



Grass Valley Downtown Association – Overview of Organizational Structure

The Grass Valley Downtown Association is a 501 C 4 Not for Profit organization that provides the 240+ downtown businesses located within the Business Improvement District (BID) boundaries with a unified voice and an umbrella organization that concerns itself with those issues impacting the downtown area. Through GVDA, businesses and property owners have an outlet to express their concerns, suggestions and ideas about being in business in the downtown area, thus building cooperation amongst GVDA's membership.

In 1986, GVDA adopted the National Main Street Four Point Approach to downtown revitalization. This National Main Street program offers community-based revitalization initiatives with a practical, adaptable framework for downtown transformation that is easily tailored to local conditions. The Main Street Approach is supported by the four pillars or "points" that are key to sustaining and enhancing a vibrant, strong, healthy commercial business district and are defined by the National Main Street network as:

- **ORGANIZATION** involves creating a strong foundation for a sustainable revitalization effort, including cultivating partnerships, community involvement, and resources for the district.
- **PROMOTION** positions the downtown or commercial district as the center of the community and hub of economic activity, while creating a positive image that showcases a community's unique characteristics
- **DESIGN** supports a community's vision by enhancing the physical and visual assets that set the commercial district apart.
- **ECONOMIC VITALITY** focuses on capital, incentives, and other economic and financial tools to assist new and existing businesses, catalyze property development, and create a supportive environment for entrepreneurs and innovators that drive local economies.



ORGANIZATION- Operational Highlights and Accomplishments

Preserved the existence and functionality of the organization despite COVID-19 pandemic. Supported the membership and our partners during the unprecedented 18 months with a skeleton staff and no events to generate income.

- Took drastic measures to preserve cash flow and longevity of organization by reducing staff- Executive Director hours cut from 40 hours/week to just 10. Executive Director worked well over 10 hours a week for free to keep the organization functioning. Eliminated the Promotion Coordinator position. In May of 2020, Executive Director hours were restored to full time.
- Employed County intern through Connecting Point for 4 months (June-Sept 2020) as assistant with no cost to GVDA
- Held monthly board meetings; implemented digital election of new officers and Board members
- Hosted Annual Merchant Meeting in November 2020
- Held new Board of Directors training via Zoom, updated Strategic Plan and 2021 Priorities
- Updated inclusion statement and volunteer policies
- Attended all meetings led by the City of Grass Valley. Helped lead communication regarding pivoting, merchant operations and ever-changing rules related to operations during pandemic.
- Storage of umbrellas, stands and heaters, etc. (In March of 2021, re-organized and cleaned office in preparation of post-pandemic operations)
- Maintained membership in California Main Street Alliance (CAMSA) and National Main Street Center. Executive Director elected to serve as Board Member of CAMSA. Created, ran, promoted, participated in two virtual California Main Street Conferences with CAMSA, representing GVDA. Featured pivoting efforts of Grass Valley merchants.
- Hosted GVPD volunteer appreciation lunch at Kane's Restaurant
- Actively participated in Nevada County Rebound and large multi-month campaign
- 2020: 326 volunteer hours recorded @\$27.20/hour = \$8,867.20 (*Independent Sector value per hour of volunteer time: Volunteer hours National Wage: \$27.20 per hour*)
- Received COVID-19 Resiliency County grant in the amount of \$8,000, helped pay for outdoor dining supplies
- Collected \$53,000 in annual assessments
- Maintained scrapbook clippings for archives

Partnerships

- *City of Grass Valley*
- *City of Grass Valley Police Department*
- *County of Nevada*
- *Greater Grass Valley Chamber of Commerce*
- *Nevada City Chamber of Commerce*
- *Truckee Chamber of Commerce*
- *Center For the Arts*
- *Sierra Business Council/Sierra Small Business Development Center*
- *Nevada County Arts Council*
- *Economic Resource Council Tourism Committee*
- *California Cornish Cousins*
- *Community Beyond Violence*
- *Grass Valley Elks Lodge*
- *Grass Valley Ladies Relief Society*
- *Music in the Mountains*
- *Sierra Vintners Wine and Ale Trail*
- *SNMH and SYRCL*
- *The Market at Grass Valley*
- *Waste Management*
- *KNCO, KVMR, The Union, Sierra Food Wine and Art*



DESIGN-Beautification Highlights and Accomplishments

Improved the Overall Physical Appearance of the Downtown Business District

- \$8000 Umbrellas, table rentals, website updates, and marketing materials to support members during pandemic.
- Contributed \$2,200 to the Lola Montez Mural Project. Held interactive meet-n-greet with artist
- Painted park benches and tables in Elizabeth Daniels park to match new mural
- Contributed \$800 and helped secure artists and implement project for parklet barricades on Mill and Main Streets
- Art in Storefronts- In collaboration with multiple county organizations in our Cultural District, successfully managed art installations into vacant storefronts. Totaling 7+ in Downtown Grass Valley
- Live, Love, Art Project- Collaborated with the City to install temporary murals throughout downtown
- Invested \$1,625 for the annual upkeep of the Historic Skyline Holiday Lights Project
- Banner Project- Contributed time, materials, and labor to reconfigure the banner rigging system
- Shop local campaign- procured 3 banners from stipend from County to create banners and shop local videos in conjunctions with the Economic Resource Council
- Maintained the only open Public Restroom at Elizabeth Daniels 7 days a week
- Coordinated porta potty duties with GVPD and garbage service with Waste Management to ensure both were serviced 7 days a week
- Worked with Waste Management and downtown business owners to clear garbage bins on South Auburn street between garbage pickup days
- Coordinated Volunteers to assist City in watering planter boxes on Mill Street
- Collaboration continues with the California Cultural District Designation and started to integrate the designation in downtown's marketing
- Repaired sound system on Mill Street to allow for ambient music on the street
- Commissioned and received bubble table donated by Curious Forge to use at GVDA events
- Assisted in RAKE clean-up day
- Board assisted in new tree acquired for streetscape beautification during holidays
- Hay bales sponsored for Fall events, beautified for Fall with corn stalks



ECONOMIC VITALITY Highlights and Accomplishments

Assisted with the Retention and/or Relocation of Businesses in Downtown

- Welcomed 20+ new businesses to Downtown Grass Valley:
 - *Aozora Sushi*
 - *Art In Motion*
 - *Atra Nova Rug Store*
 - *Collektive Boutique Mill St*
 - *Creektown Cottages*
 - *DDGeo Geomatics & Civil Engineers*
 - *Elixart in GV*
 - *Gather & Mill*
 - *Heathered Yarn Co*
 - *Holbrooke Hotel*
 - *J Breuer Clothing*
 - *Lost & Found*
 - *Mill Street Sock Company*
 - *Moms and Mini's*
 - *Native Wren*
 - *New West Wine Co.*
 - *Ox Volk Leatherwerks*
 - *Split Pea*
 - *The Drum Loft*
 - *TK Property Group*

- Rebound Nevada County formed to address economic resilience efforts with stakeholders
- Promoted E-commerce Business Ignitor Course, Helped several businesses create online stores, secured stipend for instructors for course, and free registration for merchants from Economic Resource Council
- Hosted small business marketing workshops with a total of 45 businesses in attendance
- Acted as liaison for property owners and potentially interested parties to help fill vacancies
- Maintained a listing of available properties located in the downtown
- Actively participated at Economic Resource Council representing the GVDA & downtown
- Retail tracking through surveys/Covid/Holiday sales/ post event surveys
- E Commerce Business Classes featured in Master's Student in Public Policy at the Harvard Kennedy school/ Boston Mayor's Office of Small Business Development project who read about Nevada County's innovative work to support disadvantaged businesses during the pandemic
- Shared small business financing, grant, loan program information, resources for consultation
- Purchased Main Street Database in December 2020 to utilize in 2021
- Reorganized board block list with board member



PROMOTIONS- Events and Marketing Highlights and Accomplishments

Due to the Pandemic, GVDA was forced to pivot with our events having to be cancelled and/or reformatted. In addition, we launched several new promotions and new marketing campaigns focused on supporting our downtown businesses.

EVENTS/PROMOTIONS

- Foothills Celebration (March 7, 2020)
 - *Partnered with Sierra Vintners Wine and Ale Trail*
 - *700+ Attendees*
 - *28 Wineries*
- St Piran's Day (March 14, 2020)
 - *A long-standing tradition of civic and Cornish pride*
- Held a few small farmer markets in compliance with the Tiers
- Art in Storefronts
 - *Worked with Nevada County Arts Council, Economic Resource Council, and Chambers to organize property owners and artists to put visually appealing installations in vacant storefronts*
 - *Held artist receptions at each installation*
- Promoted City of Grass Valley 4th of July Fireworks 2020, 2021
- Launched "Second Saturdays" in Grass Valley –Successful event with 16+ Artists and many stores participating. This event continues to gain momentum
- Let's Go Out!- dine out event to promote restaurants that suffered in PSPS events
- Power Shut Off/ Outreach and promotion
- Sidewalk Sale (September 22, 2020)
- Downtown Holiday Market (November 7, 2020)- Pre-holiday Shopping event which is a huge "cash register event" for local merchants and a favorite of local and tourist shoppers
- Coordinated Cornish Choir & Town Crier appearances in lieu of Cornish Christmas
- Thursday Night Market 2021 – Series of 6 events
 - 60-80 vendors
 - Maximized new layout due to street closure
 - Attendance grew each week – approximately 4000
- 3rd and 4th of July -2021- New event co-produced with the GVCC
 - Included family friendly arts and crafts, games, Pancake breakfast- 2000+ attendees
 - Open container license
 - Parade 3000+ in attendance
- Made and distributed decorations for holidays on Main St
- Promoted and placed banners for Wild & Scenic Film Festival
- Promoted and attended Independent Cinema Day, promoted by Sierra Theaters
- Commissioned Mill Around Downtown graphic based on survey to name downtown promenade and a slogan
- Created downtown video with GVDP, as well as some meet your merchant videos promoting the reopening/shopping options and availability on Mill Street



MARKETING/COVID SUPPORT

- Reacted and responded to all rules and regulations set forth during pandemic.
- Participated in a multi- partner personal outreach program to call 1500+ businesses to help, guidance and information
- Spent \$500 on new "OPEN" signage that was created to help people identify what each business offered i.e. curbside, takeout, etc.
- Rainbows and Nevada County Strong window decorations encouraged
- Business Resilience Kit (created with Nevada County Rebound) featured in a California Main Street spotlight newsletter
- Assisted with temporarily closing the street in July in compliance with Governors orders for outdoor dining and communicated with merchants regarding street closure, design ideas, etc.
- Distributed weekly newsletter acting as a resource for our businesses as needed and maintained current information on available national, state, regional and local opportunities.
- Website Redesign/Refresh-updated with new merchants, photos, some ADA improvements
- Facebook/Other Social Networking Page was maintained and grown
- Marketing campaigns: Let's Go Out in response to PSPS power outages, Share the Love, and Shop Local (with Nevada County ERC funds for banners and video) Documented events with professional photography and video for archives and promotion

LOOKING FORWARD

Surviving the pandemic on a shoestring budget, while supporting our membership as well as we did was a true accomplishment.

As we look forward to the last ½ of 2021 and 2022, we are well positioned to carry out our signature events and hope to continue to collaborate with multiple organizations to best serve our members and play a strong role in the success of the street closure and transformation of the Mill Street Promenade. We want to partner with the city to make Downtown Grass Valley the crown jewel of our community.

- New* and signature events on the horizon:
- Brewfest* October 9th
- Paint the Town Pink* (TBD October 2022)
- Second Saturdays year round
- Sidewalk Sale
- Safe Trick or Treat
- Downtown Holiday Market
- Cornish Christmas

