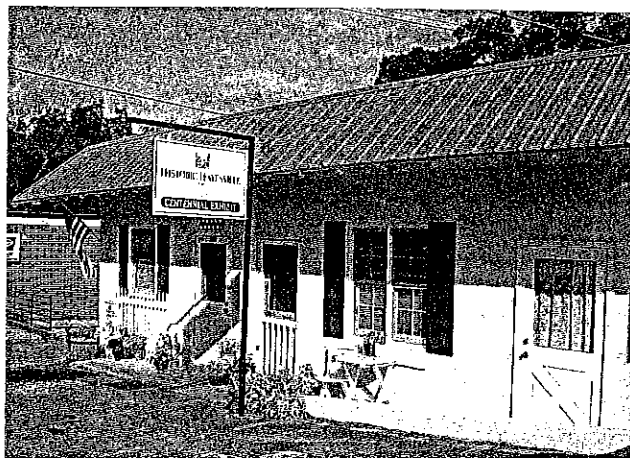


Small Town Main Street volunteers work on the Shop Small Shop Local campaign.



STMS/HHI Office and Centennial Exhibit on Sanderson Street next to Hayesville Post Office.



Hayesville Celebrates 10 Years in Small Town Main Street Program

BY SANDY ZIMMERMAN, CHAIRPERSON, SMALL TOWN MAIN STREET/HISTORIC HAYESVILLE, INC.

Shortly after the Town of Hayesville's Centennial celebration in 2013, a group of volunteers continued to work with a focus on having organizations partner together to restore, revitalize and promote the historic downtown area. The group had successfully worked together in 2013 to establish the Centennial Exhibit and office on Sanderson Street in downtown Hayesville, which continues to be maintained completely by volunteers today.

The group submitted application to be designated as a North Carolina Small Town Main Street community. Volunteers representing at least ten community organizations participated in the first meeting in August 2013 for Hayesville to become eligible for grants related to the downtown area. Meetings were held each month for two years, with guidance from Sherry Adams from NC Department of Commerce, to focus on the National Main Street Center's Four Point Approach, including organization, promotion, design, and economic vitality, and implementation for downtown Hayesville.

The town was approved as a Main Street America Affiliate after completing organization guidance and procedures in 2016, with the program continuing annually with ties to the National Trust for Historical Preservation. Recruiting new businesses to fill vacant buildings in Hayesville has been a collaborative focus by Small Town Main Street and local partners ever since. Committees were formed under the Four Point Approach with each group having one or two projects in motion at all times.

Economic Vitality activities are designed to continue recruiting new businesses and promoting existing locations in the Shop Small Shop Local campaign or other advertising. Partnerships are maintained with organizations to participate in festivals, outdoor recreation, and cultural and historical events to support the local economy. Promotion strategies

include an active website linking to all businesses, organizations or events that identify downtown as the center for history, culture, arts and services as attractions. The website also promotes special offerings from businesses and activities with links to each feature.

Downtown Hayesville maps are produced by both the Promotions and Design groups to show locations to dine, shop or play. The Design committee partners with the Town of Hayesville, Master Gardeners and other organizations for downtown beautification, business banners and other items to showcase a village setting.

Historic Hayesville Inc. (HHI) was also formed in 2016 as the required 501c3 nonprofit and administrator of Hayesville's Small Town Main Street (STMS) program. HHI took on responsibilities for the STMS Mission Statement to preserve and promote the town square, foster economic activity, and facilitate opportunities to apply for grants. One of those opportunities through Main Street included an application for \$200,000 to assist with bringing a new restaurant to downtown Hayesville. The approved funds were provided to assist rehabilitation of the 1950s Ford dealership building into Nocturnal Brewing Company located close to Main Street and the center of downtown.

Additional opportunities followed and HHI has maintained partnerships with Clay County Historical & Arts Council (CCHAC), Clay County Communities Revitalization Association (CCCRA) and Clay County Chamber of Commerce for additional projects to attract businesses, residents or visitors to downtown Hayesville.

HHI fundraisers, including the annual Trash to Treasure sale, ongoing Barn Quilt production, and Steins & Wine event in

October, have provided donations to assist CCCRA with finishing the Historic Clay County Courthouse Beal Center, in addition to helping CCHAC finish improvements to the Old Jail Museum. An additional grant was obtained by the Town of Hayesville to partner with HHI for new recycle bins designed and produced locally to be placed inside and around the Square.

The most recent project completed by HHI is the rehabilitation of the 1930s Old Town Hall as a small classroom for historical and cultural studies, located a short distance from Hayesville Schools on CCHAC property below the Cherokee Homestead maintained by CCCRA.

The HHI Board of Directors continue to partner with at least eight additional organizations, along with businesses who support STMS/HHI downtown improvements. With a population of just over 400 residents within the town limits, Hayesville is the smallest town represented in the NC program and has received recognition for its partnerships to complete projects, job creation, and public or private investment for rehabilitation or expansion construction.

A 10 Year Anniversary for the Hayesville Small Town Main Street designation has been a focus during 2023 and will continue with appreciation for volunteers, supporting businesses and additional community involvement. Visit www.historichayesvilleinc.com for more program details, project updates, and opportunities to assist with STMS/HHI projects.

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