

**A Special Project by
Ausherman Family Foundation
and the City of Frederick**



**DOWNTOWN
SAFETY &
SERVICES
INITIATIVE**

MARCH 2021

Executive Summary

This publication presented by The Downtown Safety & Services Initiative (referred to throughout this document as the Initiative) is the product of work that began in October 2018. It was then that a small group of residents, Downtown business owners, officials from The City of Frederick, and members of the Frederick Police Department met to discuss an opportunity to ensure our downtown continued to thrive through safety and service initiatives.

Following that meeting, Ausherman Family Foundation (AFF) joined the conversation and began a listening tour with interested parties to fully understand the scope of the concerns, opportunities for enhancements, and possible solutions for making Downtown Frederick a warm, welcoming place for all. In April 2019, a follow-up roundtable discussion was hosted by The City of Frederick and Ausherman Family Foundation in which The Collective Good, a community problem-solving firm, facilitated continued discussion. From that roundtable discussion, the Initiative was formed to pursue a common vision for Downtown Frederick, focused on **offering safety for all, respecting each individual, and advancing the vibrancy of this exceptional community.**

Over the next several months, the following took place:

April through May 2019

AFF took part in a second listening tour to vet the Initiative framework and relationship with public partners.

May 2019

The City of Frederick agreed to co-lead the project through the Mayor's office, and a public-private partnership was officially formed.

August 2019

Steering Committee first convened, press release was distributed, and website was officially launched.

October 2019

Hosted first public meeting to educate the community about the Initiative, its goals and activities, as well as gather community input.

Peter Couchman from Ausherman Family Foundation and Gayon Sampson from the Mayor's Office were named co-leads of the Initiative, and the following were asked to serve as Committee chairs:

Kara Norman

Downtown Frederick Partnership
Ambassador Committee

Kate Layman

Ruppert Properties
Environmental Design and Programming Committee

Ken Oldham

United Way of Frederick County
Public Messaging Committee

Kim Dine

Frederick Police Department, Ret.
Security and Enforcement Committee

Elizabeth Y. Day

The Community Foundation of Frederick County
Services and Coordination Committee

Support provided by Leigh Adams & Jen Specht

Ausherman Family Foundation





When Peter Couchman departed AFF in July 2020, Kate Layman was promoted to co-chair, while Nkem Wellington was nominated by the Steering Committee to replace Kate as chair of the Environmental Design and Programming Committee.

On October 1, 2019, DSSI held its first public meeting, with approximately 120 community members in attendance. Each committee chair shared their progress, and the community had an opportunity to provide input, ask questions, and contribute to the process. Following that meeting, the Mayor's Office committed to an independent study of the Frederick Community Action Agency, now known as the City of Frederick Department of Housing and Human Services, and the committees reconvened to continue their work.

Each committee met regularly to use their members' expertise and input in creating recommendations to be incorporated into this final publication.

Following months of research, collaboration, and discussion (inevitably disrupted by the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic), each Committee has produced a report that includes a set of recommendations for specific issues facing the Downtown Frederick area. Those reports have been collected in Part Two of this publication, including the details of each recommendation and the issue it addresses, and steps already taken to put them into action - in several significant cases, improvements are already underway.

It is important to note that each committee's recommendations are expounded upon in this publication through a "What is the issue?" and "What can be done?" format. The committees felt it was important to identify the issue fully before detailing what can be done to address it.





Part One: Introduction

Why we're here

In short: We're here to help!

The Downtown Safety & Services Initiative (referred to throughout this document as the Initiative) was formed to pursue a common vision for Downtown Frederick, focusing on **safety for all, respect for each individual, and advancing the vibrancy of this exceptional community**. Through civic engagement, thoughtful planning, and the commitment of Frederick's own – leaders, human services providers, businesses, and residents – we want to ensure Downtown Frederick is a safe, welcoming, and prosperous environment for all our citizens and visitors.

The Initiative's goals:

Promote inclusiveness and maintain safety efforts within the community

Utilize an inclusive approach, inviting input from all stakeholders, to enhance The City of Frederick's safety and vibrancy

Serve as a vehicle for citizens to provide feedback in a series of public meetings

Who we are

We are you—Frederick community members, coming together with open minds to serve the needs of *all* Downtown Frederick residents and visitors in the most effective ways possible.

The members of the Initiative represent every one of Downtown Frederick's stakeholder groups, from residents to businesses to government to law enforcement to human service providers in the areas of workforce development, emergency shelter, youth services, mental health, and more.

To be specific, the Initiative is populated by dozens of individual volunteers, who put in months of work to develop recommendations for Downtown Frederick and get them underway. Our deepest thanks go to these incredible volunteers:

Leigh Adams
Ausherman Family Foundation

Shannon Aleshire
Mental Health Association
of Frederick County

Lindsey Baker
La Paz

Leslie Barnes-Keating
Frederick County Citizens Services Division

Suzi Borg
Mental Health Association
of Frederick County

Peter Brehm
The Frederick Center

Nick Brown
The Religious Coalition for
Emergency Human Needs

Sgt. Vince Brown
Frederick Police Department

Jessica Chausky
Frederick County Health Department

Lt. John Corbett
Frederick Police Department

Ramenta Cottrell
The City of Frederick, Department of
Housing and Human Services

Elizabeth Y. Day
The Community Foundation of Frederick
County

Michelle Day
Frederick County Workforce Services

Kim Dine
Frederick Police Department, Ret.

Danielle Doll
Downtown Frederick Partnership

Sarah Drennan
Frederick County Health Department,
Behavioral Health Services

Michael Driscoll
resident

Kavonte Duckett
The Religious Coalition for Emergency
Human Needs

Jessica Ellis
Frederick County Health Department

Marlene England
Curious Iguana

Arnold Farlow
Frederick Rescue Mission

John Fieseler
Visit Frederick

Harry George
resident

Richard Griffin
The City of Frederick, Department of
Economic Development

Rev. Mark Allen Groover
Asbury United Methodist Church

Beth Heltebride
Frederick County Public Libraries

Jay Hessler
Frederick County Health Department

Ed Hinde
Student Homelessness Initiative Partnership
(SHIP) of Frederick County

Patty Hurwitz
Colonial Jewelers

Robert Jones
South End Coalition

Janet Jones
The City of Frederick, Department of
Housing and Human Services

Danielle Kellizy
The City of Frederick

Lacy Kimble
On Our Own of Frederick County

Karlys Kline
resident

Kate Layman
Ruppert Properties

Angie Liddiard
The Housing Authority of
The City of Frederick

Michelle Marshall
Frederick County Health Department

Dale Naugle
The Religious Coalition for Emergency
Human Needs

Cherie Nearman
Hootch & Banter

Eric Nicholson
resident, Neighborhood Advisory
Council 11 Coordinator

Saundra Nickols
attorney, The City of Frederick

Kara Norman
Downtown Frederick Partnership

Ken Oldham
United Way of Frederick County

Lt. Chris Raymer
The Salvation Army

Elin Ross
Federated Charities

Kelly Russell
Alderman, The City of Frederick

Nick Sadler
Sunshine Management

Sherif Salem
Hootch & Banter

Gayon Sampson
The City of Frederick

Lori Schroye-Wells
Way Station

Kimberly Scott
Delta Sigma Theta Society

Bob Smith
The City of Frederick, Parks and Recreation
Department

Capt. Dwight Sommers
Frederick Police Department

Jen Specht
Ausherman Family Foundation

Alexander Twine
The Religious Coalition for
Emergency Human Needs

Ashley Waters
The City of Frederick

Chad Weddle
Frederick County State's
Attorney's Office

Nkem Wellington
resident, Neighborhood Advisory Council
11 Coordinator

Sgt. Tracey Wiles
Frederick Police Department

Dr. Gerald Winnan
Frederick Health

Additionally, our work has also been greatly informed by the Frederick community at large, who contributed their time and thoughts through our open-door meetings, subcommittees, focus groups, and surveys, as well as through direct feedback.

How we have worked

To explore specific ways we can make Frederick an even more inviting and compassionate place to live, work, and play, the Initiative established five committees to conduct research and make recommendations in specific areas:

The **Ambassador Program Committee** investigated successful community “ambassador” programs and the ways that Downtown Frederick could benefit in terms of beautification, security presence, human services outreach, and visitor hospitality.

The **Environmental Design and Programming Committee** examined policing through environmental design and ways to use park activation and programming as positive deterrents to undesirable behaviors.

The **Public Messaging Committee** sought ways to better share critical community data with the public about activities, crime, and opportunities Downtown Frederick, and to act as the public relations arm of the Initiative.

The **Security and Enforcement Committee** evaluated existing law enforcement conditions, looking for opportunities to make improvements in legislation, scheduling, and community assets (including a police-accessible network of private and public security cameras).

The **Services and Coordination Committee** determined ways to expand and increase access to human services by analyzing current offerings, their coordination, and how well they serve Downtown Frederick’s needs.



How you fit in

We are enormously grateful for your help, and we’re eager for your continued engagement. We invite you to join us in taking the next steps toward a greater Downtown Frederick by reviewing the Committee reports that follow, and then getting involved in our community’s efforts to make these ideas a reality.

Part Two: Committee Recommendations And Progress To Date

Ambassador Committee

Committee members

Chairperson: Kara Norman

Downtown Frederick Partnership

Co-Lead: Kate Layman

Ruppert Properties

Michael Driscoll

resident

Richard Griffin

The City of Frederick, Department
of Economic Development

Patty Hurwitz

Colonial Jewelers

Michelle Marshall

Frederick County Health Department

Cherie Nearman

Hootch & Banter

Sherif Salem

Hootch & Banter

Gayon Sampson

The City of Frederick

Bob Smith

The City of Frederick, Parks and Recreation Department

Administrative support provided by:

Jen Specht

Ausherman Family Foundation

Danielle Kellizy

The City of Frederick

Our purpose

The Ambassador Committee's assignment was to investigate ambassador programs: what they are, how they work in other municipalities, and which of their typical core functions – beautification, security presence, human services outreach, and visitor hospitality – could address the concerns of residents, businesses, and visitors, and strengthen Downtown Frederick overall. Services already in place and the potential availability of funding were also key considerations.

Our proposal

Recommendation: Implement an Ambassador Program in Downtown Frederick, managed by Downtown Frederick Partnership, that provides safety, hospitality, and cleaning services above and beyond the efforts underway today.

What is the issue? Many concerns voiced by the community fall under the category of safety and cleanliness. The significant increase in visitors - seen prior to the pandemic and very likely to return in the future - that Downtown Frederick is hosting has also created a greater need for information. Safety, cleanliness, and hospitality can be addressed directly by an Ambassador Program.

What can be done? A visible, friendly, and informative ambassador team can do much to improve Downtown Frederick: greeting people, directing visitors, cleaning the streetscape and increasing communication among organizations, businesses, residents, and visitors. A constant, on-the-ground presence and quick, ongoing attention to cleanliness can improve the sense of safety and welcome.

The program's ongoing operations will be guided by data, tracked across several mission-critical measures, and will be carried out in close partnership with other organizations and stakeholders. This coordination will include the human services outreach activities underway today, and those described in the Services and Coordination Committee recommendations. Staff recruitment will be expanded to better reflect the community, and training will be emphasized to create a team of effective ambassadors. Program flexibility will be key to reflect the dynamic nature of Downtown Frederick environments.

What we've done so far

The details of the program have been drafted, including the specific services to be provided, the staffing plan to provide them, and job descriptions for ambassador-level positions. These documents were created with help from community feedback, including discussions with over a dozen local and non-local sources, lessons shared by the Bethesda Urban Partnership Ambassador Program, and a comprehensive assessment from Block by Block, a potential contractor.

What's next

Identify and secure funding for the program's first three years, which are anticipated to cost a total of \$988,000 (including \$33,000 in capital costs).

Request proposals from, and hire, a contractor to implement the Ambassador Program. Downtown Frederick Partnership will conduct this process in consultation with several stakeholders.

Begin program implementation. Many stakeholders will be involved in this process as well, in terms of outreach, training, program coordination, and more.

Manage the ongoing work of the Ambassador Program by Downtown Frederick Partnership and work to identify longer term financial support for implementation.

Environmental Design and Programming Committee

Committee members

Chairperson: Nkem Wellington

resident, Neighborhood Advisory Council 11 Coordinator

Co-Lead: Gayon Sampson

The City of Frederick

Sgt. Vincent Brown

Frederick Police Department

Jessica Chausky

Frederick County Health Department

Karlys Kline

resident

Kara Norman

Downtown Frederick Partnership

Kate Layman

Ruppert Properties

Sherif Salem

Hootch & Banter

Bob Smith

The City of Frederick, Parks and Recreation Department

Sgt. Tracey Wiles

Frederick Police Department

Administrative support provided by:

Jen Specht

Ausherman Family Foundation

Danielle Kellizy

The City of Frederick

Our purpose

The Environmental Design and Programming Committee was formed to identify and implement environmental design and programming initiatives, specifically along the South Market Street entrance to Carroll Creek Linear Park, that would further beautify the community and make it more welcoming to families while simultaneously discouraging undesirable behavior. The Committee was built on a partnership between local residents, business owners, government officials, and representatives of the Frederick Police department.

Our proposal

Recommendation: Collaborate with the Department of Public Works to improve lighting along Carroll Creek Linear Park, and hire a public art consultant to conceptualize a Frederick-specific theme for a Downtown Frederick scavenger hunt art trail.

What is the issue? Community members have expressed concern about excessive loitering along the walls at the South Market Street entrance to Carroll Creek Linear Park. In addition to the loitering, this area has become a common location for criminal activity that includes drug dealing, drug use, minor assaults, use of alcohol, public urination, and general disorderly conduct.

These activities have both alarmed community members and deterred tourism and legitimate business transactions within the area in question. Vandalism of rental homes is also an issue in this area, as is a growing presence of individuals experiencing homelessness who may need services.

What can be done? A series of artistic and practical infrastructural changes can be implemented at key points along Carroll Creek Linear Park and within Downtown Frederick to encourage families, shoppers, and visitors to actively engage with the area.

Drawing from a combination of personal observations and Meredith Wivell's study "Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design," the Committee has identified a few specific areas for improvement along Carroll Creek Linear Park.

Improved lighting along Carroll Creek Linear Park and a Downtown Frederick scavenger hunt art trail will complement the modifications (described below) that have already been completed. Implementing these initiatives will require additional resources and greater collaboration among the stakeholders involved.



What we've done so far

Two physical modifications have been completed:

With support from Ausherman Family Foundation, a private funder, and Transportation Management Services, Downtown Frederick Partnership designed, fabricated, and implemented an artistic outdoor fencing and wayfinding installation titled The Water Lily Wave Carroll Creek Wayfinding Project. This project follows the Public Art master plan and is fulfilling goals established by the Initiative.

With additional support from Ausherman Family Foundation and the Department of Parks and Recreation, railings for the raised triangle bed and pony walls on the north side of the Carroll Creek Linear Park entrance at South Market Street were fabricated and installed to create visual symmetry and to serve as a loitering deterrent.

Finally, the Committee received a proposal from Citilumen to assess current lighting along Carroll Creek Linear Park, and the Committee identified an area outside the C. Burr Artz Library for suitability as the site of a small playground. After deeming that the site is not ideal for a playground, the Committee formed the idea of creating a scavenger hunt art trail.

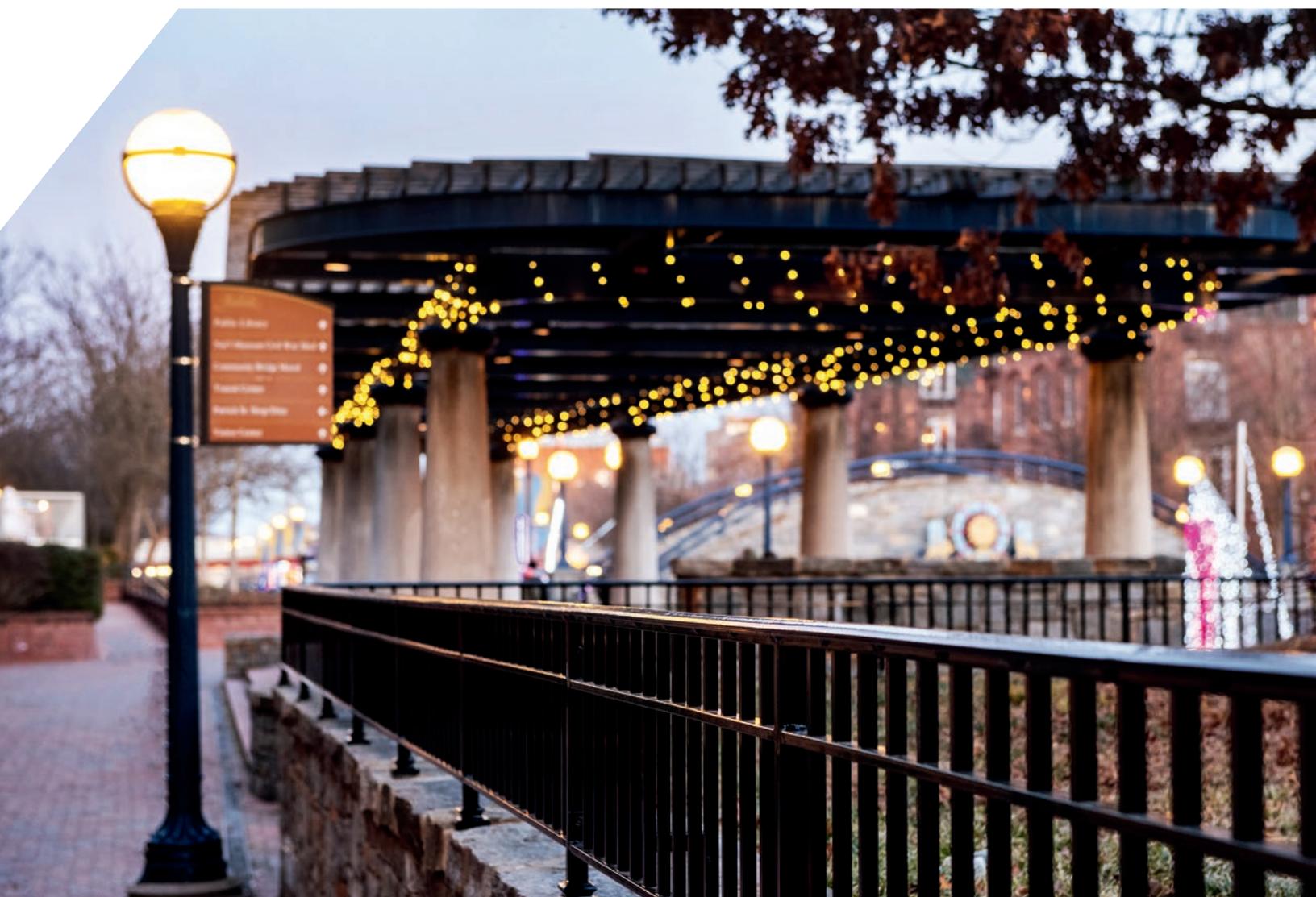
What's next

Contact the Public Works Department to review Citilumen's proposal and to provide detailed recommendations, as well as insight into what collaborating on lighting Carroll Creek Linear Park will involve.

Request additional feedback from the Public Works Department regarding the Frederick Police Department's proposal for lighting city parks in the areas around Carroll Creek Linear Park between East Street and South Bentz Street.

Hire a public art consultant to help engage the public, coordinate key stakeholders, and conceptualize a Frederick-specific theme for the scavenger hunt art project.

Collaborate with the public art consultant to manage the project from concept to implementation in accordance with the Public Art master plan and with a focus on integrating Carroll Creek Linear Park with Downtown Frederick as a whole.





Public Messaging Committee

Committee members

Chairperson: Ken Oldham

United Way of Frederick County

Co-Lead: Gayon Sampson

The City of Frederick

Shannon Aleshire

Mental Health Association of Frederick County

Danielle Doll

Downtown Frederick Partnership

Kavonte Duckett

The Religious Coalition for Emergency Human Needs

John Fieseler

Visit Frederick

Jay Hessler

Frederick County Health Department

Elin Ross

Federated Charities

Ashley Waters

The City of Frederick

Kimberly Scott

Delta Sigma Theta Society

Administrative support provided by:

Jen Specht

Ausherman Family Foundation

Danielle Kellizy

The City of Frederick

Our purpose

The Public Messaging Committee's original objective was to develop a public messaging campaign to deter "panhandling" in Downtown Frederick. However, a Frederick Police presentation at the beginning of the Committee's work made it clear that little panhandling—defined as soliciting money and harassing behavior—is actually taking place. Instead, persistent loitering and congregating has created the perception of panhandling.

Recognizing the power of data, the Committee re-envisioned its purpose: a regularly-updated, high-level, fully public, easy-to-access, "one-stop" data display to provide residents, local businesses, and visitors meaningful information about the conditions in Downtown Frederick.

The Committee has also taken on the public relations function of the Initiative, an effort that will ramp up as we make our findings known (like with this publication) and begin to take action around the Initiative's recommendations.

Our proposal

Recommendation: Develop a “dashboard” of critical community information to better inform the public, visitors, decision makers, and residents about Downtown Frederick.

What's the issue? The concerns of Downtown Frederick's stakeholders can be better addressed and resolved when we all have access to accurate, relevant, information about the issues facing us.

What can be done? An information source that's freely available and easy to access, with the most valuable data points for the general public clearly identified and highlighted, will give everyone who loves, works, and plays in Downtown Frederick the ability to make better decisions about where to put our resources—as individuals and as a community.

Among the project's needs, the Committee explored answers to the following questions:

Where the dashboard will be: What entity will host the dashboard, finalize its content, and be responsible for its maintenance?

Where the data will come from: How can we collect, organize, and publish community information strategically?

Which information will be included: What kinds of data will be most relevant and easy to understand for the general public?

While incredibly important, data collection, organization, and display are no small tasks, and the Committee recognizes the complexity of gathering quality data and preparing it for a general audience. Currently, data that is contemporary, well-organized, publicly-available, and localized to Downtown Frederick is extremely limited, and there is no strategic community-wide effort to collect and publish data. This has been a major roadblock in this Committee's effort.

There are, however, several models for this effort, including Data Driven Detroit (datadrievendetroit.org), the Baltimore Neighborhood Indicators Alliance (bniajfi.org), and the Washington County Community Solutions Hub (communitysolutionshub.org), a smaller-scale effort for Washington County, MD. Business models for such community-wide data projects vary widely, but many are public/private partnerships. Data collection in these models can be customized to meet specific needs of government, business sectors, or social needs, which spreads costs among the parties who will ultimately benefit.

A sample list of the information that may be available through the finished dashboard:

Economic Data	Public Safety	Social Environment
Housing: • Rental rates • Mortgage rates • Housing units total, value and vacancy	Crime including burglary, theft, robbery and aggravated assault	Household size
Commercial vacancy rates	Emergency services	Data on senior citizens
Workforce demographic data		ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) data, basic cost of living and households financially unstable
Total employment and unemployment rates		Point-in-time homelessness data
Total tourism and per visitor expenditures		Poverty and food insecurity
Per capita income		Well-being of senior citizens
		2-1-1 monthly service calls, top needs and unmet needs

Recommendation: Get the word out about the findings of the Initiative.

What's the issue? If we want to make sure that the Initiative is a success – that the community's needs and concerns are addressed, that everyone who depends on Downtown Frederick is informed and on board, and that we realize our vision of together – then we must have a robust public relations effort to let them know about the Initiative's work, our recommendations, and the opportunities available to join in.

What can be done? The Initiative's website (frederickdssi.org) will be kept up-to-date with the latest materials. Press releases and regular correspondence with press sources will provide visible coverage in the community, and the Committee will manage virtual press and public events as necessary.

What we've done so far

The Committee investigated various data sources that could be included in the dashboard. Some data are easy to identify, extrapolate and display; others are either harder to display or simply not available. Not all data sources are specific to Downtown Frederick; some are relatively contemporaneous while others are annual or biennial.

In terms of public relations, the Initiative's website is up to date, and the Committee is prepared to begin telling this project's story to the public, starting with this publication.



What's next

Identifying a coordinating party (or parties) to spearhead the data project

Identifying a data vendor

Updating the public through the Initiative's website, other electronic materials, press sources, and virtual events

Security and Enforcement Committee

Committee members

Chairperson: Kim Dine
Frederick Police Department, Ret.

Coordinator: Gayon Sampson
The City of Frederick

Lindsey Baker
La Paz

Lt. John Corbett
Frederick Police Department

Jessica Ellis
Frederick County Health Department

Harry George
resident

Kate Layman
Ruppert Properties

Saundra Nickols
attorney, The City of Frederick

Nick Sadler
Sunshine Management

Chad Weddle
Frederick County State's Attorney's Office

Administrative support provided by:
Jen Specht
Ausherman Family Foundation

Danielle Kellizy
The City of Frederick

Our purpose

To address community concerns about crime and the potential for disorder in the Downtown Frederick area, the Security and Enforcement Committee was formed to evaluate existing law enforcement conditions and recommend legislative changes, and to establish a network of private and public security cameras that can be monitored by the Frederick Police system.

Our proposal

Since its inception in 2019, the evaluative work of the Security and Enforcement Committee has focused on:

Assessing and enhancing partnerships that give law enforcement agencies the resources to take more effective, multi-disciplinary approaches

Reducing silos among the entities involved

Recommending possible legislative and operational changes

Applying best practices

Identifying ownership for each action item needed and a way to track progress

These changes, together, aim to create a more holistic approach to addressing the needs of Frederick's most vulnerable residents while managing the central call for safety, security, and quality of life for everyone.

An official project chart will be maintained to account for the following recommendations, including the specific entity for each. However, it should be stated that the overall success of this approach depends upon multiple entities working together. The Committee also expects that The City of Frederick's Director of Housing and Human Services will be heavily involved in marshalling resources and joining like efforts.

Recommendation: Create a robust security camera network that combines government, business, and residential feeds to give law enforcement a complete view of the area.

What's the issue? Community concerns center around drug dealing, loitering, minor assaults, public use of alcohol, public urination, and other petty crime. Residents express concerns about a sense of disorder.

Of course, many factors contribute to the actual occurrence of crime and to the sense that crime might be occurring; one of them is the natural limit on law enforcement's ability to observe all public spaces at all times.

What can be done? A robust, properly-configured network of security cameras will give law enforcement a complete view of the area they can access at any time, providing officers with significant assistance in an investigation and serving as a strong deterrent to crime. We plan to create that network by:

Expanding the current government camera program into more public spaces, government buildings, parking areas, and any public park (including Carroll Creek Linear Park) with repeated nuisance calls and ensuring that the cameras are all on the same platform, and that Frederick Police can access camera feeds via smartphone and through their in-car computer (MDC).

Making strong appeals to business owners to install cameras, sign up on the Frederick Police Department camera registry (giving the Frederick Police a record of the camera's location, should it become relevant), and make their cameras remotely accessible.

Downtown Frederick Partnership could play a significant role in educating business owners, encouraging camera installation and Frederick Police access (either in real-time or after-the-fact), and getting business cameras registered. They could also, potentially, play a role in blanket purchasing, grant funding, or other cost-reduction efforts.

Through its Office of Economic Development, The City of Frederick could also play a critical role in helping to expand this effort, including a possible part in maximizing cost savings.

Reaching out through Neighborhood Advisory Councils (NAC) and other platforms—The City of Frederick's Public Information Officer, Frederick Police Department, the neighborhood-level online network Nextdoor, etc.—to encourage homeowners to install home security systems featuring linked cameras, to register camera locations with the Frederick Police Department, and to either provide Frederick Police with a live link or commit to sending relevant footage of incidents after-the-fact.

Recommendation: Use changes in Frederick Police scheduling and assignments to create a sense of police “omnipresence” without straining personnel numbers (or tipping into “over-presence”).

What's the issue? A key component of public safety is police visibility. We applaud the efforts Frederick Police Department has and is making to increase visibility, which is important not only in Downtown Frederick, but across The City of Frederick. (This report will not address the overall staffing of the Frederick Police Department other than to cite some key facts and note that staffing ratios for any city are a function of many factors.)

Over time, the Downtown Frederick Unit has been increasingly supported by members of other units, which is likely not feasible or beneficial in the long-term. Seeing a large number of officers in the area may give residents a greater sense of safety at first, but before long this “over-presence” will start sending the opposite message – that this is a highly dangerous place to live and visit. (Statistical data shows that Downtown Frederick is not a highly dangerous place.) As such, the effectiveness and efficiency with which the Downtown Frederick Unit personnel are utilized is critical.

The Downtown Frederick Unit works a four/ten schedule—ten hours a day, four days a week. This means that, unless coverage is provided by patrol officers, the Downtown Frederick beat has significantly less (and possibly zero) coverage for three days every week, and also for many hours during the work week when the need for officer visibility may be high.

What can be done? We recommend that coverage for the Downtown Frederick beat be expanded to seven days a week, 10:00 am to midnight, with coverage extending later (to 2:00 am) on Friday and Saturday nights (realizing that the pandemic may require this schedule to be modified as conditions change).

To provide expanded coverage and a sense of omnipresence while using the fewest number of officers at any given time, we suggest that the Downtown Frederick beat can be covered by one or two highly effective officers with a nuanced approach to the “art and science” of foot and bike patrol.

Additional strategies to consider might include:

Assign the Downtown Frederick Unit Lieutenant to geographic ownership of their beat. Geographic accountability shifts the mindset from shift-specific work and allows for 24/7 ownership and responsibility of a beat which fosters teamwork, analysis, problem solving and enhanced ownership.

Stagger the schedule of Downtown Frederick Unit officers so that at least one (or two) officers are working seven days a week, reporting to Patrol Division supervisors when Downtown Frederick Unit supervisors are not on duty; this may include the lieutenant as well. (Downtown Frederick Unit supervisors would maintain their role as overall supervisors, in charge of all performance evaluations, directing officers in terms of Unit strategy, etc.) This would mean a significant culture change for the Frederick Police Department, but is an accepted practice in such situations.

Maximize in-unit supervision by scheduling the sergeant and corporal separately and ensuring that their days off overlap as infrequently as possible.

Ensure that the Patrol Division assigns one officer to the Downtown Frederick Beat on those days when coverage is lacking. Though the Downtown Frederick Unit on its own, with the above approaches, should be extremely effective in providing the sense of police omnipresence that businesses, residents, and The City of Frederick desire, it may still be necessary to buttress these efforts with one officer from Patrol on days where Downtown Frederick Unit coverage is light.

Recommendation: Involve the Frederick County State's Attorney's Office with area issues on a more official, consistent, and hands-on basis.

What's the issue? Currently, Frederick Police Department provides a list of chronic offenders to the State's Attorney (SA) so that they can prioritize cases, perform triage, and ensure repeat offenders work with a single prosecutor, rather than being passed around. However, this is not a regular or officially occurring practice, meaning opportunities for greater coordination, understanding, and effectiveness are being missed. Similarly, the SA has participated in at least one walk-along with Frederick Police to familiarize prosecutors with neighborhood concerns but has not made this a continuing effort.

What can be done? Institutionalizing these two practices will lead to more organized and focused prosecution, greater understanding among prosecutors and judges, and better outcomes for chronic offenders. In particular, we recommend that:

Frederick Police Department provides a list of chronic offenders to the SA every month, as an official practice, allowing the SA to maintain one-on-one relationships between prosecutor and offender - again, avoiding the tendency to "pass around" offenders among prosecutors - so they can provide judges a holistic view of the offender's crimes, behavior, and history with area agencies. With this understanding, the court can address the needs of the offender through social service intervention, rather than solely through prosecution.

The SA continue to participate in Frederick Police "walk-alongs" at least once per quarter, and that a representative of the SA attend Neighborhood Advisory Council meetings at least every other month in the short term, expanding to every month in the long term.

Frederick Police Department creates and institutes a robust Procedural Justice Program, focusing on trust, transparency, giving voice to all parties, and increasing understanding of how behaviors impact the community.

Frederick Police Department refers minor criminal offenses so that respondents may receive necessary support to alter behavioral lifestyles and improve the quality of life for the community.

Recommendation: Continue and expand upon the Frederick County Health Department's partnership with the Frederick Police Department, providing diversion and referral services that may represent better alternatives to arrest or prosecution.

What's the issue? The criminal justice system is often not the best avenue for people experiencing behavioral health issues or an acute crisis. By using a multi-agency, multi-disciplinary approach, we can better focus resources on root causes, free police to engage in other proactive or community efforts, reduce justice system caseloads, and – most importantly – provide effective assistance for the community.

What can be done? Give Frederick Police Department officers greater discretion, and free them to engage in other proactive or community efforts, by empowering them to call on partnerships with community-based, trauma-informed care providers and multidisciplinary response units – such as the newly-created 24/7 Mobile Crisis Response Team (described below). This can mean immediate assistance for behavioral health issues, including on-scene help for a crisis situation. An advanced public health framework could also include connecting respondents with services such as counseling or housing alternatives.

Besides reducing reliance on the formal criminal justice system as well as crime, recidivism, deaths from overdoses, repeat calls to police for service, and the caseload of the State's Attorney, this approach is designed to address root causes and more effectively provide for those in our community who are in need.

With those significant efforts and goals in mind, we recommend:

Continuing collaborative work on the Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion program (or a similar project), designed to better address issues of disorder, minor offenses, health-related issues, and law violations. This can be accomplished by developing alternative, multi-agency, and multi-disciplinary responses that maximize the impact of social services, reduce recidivism, and free up law enforcement to engage in other proactive or community efforts.

Continuing the Health Department's coordinated response to behavioral health needs utilizing peer recovery specialists, in partnership with the Frederick Police Department. (See the Services and Coordination Committee Report below for more details.)

Renewing the Behavioral Health Task Force, a partnership of the Health Department, Frederick Police Department, and behavioral health service providers, which was established to provide more behavioral health services to those in need, address policy issues, provide cross training for both police and care providers, and address individual cases while protecting the privacy rights of residents.

Ensuring that the Frederick Police Department is part of the newly-formed 24/7 Mobile Crisis Response Team, already composed of multiple partners, and has protocols in place to work with them effectively in meeting the needs of respondents.

Recommendation: Elevate and equip the Neighborhood Advisory Council to improve the levels of communication, trust, and togetherness among the Frederick Police Department and the community.

What's the issue? There will always be a gap between perception and data, and it will always be important. Fear of crime and public perception is as real as statistical data—which, in fact, may not illustrate certain concerns, depending on what's being measured.

Frederick Police Department is to be commended for its continued impact on crime, focus on important issues facing Downtown Frederick and across The City of Frederick, and presentation of data regarding crime to City stakeholders. Likewise, our residents deserve great credit for their continued interest and involvement in improving the quality of life for all Frederick residents.

The key to feeling secure in our community—to overcoming the gap between perception and data—is communication and trust. Frederick Police Department and our residents must continue to talk to and with each other, not at each other, to ensure the flow of good information and good will.

While crime statistics may indicate historical low points, anyone could still observe behavior indicative of disorder or crime.

What can be done? The existing NAC infrastructure could make an excellent vehicle for improving communication and trust. With robust NAC member involvement, a synergistic relationship can be established between the Frederick Police Department and the business and residential community, creating a deeper cycle of communication and information flow.

To bring more attention and utility to the NAC in its new role, we recommend that the NAC Coordinator and Public Information Officer positions be separated, to spotlight the NAC Coordinator position and equip it to become an available, interactive community resource. (This recommendation was also provided in the original Community Outreach Committee report commissioned by Mayor Michael O'Connor after his inauguration in 2017.)

It is noted that while the City of Frederick has not separated the positions to date, the position did shift to the city's communications department, and is no longer an FPD designated position. This shift helps provide for more efficient and effective communication and information flow between the NAC program and City staff and community partners. The City's communications department in its entirety assists with FPD outreach, communications and engagement.

What we've done so far

Frederick Police Department and Frederick County Health Department have already partnered to pilot a police ride-along program for peer recovery specialists (see the Services and Coordination Committee Report) and the Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion program, both of which provide alternative, multi-agency, multi-disciplinary responses to minor violations and health-related issues.

Additional security cameras have been installed in Carroll Creek Linear Park between Market Street and Carroll Street, and the Safety in the Parks Ordinance was passed by The City of Frederick to decrease negative behavior. At the same time, Frederick Police Department is working with the Frederick County State's Attorney's Office to develop strategies regarding offenders that deter inappropriate behavior.

What's next

Work with Frederick Police Department to provide more comprehensive coverage for Downtown Frederick through shifts in officer scheduling and authority considerations.

Develop and push for a Procedural Justice Program in Frederick.

Continue and deepen Frederick Police Department's involvement with the community through NAC meetings and other opportunities to share with and hear from Downtown Frederick stakeholders.

Help facilitate Frederick Police Department's partnership with multidisciplinary community partners like the Health Department and the 24/7 Mobile Crisis Response Team.



Services and Coordination Committee



Committee members

Chairperson: Elizabeth Y. Day

The Community Foundation of Frederick County

Co-Lead: Kate Layman

Ruppert Properties

Leslie Barnes-Keating

Frederick County Citizens Services

Suzi Borg

Mental Health Association of Frederick County

Peter Brehm

The Frederick Center

Nick Brown

The Religious Coalition for Emergency Human Needs

Ramenta Cottrell

The City of Frederick, Department of Housing and Human Services

Michelle Day

Frederick County Workforce Services

Sarah Drennan

Frederick County Health Department, Behavioral Health Services

Marlene England

Curious Iguana

Arnold Farlow

Frederick Rescue Mission

Rev. Mark Allen Groover

Asbury United Methodist Church

Beth Heltebride

Frederick County Public Libraries

Ed Hinde

Student Homelessness Initiative Partnership (SHIP) of Frederick County

Janet Jones

The City of Frederick, Department of Housing and Human Services

Robert Jones

South End Coalition

Lacy Kimble

On Our Own of Frederick County

Angie Liddiard

The Housing Authority of The City of Frederick

Dale Naugle

The Religious Coalition for Emergency Human Needs

Eric Nicholson

resident, Neighborhood Advisory Council 11 Coordinator

Lt. Chris Raymer

The Salvation Army

Kelly Russell

Alderman, The City of Frederick

Gayon Sampson

The City of Frederick

Lori Schroyer-Wells

Way Station

Capt. Dwight Sommers

Frederick Police Department

Alexander Twine

The Religious Coalition for Emergency Human Needs

Dr. Gerald Winnan

Frederick Health

Administrative support provided by:

Jen Specht

Ausberman Family Foundation

Danielle Kellizy

The City of Frederick

With input from individuals participating in programs of the Religious Coalition for Emergency Human Needs and the Department of Housing and Human Services.

Our purpose

The Services and Coordination Committee's assignment was to:

Analyze human services already being provided, how the programs involved are being coordinated, and what the needs of the population are, and then

Investigate options for providing the right set of services and making them easier to access.

Our proposal

The Committee's recommendations are based upon best practices, service delivery ideas, and research commissioned by The City of Frederick. It will be up to those with relevant expertise – government agencies, local philanthropies, service providers, community leaders – to decide which programs will be put into action. The Committee worked under the assumption that all services will be maintained at the same level once the COVID crisis is behind us.

Because all persons have the right and privilege to experience Downtown Frederick and Carroll Creek Linear Park, recommendations focus on behaviors and not on individuals.

The Committee identified three populations who may be in need of services or outreach: youth; individuals experiencing homelessness; and persons with behavioral issues (such as substance use disorder or mental health disorders). We recognize that these populations may overlap, and that not all youth congregating Downtown Frederick need services.

Recommendation: Provide alternative venues and care services for youth to make sure they have options for socializing and recreation that are safe, and support that's easy to access.

What is the issue? Youth (generally those ages 13-19) tend to gather in groups and talk loudly (or yell outright), which can be perceived as intimidating and unwelcome. Skateboarding, especially in groups, also generates excess noise and can be dangerous for pedestrians. These behaviors contribute to the perception of juvenile crime as a significant problem, though the reality is that juvenile crime in Downtown Frederick is rare.

With nice weather, the emergence of COVID pushing people outdoors, changes in youth culture, and a shortage of places designed to give them a place to socialize and "belong," young people will continue to seek community along Carroll Creek Linear Park. In addition, young people who are dealing with homelessness may not have anywhere else to go.

What can be done? We can provide youth more places to gather, more freedom to ride safely, and more support through:

New facilities and physical improvements:

A Downtown Frederick youth center where young people feel safe dropping in anytime, designed to be culturally competent, foster love and belonging, and make sure visitors have what they need to thrive.

A crisis house for youth who need a safe space to get away from issues in their homes (or elsewhere) and to stabilize.

A youth shelter for minors (ages 18 and under) who are experiencing homelessness – one that is nonjudgmental, has a low barrier to entry, and offers easy access to services. (Local nonprofit Steadfast may be able to operate this program.)

Improvements to Chief Kim C. Dine Skate Park or additional sanctioned areas for skateboarders, skaters, and cyclists that are free, well lit, and open 24/7 for maximum safety and accessibility, with more signs and increased advertising to make them well-known and easy to find.

A bike lane on Market and Patrick Streets to make it safer for skateboarders, skaters, and cyclists.

New and enhanced programs:

A food bank for youth who would not otherwise qualify for assistance, with the goal of continuous, long-term operation (through the pandemic and beyond); include a place where youth can cook for themselves, with training and tools.

Focused events that involve youth in positive activities.

An analysis of current transportation offerings and, if necessary, revising them to ensure people can access services outside of the Downtown Frederick area.

Service coordination, outreach, and access improvements:

Assisting youth in locating services, and ensuring that services are easy to access.

Supporting and expanding the Juvenile Early Diversion Initiative (JEDI).

Creating a public outreach campaign regarding youth along with individuals who are experiencing homelessness and individuals with behavioral health issues.

Recruiting and training peer counselors to conduct outreach for youth experiencing behavioral health issues.

Partnering with existing youth resources to bring their programming and activities to the Downtown Frederick area.

Recommendation: Expand housing and rehousing support, job-finding services, and outreach efforts to help people experiencing homelessness.

What is the issue? People who need services in the areas of basic human needs—food, shelter, clothing, jobs—frequently make use of Downtown Frederick and Carroll Creek Linear Park. Their presence, and at times their behavior, can be alarming or misunderstood by visitors and residents. More pressingly, it indicates a larger community problem, and an opportunity to help solve it: without the right resources, or a way to access them, people experiencing homelessness have few ways to pass the day or take steps toward a better situation—especially since the start of the pandemic, which forced the C. Burr Artz Library to close.

Gaps in services and barriers to access are likely adding to the issue of area homelessness; with better housing and employment services, far fewer people will need to be without homes. However, it must be noted that people have the right to decline help, that public spaces are for everyone, and that homelessness is unlikely to go away entirely.

What can be done? We can provide people experiencing homelessness more options for connecting, recovering, and improving their circumstances through:

New facilities and physical improvements:

Access to computers outside of The Salvation Army Day Center, where people can physically reach them, to support job-finding efforts.

New and enhanced programs:

Expanding rapid rehousing, permanent supportive housing, and homelessness prevention programs, which should also include case management.

Increasing services offered at The Salvation Army Day Center, including access to designated computers and other job-finding services.

Service coordination, outreach, and access improvements:

Recruiting and training peer mentors so they can join caseworkers to canvas the area and provide “come alongside” support for persons experiencing homelessness; coordinate efforts with the Ambassador Program (see Ambassador Committee report).

Aligning services to make it simple for people to find wrap-around help – establishing a whole-person, “no wrong door” approach, universal navigation assistance, and coordinated access.

Encouraging participation by finding ways to showcase programs, and shed light on their benefits, in an accessible and casual way.

Service coordination, outreach, and access improvements (continued):

Expanding targeted outreach in preparation for cold weather by building connections among people, The Salvation Army Day Shelter, and The Alan P. Linton, Jr. Emergency Shelter, emphasizing their welcoming environment and their core commitment to empowering individuals.

Offering education for the general community centered on overcoming bias and ways they can help.

Analyzing current transportation offerings and, if necessary, revising them to ensure people can access services outside of the Downtown Frederick area.

Recommendation: Provide people experiencing behavioral health issues with better and more accessible solutions for helping themselves and finding relief.

What is the issue? When present in the Downtown Frederick and Carroll Creek Linear Park area, persons exhibiting symptoms of behavioral health issues (such as substance use or mental health disorders) can be disruptive and, at times, a risk to themselves, visitors, and residents of Downtown Frederick and the Park area.

Unfortunately, behavioral health service providers are suffering from a high number of staffing vacancies, resulting in limited capacity. In addition, there is no 24/7 behavioral health response unit at present to provide on-demand, on-site services. At the same time, some people may choose not to engage in behavioral health services, while others may find that the services offered don't help eliminate their symptoms.

What can be done? We can provide people experiencing behavioral health issues with better solutions for helping themselves and finding relief through:

New facilities and physical improvements:

Addressing the recommendations included in the upcoming study from The City of Frederick, Department of Housing and Human Services, set to be completed in the summer of 2021.

New and enhanced programs:

Implementing education opportunities for service providers, residents, and businesses to build their understanding and ability to help; recommended topics include Mental Health First Aid, honoring the stages of change, trauma-informed care practices, overdose response training, stigma and language, and where to go for help.

Training to shore up the ability of peers to understand, be comfortable with, and assist those with co-occurring disorders (two or more conditions occurring simultaneously).

Supporting and expanding Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) and the Juvenile Early Diversion Initiative (JEDI) as critical elements in the continuum of care.

New and enhanced programs (continued):

Supporting the work of the Local Behavioral Health Authority and its key partners, such as law enforcement, first responders, and behavioral health providers, to continue developing the following services. Providing these services on-demand will help preserve hospital-level services for those who require that level of care.

Community Outreach and Support Team (COAST) and Mobile Crisis Services into 24/7 services
an accessible, culturally responsive, 24/7 system of care to address behavioral health needs
expanded support services: more safe, stable, affordable housing (including Permanent Supportive Housing) and residential crisis beds; crisis stabilization services (including withdrawal management); and more staff, volunteers, and ambassadors on the ground and trained to help (including more peer mentors for youth)

Service coordination, outreach, and access improvements:

Supporting ongoing collaboration among the range of service providers and volunteers conducting outreach and referrals, and consider whether more formal collaboration would be helpful.

Identifying barriers to providing support for individuals who are:

experiencing symptoms of chronic and persistent mental illness,
and/or engaging in active substance use

in need of housing

needing to quarantine or isolate due to COVID exposure or a positive COVID diagnosis

Analyzing current transportation offerings and, if necessary, revising them to ensure people can access services outside of the Downtown Frederick area.



What we've done so far

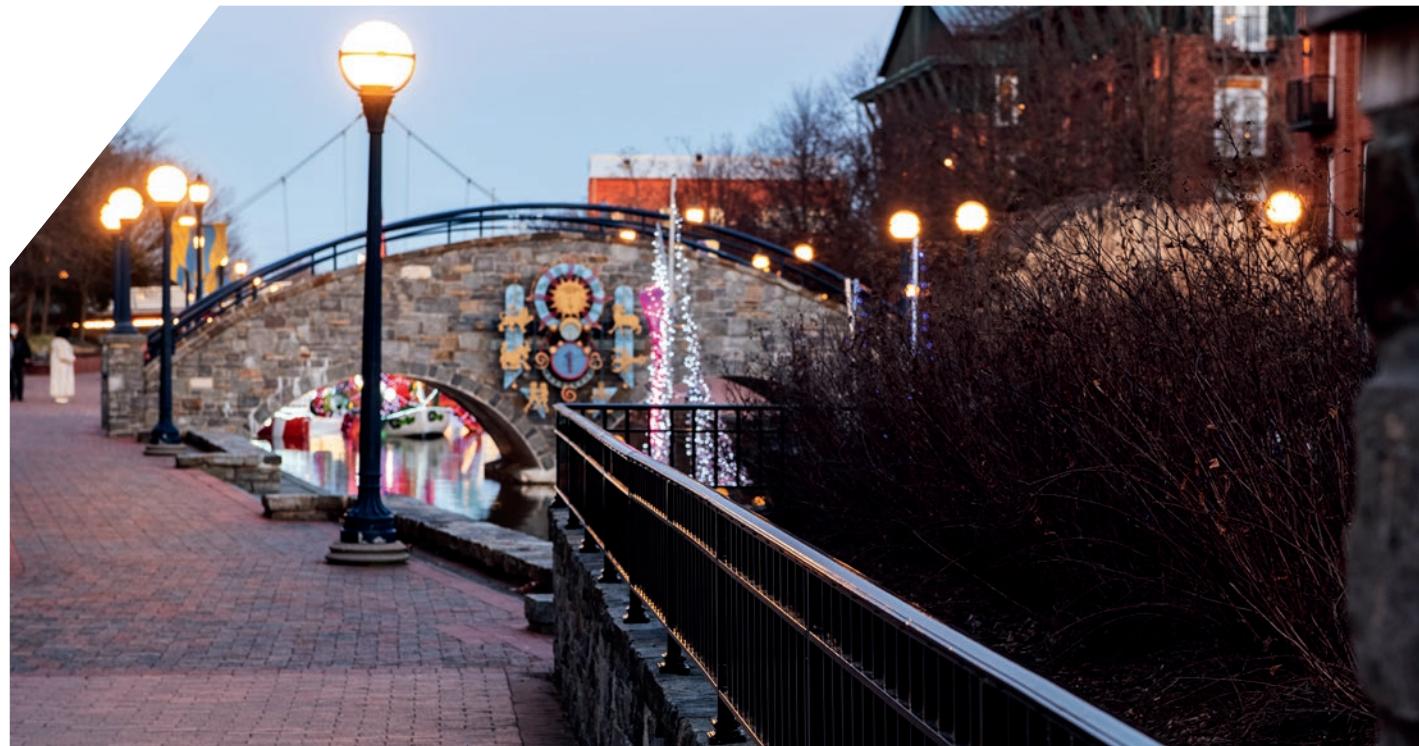
The Day Center for people experiencing homelessness launched in January 2020 at Frederick Rescue Mission, operated by The Salvation Army and Frederick Rescue Mission, with three years of funding supplied by AFF, The Community Foundation of Frederick County, and the Community Foundation's Mark and Susan Butt Saturday Mornings Fund. The Day Center gives people a place to escape the elements and access case management, health services, and other critical programs through partners including The Religious Coalition for Emergency Human Needs and The City of Frederick Department of Housing and Human Services. During the pandemic, the Day Center closed for a number of months, then reopened at Grace United Church of Christ.

Following a successful pilot program, a peer-support program called the Community Outreach and Support Team (COAST) was launched to help people experiencing a behavioral health emergency. A collaborative effort of Frederick County Health Department's Behavioral Health Services division, Frederick Police Department, and Frederick County Division of Fire and Rescue Services, COAST equips peer support specialists to provide on-scene assistance in the case of a crisis such as an overdose or a behavioral health episode.

What's next

The City of Frederick's Department of Housing and Human Services will complete a study of its services in Summer 2021. Some of the study's results may be helpful in addressing the human service needs of the Downtown Frederick area.

These recommendations will be presented to elected officials, funders, service providers, and community leaders to encourage them to become involved in the solutions presented herein.





Part Three: Conclusion

This publication is a roadmap.

This publication shows, again, that the Frederick community knows how to bring our voices and our talents together for a common cause. It shows us what can be envisioned and put into action with the full community working together.

This publication also shows that there is work to be done, and that it will take the full community to do it.

If you are reading this, we know you are someone who cares about Downtown Frederick. That means no one can do more to help this effort than you.

So please: Check the roadmap. Choose your route.

If you feel you can contribute in any form, please reach out. There's fundraising to do, project committees to form, service providers to volunteer with, and much more.

Our City of Frederick is a special place because we work to keep it that way. As that work goes on, we are excited to see how each of us—especially those who care for Downtown—support the work that makes it ever more warm, welcoming, and vibrant.