

# **DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**

## **2023 BUDGET & PROGRAM OF WORK**

**Approved 10/31/22**



### **DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT CITY OF SHREVEPORT, LOUISIANA**

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***Mission Statement: To actively pursue, support, facilitate and welcome initiatives that aid and encourage private development. Promote and coordinate public development within the Downtown Development District of Shreveport, Louisiana.***

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	3-5
Development Priorities	6-12
Summary: Goals and Objectives	12-14
2023 Activities - Basic Services	14-15
Development and Marketing	15-16
Image and Communications	16
Legislative Action/Leadership Support	16-17
Parking and Transportation	17
Planning	17-18
Quality of Life	18
Urban Design	18-19
Budget	20-21

# Introduction

The Downtown Development Authority (DDA) was established by Act 554 of the State of Louisiana in 1978. The provisions of Act 554 provide that an annual plan of work be submitted to the Shreveport City Council for review and adoption within 30 days from the date of submission. The 2023 Program of Work reflects the activities to be undertaken during 2023.

Downtown is composed of numerous stakeholders, each with different opinions and ideas about how to improve downtown and each with different priorities regarding those improvements. Each organization and business contributes to the improvement of downtown in accordance with its own strengths and abilities, so this diverse environment requires a complex development strategy. It has been proven that not all development is good or positive development, so plans and projects must be considered in the context of downtown as a whole.

This document seeks to define activities, improvements, goals, and objectives that moves downtown forward. Included in this Program of Work are portions of the *Downtown 2010 Redevelopment Strategy* which was approved by the City Council and is the basis for the twenty-five-year DDA millage extension approved by citywide vote in November 2002. DDA funding under the millage extension is provided through 2027.

The year 2022 saw downtown businesses working to rebound and return to pre-pandemic levels for services and operations. The pandemic created significant uncertainty, and downtown businesses faced the same problems as others throughout the city trying to maintain employees, source products, and attract customers. Ongoing business model changes in the banking sector, supply chain issues, and rising inflationary pressures also negatively impacted downtown, but did not stop new businesses, restaurants, attractions, and services from moving into the city center in 2022.

Buildings were leased, purchased, and renovated for a wide range of projects and new businesses. These businesses include, but are not limited to, Sanctuary Glass, 421 Lake Street, Phoenix 2.0, 400 Commerce Street; Ben's Body Basics, and The Gallery at Andress, 717 Crockett Street; Pop n Pizza, 500 Texas Street, Downtown Day Spa & Barbershop, 327 Market Street; Refine Design Décor and More, 616 Texas Street, The Grove, 107 Spring Street, Jeneral's Bar and Grill in the Red River District.

Residential development continues downtown. The Bayou Grand Apartments, anchoring downtown on the north, opened in the summer of 2022 with the promise of mixed income housing. The Lee Hardware and United Jewelers Apartments, 719 Edwards Street, completed a \$7.8M renovation and reopened to tenants. Work continued at the Uneeda apartments, 711 Milam Street; Phase 2 of Ridgeway Square at 721 Marshall; Center City Lofts at 427/429 Crockett; and the Petroleum Tower at 425 Edwards. Work started on the Rubenstein Lanford buildings in the 500 block of Milam and the former Creswell Hotel on Milam, and the former Centerpoint Building at 525 Milam could be repositioned for residential, as well.

New retail options including The Grove, Refine Design Décor Boutiques and More, and Clean Slate Botanicals opened with enthusiastic reviews helping make downtown's retail choices stronger. Blind Tiger restaurant celebrated 30 years in business, and a revamped 46<sup>th</sup> annual Red River Revel drew larger crowds. The Bakowski Bridge of Lights neon display on the Texas Street Bridge became the area's newest tourist attraction.

Downtown lost an iconic historic structure – 114 Texas Street – to a two-alarm fire in September. The building once housed the former Humphrees and SportsPage clubs that were popular during the era of Shreve Square. The adjacent Chicago building was also damaged by the fire and heat.

On downtown's west end, the new pavilion at Caddo Common opened with a concert on November 12. New eateries opened giving diners fabulous choices such as PepitoXO @ Artspace - 708 Texas; Northern Louisiana Comfort Food & Catering in the historic KCS Café at 830 Louisiana, and Jeneral's Bar & Grill in the Red River District. A long-time dining favorite The Noble Savage reopened its doors at 417 Texas Street. The much-loved bar and restaurant features fan favorites and new dishes. Drupp Donuts leased the former Dee's Photo building at 421 Market Street and hopes for a late 2022 opening. The former 'Baci' building at 312 Texas Street was sold to an investor who plans an 'art' themed restaurant, and 427 Crockett Street will be opening as an 'old fashioned' breakfast and lunch eatery in early 2023. Unfortunately, downtown lost two food/beverage outlets. Retro Downtown at 420 Marshall Street closed and Cookie B's Smoothies and More at 423 Texas Street shuttered after a very short run.

The DDA continued to promote the arts with the popular Artwalk and new event Second Saturday Downtown, swapped plants, garden and vendor items at the Downtown Plant Swap, hosted Harvard graduate students who participated in a Field Immersion Study - making significant recommendations for downtown's Red River District, and welcomed comic book lovers to Artspace's Chip Kidd's Batman in Black & White Exhibit. Other events that highlighted unique downtown entertainment opportunities included Robinson Film Center's Robbys Fashion Through Film event, Train Day at the Museum (Shreveport Waterworks Museum), the Annual Aseana Spring and Fall Fests, a huge multi- day Juneteenth celebration, Mudbug Madness, Brew, Cork, and the popular series of events presented as Prize Fest. The DDA in 2023 will continue its support of downtown art galleries, events, and distinct offerings that promote existing art-related venues and the creative industry overall. Artspace, Central ARTstation, Southern University Museum of Art, Marlene Yu Museum (currently closed), Bailey Gallery, Big Sun Studios, High Gravity Glassworks, the Agora Borealis, C&C Mercantile/ArtiFact, the Gallery at Andress, the Artists at Andress, J&R Performance Gallery, the Strand Theatre, Emmett Hook Performance Center, RiverView Theater, the Bakowski Bridge of Lights, and the Red River Revel continue to make downtown Shreveport an arts destination.

The DDA was the push behind getting the public art piece 'Quilt Kiosk' at the NE corner of Texas and McNeill Streets funded for repair after it was seriously damaged in the summer of 2020. We partnered with Shreveport Regional Arts Council, who chose artist Bruce Allen to make the repairs to the ceramic, concrete, and glass over steel piece when the insurance

settlement was finally received. Muralists/artists Ka'Davien Baylor and Ben Moss and their artistic team also enhanced downtown's art with the installation of two remarkable murals, both part of the 'Marshall Mural Mile.' The multihued "Ascension Underpass Mural," on the I-20 Underpass at Marshall Street is a welcoming entrance into downtown. Baylor is also the artist responsible for the 'Absolute Equality' mural on the west side of 331 Milam Street. The collaborative project commemorating Juneteenth features multiple references to points in Shreveport's history. Still another, 'From Shreveport with Love' was painted on the west side of 327 Crockett Street, making 2022 a mural intensive year downtown!

Shreveport Common continued to be a popular draw for events, installations, and unique happenings imagined and presented by The Shreveport Regional Arts Council (SRAC). Their vision for Shreveport's first cultural community included some important public additions in 2022, including the Caddo Common Pavilion performance space, the three lighted 'Artistrees', permanent metal tables and chairs and a mister station, which should prove very popular in the heat of summer.

In addition to the installation of Caddo Common's metal Artistrees, downtown's aging tree inventory received support from the Shreveport City Council as part of a \$170,000 allocation that included funding for removal and installation of new trees, replacement of downtown's outdated Wayfinding Signage, and a UV coating on downtown's famous "Once in a Millennium Moon" mural. More than a dozen trees were dead or dying in 2022, and 67 trees were to be planted in late 2022 or early 2023.

The DDA began an initiative in 2022 to enhance the perception of public safety in downtown by the hiring of off-duty Shreveport Police Department officers to walk the beat. Their presence is proving to be beneficial to visitors, residents, businesses and all who call downtown home. This initiative is planned to continue in 2023.

In 2022, a project that the DDA has championed for more than 25 years was announced. The State of Louisiana confirmed it would move its state office building and more than 400 employees from Fairfield Avenue to downtown. The state has since purchased the former Joe D. Waggoner Federal Building at 500 Fannin and retained local firms for demolition and design. The DDA will continue to work with State officials in 2023 as needed on this major project that will improve downtown's northern edge.

DDA also heavily marketed downtown properties and businesses and projects to keep downtown top of mind to developers, shoppers and those looking for a wonderful place to live. Festivals and events continued their return to prominence in 2022, and DDA supported these with marketing, technical support, and financial assistance where possible.

The Shreveport City Council approved new district lines in 2022 that resulted in a small slice of downtown, the riverfront area that includes our two casinos, being moved into District A. In addition, city-wide elections in 2022 may mean that we will be working with several new elected officials in 2023.

DDA's 2023 millage rate remains at 9.04 mills.

## Development Priorities

The DDA strives to improve the economic vitality of the Central Business District and our historic downtown as a whole by focusing efforts on a wide range of activities. Those activities work to strengthen the existing business base, attract new businesses, and improve property values while simultaneously highlighting the district's historic charm and urban appeal.

- **Residential** - DDA continues to be the lead agency in identifying residential opportunities and in approaching, encouraging, and assisting developers/funders. The process can be complicated, and we work to assist developers with parking and zoning issues, building and life/safety codes, finding financing and insurance partners, acquiring appraisals and the many other things needed to be able to move forward in a project. Downtown continues to be underbuilt in market rate units, whose salary demographic is helpful in attracting businesses, retail, and other Quality of Life components to downtown.

Residential conversions could be an option as large downtown office buildings search for ways to increase occupancy. Though construction costs to rehab office space into residential space are significant, the numbers could make sense in the face of an anemic office market. The DDA meets and talks regularly with economic development officials, bankers, and elected officials about smart ways to help incentivize needed residential developers through the potential use of TIF, PILOT, parking help and other assistance, which has become especially important as interest rates and the cost of construction and supplies continue to increase.

Restoration and residential conversions continue or have been completed at numerous downtown properties including the Lofts at 624 (624 Texas Street), The Standard (509 Market), Ridgeway Square (719 Marshall Street), Hughes Tool (816 McNeill Street), Southern Bell (627-629 Crockett Street), the apartments at 800 Texas Avenue, 716/718 Edwards Street, the Hutchinson Building (504 Texas Street), Uneeda Biscuit Building (711 Milam), Ogilvie Hardware Lofts 217 Jones Street, and others. A significant renovation of downtown's popular Lee Hardware and United Jeweler's Apartments (Edwards and Crockett Streets), which began in the summer of 2021, was completed in 2022. The \$7.8M renovation was the first major restoration since the apartments were originally developed in 1998. The long-vacant Petroleum Tower was sold in 2021 with plans for residential use. The conversion of the Uneeda Biscuit Building (711 Milam) to apartments continued in 2022. The Rubenstein/Lanford and former Saenger Drugstore buildings and the former Creswell Hotel sold in 2022 with the new owners exploring possible residential conversions. These projects join other existing residential apartment properties downtown: 710 Crockett Lofts, Fairmont, Jefferson, and condominiums at 229 Milam Street. The Centrepont Building at 525 Milam sold with the new owner planning in late 2022 to convert the office property to a potential residential/student housing use.

Downtown residential occupancy rates are consistently in the 90% range, and new properties like the Standard and Lofts at 624 Texas are at capacity which indicates a continued strong public desire for downtown market rate housing options.

- **Downtown Infrastructure**- DDA advocates for city funding to be allocated on an ongoing basis to keep downtown infrastructure repaired and safe, knowing that a vibrant and attractive downtown reflects positively on both downtown and the rest of the city. Broken and inoperable infrastructure creates a feeling of neglect and lack of care and concern, and has caused developers in the past to re-think investment in Shreveport.
- **Historic Tax Credit Support**- The DDA and non-profit Downtown Shreveport Development Corporation (DSDC) continued their ongoing support of the State and Federal Commercial Historic Tax Credit programs in 2022. The popular tax program was extended through January 1, 2026 and added an annual statewide credit cap of \$125M. This 20% tax credit on eligible costs remains significant to the continued revitalization of downtown Shreveport and is a valuable tool for developers of historic properties. Several properties currently under construction or soon to be would not have been possible without the tax credit. DDA will continue to be an educational resource on the importance of the credit and will assist developers interested in utilizing it.
- **Downtown Performance Code** – DDA will continue efforts in 2023 to help businesses locate in the City Center through a partnership with the State Fire Marshal’s Office and City of Shreveport to facilitate timely and informative plan reviews to assist developers with renovation. At DDA’s request, the Fire Marshal’s Office participates in meetings to answer questions and provide personal assistance for developers and building owners downtown.
- **Homelessness** – The issue of homelessness is challenging to all, and local law enforcement has relatively few tools at their disposal. Arrest is an option, but not a long-term solution. SPD is working with mental health professionals to create more options for those persons dealing with drug and mental issues or a combination of both. Sadly, in some especially challenging cases, local social service agencies have said that they are unable to deal with a person who is creating issues for him or herself and others. While Homelessness is not a crime, it creates a perception of lack of safety, and issues attributed to it: panhandling, petty theft, vagrancy, disturbing the peace, and other nuisance calls are the top complaint received by the DDA. Inactivity on this front could lead to fewer investments downtown and revenue losses to businesses already located here. DDA works with the social service agencies, elected officials, local non-profits, law enforcement and the business community on the limited solutions that appear to exist. This work should continue to be of significance to the City and DDA in 2023.
- **West Edge** – DDA and DSDC continue a combined commitment to strengthening the West Edge (the area around the 600/700 blocks of Texas Street) as a center of arts and

cultural activity. Successes include the development of artspace, Setting the Standard Barbering Academy, Robinson Film Center, Lofts at 624, PepitoXO @ artspace, Rhino Coffee downtown, Kevin Bryan Architect, Emmett Hook Performance Center, the Louisiana Film Prize, Southern University Museum of Art, and ShaBaby's Cajun Cuisine. The former Tipitina's Music Co-Op property (700 Texas) sold to O'Brien Energy in the fall of 2021. Renamed Cooper's Corner, the owners are converting the building into a business hub. 709 Texas, the former Percy Alexander CPA office, was sold to Drayden Dunn as home for his Envision Media and Marketing business. DDA will continue efforts in 2023 to support the anchors and attractions already located in the West Edge and promote available buildings to businesses and developers.

- **Shreveport Common** - The DDA is a member of the Shreveport Common Board of Directors and works to support efforts as downtown's newest Arts & Culture District is developed. Though delayed because of the pandemic, work on Every Man A King Distillery in the former Arlington Hotel at 700 Cotton Street crept forward in 2022 and development of residential at Uneeda Biscuit Lofts, 711 Milam, is expected to be complete by April 2023. The Address Artist & Entrepreneur Center in the former Address Ford at 717 Crockett has become an important anchor for Shreveport Common and Downtown. The beautifully restored building is now home to established businesses, startups, and artists.
- There is strong proof that arts districts can be catalytic in creating revitalization. So-called 'Creative Placemaking' is a way to intentionally leverage the power of arts, culture, and creativity to help drive a broader agenda for change, growth and transformation while building a quality of place. A key anchor in Shreveport Common is Caddo Common Park which we believe will become a popular location for outdoor events such as concerts, plays in the park and more. The park is the recipient of an AARP grant for outdoor furniture in the Food Truck Bosque area, the lit sculptural 'Artistrees' and mister station have been installed, and the pavilion/performance stage neared was completed in November 2022.
- **Other Art and Entertainment-** Installation of the new LED lights on the Texas Street Bridge began in September 2021 and was completed in 2022. Local optometrist Dr. George Bakowski and wife Sandra donated \$1 million to jumpstart the effort. Other partners who stepped up with dollars were the Downtown Development Authority, Red River Waterway Commission, Louisiana Public Service Commission, cities of Bossier City and Shreveport and private donor Will Atkins. Thanks to the generosity of the Bakowskis and the partners, the LED-lit Bakowski Bridge of Lights will shine brightly for years to come.

The Downtown Shreveport Art Walk, Second Saturday Downtown, art venue openings and art exhibits, theatrical performances, live music, and other events that were cancelled or cut back because of the 2020 Pandemic continued their return to downtown in 2022. Patrons and visitors enjoyed productions and events at Robinson Film Center, artspace, Emmett Hook Center, The Agora Borealis, The Missing Link, The Lot, Noble Savage Tavern, Fatty Arbuckle's, Korner Lounge, Festival Plaza, Red



River District, High Gravity Glassworks, C & C Mercantile and Lighting, Central ARTstation, Big Sun Studios, Bailey Gallery, The Gallery at Andress, Shreveport Common, and other downtown locations.

Mudbug Madness, Good Times/Juneteenth, the Red River Revel, Brew, and other festivals filled Festival Plaza with celebrators in 2022. Productions also enlivened the Strand Theatre, Aseana Garden, and Municipal Auditorium, among others. Conventions and events were held at the Shreveport Convention Center, and the Louisiana Prize Fest returned to the streets celebrating, music, comedy, fashion, food, and film. The DDA will continue to support these events in 2023 with publicity, marketing, sponsorships, and other types of in-kind assistance.

Meanwhile, restaurants and other businesses saw more patrons return in 2022 amid the end of Covid 19 restrictions and protocols.

- **Historic Texas Avenue**- The 800 through 1200 blocks of Texas Avenue are in the Downtown Development District and offer an area ripe for re-development. Restoration to this key area began in earnest in 2020 and continued in 2022. 1110 Texas Avenue (old Schorr Furniture Store) was rehabbed as the C&C Mercantile and Lighting and ArtiFact artisan's factory. Owners Lauren Ross Simmons and Derek Simmons also acquired a lease from the city for the adjacent parking lot and Nolan's building with the intention of making developing step one of an avenue revitalization. C&C Mercantile held numerous artist events in 2022 and is continuing to serve as a new anchor for the western part of downtown. The DDA will continue to support C&C Mercantile and other businesses in this historic part of downtown.
- SporTran was the catalyst for changes in the 1200 block of Texas Avenue. The acquisition of the former Sun Furniture building and an adjacent building in the next block helped create SporTran's Multimodal Resource Center across from the Murphy Street transit Hub. At the close of 2022, work had begun on phase one of demolition and rehabilitation at the former Sun Furniture building on Texas Avenue. The property on the corner of Murphy Street and Texas Avenue, which has served Shreveport citizens for more than 120 years as a variety of options including a car dealership and furniture store, will become SporTran's transit mall, employee wellness center, safety training facility, and a public food court. Phase One is scheduled for completion in early 2023 and will include construction of the food court.
- **Historic Preservation and Adaptive Reuse**  
Preservation and Adaptive Reuse of historic structures continue to be imperative to a thriving downtown. DDA staff interacts frequently with developers and other interested parties in providing market and traffic data, commercial rental rates, sales comps, and other information to get vacant buildings into the hands of those who have the means and imagination to return them to active commerce.

- DDA remains committed to preserving and maintaining our inventory of unique historic properties. We hired consultants in 2015 to update and expand the Downtown Shreveport National Register District. In doing so, more downtown properties became eligible for state and federal tax historic credits.
  - DDA partners with the Louisiana Trust, Metropolitan Planning Commission, Louisiana Historic Preservation Office, Main Street, and others to promote the significance of redevelopment and adaptive reuse of downtown's historic properties.
  - In 2023 DDA hopes to resume production of events aimed at promoting the City Center's past such as the popular History in 5 talks at the Downtown Artwalk, events at the Shreveport Water Works Museum/Railroad Museum and other history-driven programs.
  - DDA continues to serve on the boards of the Shreveport Water Works Museum, Shreveport Common, and Cross Bayou A-Truss Bridge Committee and assists, as possible, in grants, fundraisers, and other ways to highlight their facilities and share their stories with a broader audience.
- **Cross Bayou** – the DDA recognizes this area as both valuable and underutilized and is supportive of appropriate and well-planned development that features prominent public access to the waterfront and a strong connection to historic Downtown. The Great Expectations Master Plan outlined the need to take steps to prepare the area for development- correct zoning, design guidelines, park planning and brownfields cleanup. DDA supports the City's ongoing efforts to acquire properties in the area to be able to issue a nationwide Request for Proposals to see what developers and ideas would be the best fit for Shreveport and downtown. Whatever is eventually developed here should be site planned to 'face' our historic downtown and interact with it, not sit as an island unto itself.
  - **Red River District** – The DDA continues to believe that the Red River District can be an attractive venue for businesses and events alike. DDA developed an action plan in 2008 to transform the former entertainment district into a place that would draw patronage from locals and visitors and has continued to assist the City in these efforts. In 2022, DDA hosted the Harvard Field Immersion Study that culminated in the 'Revitalizing the Red River District' report. We believe this report should prove helpful in future planning for, positioning of, and marketing for the district. In 2023 DDA staff will continue to interact with tenants and promote events that will highlight the area and downtown as a whole.
  - **Downtown Programming** - Though DDA operates with a small staff, we are aggressive in our desire to support events aimed at drawing people downtown. We know that when exposed to all that downtown has to offer, people will make the decision to live, work, and play here. DDA plans and executes events, assists others

with their events and provides monetary assistance through the DDA Mini-Grant program. Events as diverse as tours that pair beer and historic buildings and art walks have been conceived and presented by DDA, bringing thousands to downtown who might not normally have a reason to visit. Our programming push will continue in 2023 with Art Walks, Small Business Saturday, Second Saturday, and other partnerships.

- **Downtown Marketing & Promotion-** In 2020 as the COVID stay at home orders took effect, DDA pivoted from its planned marketing campaign to one intended to keep the closed businesses top of mind and pushed information about businesses still able to function. The effort continued in 2021 to keep downtown business top-of-mind in the community. In 2022, marketing returned to a more normal footing with DDA working to aggressively promote through all available free means- free traditional media, social media, flyers, speeches and appearances, and by hosting events, and paid media.

DDA believes that people who experience what downtown offers will be much more likely to consider it as a place to invest, work or live. At any given time, DDA is engaged in marketing outreach via social media and blog posts, videos, and weekly/monthly columns, articles and news and feature stories. In late 2022, the Shreveport DDA and Downtown Shreveport pages, both of which are managed by the DDA, had more than 20,000 ‘likes’ and more than 24,500 ‘followers’.

Our Thursday Shreveport DDA eBlast newsletter has attracted a strong following and results in interest from the public, developers, the traditional news media and elected officials.

**Grants to Promote Downtown** – DDA will pursue various grant opportunities in 2023 to provide additional funding for programming and development in downtown. As a result of a \$217,000 grant from the Louisiana Public Service Commission, all downtown street lighting was converted to LED making the city center more pedestrian friendly and enhancing security. \$175,000 earmarked by City Councilwoman LeVette Fuller and approved by the City Council will pay for tree removal and replacement, art maintenance and wayfinding signage. Previous grants have funded downtown marketing, the creation of a downtown garden, assistance to businesses locating downtown, structural repairs to historic buildings and for a market study of Shreveport Common.

- **Communications Partnerships for a Stronger Downtown-** DDA staff works hard to strengthen downtown partnerships and believes a free-flow of information is imperative. Communication with governmental entities, businesses, developers, non-profits, learning institutions, and media are employed to share information and increase the vitality of downtown overall. Communications outreach includes the weekly e-Blast, community speeches and talks, tours, a wide range of social media including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, and the downtownshreveport.com

website, press releases and columns in Forum News, The Times, SB Focus and BIZ magazine, among others.

- **Riverfront Development** – The DDA’s sister organization, DSDC, has supported both the Shreveport Aquarium and Sci-Port Discovery Center with grants in the hopes of helping them become more self-sufficient. DDA supported major legislation in 2018 that added additional gaming space and allowed the downtown casinos to move out of the water 1200’ from their existing berths to assist in them becoming more competitive. DDA will continue to support downtown’s two riverfront casinos and advocate for improvements to help them continue to improve their market.

## Summary: Goals and Objectives

### A. **Basic Services**

Ensure and, if required, supplement the effective delivery and management of basic municipal services such as police services and litter removal on the public streets and spaces in downtown. Advocate for the continued installation of security cameras in downtown and investment in infrastructure upgrades and repairs.

### B. **Development and Marketing**

Actively pursue and support initiatives that promote quality public and private sector development in downtown. Promote the downtown experience and our abundant history. Continue to position the city center as a place to “Live, Work, Play and Invest.” Promote downtown residential, retail, office markets, and downtown events and programs.

### C. **Image and Communications**

Actively promote opportunities in downtown and reinforce that downtown is a welcoming, diverse address filled with unique businesses, opportunities, events, and festivals. DDA will also continue to maintain communication between downtown property owners, businesses, advocates, elected officials, the public, and the media by informing them of downtown’s needs, opportunities, plans, and assets.

### D. **Legislation Action and Leadership Support**

Provide necessary support services to various non-profit downtown improvement organizations and recruit key leaders to become involved in the downtown revitalization process. Encourage City, Parish, State, and Federal agencies to participate in the revitalization of downtown. Work with elected officials on the local, state, and national level to advocate for downtown enhancements and continuation of historic tax credits and other downtown and/or historic incentives. Provide recommendations and input relative to continued improvements in the DDD.

**E. Parking and Transportation**

Improve accessibility to and within downtown. The DDA, through its parking contract with the City of Shreveport, manages the on-street metered parking program through ShrevePark and analyzes parking demand, locations, and funding. We strive to make parking easier with parking apps and park cards and online payments to make ticket payment options accessible and convenient. The DDA will continue to work with the City of Shreveport and others to identify additional parking spaces and to thoughtfully consider future locations for parking facilities.

- DDA and ShrevePark continue to engage in changes in parking technology, App Parking, and learn new methods of parking management to make downtown parking as seamless as possible.
- ShrevePark continues to manage a downtown curb re-painting program that assists parkers in identifying app and other types of spaces.

**F. Retail and Business Support**

We work with downtown retail businesses and commercial buildings to promote their goods, space, and services through networking and traditional and social media. We host such initiatives as Small Business Saturday, Pop Ups, and Art Walks to promote businesses, we hire marketing experts for informational sessions for our business owners and create professional marketing campaigns to promote our downtown businesses year-round.

**G. Downtown Office Building Support**

DDA will continue to support local real estate companies and downtown brokers to help promote the downtown office market. Staff is engaged in conversations with downtown property owners and managers on how to best position their properties, property amenities and provide information, advice, and assistance to tenants. We share information with those looking for downtown space and with those who are already downtown. DDA engages with other entities such as Main Street, Strong Towns, and other downtown associations to be aware of Best Practices and to determine best ideas in repositioning office space that may not be needed post-Covid. DDA will work closely with partner DSDC in an Absorption/Market Study to help answer developer questions and position properties for sale or different uses. A 2022 study by Urban3/Strong Towns will also play a key role in promoting and positioning our historic DDD.

**H. Planning**

DDA will continue to implement the Strategic Framework 2010-2015 plan priorities as approved by the DDA Board of Directors and continue implementation of the 2010 Redevelopment Strategy. DDA works with the Metropolitan Planning Commission on the Unified Development Code (UDC) and makes suggestions on how to tweak the code as needed in ways that make sense for downtown. DDA worked with the

City to push a Sidewalk Café permit process. *In 2020, when restaurants were able to open as take-out only and later at only 25% capacity, the DDA worked with MPC for a temporary, easy-to-implement sidewalk café option to give restaurants room for additional customers.*

**I. Quality of Life**

Enhance the overall livability of downtown for workers and visitors by promoting and facilitating special events, encouraging historic preservation, pedestrian amenities, additional retail and entertainment, and ensuring that downtown is safe and secure. DDA will continue working with DSDC in 2023 to manage a downtown Graffiti Removal program.

**J. Urban Design**

Encourage and support high quality urban design and continue to work with such organizations such as Re:Form Shreveport, Strong Towns, Verdunity, and others to encourage engagement, incremental growth and projects that are people oriented. DDA will support the improvement of the aesthetic qualities and character of downtown through public space development and historic preservation efforts, and actively oppose the construction of metal buildings, the demolition in general of historic buildings and structures, and the demolition of non-historic structures unless other structures are built to take their place. Density in a downtown matters, and the DDA shares that message with developers, the public and elected officials.

## **2023 ACTIVITIES**

Note: Activities include, but are not limited to, the following. It should be noted that there may be administrative costs and/or direct project development and implementation costs in each area.

**A. Basic Services**

Ensure and, if appropriate, supplement the effective delivery and management of basic services such as police, sanitation, and general non-repair maintenance of the public streets and spaces in downtown.

*Enhance and Improve Downtown Security*

Continue support of Downtown Police and the Downtown Mounted Patrol with a budgeted line item dedicated to this. Advocate for continued installation of security cameras in downtown and additional police presence. As possible, fund hiring Shreveport Police officers to walk the beat in the Central Business District while talking with SPD and City officials about the need for additional officers assigned to Downtown.

Improve the Maintenance of Downtown Public Spaces

Subject to City or other contract, participate in the maintenance of public spaces in downtown through litter pickup, street-sweeping and vacuuming, grass cutting and other public space maintenance. Also provide supplemental funding for special planting, maintenance, or other beautification projects within downtown as possible.

Continue to meet with the City, SWEPCO and other partners on repairs, maintenance and upgrades to downtown lighting and improved access to electricity, with the City Engineer and Public Works on sidewalks, curbs, and other street issues, with the City Technology department on security cameras and other crime-fighting tools, and with the City Council and Mayor's Office to find the resources to make critically-needed downtown infrastructure improvements.

**B. Development and Marketing**

Actively pursue development initiatives to promote quality public and private sector development initiatives in downtown.

West Edge District and Shreveport Common Redevelopment

Initiate/support West Edge and Shreveport Common quality of life initiatives.

Cross Bayou/Riverfront/Convention Center Development

Encourage City efforts to further acquire property and remediate Cross Bayou for eventual use, and promote and encourage greater use of the Riverfront, Red River Entertainment District, and Convention Center areas.

Business Support

Coordinate and implement programs to position downtown as a good environment for retail and business services. Continue to provide specific help to businesses; promote and market these businesses and their services. Continue to assist restaurants in downtown to secure sidewalk café permits and downtown bar and club owners to identify their needs and facilitate additional security possibilities.

Office Space

Work with property owners and managers to position their spaces for lease. Make suggestions for opportunities to overcome issues that may be negatively affecting particular buildings and encourage attention to trends which will help position properties more positively. Promote spaces on DDA website and social media.

Stimulate Individual Development Opportunities

Foster other development opportunities for downtown, especially those with a strong residential component.

Client Services

Provide client services to existing downtown businesses or prospective businesses concerning market data, economic and historic tax incentives, and space needs.

Economic

Administer, foster, develop and/or coordinate economic incentive measures to spur continued development of downtown. Assist in providing information about all tax credits and other help available and work with the City of Shreveport in sharing details about the Downtown Opportunity Zone and other incentives.

**C. Image and Communications**

Promote a positive image of downtown and maintain effective communications between downtown property owners, businesses, advocates, elected officials and citizens of the City by informing them of the needs, opportunities, plans, and assets of downtown. Elevate the public's awareness of downtown and its offerings and explain the DDA's role in both. Continue publication of the weekly e-blast that highlights ongoing activities in downtown, maintain an aggressive social and traditional media outreach, and initiate creative marketing strategies to highlight downtown businesses and properties.

Provide Information to Educate and Inform Downtown Businesses and Professionals About Downtown Issues and Important City/Regional Issues Which Impact Downtown

Publish reports for DDA/DSDC as appropriate and prepare and distribute marketing materials designed to share correct and updated information about downtown.

Educate and Inform the Community about the Importance of Downtown and Present An Image That Downtown Is A Desirable Place in which to Live, Work, and Play

Provide information relative to downtown attractions and update materials that promote downtown. Continue to work with Strong Towns, Urban3 and other national organizations that promote the continue importance and potential economic strength of downtowns.

Participate in select Shreveport initiatives that will enhance the national image of our city and promote increased civic pride

**D. Legislative Action and Leadership Support**

Provide necessary support services to various non-profit downtown improvement organizations and recruit key leaders to become involved in the downtown revitalization process. Participate in providing information to local, state, and federal lawmakers on legislation that impacts downtown growth and development.

Support and Participate in State and National Associations Which Are Concerned With Revitalizing Downtowns

Participate in organizations dedicated to downtown revitalization and, as appropriate, attend Louisiana Cultural Connection, Louisiana Trust for Historic Preservation, and Main Street Conferences.

Support and Encourage the Participation and Activities of Local Downtown Organizations Whose Primary Interest Is Also the Revitalization of Downtown

Provide contract DDA staff services to Downtown Shreveport Development Corporation



(DSDC) and DSDC2, Inc. to enable their programs of work. Maintain supportive relationships with Downtown Shreveport Unlimited, Shreveport Common and others.

## **E. Parking and Transportation**

Improve the accessibility to and within downtown.

### Former SporTran Terminal

DDA will continue efforts to work with the current lessee and/or future lessee of the former SporTran facility –now known as The Lot – in efforts to program and promote live music events, a food truck court, and creative events. DDA will also engage the new owners of the former Greyhound Bus Terminal, Holy Trinity Catholic Church, as they repurpose the facility for a new use for the church.

### Pedestrian/Vehicular Circulation/Bike Lanes

Work to improve and maintain effective and safe pedestrian and vehicular circulation in downtown. Manage the creation and installation of wayfinding signage throughout downtown Shreveport per funding in 2022 by the Shreveport City Council. Encourage the installation of amenities that will enhance the pedestrian environment, and work with the City and others to promote the development of multi-story parking in downtown on existing surface lots. Work with the City on the expansion of bicycle lanes or sharrows throughout downtown and continue to advocate for additional bicycle racks in locations where needed. Encourage the city and state to consider creative ‘traffic calming’ solutions to fight excess speeding seen on Spring and Market Streets which make the areas dangerous to pedestrians and bicyclists. Work with the city and state to slow speed and make the area of Texas Avenue from Cotton Street to Murphy Street a ‘Complete Street’ concept that will make it safer, more attractive, and more pedestrian friendly. Encourage the City to return to a system of two-ways streets that will make travelling downtown less daunting and confusing.

### Off-Street Parking

Promote the development of thoughtful additional off-street parking facilities on existing surface lots and consider which surface lots might be prime locations for parking garages. Provide staff support via contract to DSDC to manage the First United Methodist Church parking lots. By contract, administer the City of Shreveport’s on-street parking program and advise the City on use of funds from the parking enterprise fund.

### Curbside Parking

Develop and encourage the effective use of curbside parking. Continue to develop opportunities to create additional vehicle and motorcycle spaces in downtown.

## **F. Planning**

Plan for the growth, development, and occupancy of downtown by early identification of opportunities and potential problems. Provide comment to City Administration, City Council, Caddo Parish, MPC and Zoning, NLCOG and other appropriate agencies regarding planning and development issues.

Maintain Downtown Maps and Develop Data that Communicates Pertinent Information Concerning Downtown Property and Its Use

Participate in commercial office space research consortiums where possible. Provide information as requested to encourage residential, office, and retail development in downtown

Maintain a Set of Goals, Strategies, and Objectives for Downtown

Continue to review and update downtown goals and strategic objectives. Prepare and adopt for DDA and DSDC a work plan which reflects the strategic objectives that are to be addressed by the primary downtown economic development and advocacy organizations. Facilitate meetings as appropriate to update downtown stakeholders on downtown projects.

Represent Downtown's Interest in Citywide Planning Issues for Adjacent Neighborhoods and Regional Planning Activities

Monitor and evaluate city-wide and regional planning efforts for impact on the downtown area such as the city's Choice Neighborhoods plan, which affects a portion of the Downtown Development District. Participate in planning activities as appropriate. Work with the City of Shreveport on its projects and developments outlined in the \$24.2M HUD Choice Neighborhood grant that was awarded in 2018.

## **G. Quality of Life**

Enhance the overall character, environment, and attraction of downtown Shreveport by supporting, promoting, and facilitating special events and cultural activities.

Festivals and Special Events, Sponsorships

Assist in the development and production of special events. Provide support to organizations and entities that will enhance the downtown experience through the funding of mini-grants, insurance coverage or other sponsorship assistance. Manage the street vendor permitting program, street performers, and sidewalk café programs.

Art as Industry

Give downtown Shreveport a unique sense of place by fostering the art industry as a place-making collaborative. Monitor progress and participate in the process of both temporary and permanent art components of the streetscape project. Work with SRAC, Robinson Film Center, Bailey Gallery, Agora Borealis, Artipsy, C & C Mercantile, Address Art & Entrepreneur Center, Big Sun Studios, The Lot, the Strand Theatre, and other entities to create the ongoing presence of the arts in downtown as an industry. Increase public art installations in downtown through partnerships with local, regional & national artists, SRAC, City of Shreveport and other entities and advocate for maintenance of such. Promote ways to highlight the importance of art in the community.

## **H. Urban Design**

Improve the urban design, aesthetic quality, and character of downtown and work with appropriate agencies as opportunities are provided. Continue support of Re-Form Shreveport in bringing nationally known speakers to Shreveport to speak on issues of Urban Sprawl, the

importance of Downtowns, livability, the importance of a walkable-friendly community, and more.

*Implementation of Desired Urban Design Concepts*

Monitor minimum sidewalk standards in accordance with the design criteria of the downtown streetscape projects, participate in the design of downtown streetscape projects, and provide input to the City Administration and MPC as to the appropriateness of design of proposed projects. Administer the sidewalk café permit process and assist businesses in the application process.

*Plan and Promote the Development of Public Places, such as Plazas, Fountains, Green Space and Pop-Up Parks in Downtown*

Continue support of projects/events that promote a positive image of downtown. Work with the City and others to identify opportunities for green space enhancement and other public developments. Provide support for the continued enhancement of Caddo Common Park.

*Plan and Implement Improvements to Downtown Gateways*

Monitor gateway concepts and make specific recommendations regarding planned improvements at key downtown entry ways.

*Identify and Encourage the Preservation and/or Renovation of Historic or Architecturally Significant Buildings in Downtown*

The DDA staff continues to provide assistance and coordination between developers and the State Historic Preservation Office to qualify properties for participation in the state and federal tax credit programs. DDA will also continue efforts to encourage and assist historic preservation work of DSDC, encourage - financially and otherwise - adaptive re-use of historic buildings in downtown, promote redevelopment incentives, and work with the State Fire Marshal's Office and other cities to determine "Best Practices" in historic building codes.

**2023 DDA Budget – Approved 10-31-22**

		<b>2023 Revenue</b>
1	2022 DDD Property Tax	\$ 708,468
2	Streetscape Contract	\$ 279,830
3	Streetscape Misc. Income	\$ 6,300
4	Parking Contract	\$ 362,000
5	Parking Misc. Income	\$ 500
6	DSDC Management Contract	\$ 30,000
7	Interest	\$ 2,000
8	Miscellaneous Income	\$ 5,000
9	FUMC Lot Management	\$ 2,400
10	2022 Carry Over Revenue - COS	\$ 142,200
<b>Total Revenue</b>		<b>\$ 1,538,698</b>

		<b>2023 Expense</b>
11	Salaries, Admin.	\$ 332,000
12	Retirement	\$ 10,000
13	Medical Insurance	\$ 63,300
14	Payroll Taxes (.0765)	\$ 28,000
15	Worker's Comp	\$ 1,000
16	Staff Parking & Validation	\$ 2,200
17	Legal	\$ 8,000
18	Accounting	\$ 24,000
19	Professional Dues & Subscriptions	\$ 5,000
20	Postage	\$ 600
21	Office Supplies & Expenses	\$ 22,000
22	Office Rent (416 Cotton)	\$ 39,048
23	416 Utilities	\$ 12,000
24	Dining & Entertainment	\$ 2,000
25	Seminars & Training	\$ 5,000
26	Insurance - General	\$ 14,000
27	Travel Expense	\$ 3,000
28	Telephone	\$ 10,720
29	Marketing/Publications	\$ 27,500
30	Downtown Police Supplement	\$ 4,000
31	Security Grant	\$ 15,000
32	Streetscape Maintenance	\$ 286,130
33	Trees/Infrastructure (COS)	\$ 142,200
34	Events/Sponsorships	\$ 10,000

35	Parking Services (Contract)	\$	362,000
36	Artspace Support	\$	20,000
37	Mini-grants	\$	5,000
38	416 Cotton	\$	10,000
39	Downtown Beautification	\$	75,000
<b>Total Expense</b>		<b>\$</b>	<b>1,538,698</b>