



## VISION/MISSION/GOALS

## MAIN STREET

# IMPACT REPORT

### VISION & MISSION 2023-28

Nestled between the Great Smoky Mountains and the Blue Ridge Parkway, Sylva, NC is the heart of a renewed Appalachian culture blending our rich mountain heritage with our outdoor recreational resources and embracing our independent businesses. Downtown is the host for quality experiences for everyone to visit and call home.

### WHY DOWNTOWN?

Downtown Sylva is the preferred destination for visitors and locals alike to gather with friends outside of work and home because it emphasizes a sense of place and community identity.

Historic downtowns are the center for small businesses to grow and prosper. The goal is for it to thrive as the center for business development. While General Business Districts support the town's economy as a whole, the Downtown Business District drives it.

blocks	<b>6</b>
parcels	<b>67</b>
parcel owners	<b>34</b>
public parking spots	<b>664</b>
1st floor storefronts	<b>55</b>
residential units	<b>31</b>
lodging units	<b>37</b>
restaurants	<b>17</b>
retail	<b>32</b>
vacancy rate	<b>1.8</b>
property value increase	<b>30%</b>



# INVESTMENT STATS

2023-2024

**PUBLIC**

**\$882,682**

**PRIVATE**

**\$1,334,573**

**13** FACADE IMPROVEMENTS

**23** BUILDING IMPROVEMENTS

**6** NET NEW BUSINESSES

**11** NET GAIN JOBS

## VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

**\$25K** VOLUNTEER VALUE

**720** VOLUNTEER HOURS

Lisa Kelly is one of the busiest merchants in Sylva, has 4 kids and 2 grand-kids, and somehow manages to volunteer her time at multiple events, serves as the event coordinator for the Town's signature festival AND says "yes" 99% of the time when asked. She has served on the board on and off for the past decade and is now our incoming President.

### FORAGER'S CANTEEN

Formerly, a defunct brewery, local developers purchased and rehabbed this building to house Forager's Canteen. Relocated from Dillsboro to Sylva, this property is now a bustling creekside restaurant and bar.



### DOWNTOWN DEPOT

Decades in the making, this "Depot" serves as a public restroom and park plaza connecting the town's event center with Main Street. The facility was sustainably designed with historic elements from the 2 previous depots. It is located at the original center of Sylva's octagon-shaped town limits and houses a visitor kiosk and picnic tables.



### SYLVA SUPPLY MURAL

This historic mural was restored with careful attention to detail on the same ghost footprint of its original to preserve the porous brick and mortar. Multiple community members were involved to find original photos and fund this long-term envisioned project.



# COMMUNITY

PROFILE - 2025

POPULATION  
**2,583**

HOUSEHOLDS  
**1,043**

MEDIAN HH INCOME  
**\$41,926**

MEDIAN AGE  
**30 YEARS**

Even with Sylva's small size, the town's key industry is tourism with over 1 million visitors to Jackson County each year.

## DOWNTOWN DRIVE TIME MARKETS

	5 MIN	10 MIN	20 MIN
POPULATION	2,583	4,492	14,000
HOUSEHOLDS	1,048	2,048	2,500
MEDIAN INCOME	\$41,926	\$41,228	\$33,704



## HELPING BUSINESSES THRIVE

- facade grants
- design services
- funding/tax credits
- business resources

We are so thankful for our partners, North Carolina Main Street, Jackson County Chamber, Small Business Center at SCC, WCU, Southwestern Commission, Mountain West Partnership, Mountain Bizworks and so many others who provide support to our businesses and property owners.

# ECONOMIC DEV. STRATEGY HIGHLIGHTS

- Created a Business Retention and Appreciation event for over 200 businesses in collaboration with County Economic Development, the Small Business Center and Jackson County Chamber of Commerce.
- Engaged with partners to conduct studies for a co-working space and a tiny home development.
- Participated in a cohort to create an outdoor economy plan designed to enhance the town and county's outdoor assets, including the development of a skate park, pedestrian and bicycle path connectivity.
- Engaged as a Blue Ridge Parkway gateway community, leveraging strategies and funding to better leverage the town's proximity to attract visitors to downtown.
- Strategize with the county on Hwy 107 pre-development

## PROMOTING DOWNTOWN

Our Chamber and TDA do a great job bringing tourists to Sylva businesses by promoting downtown. We appreciate all of our partners who help organize events, along with the diverse organizations who also host attractive events downtown.

- Friends Night Out
- Greening Up the Mtns. Festival
- Concerts on the Creek (15)
- 4th of July Celebration
- Mountain West Brewfest
- Treat Street
- WCU Homecoming Parade
- Walk for Hope
- Tree Lighting/Fireworks
- WNC Pottery Festival
- Back to School Event
- Christmas Parade
- Weekly Farmer's Mkts.
- CycleNC Mountain Ride



"During the past eight years owning a Brewpub in downtown Sylva, I realized pretty quickly that you have to get involved to drive traffic to your business. The TDA, events and seasonal tourism attract people downtown, but what we as merchants do to help with that process, and convert them to customers makes a huge difference in our ability to grow."

- Laurie Bryson, Promotions Chair

## DESIGNATIONS

- National Register of Historic Places
- Tree City Community
- Most Photographed Courthouse in NC
- Trout City Designation



**NORTH CAROLINA  
MAIN STREET**

NC Main Street is a Main Street America™ Coordinating Program. As a Main Street America™ Coordinating Program, NC Main Street helps to lead a powerful, grassroots network consisting of over 40 Coordinating Programs and over 1,600 neighborhoods and communities across the country committed to creating high-quality places and to building stronger communities through preservation-based economic development.



# THE IMPACT OF MAIN STREET

2024-25

IN OUR COMMUNITIES

## THE RESULTS ARE IN...

Each year in July, North Carolina Main Street communities report the impact of their work to the North Carolina Department of Commerce. Main Street is the most impactful downtown economic development program in the state of North Carolina.

### PUBLIC/PRIVATE INVESTMENT

**\$6.1B** 1980-2025  
**\$518M** 2024-2025

### NET NEW BUSINESSES

**8,518** 1980-2025  
**288** 2024-2025

### NET NEW JOBS

**37,530** 1980-2025  
**1,925** 2024-2025

### BUILDING IMPROVEMENTS

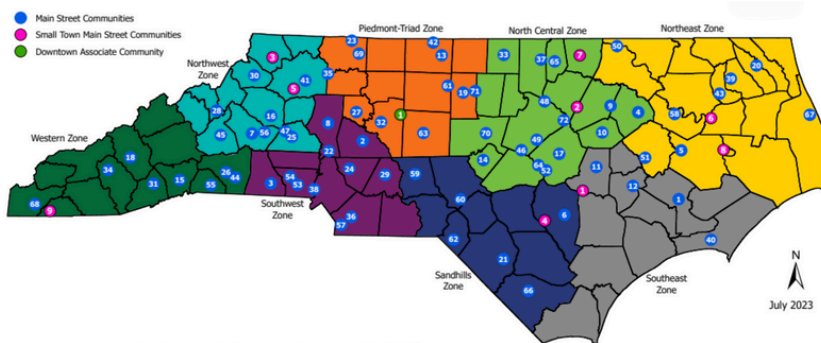
**8,419** 1980-2025  
**293** 2024-2025

### FACADE IMPROVEMENTS

**9,440** 1980-2025  
**364** 2024-2025

### VOLUNTEER HOURS

**127,805** 2024-2025  
**\$4.2M** Time Value



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NC MAIN STREET**

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**LEARN ABOUT OUR  
MAIN-TO-MAIN TRAIL**

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