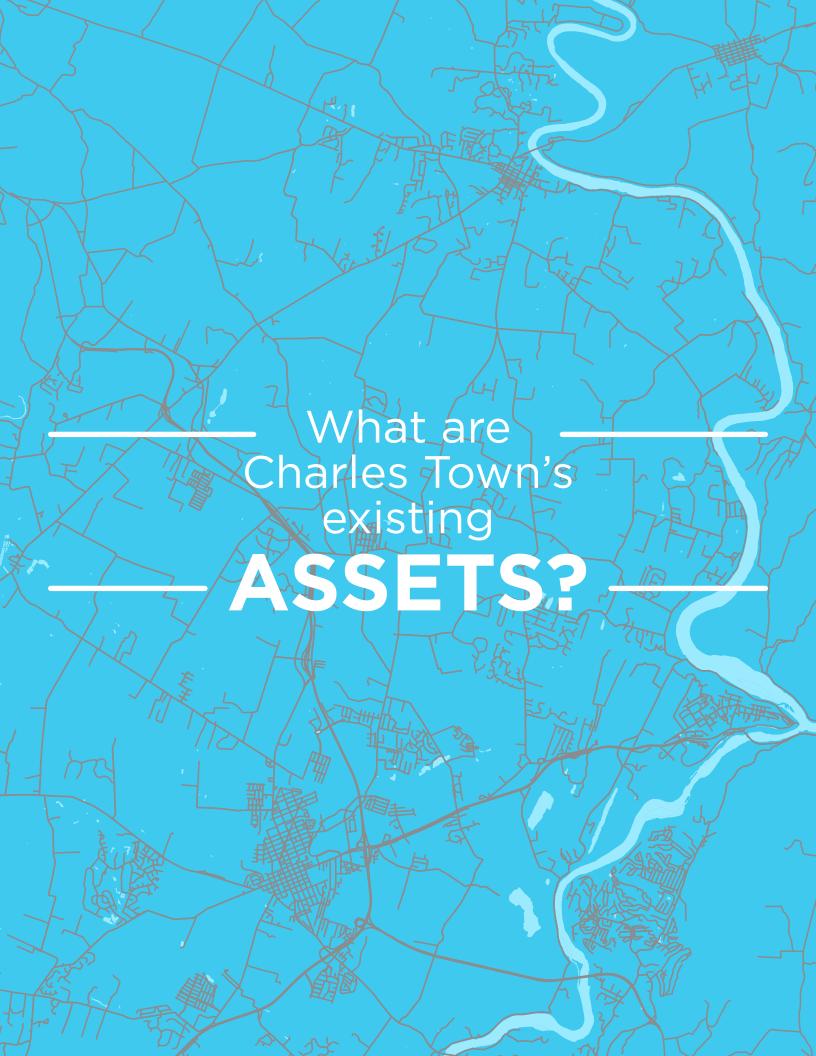
MAPPINGS

Understanding Charles Town's existing arts and cultural assets, as well as how it relates to successful neighboring towns, helps to determine where there are opportunities and gaps.

Originally chartered in 1786, Charles Town has relied on its rich and interesting history as its largest tourist draw until recent years. As new and interesting arts and culture related galleries, cooperatives, shops and events have popped up over the years, Charles Town is looking to transition its identity to incorporate both its rich past and artistic future.

Washington Street, Charles Town's business district and site for the evolving arts and cultural district contains a variety of historic, artistic, and cultural assets, but still leaves much to be desired. Besides designating the four corner lots at George and Washington Street to public

use, land use within the district varies between commercial, residential, religious, and public lands.

The following maps illustrate Charles Town's current assets, opportunities and appeal compared to its similar historic neighbors, Harpers Ferry and Shepherdstown. Analysis at the regional, local and corridor scale provide a complete picture of Charles Town.

REGIONAL

Charles Town is located in close proximity to Harpers Ferry and Shepherdstown, as well as numerous other historic (specifically civil war-era) towns. Charles Town's positioning in terms of geography and identity is comparable to that of Shepherdstown but cannot currently compete with Harpers Ferry.
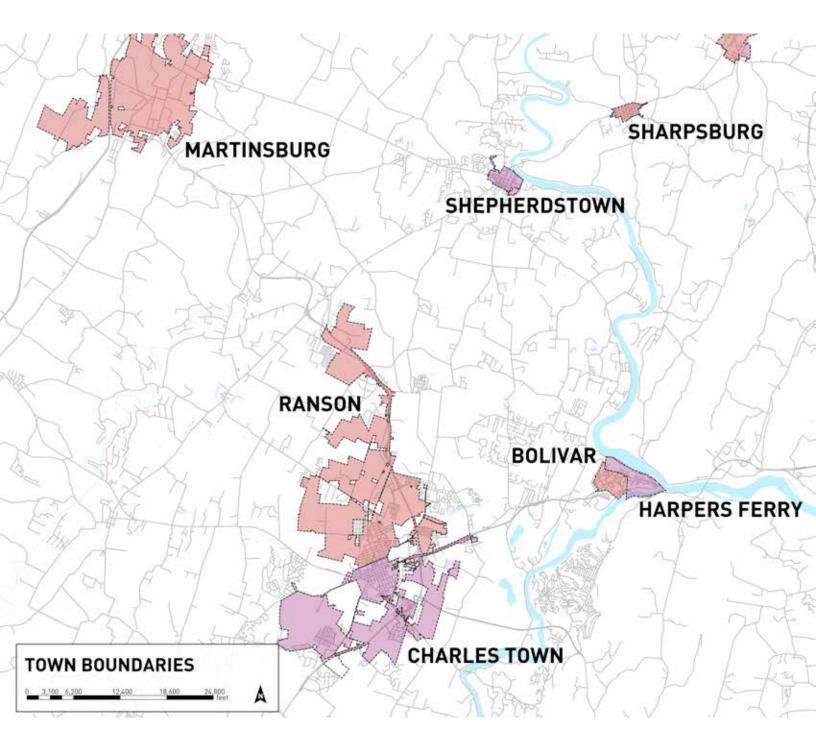
LOCAL

Charles Town, bordered by Ranson to the north, is only 5.8 square miles in area but contains several sites of interest located throughout the City. Despite its close proximity to Ranson, the two Cities exhibit far different identities.

CORRIDOR

Washington Street acts as Charles Town's business district and is the site of the City's up and coming arts and cultural district. The street acts as the City's main point of entry from the east or west, which can be both an asset and a liability to the district. The traffic associated with its positioning could be a liability, but can also act as an asset by attracting those who are just passing through.

MARTINSBURG

SHARPSBURG

SHEPHERDSTOWN

RANSON

BOLIVAR

HARPERS FERRY

CHARLES TOWN

TOWN BOUNDARIES

0   3,100 6,200   12,400   18,600   24,800
                                                    feet

REGIONAL ASSETS
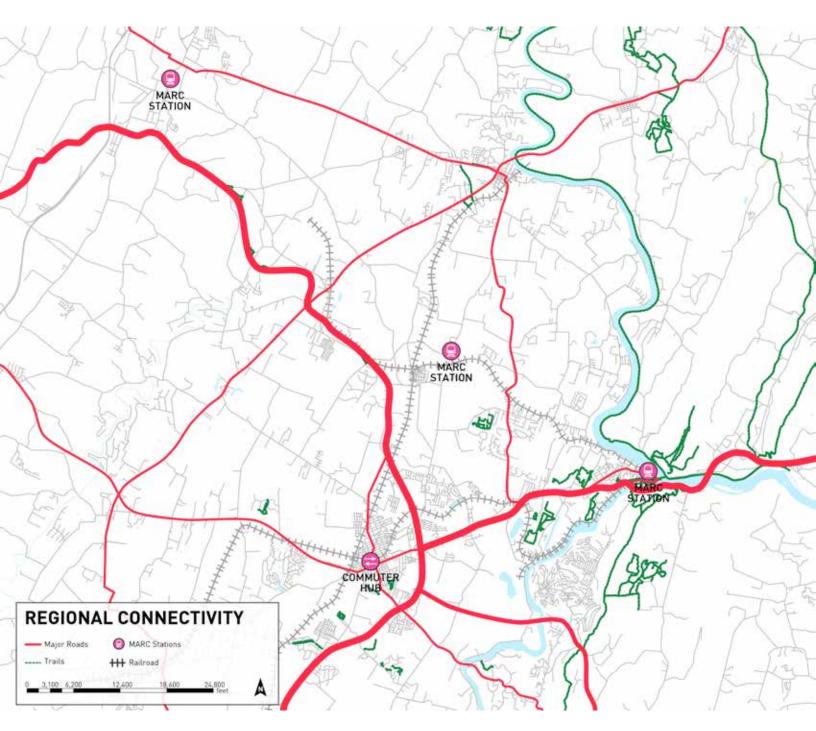
Town Boundaries

Charles Town is one of several small cities in West Virginia that depends on historical tourism as a major draw for regional visitors. The city is located approximately seven miles southwest of Harpers Ferry, WV (best known as the site of John Brown's raid on the Armory in 1859), and eleven miles south of Shepherdstown, WV (a historic town with several civil war era sites of interest).

Given the close proximity and size of each city,

regional tourists can easily visit all three within a day or two. In addition to historical tourism, these cities share small town approachability, boutique shops, outdoor exploration, and a variety of annual festivals and events that attract local and regional visitors alike.

REGIONAL CONNECTIVITY

— Major Roads   ◯ MARC Stations

····· Trails   ╫╫ Railroad

0 3,100 6,200   12,400   18,600   24,800 feet
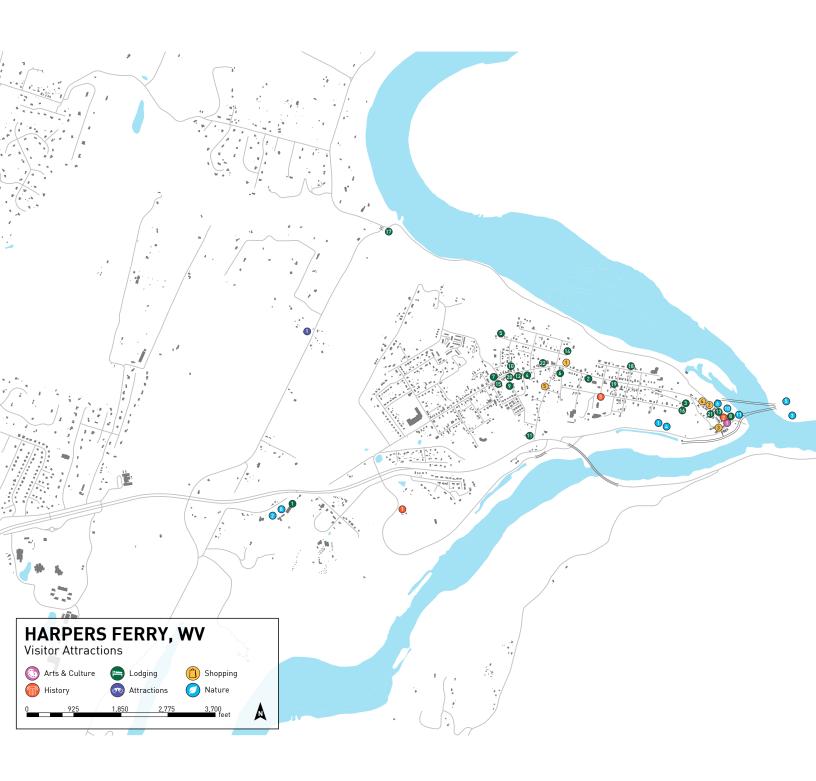
Regional Connectivity

Although located only an hour and a half away from Washington, DC by car, Charles Town is not situated along any major highways that lead directly into the city. This acts as both an asset and a liability for the Arts & Cultural District because it is not directly accessible to those on their way to or from Washington DC, but is far enough off of the highway to provide a relatively quiet and authentic small town feeling. Instead, the major entry points into the city from the north or south are from I-9 directly to Washington Street, or cutting through Ranson from the north. As a result, Washington Street and Seminary Street, West Street, and George Street are all important intersections and possible entry points into the Arts and Cultural District.

HARPERS FERRY, WV
Visitor Attractions

Arts & Culture	Lodging	Shopping
History	Attractions	Nature

0   925   1,850   2,775   3,700 feet

Harpers Ferry, WV Visitor Attractions

Situated at the intersection of the Potomac and Shenandoah Rivers, Harpers Ferry is a popular tourist destination for its distinctive shops, outdoor exploration, adventure tourism opportunities, historic attractions, and small town streetscape and atmosphere. Home to only 285 residents, Harpers Ferry is best known for John Brown's raid on the Armory in 1859 and its role in the Civil War. The town of Bolivar borders Harpers Ferry to the west, and a popular outdoor exploration destination, the Harpers Ferry National Park, surrounds both towns.

While not directly adjacent to a major route into Washington, DC, its position as the eastern gateway into West Virginia allows Harpers Ferry to be relatively accessible from the east or west. The town has numerous Inns, Bed & Breakfasts, and small hotels in support of its popularity as a tourist destination and its position in between numerous historical points of interest.

ARTS & CULTURE

PLACES

1 Westwind Potters

HISTORY

PLACES

1 Harpers Ferry National Historic Park
2 John Brown Wax Museum
3 Storer College at Harpers Ferry

PROGRAMS

Under Fire: Battle of Bolivar Heights Reenactment
Cider Making
ATC Haunted Trail House
Old Tyme Christmas
Capt. Flaggs US Quartermaster City Reenactment
Ghost Tours of Harpers Ferry
Harpers Ferry Horse and Wagon Tour
O' Be Joyful Historical Tours of Harpers Ferry

LODGING

PLACES

1 Quality Hotel Conference Center
2 Angler's Inn B&B
3 Ledge House B&B
4 The Jackson Rose B&B
5 West Ridge Hollow B&B
6 Boundary Cottage
7 Teahorse B&B/Hostel
8 Mountainside Lodge
9 Two Rivers Guest House
10 Canal House Cottage
11 Econo Lodge Harpers Ferry
12 Armory Quarters
13 Stonehouse B&B
14 Butler Burrell House
15 Enchanted Cottage
16 Peggy Dye House
17 Harpers Ferry Campground
18 Between the Rivers B&B
19 Camp Hill B&B
20 Riley House
21 The Town's Inn
22 Light Horse Inn

ATTRACTIONS

PLACES

1 Harpers Ferry Toy Train Museum

SHOPPING (arts related)

PLACES

1 Guilded Flea
2 FR Dreams
3 Harpers Ferry Historical Association Bookshop
4 The Hodge Podge
5 Lisa Kovatch Pottery

NATURE

PLACES

1 Appalachian Trail
2 Aerial Forest Adventure Park
3 Chesapeake & Ohio National Historical Park
4 Jefferson Rock
5 Maryland Heights Trail
6 Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail
8 River Riders
9 Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail
10 Washington Heritage Trail National Scenic Byway
11 Great Allegheny Passage

PROGRAMS

Half Marathon at Harpers Ferry
Herpers Ferry Park Guided Tours
Angler's Inn Guided Fishing Trips

What the town lacks in arts and culture related attractions, it more than makes up for in history and nature related offerings. The town's historic buildings and sites of interest are supported with numerous historic themed events and programs, such as history tours and reenactments. Similarly, the Appalachian Trail (which leads directly through the town) and surrounding National Park are supported by adventure tourism guides, recreational equipment stores, and biking, hiking and walking trails.

SHEPHERDSTOWN, WV
Visitor Attractions

Arts & Culture		Lodging		Shopping	
History		Attractions		Nature	

925   1,850   2,775   3,700 feet

Shepherdstown, WV Visitor Attractions
Just a 15 mile drive north from Harpers Ferry along the Potomac River sits Shepherdstown, WV, arguably the oldest town in the state. Shepherdstown offers a bucolic blend of rustic ambiance and metropolitan thought. The town is a popular tourist destination for its numerous arts and cultural opportunities, outdoor exploration, live music, historic sites, boutique shopping, and fine dining. Home to over 1,700 residents, Shepherdstown's population includes many Shepherd University students, which is located in the heart of the town.

Unlike Charles Town and Harpers Ferry, Shepherdstown is located at least 30 minutes away from a major highway, and does not contain a train station or other means of public transit directly into Washington, DC. Despite its rural location, Shepherdstown has much to offer tourists. In part due to the University, Shepherdstown has many art galleries, as well as

ARTS & CULTURE

PLACES

1 The Bridge Gallery
2 Dickinson & Wait Craft Gallery
3 Ricco Gallery of Contemporary Art Jewelry
4 Sheila Brannan - Stained Glass Studio
5 Shepherdstown Opera House
6 The Black Box Art Center
7 Urban Easel

PROGRAMS

Over the Mountain Studio Tour
American Conservation Film Festival
Cut to the Chase Film Festival
Masterworks Chorale Concerts
Performing Arts Series at Shepherdstown
Two Rivers Chamber Orchestra
Contemporary American Theater Festival
Shepherdstown University Plays & Musicals
Mountain Heritage Arts & Crafts Festival

HISTORY

PLACES

1 Mecklenburg Tobacco Warehouse
2 Shepherdstown Historic District
3 C&O Canal National Park
4 Little House
5 The Entler Hotel and Museum
6 The Rumsey Monument

PROGRAMS

Self Guided Walking Tour

LODGING

PLACES

1 Bavarian Inn
2 Clarion Hotel & Conference Center
3 Cottage at Cress Creek
4 Thomas Shepherd Inn
5 Perchasta Farm
6 Mecklenburg Inn

ATTRACTIONS

PLACES

1 Cress Creek Country Club

PROGRAMS

Boo!Fest
Christmas in Shepherdstown
DogFest
GardenFest

SHOPPING (arts related)

PLACES

1 Look in Pop's Attic
2 O'Hurley's General Store
3 D'Accord Boutique
4 The Now and Then Shop
5 Refinements
6 Retropolitan
7 Shepherdstown Paint and Art

NATURE

PLACES

1 Shepherdstown Pedal & Paddle
2 Morgan's Grove Park
3 Two River Treads

PROGRAMS
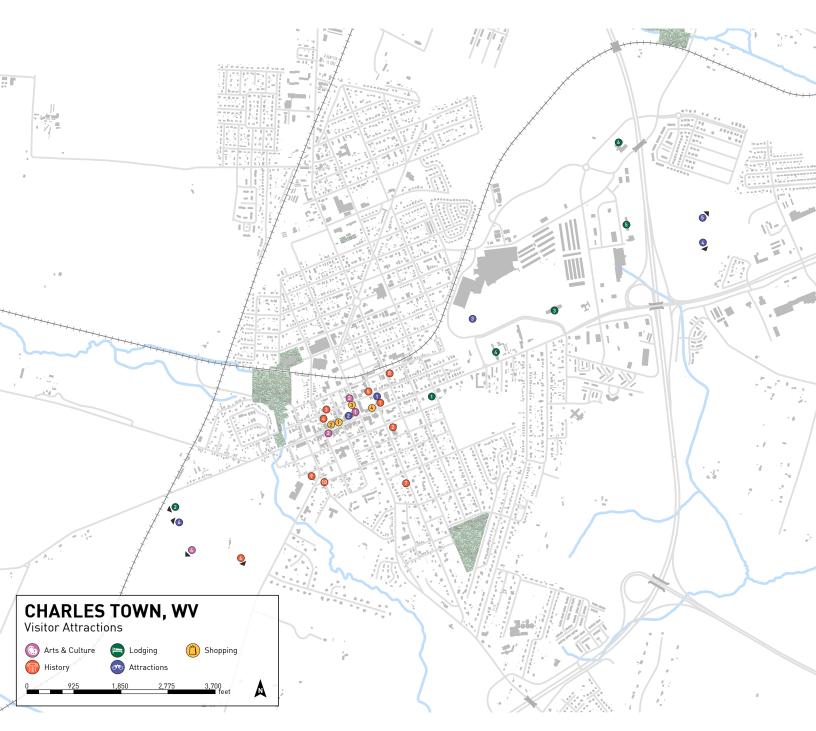
Freedom's Run
The Potomac Valley Audubon Race for the Birds

music, dance and theater performances. These arts and cultural offerings are supported with a variety of annual festivals and events, such as the Over the Mountain Artists Studio Tour, Contemporary American Theater Festival, and various Shepherd University plays and musicals. Additionally, Shepherdstown contains many historic sites of interest and the entirety of the town has been designated as a Historic District on the National Register of Historic Places. Shepherdstown also has many unique shops and antique stores, as well as several Inns and Bed & Breakfasts to offer tourists.

CHARLES TOWN, WV
Visitor Attractions

Arts & Culture   Lodging   Shopping

History   Attractions

0   925   1,850   2,775   3,700 feet

LOCAL ASSETS

Charles Town, WV Visitor Attractions

Founded in 1786 by George Washington's brother, Charles Town is currently the County seat of Jefferson County, and the largest of the three towns by far with over 5,000 residents. Charles Town shares Harpers Ferry and Shepherdstowns rich historical past, but sets itself apart with the Hollywood Casino, horse racing, a nearby motor sports park and an up and coming arts and cultural district.
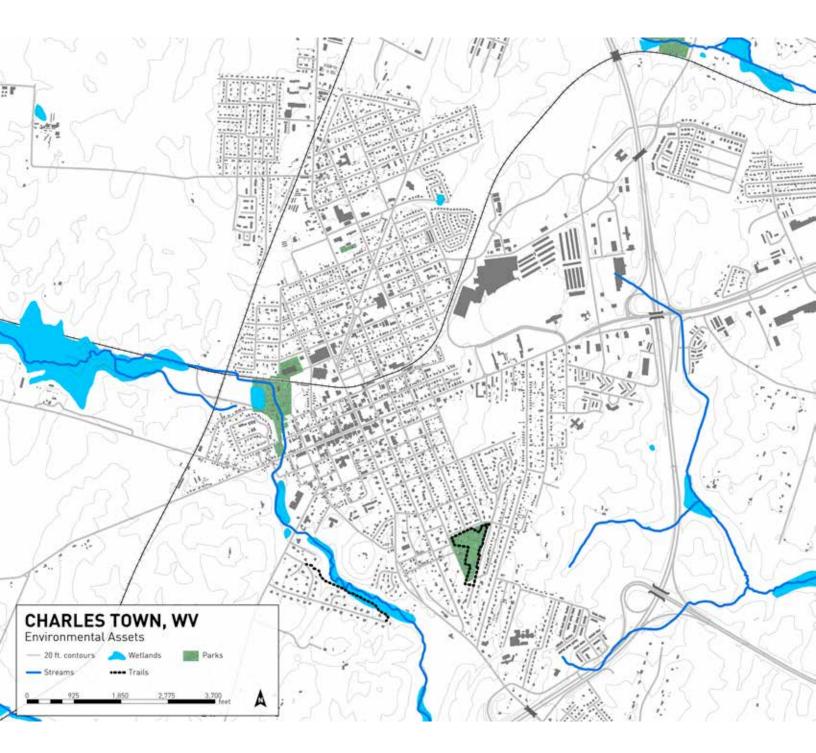
Just 15 minutes west of Harpers Ferry along highway 340, John Brown's historic saga came to an end with his trial in the Charles Town courthouse and subsequent hanging on the property of a prominent Charles Town resident. Charles Town boasts many other historic sites, such as Charles Washington's home (Happy Retreat), Office, and grave site. These sites are supported with history-related

ARTS & CULTURE

PLACES	RFP	Sheperd. Website	Jeff. Co. Brochure	H.F. Website	C.T Brochure
1 Jefferson Arts Council & Fire Hall Gallery	X	X	X		
2 Washington Street Artists Cooperative	X	X	X	X	X
3 Old Opera House Theatre Company	X	X	X		X
4 CraftWorks at Cool Spring		X	X		

PROGRAMS	RFP	Sheperd. Website	Jeff. Co. Brochure	H.F. Website	C.T Brochure
Heritage Crafts Center			X		
ArtOber					
Charles Town Heritage Festival				X	

HISTORY

PLACES	RFP	Sheperd. Website	Jeff. Co. Brochure	H.F. Website	C.T Brochure
1 Jefferson County Museum	X	X	X	X	
2 Zion Church, Graveyard, & Reading Room		X			
3 The Tiffin House	X				
4 Charles Washington's Office	X				
5 First School for African American Children in Charles Town					
6 Happy Retreat Estate & Charles Washington Grave Site	X		X		
7 John Brown's Hanging Site					
8 Webb-Blessing Houses	X				
9 Wainwright Baptist Church					
10 Fisherman's Hall	X				

| PROGRAMS	RFP	Sheperd. Website	Jeff. Co. Brochure	H.F. Website	C.T Brochure
Charles Town and John Brown Tours			X	X	
Charles Town Ghost Tours			X	X	
African American Heritage Festival			X		

LODGING

PLACES	RFP	Sheperd. Website	Jeff. Co. Brochure	H.F. Website	C.T Brochure
1 Carriage Inn Bed & Breakfast			X		X
2 The Hillbrook Inn			X	X	X
3 The Inn at Charles Town			X	X	
4 Turf Motel			X		
5 Hampton Inn				X	
6 Holiday Inn Express				X	

ATTRACTIONS

PLACES	RFP	Sheperd. Website	Jeff. Co. Brochure	H.F. Website	C.T Brochure
1 Charles Town Farmers Market				X	
2 Charles Washington Hall Community Center	X				
3 Hollywood Casino & Charles Town Horse Races			X	X	X
4 Bloomery Plantation Distillery			X	X	X
5 Sleepy Hollow Golf and Country Club			X		
6 Locust Hill Golf Course			X	X	
7 Charles Town Cannons					

SHOPPING (arts related)

PLACES	RFP	Sheperd. Website	Jeff. Co. Brochure	H.F. Website	C.T Brochure
1 Bars & Booths			X		X
2 The Wooden Shoe		X	X		X
3 Back in Time		X			
4 Junkworks Antiques					X

programming such as the Charles Town and John Brown guided tours and the annual African American Heritage festival, which is hosted by the Jefferson County NAACP branch. Charles Town also boasts a handful of arts and cultural attractions, including the Fire Hall Art Gallery, Washington Street Artists Cooperative, and supporting ArtOber and Heritage Festival events. In addition to arts and culture, history, gambling, and horse racing, tourists also come to Charles Town for its unique shops, nearby distillery and golf courses.

CHARLES TOWN, WV
Environmental Assets

— 20 ft. contours   Wetlands   ▮ Parks

— Streams   •••• Trails

0   925   1,850   2,775   3,700 feet

Environmental Assets

Charles Town's most prominent environmental feature is Evitts Run, a tributary to the Shenandoah and Potomac Rivers as part of the Chesapeake Bay watershed. The stream is visible above ground for most of its length within the Charles Town boundary, but is directed below ground at its point of intersection with Washington Street, west of Charles Town's Downtown.

There are also a few parks in Charles Town, including Evitts Run Park which runs along the stream, and Jefferson County Memorial Park. JCMP features a walking trail, tennis courts, basketball courts, playgrounds, an outdoor swimming pool, and more.

Despite minor hills, Charles Town consists of little topographic change.

CHARLES TOWN, WV
Google Map

0   925   1,850   2,775   3,700
feet
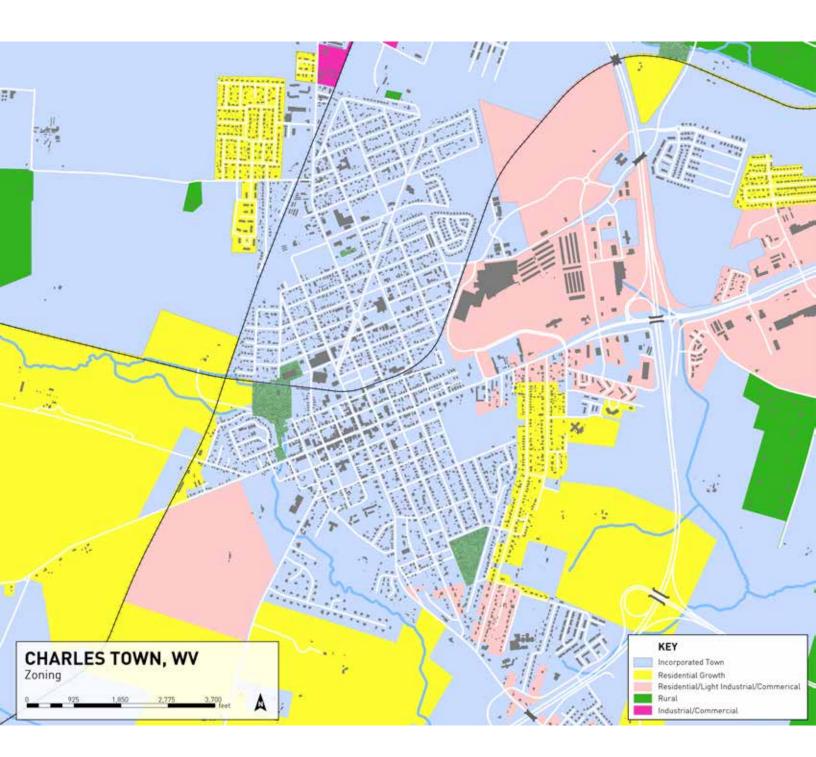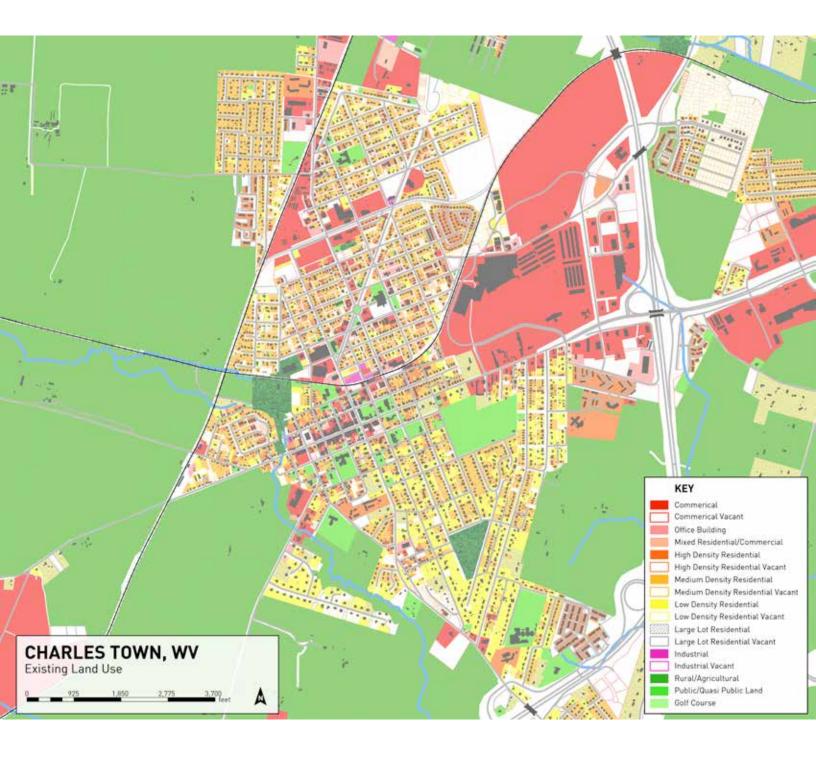
Aerial Photograph
Charles Town and neighboring town to the north, Ranson, are relatively dense and compact compared to other nearby towns. Development is clustered around Washington Street, which contains the largest building footprints compared to the rest of the City, and spreads south until the City intersects with the highway. This density does not dissipate significantly as development moves farther out from the City, but instead is tightly surrounded by large tracts of farm land. Development clusters are visible outside of the city but they appear to be fairly compact and contained.

CHARLES TOWN, WV
Zoning

0   925   1,850   2,775   3,700 feet

KEY
Incorporated Town
Residential Growth
Residential/Light Industrial/Commerical
Rural
Industrial/Commercial

Zoning

All area within Charles Town City boundaries is zoned as an "incorporated town". The city is bordered by smaller areas which are zoned as "residential growth", "residential/industrial/commercial", "rural" and "industrial/commercial".

CHARLES TOWN, WV
Existing Land Use

0   925   1,850   2,775   3,700
                                  feet

KEY

■ Commerical
□ Commerical Vacant
■ Office Building
■ Mixed Residential/Commercial
■ High Density Residential
□ High Density Residential Vacant
■ Medium Density Residential
□ Medium Density Residential Vacant
■ Low Density Residential
□ Low Density Residential Vacant
▨ Large Lot Residential
□ Large Lot Residential Vacant
■ Industrial
□ Industrial Vacant
■ Rural/Agricultural
■ Public/Quasi Public Land
■ Golf Course

Existing Land Use

Charles Town's existing land use consists of commercial, mixed use, residential, industrial, rural/agricultural, and vacant lands. The portion of Washington Street that sits within the Arts and Cultural District is primarily commercial with some public lands on the eastern portion of the district. South of Washington Street, Charles Town is primarily medium and low density residential, surrounded by rural/agricultural and public lands. North of Washington Street

in Ranson, the existing land use is primarily residential but contains a mix of commercial, office buildings, industrial, and public lands as well. There is a large area of commercial land on the eastern portion of Washington Street, near to the entrance to I-9.

CHARLES TOWN, WV

0   180   360   540   720 feet

N

WASHINGTON STREET ASSETS

Significant Buildings

Several buildings were identified as significant by the city of Charles Town. Five of these buildings (the police station, the Jefferson County Courthouse, City Hall, the Wright Denny Intermediate School, and the St. Thomas Lutheran Church) sit on Washington Street as part of the Arts and Cultural District or within the surrounding block.

The Jefferson County Courthouse and City Hall (both are buildings of historic significance) sit at the intersection of W. Washington Street and George Street. The location of these significant buildings provides an opportunity because Washington St. is a highly traveled road in and out of the City, and George Street is a main connection point to the City of Ranson and north to I-9. This intersection is passed by many locals and regional visitors daily, either as the entryway to Charles Town or in passing.

St. Thomas
Lutheran Church
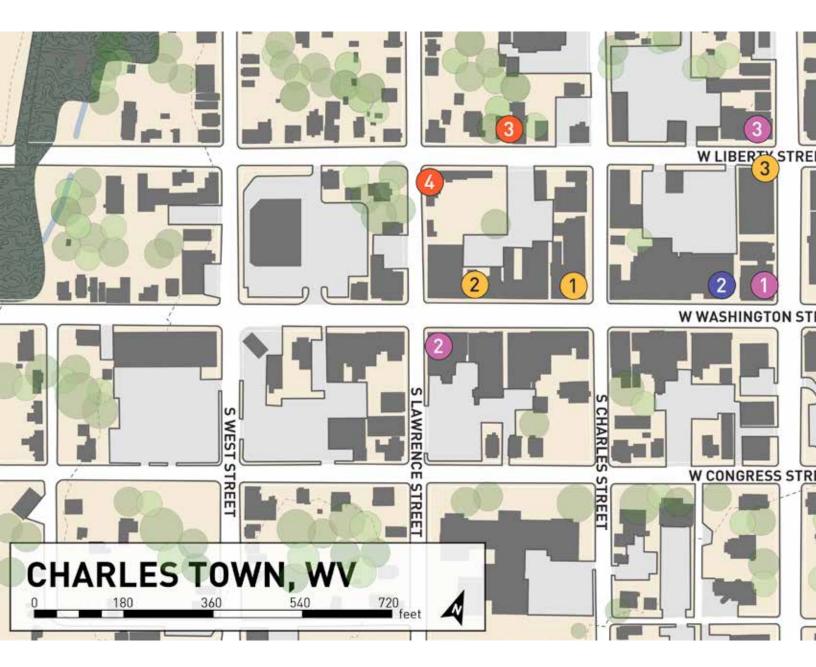
The police station is a small unassuming building located at the intersection of Charles Street and W Liberty Street. It is located close enough to Washington Street to be considered part of the district, but far enough away that it does not interrupt the commercial nature and sidewalk culture of Washington Street.

St. Thomas Lutheran Church is located at the intersection of W. Washington Street and S. Seminary Street, right outside of the district boundary. However, for regional visitors this church is one of the first non-residential buildings that are visible when approaching the district from I-9 at W. Washington Street. Lastly, the Wright Denny Intermediate School, servicing over 450 students and employing 40 teachers, is located one block south of the district on South Street. Although not officially part of the district, the school's proximity to Washington Street provides an opportunity for a partnership and arts education.

CHARLES TOWN, WV

0   180   360   540   720 feet

Washington Street Assets
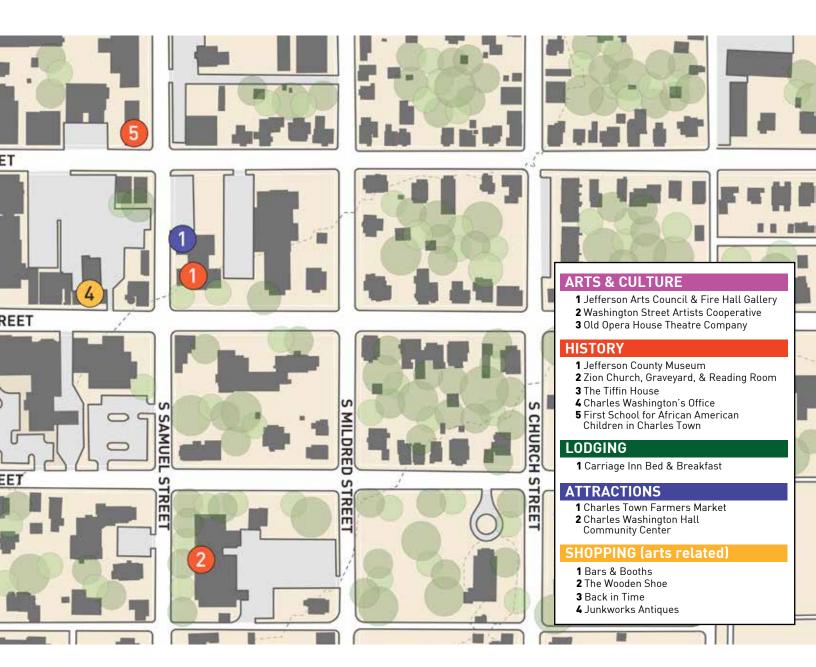
W. Washington Street and the surrounding blocks contain many arts and culture related assets, attractive to locals and regional visitors alike. Directly related to the arts and cultural district, the Jefferson Arts Council & Fire Hall Gallery, the Washington Street Artists Cooperative and the Old Opera House all lay within two blocks of one another, illustrating the beginnings of an arts cluster within the district.

Washington Street also contains many historical sites of interest, including the Jefferson County Courthouse (the site of John Brown's trial), the Tiffin House, the Zion Church, Graveyard & Reading Room, and the first school for African American children in Charles Town (all located in the northern block of Washington Street).

Related to the arts and cultural district attractions, Washington Street contains several shops and antique stores, including Bars & Booths, The Wooden Shoe, Back in Time, and Junkworks Antiques.

ARTS & CULTURE
1 Jefferson Arts Council & Fire Hall Gallery
2 Washington Street Artists Cooperative
3 Old Opera House Theatre Company

HISTORY
1 Jefferson County Museum
2 Zion Church, Graveyard, & Reading Room
3 The Tiffin House
4 Charles Washington's Office
5 First School for African American
Children in Charles Town

LODGING
1 Carriage Inn Bed & Breakfast

ATTRACTIONS
1 Charles Town Farmers Market
2 Charles Washington Hall
Community Center

SHOPPING (arts related)
1 Bars & Booths
2 The Wooden Shoe
3 Back in Time
4 Junkworks Antiques

Charles Town contains a limited number of lodging options for overnight guests, and most are located close to the casino and racetrack. However, there is one Inn, the Carriage Inn Bed & Breakfast that is located near the arts and cultural district, on the eastern side of Washington Street.

While Charles Town is working to establish more arts and cultural attractions to fulfill it district mission, the City has many other attractions to offer visitors as well, including a weekly farmers market, tours, events, festivals, and a community center.

SOURCES
http://discoveritallwv.com/
http://www.charlestownwv.us/

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The success of any arts and cultural district hinges on the support of residents. The community engagement process for this project focused on understanding community perceptions and aspirations for the District.

Committee Meetings

The Charles Town Arts and Cultural District design team met with the Project Committee twice in person during the process and numerous times over the phone.
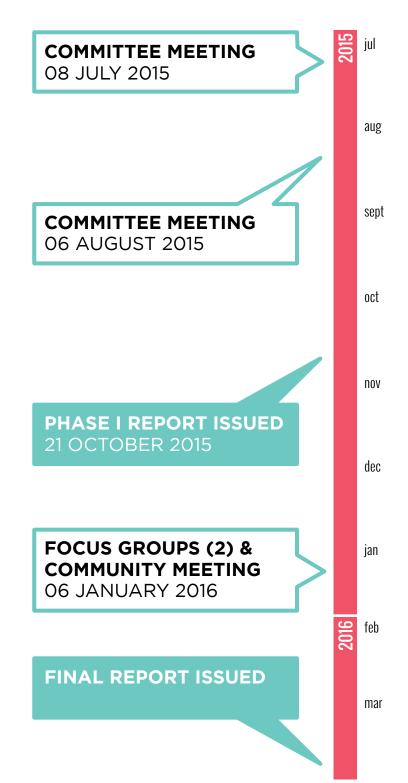
During the first committee meeing, the project schedule and deliverables were established, in addition to initial brainstorming for the community engagement events.

evolveEA presented information regarding how to create an arts and cultural district strategic plan, district precedents, charles town asset mapping, and a previous reports analysis during the second committee meeting. The conversation focused on similarities, differences, and lessons learned from the precedents shared. The committee was most impressed with the Fredrick, MD example, due to it's impressive streetscape, strong organizational strategy, access to funding resources, and historic assets and density. Potential anchor organizations were suggested, such a Tamarack outpost or museum.

The number of staff responsible for each of the precedent districts was discussed, as well as the need for a Charles Town staff person to organize the efforts and ensure this is a long term commitment.

Charles Town's proximity to neighboring first day attractions, including the race track and casino, were viewed as a potential asset. The committee discussed strategies to work with the casino/racetrack, as well as the incorporation of horse racing into the District.

The meeting concluded with a planning session in preparation for the community meeting including date, time, location, and engagement activities.

COMMITTEE MEETING
08 JULY 2015

COMMITTEE MEETING
06 AUGUST 2015

PHASE I REPORT ISSUED
21 OCTOBER 2015

FOCUS GROUPS (2) & COMMUNITY MEETING
06 JANUARY 2016

FINAL REPORT ISSUED

2015
jul
aug
sept
oct
nov
dec
jan
2016
feb
mar

FOCUS GROUPS

The design team and committe held two focus groups prior to the community meeting. The focus groups were open to the public and consisted of open conversation regarding the District.

COMMUNITY MEETING

Postcards

Community members were asked to take a postcard and fill it with stickers of programs, places, and economic development ideas that they would like to see in the District. The top stickers were cultural real estate strategy (20 votes), a bookstore/cafe/performance space (18 votes), an art trail/tour (17 votes), paint + drink event (16 votes), night market (16 votes), live/work studios (15 votes), galleries/museums (15 votes), and a seasonal arts festival (14 votes). The cultural real estate suggestion was repeated several times not only on the postcards, but on the maps and elevations as well, with some indicating areas to target. The art trail/tour idea also appeared on the maps in addition to the postcards, with the majority of community members indicating that the art trail should run along Evitt's Run from Evitt's Run Park down to Happy Retreat.

Street Artists & Musicians
Public Art
Creative Storefronts
Art Trail/Tour Season Arts Festival
Cultural Real Estate
Galleries/Museum Strategy
Special Interest Tours Paint & Drink Event
Apprenticeships
Artists Co-op
Bookstore/Cafe/ Children's Art Programs
Performance Space
Night Market Arts District Tax Credit
Live/Work Studios

Bookstore/Cafe/Performance Space was the second most popular idea. Combining this idea with an arts business was also suggested.

Night Market was suggested along Charles Street to increase activity in the District at night and for artists to gain more exposure.

VOTES

PROGRAMS

NIGHT MARKET
PAINT & DRINK EVENT
SEASONAL ARTS FESTIVAL
STREET ARTISTS & MUSICIANS
SPECIAL INTEREST TOURS
CHILDREN'S ART PROGRAM
MAKER FAIR
ART ALL NIGHT
SCAVENGER HUNT
ART CLASSES/SCHOOL
GALLERY ART CRAWL
VETERAN'S ART PROGRAM
ART & DANCE FLASH MOBS
VISITING ARTIST PROGRAM
IDEAS COMPETITION
AUDIENCE-SPECIFIC ART FESTIVAL
POETRY READINGS
ART SUPPLY/TOOL LENDING LIBRARY
CREATIVE SKILL EXCHANGE
ART FESTIVAL
(ARTS) OPEN STREETS
MAKER ROUNDTABLE/CO-OP
BOOKSTORE/CAFE/PERFORMANCE SPACE
ART TRAIL/ART TOUR
LIVE/WORK STUDIOS
GALLERIES/MUSE
CREATIVE STO

COMMUNITY MEMBER POSTCARD

Cultural Real Estate Strategy recieved the most votes. This suggestion was repeated on several of the maps and elevations too!

Bar chart labels (left to right):

EUMS · OREFRONTS · ARTIST CO-OP · PUBLIC ART · ARTS INCUBATOR · ART PARK/ART ALLEY · THEMED SCULPTURES · MAKER SPACE · POP-UP INSTALLATIONS · TAMARACK OUTPOST (ARTISAN SHOP) · ART STORE · CONSTRUCTION SITE ART · ARTIST MICRO-RESIDENCIES · VACANT LOT/STOREFRONT INSTALLATIONS · MURALS & INTEGRATED PUBLIC ART · CREATIVE CROSSWALK · CULTURAL REAL ESTATE STRATEGY · ARTS DISTRICT TAX CREDIT · APPRENTICESHIPS · ARTIST SUPPORT GRANTS · ARTIST LOAN FUND · TEACHING ARTIST GRANTS · DISTRICT-LEVEL CROWDFUNDING · PRIZES & SCHOLARSHIPS · ARTS DEVELOPMENT MODEL · BUSINESS MENTORS FOR ARTISTS

PLACES

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

LAWRENCE ST.

Community mural

Community mural

Arts School of Charles Town

Cultural real estate strategy

CHARLES ST

The 4 State Gallery and 4 State Real Estate LesaShively@Gmail.com

Tattoo Parlor

Hookah Bar

Cultural Real Estate Strategy

Tamarack Outpost

Wood fire pizza

Arts

Ar

Street Elevations

Community members were presented with two long elevations, one for the north side of Washington Street, one for the south side. Participants labeled areas that they liked, areas they can be improved, and suggested locations for future consideration. The above image (abbreviated from the full elevation), and the map on the previous page show the responses, color coding based on likes (green), dislikes (red), and future aspirations (purple).
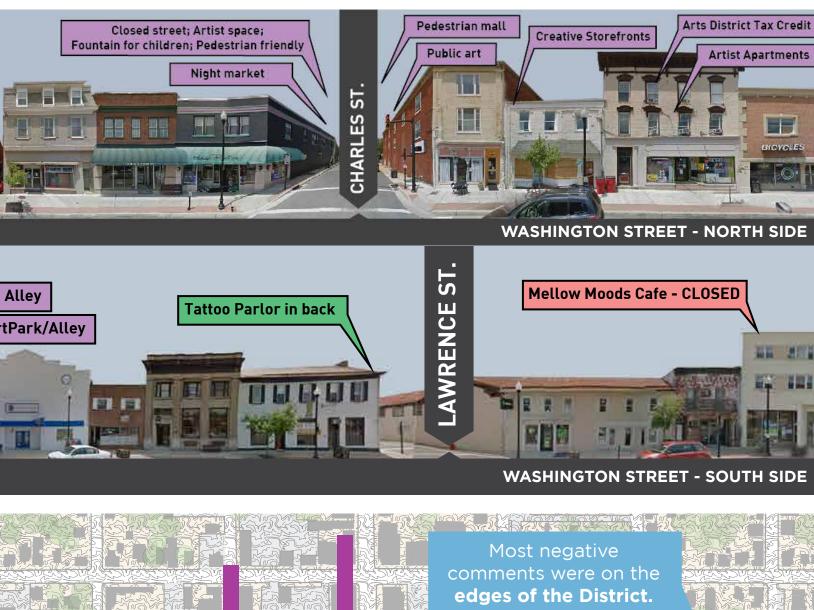
You can see from the map that there were very few negative comments. The negative comments that were shared were requests for renovations, and were located on the edges of the District (west of Lawrence St. and east of Mildred St.).
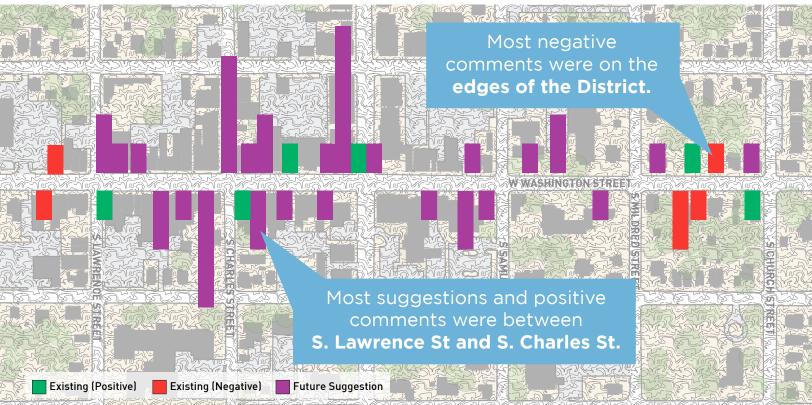
A great majority of the comments were future aspirations and suggestions. There was a significant cluster of ideas for the two blocks between Lawrence St. and George St., with

several comments for the block of Charles St. between Liberty St. and Washington St. These comments (a selection shown above), included an arts alley, night market, Tamarack Outpost, cultural real estate strategy, community mural, pedestrian friendly street, public art and much more. These suggestions were for physical buildings and for the streets and spaces in between buildings.

The positive (green) comments shared were scattered along Washington St. and mostly included existing arts-related businesses, such as a tattoo parlor, art gallery, the old opera house and more.

The results of this exercise show a significant interest and excitement for Washington St. between Lawrence St. and George St., in addition to showing that the edges of the District may need more attention to improve public perception and be included in the District.
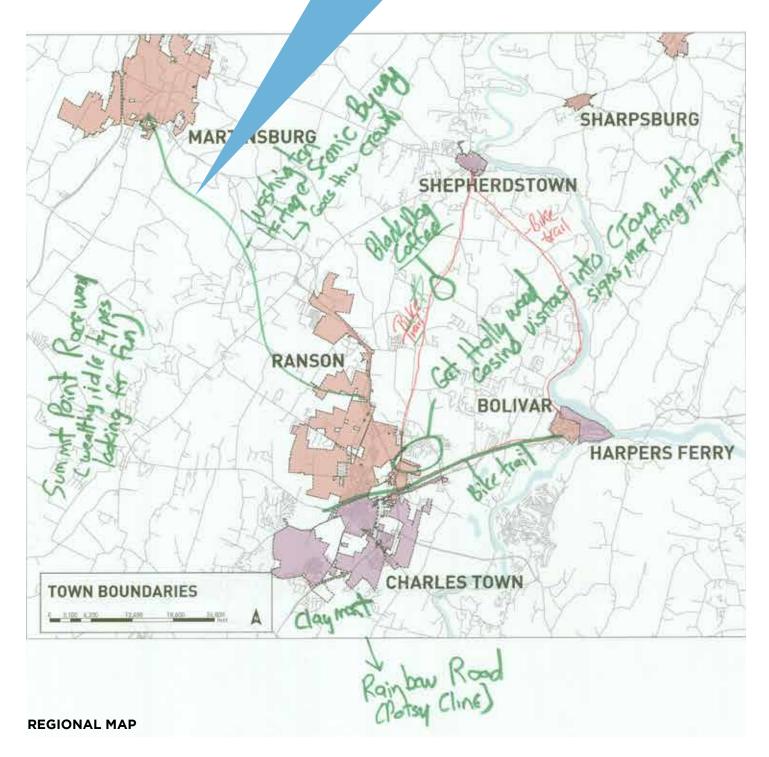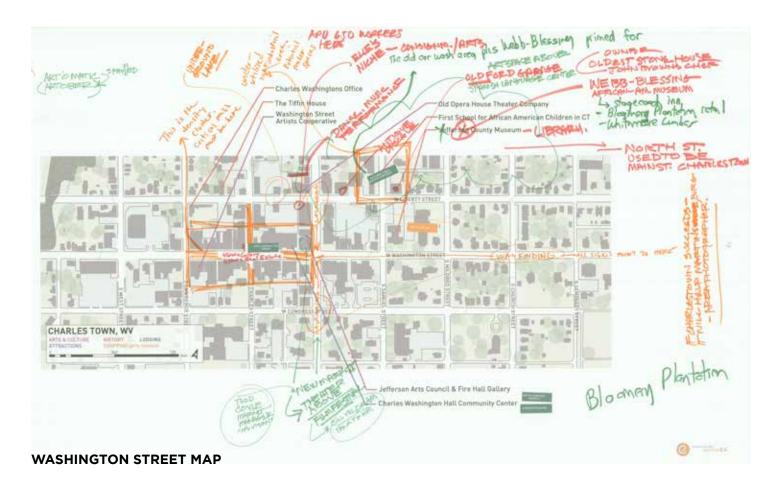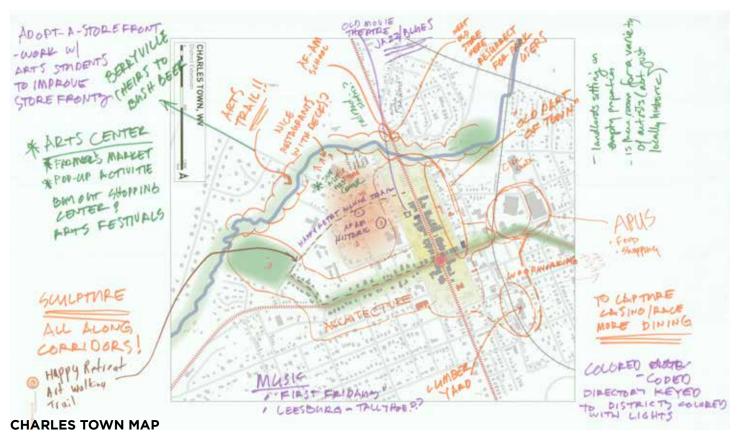
WASHINGTON STREET - NORTH SIDE

Closed street; Artist space;
Fountain for children; Pedestrian friendly

Night market

Pedestrian mall

Public art

Creative Storefronts

Arts District Tax Credit

Artist Apartments

CHARLES ST.

WASHINGTON STREET - SOUTH SIDE

Alley

tPark/Alley

Tattoo Parlor in back

Mellow Moods Cafe - CLOSED

LAWRENCE ST.

Most negative comments were on the **edges of the District.**

Most suggestions and positive comments were between **S. Lawrence St and S. Charles St.**

■ Existing (Positive) ■ Existing (Negative) ■ Future Suggestion

Mappings

Community members contributed existing assets and future aspirations for Charles Town on a series of maps. Historic and civic assets were often highlighted, as well as potential bike connections and opportunities to connect with arts organizations and tourist attractions.

Bike trails connecting Charles Town to Ranson, Martinsburg, Shepherdstown, and Harpers Ferry are desired by community members.

REGIONAL MAP

WASHINGTON STREET MAP
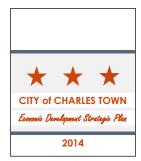

CHARLES TOWN MAP

PREVIOUS REPORTS

Charles Town has been the subject of several plans and studies. The following is a brief analysis of these reprots.

CHARLES TOWN
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC PLAN

★ ★ ★

CITY of CHARLES TOWN

Economic Development Strategic Plan

2014

CURRENT STATISTICS SHOW
Population growth, income growth, job growth
Statistics are positive in comparison to West Virginia, but there is still room for improvement in comparison to the DC Metropolitan area
Accommodations and food service account for 24% of Charles Town employment
Drivers, Casino, American Public University (APU)

ALIGNMENT
New economic development director could assist with Arts & Cultural District
Aligns with Downtown revitalization goals, physical improvements and economic development programs
Art is a sign of visible improvement and brings visitors, aligns with Downtown housing increase
Center for heritage tourism and cultural assets
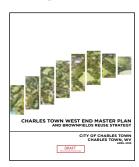Understand future (greenfield) growth

OPPORTUNITY
Laborshed opportunities in professional, scientific, and technical services
People go elsewhere to shop (15 minute drive). Growth possible in food and beverage, clothing, motor vehicle and full service restaurant
Cost of living is 30% less than some DC suburbs

CHALLENGES
Unstable commercial occupancy
Competition from Maryland casinos

CHARLES TOWN
WEST END MASTER PLAN

CHARLES TOWN WEST END MASTER PLAN
AND BROWNFIELDS REUSE STRATEGY

CITY OF CHARLES TOWN
CHARLES TOWN, WV
APRIL 2015

DRAFT

INTENTION
Connect natural and cultural resources with economic development
Housing, Parks, Retail, Ballpark

ALIGNMENT
Additional development can support the Arts & Cultural District
Connectivity between happy retreat and Evitts Run... other connections are possible

OPPORTUNITY
The western portal to the Arts & Cultural District/Destination, auto dealer site
Arts & Cultural installations continuous into the park
Future connections to long distance bike trails

CHALLENGES
Connectedness is not explicit in the plan

CHARLES TOWN
DISCOVER CHARLES TOWN FIVE YEAR PLAN (2011)

Discover Charles Town
Five Year Strategy

INTENTION
Reinforcement of Downtown District with marketing, events
Economic Analysis (high level)

ALIGNMENT
Similar needs as for the Arts & Cultural District marketing and promotion, but not the same
Both contribute to Downtown revitalization

OPPORTUNITY
Shared programming for live/work strategy, new housing, mixed use spaces
Recommended hotel/conference center supports the Arts & Cultural tourist needs
Downtown improvement District (DID) could assist the Arts & Cultural efforts
Shared inventory for Downtown buildings

CHALLENGES
Market challenges remain difficult, slow improvement since 2011
Doughnut of spending potential (3 minute drive and outward) per 2011 statistics

CHARLES TOWN/RANSON
ULI TAP REPORT COMMERCE CORRIDOR PLAN (2004)

ULI Washington

A Technical Assistance Panel Report

The Commerce Corridor Revitalization Project

Sponsored by:
The City of Charles Town, West Virginia
The City of Ranson, West Virginia

October 24-28, 2004

INTENTION
Analyze corridor potential, Charles Town and Ranson
ALIGNMENT
Suggested programmatic possibilities, movie theatre, commercial office space, structured parking

OPPORTUNITY
Law offices anchor Downtown (but suck the life out of it)
Structured parking benefits the Arts & Cultural District needs

CHALLENGES
The plan was created pre-economic downturn. Some assumptions, like movie theatre anchors, are not considered desirable.
County/Law offices anchor Downtown but are not supportive of other revitalization efforts.
Recommended that efforts be to support local economy first, tourism second.

CHARLES TOWN/RANSON
BROWNFIELD REDEVELOPMENT PLAN (2004)

INTENTION
Analyze brownfield redevelopment potential, Charles Town and Ranson

ALIGNMENT
Suggests how surrounding market could change if development of brownfields brings new people and businesses to the community.
Heavy integration of stormwater systems, a concern of the Downtown.

OPPORTUNITY
Study each site for opportunities for arts and cultural programming. Joint application for funding when development occurs.
Focus on closest sites to the District.

CHALLENGES
Development is likely to occur over a long period of time. Difficult to estimate the impact on Downtown.

OTHER PLANS
CHARLES TOWN/RANSON TIGER GRANT
CHARLES TOWN COMPREHENSIVE PLAN (2006)
AFRICAN AMERICAN HERITAGE SITES
REAL ESTATE MARKET ANALYSIS (2011)
RANSON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN (2012)

IMAGE SOURCES
charlestownwv.us
discoveritallwv.com
static.panoramio.com
c1.staticflickr.com
city-data.com/

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