



Board Meeting

Town Council Chambers

March 11th, 2021 @ 5:15 p.m.

A G E N D A

1. Welcome/Call to Order
2. Approval of Consent Agenda
 - Meeting Minutes – *February 11th, 2021*
 - Monthly Financials
 - Committee Reports (*if included*)
 - Main Street Coordinator's Monthly Report
3. Main Street Coordinator Updates
 - Boundary Expansion
 - Distrx Mobile App
 - Downtown Investment Grant – Application
 - Façade Loan Program Modification
4. Old Business
 - Bylaws Modification – Executive Director Role
5. New Business
 - Donation Campaigns
 - USDA Rural Business Development Grant
 - Website Redesign Proposal
6. AEDA Steering Committee Update
 - Robert Pate – AOT Representative to Steering Committee
7. Work Session
 - FY21-22 Work Plan Development
8. Adjournment

Next meeting: April 8th, 2021 @ 5:15 PM



February 11, 2021 Board Meeting in Town Council Chambers

Attendees: Ed Soto, Regina Adams, Dr. Scott Lowman, Robert Pate, Melinda Saunders, Yolanda Stone
(telephonic attendance)

Town of Altavista Employees: Sharon Williams, George Sandridge

Stand-In Secretary: Melinda Saunders

1. **Welcome/Call to Order @ 5:18pm** by Ed Soto
2. **Approval of Consent Agenda**
 - Meeting Minutes from January 14, 2021
 - Motion: Regina Adams; Second: Robert Pate → APPROVED
 - Committee Reports
 - Economic Vitality Report (Ed Soto)
 - One application was received for the AOT Downtown Business Investment Grant from Mr. Perkins re: his interest in starting a hair salon/barber shop/retail space at 600 Broad Street. Mr. Perkins, his business partner and a current employee were in attendance to provide insight & participate in a Board Q/A session with technicalities discussed re: Campbell County building permits, zoning permits, business license, etc. The County requires a signed lease in order for a building permit to be issued.
 - BACKGROUND: Mr. Perkins has been in the barber/hair arena for 30+ years, originally from DC and subsequently relocating to Lynchburg where he established/managed two salons; currently has a salon in Rocky Mount (6+ years) and will be closing his establishment at SML (8+ years) when relocating to Altavista. He anticipates 5-6 employees in addition to offering an apprenticeship program; not anticipating transfer of SML clientele to Altavista, has current, local, already-established clients and will also offer new talent, to include: braids, nails, lash care, makeup, barber shoppe, apparel, etc.
 - In lieu of no further questions/pending resolutions, George moved to accept Mr. Perkin's Downtown Business Investment Grant.
 - Motion: Dr. Scott Lowman; Second: Regina Adams → APPROVED
 - Treasurer's Financial Update (George Sandridge)
 - January Financial Documents included
 - Eleanor Hoehne has submitted her resignation; appreciate her time & dedication to AOT
 - Motion to accept: Robert Pate; Second: Dr. Scott Lowman → APPROVED
 - Recommendation from Ed Soto to appoint a new Treasurer ASAP; aim to coordinate congruent PUBLIX accounting software training with George & Treasurer
 - Yolanda Stone nominated /accepted to serve as Treasurer, effective immediately
 - Motion: Regina Adams; Second: Robert Pate → APPROVED
 - Steering Committee Update (Robert Pate)
 - Focusing initiatives on ways to recruit AND retain new businesses, including:
 - Rental subsidy (\$5k MAX per entity with \$30K budget)
 - Sign Grant (50/50 match with \$2500 budget)
 - What are the parameters, restrictions, limits? What type(s) of signs?
 - Design Grant (50/50 match with \$5k budget)
 - Façade Grant (not a loan – to be discussed, see #5)
 - Proposed total budget of \$67,500

3. **Community Coordinator Updates** (George Sandridge)

- AOT Boundary Expansion → currently on hold
- Art on Main
 - George has met with/initiated telephonic contact with multiple, vacant-building property owners and begun to obtain window measurements (additional measurements to be obtained on Pittsylvania Avenue)
 - Currently have 4-Confirmed spaces, 2-PENDING owner responses
 - Multiple active-property owners have also been contacted re: utilization of their vacant window-space
- Vista Theatre Façade Rendering
 - This initial rendering/proposal has been approved (sketch and visual drafts reviewed)
- Ongoing Vacant Building Promotion Efforts
 - Discussed possibility of creating a vacant building database – readily available and accessible to the public/interested parties
 - Such as: Building photos (interior/exterior), square footage of each available site, average lease/utility expenses, property owner contact information, minimum lease requirements, etc.
 - Great way to also advertise the available space – centralized, efficient, easily accessible information – must be maintained & kept up to date
 - George to begin compiling a database & update further @ AOT March 2021 meeting

4. **Old Business**

- Downtown Investment Grant – (Please refer to previously noted comments under Committee Report)
- AOT recruitment update
 - Regina Adams has contacted April Morris (First National Bank) who is interested/considering
 - All members are encouraged to continue to consider potential community candidates

5. **New Business** (George Sandridge)

- AOT Work Plan Review (operated on a July-June fiscal year)
 - George is moving forward with the application for the Pop-Up Program
 - By March meeting, wish to schedule our AOT fiscal 2021-2022 work planning meetings with Committees and Zachary Whitlow (conducted via Zoom, typically < 1 hour duration)
 - AOT & Town Council will NOT have a February work session, will defer until approximately May 2021, closer to the end of the fiscal year in order to ensure goals are accurately reflected
- By-laws Modification ~ Executive Director Role (George Sandridge)
 - Main Street Coordinator has historically been considered the Executive Director of AOT, but this practice is not outlined/confirmed in current by-laws. Reviewed the first reading of proposed AOT By-law amendment to be further discussed and voted upon at AOT March meeting
 - Proposal → Clarify/outline dual role of Main Street Coordinator and AOT Executive Director
- Distrix Mobile App
 - An Apple/Android intuitive app which can be customized to promote local businesses, activities and events; appealing to multi-age generations providing immediate district/business access and promotion.
 - May also add customized features such as walking tours, push-notifications when a subscriber is in the district, etc. but may incur additional fees
 - Cost → Free for National Main Street Communities
 - Board consensus obtained for George to proceed with app development
- Façade Loan Program Modification
 - Recommend modification to a GRANT (\$50k) to incentivize more businesses to take advantage
 - Would NOT include interior renovations/updates as per current regulations
 - Concern over businesses seeking to enhance their current facades will be taxed additionally at a higher rate for the improvements made; promotes property owner reluctance
 - Unknown whom prior loan recipients have been

- George to research/update prior to a vote @ March 2021 AOT meeting
- DRO Material Limitations (Sharon Williams)
 - DRO is looking at the current restrictions outlining the types of building materials which can be used; consideration is being given to restructuring current restrictions in order to promote individualistic creativity and property improvements.
 - Currently SIGNS are limited to three-signs total, maximum all signs 60' with a single sign of no more than 30'
 - Currently there is NOT a Historical District, meaning there are no additional restrictions
 - Consideration to be given to how the current restrictions may impact the Shared Work-Space
 - Any modifications will also require Planning Committee evaluation/approval
 - Board consensus was given and AOT feedback provided to Sharon re: support for review of current restrictions

6. ADJOURNMENT→ by Ed Soto @ 6:28pm

- The next AOT Meeting is slated for Thursday, March 11, 2021 @ 5:15pm in Town Council Chambers



Main Street Coordinator February 2021 Monthly Report

Businesses Visited/Contacted

- Blum Skincare
- Cyclin' Nutz
- Danny's Village Barber Shop
- Edward Jones Investments
- English Auto
- First National Bank
- General Store & Inn
- KB Bookkeeping
- Kent & Kent Law Firm
- Linda's Barber & Beauty Shop
- Main Street Café
- Main Street Shoppes
- Rountrey Hardware
- Scoops
- SPT Salon
- Steve's Florist
- Styling Boutique
- The Portrait Place
- Vista Fitness
- Vital Edge Nutrition

AOT Activities

- Accounting Software: The Main Street Coordinator met with staff from Publiq Accounting to begin the onboarding process for the new accounting software. The conversion from the current QuickBooks software to the new Publiq software will take approximately 3-4 weeks.
- Boundary Expansion: DHCD staff notified the Main Street Coordinator of its approval of the recent boundary expansion request. However, before an official approval letter is drafted, VMS requested that AOT develop a new work plan that builds consensus and identifies worthwhile projects and initiatives that align with the local Main Street organization's mission and Transformation Strategies. AOT will be developing a work plan for FY21-22 at the March 11th board meeting.
- Budget Review: The Main Street Coordinator met with the AOT Board President on February 12th to discuss the proposed FY21-22 budget for AOT. A draft copy of the budget will be provided at the March 11th AOT meeting.
- Distrx App: Development on AOT's new app continued to be a priority. The MSC sent information regarding the app's capabilities to business owners in the AOT district. Full release of the app is expected by the end of March.
- Donation Software: The MSC met with Michael Hudson, Executive Director at Avoca Museum, to discuss donation campaigns. Mr. Hudson provided information on the process Avoca uses to request donations, including letters and emails. A donation page was established on AOT's website, and an active donation campaign will be discussed at the March 11th Board meeting.
- Downtown Business Investment Grant: At the February 11th meeting, the AOT Board of Directors voted to provide DBIG funding to Mr. Bryan Perkins to open a hair/nail salon at 600 Broad Street.

Mr. Perkins currently operates salons in Rocky Mount and the Timberlake area of Lynchburg. Information was also provided regarding the Façade Loan Program and the Altavista Revolving Loan Fund.

- Downtown Investment Grant: At the February 11th board meeting, the AOT Board of Directors voted to allow the MSC to apply for DIG funding to assist with AOT's Downtown Business Investment Grant (DBIG). As a reminder, the DBIG provides a \$3,000 grant to new business owners in the AOT district that covers three months of rent and utilities (water, sewer, gas, and electric). DIG funding from DHCD will allow AOT to provide additional funding to new businesses in the downtown district.
- Liberty University Internships: The MSC met with the Community Development Director and Brian Hastoglis, Employer Relations Coordinator with Liberty University, to discuss the possible utilization of interns for downtown businesses. Several businesses have stated that they do not have the time and/or expertise to develop a website and social media platforms to market themselves during the COVID-19 pandemic. Mr. Hastoglis stated that departments at Liberty, specifically undergraduate, were constantly guiding students towards internships in the surrounding areas, both paid and unpaid types. He informed us that finding qualified interns would not be an issue. Depending on need, the MSC will contact additional universities in the area (Randolph College, University of Lynchburg, Sweet Briar College, and CVCC) to inquire about intern services.

Town Activities

- Art on Main: The MSC continued to contact vacant property owners in the downtown district requesting permission to participate in the upcoming Art on Main program. As of March 1st, three business have given their approval, one has declined, and five have not been reached.
- Spark Innovation Center – Construction: The Town Manager, Assistant Town Manager, Community Development Director, and Main Street Coordinator met with staff from Hurt & Proffitt to continue discussions on the co-working space.

Town Social Media Activities

- **Page Likes:** 1,955 (+31 during February)
- **Page Followers:** 2,094 (+32 during February)
- **Post Reach:** 6,309 (+17% compared to January)
- **Total Posts:** 16 posts
- **Most Popular Post:** Hiring of New Main Street Coordinator (February 2nd) – 4,120 reached

AOT Social Media Activities

- **Page Likes:** 1,659 (+10 during February)
- **Page Followers:** 1,760 (+10 during February)
- **Post Reach:** 1,069 (+59% compared to January)
- **Total Posts:** 4 posts
- **Most Popular Post:** Hiring of New Main Street Coordinator (February 2nd) – 983 reached



Agenda Cover Sheet
AOT Board Meeting
March 11th, 2021

Agenda Location

Main Street Coordinator Updates

Description

Zachary Whitlow, Community Revitalization Specialist at DHCD, notified the Main Street Coordinator on February 26th that AOT's revised boundary amendment application was reviewed, and the proposed extension will, ultimately, be approved by VMS / DHCD. However, prior to drafting an official approval letter, recognizing the program's new boundaries, VMS strongly encourages AOT to develop a new work plan that builds consensus and identifies worthwhile projects and initiatives that align with the local Main Street organization's mission and Transformation Strategies (TS). Once finalized, a copy shall be shown to and reviewed by VMS.

Potential Actions

None. For informational purposes only.

Attachments

None.



Agenda Cover Sheet
AOT Board Meeting
March 11th, 2021

Agenda Location

Main Street Coordinator Updates

Description

The Main Street Coordinator participated in an online webinar on January 28th with program managers from other Virginia Main Street localities. The Executive Director of the Danville River District Association, Diana Schwartz, discussed how her district was utilizing an app called “Distrx” to promote downtown businesses and events. Danville staff provided the MSC contact information for staff at Distrx, who assisted in getting the app set up and ready to go. The app is free for National Main Street communities, and offers information on businesses, restaurants, landmarks, parks, etc. The locality also has the ability to offer a walking tour for an additional cost.

Information is currently being sent to businesses in the AOT district. This informational sheet provides them the information needed to add themselves to the app. The Main Street Coordinator is available to answer questions from interested businesses.

Potential Actions

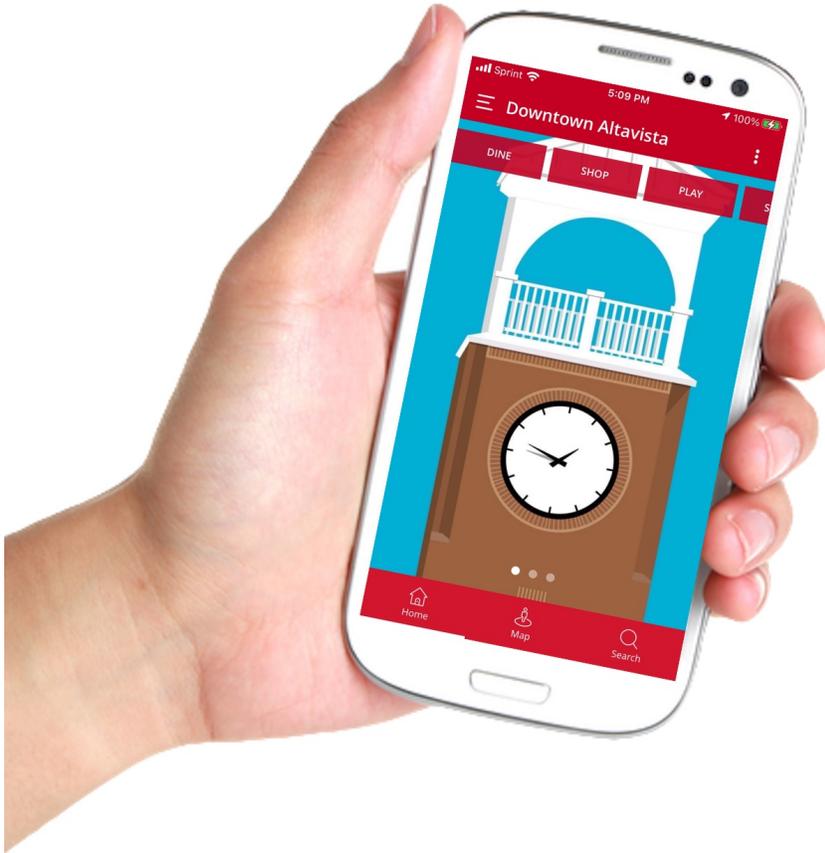
None. For informational purposes only.

Attachments

- Informational Flyer
- Exerpt from WFXR News report on Danville Distrx App

OUR OWN APP!

Downtown Altavista's New Mobile App



Reaching today's mobile users is more important than ever. We are pleased to announce that we now have our own mobile app as part of a nationwide network for all Main Street districts. It's a great way to let locals and visitors know all of the great things going on in our community. And best of all, it is part of a growing national network that includes all Main Street communities across the country. As more districts are added each month, mobile users throughout Virginia and across the country will be able to see information on your business, including a detailed business description, pictures, links to your website and social media channels and the ability to post your current promotional offers. Watch the brief explainer video on Distrx's YouTube channel!

Creating your listing in the mobile app, which also includes a page on the national website is quick, easy and very affordable..

Go to <https://greetSMART.com/user/signup/price-plan> to get started

Exciting News!

Better yet, the Downtown Altavista mobile app allows you to create promotional offers that will appear in the app and online. You can create recurring day-of-week or time-of-day offers, including pictures, text, coupons and barcodes, and you can change your content as often as you like.

Best of all, *all of this is available at no cost!* Your business listing is completely free and includes a search engine optimized web page on the national website at www.distrx.com.

To get started, download the **distrx** mobile app, available free on the App Store and Google Play. As the **distrx** network grows to cover the entire country, your active participation will ensure your business message reaches mobile users.

Visit <https://greetsmart.com/user/signup/price-plan> to sign up. It's quick and easy, and your mobile listing will appear in the app in minutes.

Thank you for being part of this exciting new technology!

We're going mobile!



Joe's Bar & Grill is known throughout the region as the place where everyone gathers for food, fun and entertainment. Joe's world famous wings are crispy golden treasures and offered in 8 mouth-watering flavors. And if you love burgers, build your own custom Angus beef creation - add your choice of cheese, bacon or more than a dozen other toppings.



Sample In-app Listing

Altavista is going mobile! Be part of our new mobile app.

Sign up today!

Sample Web Listing



Scan to Download



DANVILLE, Va. (WFXR) — The River District Association (RDA) in Danville has announced the River District Downtown App, Distrx, will be launched in early March.

The purpose of the app is to provide both visitors and residents of the Danville area with a directory of downtown businesses, parking information, walking tours, a calendar of downtown events and updated COVID-19 protocols.

The Distrx app is part of a nationwide network of Main Street districts. Locally, it will allow local businesses to keep contact information, business hours, websites, promotions and coupons they offer which can be updated in real-time.

All participating businesses will also be included in the Distrx search engine optimized website: <https://distrx.com/districts/1457-danville-river-district-danville>.

New districts are being added regularly, so mobile users throughout Virginia and across the country will be able to see information about Danville's River District.

Those who download the app will be able to use it in participating districts throughout the country with no additional downloads needed.

The app and additional functionality are provided by the River District Association and is available at no cost to all businesses located within Danville's River District.

The River District Downtown App will be able to be downloaded on Apple and Android devices within the Apple Store and Google Play App Store for free starting on March 6 with a scavenger hunt "apptivity" for the community.

You Otter be in the River District!

**March 6th, 2021
10 am - 12 pm**

River District Scavenger Hunt:
Solve the clues, find the otters and win prizes!

Download the Distrx app and click the contest button to participate!

Download on the App Store | GET IT ON Google Play

distrx | RIVER DISTRICT ASSOCIATION | MAIN STREET AMERICA

(Courtesy of the River District Association).



Agenda Cover Sheet
AOT Board Meeting
February 11th, 2021

Agenda Location

Main Street Coordinator Updates

Description

Each year local Main Street organizations work to attract the necessary public and private investment to their historic commercial districts in order to: (1) breathe new life into blighted and vacant buildings; (2) establish and expand independent businesses that make downtowns fun and unique consumer destinations; and (3) create mixed-use downtowns where people once again live above bustling commercial establishments and property owners maximize the productive use of every floor of downtown buildings. The Downtown Investment Grant (DIG) is one tool that Main Street communities use to accomplish the goals above.

The FY2022 DIG application is due March 15th, and it is recommended that each locality submit an application. Due to the financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, DHCD staff recommended that proposed projects focus on economic vitality and business relief/recovery instead of design and promotional content.

The Main Street Coordinator has placed an application with DHCD.

Potential Actions

None. For informational purposes only.

Attachments

None.



Agenda Cover Sheet
AOT Board Meeting
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Agenda Location

Main Street Coordinator Updates

Description

As a Main Street community, downtown Altavista businesses have access to a façade loan program designed to assist with *permanent improvements to the exterior of non-governmental buildings within the town limits. Eligible improvements include: painting (including murals and restoration of historic mural-style signage), awnings, masonry repair/cleaning, storefront replacement/restoration, exterior lighting, window repair, cornice repair/replacement, roofing (such as standing seam metal, terra cotta tile, and shingle [slate, wood, asphalt]) that is readily visible from an adjacent public street or alley and is an integral part of the aesthetic design of the building, and restoration of historic and permanent landscaping (hardscape).* As it is designed now, the program is a loan that must be paid back within 60 months (5 years) of receiving the loan. In addition, a 50/50 match is required of each business. By changing the program from a loan to a grant, it may incentivize more businesses to take advantage of it.

Potential Actions

None. For informational purposes only.

Attachments

None.



Agenda Cover Sheet
AOT Board Meeting
March 11th, 2021

Agenda Location

Old Business

Description

The Main Street Coordinator has historically been considered the Executive Director of Altavista On Track. However, this is not outlined in the current by-laws. As a 501(c)(3) organization, AOT is not required to have an official Executive Director, but it would clarify the stance that AOT has maintained for several years.

Potential Actions

The Board may:

- Vote to implement the by-laws change
- Table the item to a future meeting
- Take no action

Attachments

- Current AOT Bylaws
- Proposed Amendment

BY-LAWS OF ALTAVISTA COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE CORP.

ARTICLE I- NAME

Section 1

This organization shall be known as the Altavista Community Development Committee Corporation of Altavista, Virginia, 24517 and composed of its initial Board of Directors consisting of its eleven (11) initial Directors as listed in its Charter dated July 28, 2004 effective as of August 11, 2004 by the Virginia State Corporation Commission. The corporation has adopted an assumed name of “Altavista On Track”.

ARTICLE II- Purpose of Organization

Section 1

The corporation is organized as a charitable, non-profit corporation dedicated to the promotion and development of the social welfare and the economy of the Altavista area, at all times striving to develop the plans and the means for the economic restructuring of the business community through promotion and design plans developed by the corporation.

ARTICLE III- Meetings

Section 1

The Board of Directors shall hold one meeting on the second Thursday of each month. All Directors will be expected to attend. Directors participating in various committee meetings and other committee members shall strive to have one regular meeting each month prior to the regular Board Meeting.

Section 2

Committees shall be subject to special called meetings at the discretion of its Chairman. The Board of Directors shall be subject to special called meetings at the discretion of two Board Members and/or the President .

Section 3

There shall be an annual meeting held on the second Thursday of June of each year.

Section 4

The President may at his/her discretion call meetings at any time and at any place for whatever stated purpose he deems necessary by giving a three (3) day notice.

ARTICLE IV- Officers

Section 1

The Corporation shall elect all officers for the ensuing year by written ballot. Nominations shall be made by a nominating committee composed of three members of the Board appointed by the President at the regular business meeting in May of each year. The committee shall submit a list of one nominee for each office, but the nominations by the committee shall not preclude nominations from the floor which are both desirable and expected. Elections shall be by majority vote of the Directors present at the regular June meeting.

Section 2

All officers must be Directors or Employees of the Corporation and no Director or Employee shall be elected to hold more than one elective office.

Section 3

The officers of the Corporation shall be as follows and shall be elected in the following order:

President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. Current officers shall constitute an Executive Committee, which shall also include the immediate past President for a period of one year. The duties of the Executive Committee shall include personnel actions and any other business referred to the Executive Committee by the full Board of Directors.

Section 4

The President shall preside at all meetings.

Section 5

The Vice President shall perform the duties of the President during his/her absence.

Section 6

The Secretary shall be under the supervision and direction of the President. The Secretary shall, with the assistance of staff, keep the corporate records, including minutes of all corporate meetings, committee appointments, and attendance records. He/she shall be held directly responsible for all books and papers in his/her care and transfer all records in good condition to his/her successor. The Secretary shall send notices of all regular and called meetings to the Directors and committees.

Section 7

It shall be, with the assistance of staff, the duty of the Treasurer to keep a correct account of all monies received by the Corporation, make prompt payment of all approved invoices, submit a financial report to the Board at each monthly meeting or at any other time requested by the President. The Treasurer's records and accounts are to be audited at least once each year by a committee to be appointed by the Board or a Certified Public Accountant appointed by the Board.

Section 8

The Board of Directors shall be responsible for basic policy making for the Corporation and for employing the staff within the financial capability of the Corporation.

Article V – Directors

Section 1

The number of Directors serving on the Board shall be nine (9), eleven (11) or thirteen (13). The number of Directors shall not be less than eleven or greater than fifteen. There shall be an additional two Director positions reserved for a member of Town Council and an employee of the Town of Altavista, both of which shall serve in an ex officio capacity. The Mayor shall appoint the Director representing Town Council. The Director representing the Town shall be appointed by the Town Manager.

Section 2

The term of service for new Directors, who are not completing the term of a previous Director, will be three years. After the initial term, each Director will have the opportunity to be re-elected to additional three-year terms. The Director representing Town Council shall serve at the discretion of the Town Council and shall not be subject to term limits. The Director representing the Town of Altavista shall serve at the discretion of the Town Manager and shall not be subject to term limits.

Section 3

In case of death, resignation or removal of any elected Director, the Board shall at the next regular meeting fill the vacancy by majority vote of those directors present.

Section 4

All officers and directors shall fulfill their respective duties faithfully

ARTICLE VI- Committees

Section 1

All committees shall be appointed by the President. The first member appointed on any committee shall be chairman of same, unless otherwise designated by the President. All committees shall report at each regular meeting until their duties are fully discharged.

Section 2

All committees shall keep accurate minutes of their meetings. All minutes should be sent to the Secretary of the Board of Directors prior to each monthly meeting.

ARTICLE VII- Quorum

Section 1

One third of the Board Members on roll, rounded to the next whole number, shall constitute a quorum, one or more of the officers being present.

ARTICLE VIII- Attendance

Section 1

Any Director or Committee member who has three unexcused absences from the regular meetings within each elected fiscal year shall be reported by the Secretary to the Board of Directors, and may be removed and replaced by the Board.

ARTICLE IX- Rules of Order

Section 1

Roberts Rules of Order, Revised, shall be the accepted Parliamentary law for this organization.

ARTICLE X- Changes, Deletions or Additions

Section 1

Any subject not covered in these By-Laws may be added or any By-Law may be altered by the following procedure:

- A. Any addition or change will be brought to the floor in a regular meeting of the Board. No action shall be taken or any addition or change made until the next regular meeting of the Board.
- B. A two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Board is required to amend the By Laws.

ARTICLE IV- Officers

Section 1

The Corporation shall elect all officers for the ensuing year by written ballot. Nominations shall be made by a nominating committee composed of three members of the Board appointed by the President at the regular business meeting in May of each year. The committee shall submit a list of one nominee for each office, but the nominations by the committee shall not preclude nominations from the floor which are both desirable and expected. Elections shall be by majority vote of the Directors present at the regular June meeting.

Section 2

All officers must be Directors or Employees of the Corporation and no Director or Employee shall be elected to hold more than one elective office.

Section 3

The officers of the Corporation shall be as follows and shall be elected in the following order: President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. Current officers shall constitute an Executive Committee, which shall also include the immediate past President for a period of one year. The duties of the Executive Committee shall include personnel actions and any other business referred to the Executive Committee by the full Board of Directors.

Section 4

The President shall preside at all meetings.

Section 5

The Vice President shall perform the duties of the President during his/her absence.

Section 6

The Secretary shall be under the supervision and direction of the President. The Secretary shall, with the assistance of staff, keep the corporate records, including minutes of all corporate meetings, committee appointments, and attendance records. He/she shall be held directly responsible for all books and papers in his/her care and transfer all records in good condition to his/her successor. The Secretary shall send notices of all regular and called meetings to the Directors and committees.

Section 7

It shall be, with the assistance of staff, the duty of the Treasurer to keep a correct account of all monies received by the Corporation, make prompt payment of all approved invoices, submit a financial report to the Board at each monthly meeting or at any other time requested by the President. The Treasurer's records and accounts are to be audited at least once each year by a committee to be appointed by the Board or a Certified Public Accountant appointed by the Board.

Section 8

The Executive Director shall be the Main Street Coordinator of the Town of Altavista or another designee as desired by the Board.

Section 8 **9**

The Board of Directors shall be responsible for basic policy making for the Corporation and for employing the staff within the financial capability of the Corporation.



Agenda Cover Sheet
AOT Board Meeting
March 11th, 2021

Agenda Location

New Business

Description

The Main Street Coordinator met with Michael Hudson, Executive Director at Avoca Museum, to discuss Avoca's annual donation campaign. Mr. Hudson provided information on the process Avoca uses to request donations, including letters and emails. Following discussions with the AOT Board President, the MSC established a passive donation page and linked it to the AOT website. The software that is being utilized is free for AOT, but small charges will occur when customer makes a donation. They do have the option to cover the charge if they so desire.

An active donation process through email may net more total donations than the passive donation button currently on the website. However, prior to any campaigns beginning, Board input is desired.

Potential Actions

- The Board may:
 - Vote to approve active donation campaigns as deemed necessary by the MSC
 - Table both items to a future meeting
 - Take no action

Attachments

- None (*information will be shown on screen*)



Agenda Cover Sheet
AOT Board Meeting
March 11th, 2021

Agenda Location

New Business

Description

Following discussions with the AOT Board President and Dr. Scott Lowman, the Main Street Coordinator is requesting permission to apply for a USDA Rural Business Development Grant (RBDG). Currently in the downtown district, there are ten vacant buildings. Several buildings are listed on a real estate website as "For Sale," with prices ranging from \$75,000 to \$240,000.

Several interested individuals have approached the MSC inquiring about funding necessary to purchase a building in the downtown district. These individuals would like to open new restaurant, but start-up costs are prohibitive. The RBD grant would allow AOT to purchase a building in the downtown district and rent/lease it to a business owner at no/reduced monthly rent. This would allow the business to get established and bring a much-needed business opportunity to downtown Altavista.

The deadline to apply for the RBD grant is March 31st, 2021. The MSC has been in communication with staff at USDA to discuss specifics regarding the grant program. The vacant building at 525 Main Street has been identified as the site of this program.

Potential Actions

- Vote to allow the MSC to submit an application to USDA for the program mentioned above
- Modify the application prior to voting to apply
- Table the item to a future meeting and apply for the FY22 program
- Decline to pursue the grant funding

Attachments

- USDA Rural Business Development Grant Program Fact Sheet
- Parcel Information - Campbell County GIS
 - 525 Main Street

Rural Business Development Grants (RBDG)

What does this program do?

RBDG is a competitive grant designed to support targeted technical assistance, training, and other activities leading to the development or expansion of small and emerging private businesses in rural areas that have fewer than 50 employees and less than \$1 million in gross revenues. Programmatic activities are separated into enterprise or opportunity type grant activities.

Who may apply for this program?

Rural public entities including, but not limited to:

- **Towns**
- **Communities**
- **State agencies**
- **Authorities**
- **Nonprofit Corporations**
- **Institutions of Higher Education**
- **Federally recognized Tribes**
- **Rural Cooperatives**

What is an eligible area?

RBDG funds must be directed for projects benefitting rural areas or towns outside the urbanized periphery of any city with a population of 50,000 or more. [Check eligible areas.](#)

How much funding is available?

There is no maximum grant amount for enterprise or opportunity type grants; however, smaller requests are given higher priority. Generally, grants range from \$10,000 up to \$500,000. There is no cost sharing requirement. Total opportunity type grant funding is limited statutorily to up to 10% of the total RBDG annual funding.

How may funds be used?

Enterprise type grant funds must be used on projects to benefit small and emerging businesses in rural areas as specified in the grant application. Uses may include:

- Training and technical assistance, such as project planning, business counseling/training, market research, feasibility studies, professional/technical reports, or product/service improvements
- Acquisition or development of land, easements, or rights of way; construction, conversion, renovation, of buildings, plants, machinery, equipment, access streets and roads, parking areas, utilities

- Pollution control and abatement
- Capitalization of revolving loan funds including funds that will make loans for start-ups and working capital
- Distance adult learning for job training and advancement
- Rural transportation improvement
- Community economic development
- Technology-based economic development
- Feasibility studies and business plans
- Leadership and entrepreneur training
- Rural business incubators
- Long-term business strategic planning

Opportunity type grant funding must be used for projects in rural areas and they can be used for:

- Community economic development
- Technology-based economic development
- Feasibility studies and business plans
- Leadership and entrepreneur training
- Rural business incubators
- Long-term business strategic planning

How are applications evaluated for competitive funding?

RBDG applications compete at the state office level, which are dependent on appropriations.

All applications are evaluated based on:

- Evidence showing job creation to occur with local businesses;
- Percent of nonfederal funding committed to the project;
- Economic need in the area to be served;
- Consistency with local economic development priorities;
- Experience of the grantee with similar efforts; and
- Other factors described in the current Notice of Solicitation of Applications (NOSA), if one is published.

How do we get started?

Applications are accepted through USDA Rural Development's [local or State offices](#) once per year. Applicants are advised to view program information specific to your [local or State office](#) to learn about local application timelines, concept paper requirements, etc.

Grant awardees will need to complete required paperwork and comply with the terms and conditions of the award. Contact your [local or State office](#) for details.

Who can answer questions?

Contact your [local RD office](#).

What governs this program?

- Basic Program – [7 CFR Part 4280 Subpart E](#)
- This program is authorized by the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (ConAct).

What governed the predecessor programs of RBEG and RBOG, as well as all awards given before FY 2015?

- RBEG Basic Program
[RD Instruction 1942-G](#)
- RBOG Basic Program
[7 CFR Part 4284](#)
- This program was authorized by the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (ConAct).

Why does USDA Rural Development do this?

This program provides grants for rural projects that finance and facilitate development of small and emerging rural businesses, help fund distance learning networks, and help fund employment related adult education programs. To assist with business development, RBDGs may fund a broad array of activities.

NOTE: Because citations and other information may be subject to change, please always consult the program instructions listed in the section above titled “What Governs This Program?” You may also contact [your local office](#) for assistance. You will find additional forms, resources, and program information at [rd.usda.gov](#). *USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.*



Agenda Cover Sheet
AOT Board Meeting
March 11th, 2021

Agenda Location

New Business

Description

Following internal discussions with the Board President, the Main Street Coordinator requested a formal proposal from Jonathan Mitchell with Simply Branding to redesign the AOT website. Mr. Mitchell originally created the website several years ago, but it has not been properly updated or maintained for an extended period of time. The proposal will cover two main items: redesign of the website and conversion of the URL from .net to .org.

In addition, the Main Street Coordinator will be retiring the current AOT email address and will be utilizing a professional email. Currently, AOT's main email address is downtownaltavista@gmail.com. If the Board approves the URL change, then the new email address will end in @altavistaontrack.org.

Potential Actions

- The Board may:
 - Vote to approve the website redesign proposal and URL change
 - Vote to approve only the URL change
 - Table both items to a future meeting
 - Take no action

Attachments

- Proposal from Simply Branding

2021

ALTAVISTA ON TRACK

PROJECT PROPOSAL

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Altavista On Track's website is outdated and cluttered. When a first-time visitor comes to the website, it is not clear what AOT is, what downtown Altavista has to offer, or what the visitor needs to do next to take action. That reflects poorly on AOT as well as our town.

The goal of this project is to create an updated website with more thought put into content, design, and the visitor's experience. We want to clearly communicate both what AOT is and why downtown Altavista is awesome. In order to increase engagement and ultimately gain more donors, I also recommend strategizing content for your AOT newsletter and other ways to deliver more value to your email list.

The completion goal for your new website is 4 weeks from approval, or mid April. Based on historical traffic analytics, your website has a spike in traffic in both the spring and fall. This offers a good opportunity to take advantage of higher traffic to showcase your new website and increase engagement through collecting email addresses and donations.

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

01

Redesign your website to increase engagement from visitors

03

Organize your website content to make it easier for visitors to use

02

Clarify the purpose of Altavista on Track on your website

PROJECTED TIMELINE

- Website construction begins (March 22)
- Website submitted for approval (April 2)
- New website goes live (April 8)



RECOMMENDED INVESTMENTS

1

Website Re-Construction - \$1,200

- Redesign your existing Squarespace website
- Reorganize content to make it more user-friendly
- New graphics and updated imagery
- Search engine optimization

2

Messaging Strategy Session - \$250

- 1 hour session to clarify the vision and mission of AOT
- Recommended before website construction begins

3

Email Funnel Strategy Session - \$250

- 1 hour session to discuss newsletter content and other ways to curate content for your target audience
- Recommended before or shortly after new website goes live

I sincerely hope we get the chance to work together!
Call or text me at (434) 363-0318 any time if you have questions.

Jonathan Mitchell
(434) 363 - 0318



Agenda Cover Sheet
AOT Board Meeting
March 11th, 2021

Agenda Location

AEDA Steering Committee Update

Description

Robert Pate, who is the AOT representative on the Altavista Economic Development Authority Steering Committee, will give a brief update on the March committee meeting.

Potential Actions

None. For informational purposes only.

Attachments

- Meeting notes (*will be sent via email on March 9th*)



Agenda Cover Sheet
AOT Board Meeting
March 11th, 2021

Agenda Location

Work Session

Description

Altavista On Track is required to design and execute a yearly work plan as outlined in its MOU with DHCD and the Town. The previous work plan was completed in July 2020 and runs to June 2021. Zachary Whitlow, Community Revitalization Specialist at DHCD, notified the Main Street Coordinator on February 26th that AOT's revised boundary amendment application was reviewed, and the proposed extension will, ultimately, be approved by VMS / DHCD. However, prior to drafting an official approval letter, recognizing the program's new boundaries, VMS strongly encourages AOT to develop a new work plan for FY21-22.

Potential Actions

Begin development of FY21-22 work plan. Approval of full Board will be required upon completion of draft document.

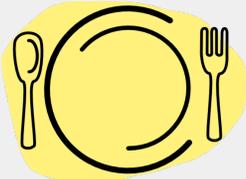
Attachments

- Example Work Plan (Downtown Blackstone Initiative)

CY2020 DBI Work Plan

Transformation Strategy	Economic Vitality	Design	Promotion	Organization
<p>Strategy: Military Installation</p> <p>Goal: Capitalize on the new U.S. State Department's Foreign Affairs Security Training Center (FASTC)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Influx of temporary workers • Influx of students/trainees • Long-term permanent staff <p>Objective(s):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mitigate pressures on public sector to address downtown parking and housing concerns 2. Acknowledge the facility's Multiplier Growth Effect 3. Strengthen economic and social conditions between installation and downtown 	<p>Activities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complete the FY2020 DIG <i>Railway Parking Project</i> (Housing Enticements) 2. Coordinate w/ Blackstone's new Tourism Committee on matters relating to new growth and development spurred from FASTC. (DBI Co-Chair) 3. Apply for the FY2021 CBL grant program to fill market niches and further position the district for growth. 4. Actively participate in work sessions to offer input on the Town of Blackstone's new Comprehensive Plan to address new growth and economic development. 5. Encourage small business owners to learn more about Federal Contracting and Federal Procurement practices. Promote training through Longwood SBDC. 6. Utilize the organization's Revolving Loan Fund, as well as other incentives, to encourage upper-story development downtown 	<p>Activities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complete the FY2020 DIG <i>Railway Parking Project</i> (Physical Improvements) 2. Provide assistance w/ the town's Hometown Heroes program to celebrate/honor local/community veterans. <i>*New downtown banners</i> 3. Can additional signage be added/placed at the base's Post Information Center that promotes downtown offerings and attractions? <i>*Volunteer to assist Fort Pickett agencies with landscaping around the Information Center.</i> 4. Decorate LOVEwork w/ military theme. Is there a particular/significant month that would be appropriate to feature such themes? <i>*Perhaps military personnel can offer input or volunteer?</i> 5. Create storefront displays that include nods to the locality's proud military identity. Perhaps host decorating contest for military-themed displays? 	<p>Activities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Poll Business Owners - How many currently offer military discounts? What other discounts are made available to the military? 2. Add FASTC information and other military-related content to DBI's website to showcase the community's proud military identity. 3. Launch #WeAreFASTC social media campaign to showcase the facility and new developments, as well as spotlight personnel. 4. Partner alongside the Chamber of Commerce and Town of Blackstone to produce welcome packets for personnel and families relocating (permanently or temporarily) to the area. <i>*Develop/include map/guide of commercial district and other key areas of focus.</i> 5. Consult w/ Blackstone's new Tourism Committee on methods to attract military heritage visitors to the area 	<p>Activities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fundraiser - advertise the sale of DBI's Fort Pickett themed ornament to garner increased sales. Can the ornaments be sold at any varying locations on base? 2. Recruit FASTC/Installation representative to serve as ex-officio board member or committee member that can offer perspectives on personnel, families, staff, and vendors/contractors. 3. Consult base leadership and civilian staff (potential surveying) to determine what amenities, activities, and other offerings they'd like to see downtown. 4. Gauge the feasibility of touring new facilities w/ installation leadership to gain better understanding of base operation / needs. Consult Ret. Col. Wilkinson 5. Need new volunteers to serve on the committee - perhaps contact VFW or speak to local veterans that are also stakeholders throughout the community.

Transformation Strategy	Economic Vitality	Design	Promotion	Organization
<p>Strategy: Home Furnishings</p> <p>Goal: Promote Blackstone’s Historic Business District as a home furnishings source</p> <p>Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Brand downtown as a regional furniture destination that offers vintage (antiques) and designer furnishings - varying price points exist 2. Address local residents (homeowners, renters, etc.) but also focus on visitors - experience shopping, e.g. Blackstone Antique Mall 3. Increase foot-traffic through regional day-trippers and/or person(s) searching for home-related items 4. Engender more cooperation + cross-promotion between home-oriented businesses. 	<p>Activities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Supply market data to business owners, focusing on sales surplus + leakage in categories related to Transformation Strategy. 2. Organize seminar on how to use historic tax credits for property/home owners. Encourage upper-story development (residential or office/service usage). 3. If awarded, utilize the CBL program to fill identified niche businesses that compliment home-related categories that strengthen Transformation Strategy. 4. Advocate for additional downtown housing units - explore tax abatement or subsidized rent to entice upper-story development. 5. Encourage use of DBI’s 0% interest loan fund for property owners to make needed improvements to vacancies, ensuring that properties don’t lose their physical + economic life. Perhaps offer tour of loft spaces or vacancies and show “what could be.” 	<p>Activities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consult property owners of vacant buildings to create living window displays. Ask local art students to assist w/ the community project. 2. Explore alternative signage or small-scale mural on the corner of E. Broad/Main (Corner Kitchen) to direct motorists + pedestrians to antiques, furniture, flooring, and service businesses. 3. Downtown Kiosk - Display advertisements and map of area w/ downtown anchors and attractions highlighted. Consult local carpenters or providers for structure(s). 4. Increase awareness of effective design + promote historic preservation with beautification-based grant program (bi-annually) 5. Advocate for the rerouting of large vehicular traffic from Main Street district + the creation of crosswalks. Consult w/ town leadership about assistance and VDOT requirements, etc. <i>*Encourage pedestrian friendly + walkable district</i> 	<p>Activities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Utilize the district’s annual Holiday Open House and Small Business Saturday event to launch seasonal “passport program” that encourages visitation to home-related businesses. 2. Launch social media campaign to entice people to “Shop the Side Streets” Highlight businesses and products that contribute to Transformation Strategy objective(s) and goal(s). 3. Create event that focuses on indoor + outdoor home-related services, education, demonstrations, and other activities, e.g. nurseries, upholstery, hand-made (local) crafts, and more. 4. Expand DBI’s website’s “Directory” or “Resources” to include local contacts that represent home repair, construction, and other areas that are suitable for home improvement, etc. 5. Adopt-A-Pot Program - Bring new life to downtown flower pots 6. Advertising cost-share program(s) - publications 	<p>Activities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Partner alongside the Blackstone Rotary Club for “Pick Up Our Pride” and other community clean-up events around the commercial district. 2. Explore partnership w/ local bed & breakfast to create shop/eat/explore packages for guests - “Home Away from Home” 3. Expand on home-related event to include “Chairity” fundraiser - budget for outdoor rocking chairs, decorate w/ art students, auction (main event) for profit/grant establishment. 4. Consult owners of the Blackstone Antique Mall to enhance engagement with vendors - ID ways to incorporate them into home-related event or “Chairity” fundraiser. 5. Create window decals for businesses that feature home-related branding and/or slogan w/ QR code (DBI’s website). 6. Main Appreciation <i>*Annual meeting to highlight program success and thank volunteers, businesses, etc.</i>

Transformation Strategy	Economic Vitality	Design	Promotion	Organization
<p>Strategy: Dining + Food</p> <p>Goal: Establish commercial district as food hub/destination featuring restaurants, catering, farmer's markets, and more.</p> <p>Objective(s):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase meal tax revenue (collection not percentage) 2. Diversify dining options in the commercial district mix through varied offerings - not only restaurants but local vendors and culinary talent that seek exposure 3. Reinforce district branding efforts through marketing campaigns, focused on local downtown eateries 4. Engender more positive dining experiences for business travelers and military personnel + staff 5. Illuminate the challenges faced by small business owners, especially those that own restaurants or want to open restaurants to encourage incentives that attract entrepreneurs + raise success rates 	<p>Activities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Given that the district's meal tax revenue has been increasing annually, can any revenue be utilized and/or earmarked for downtown revitalization? Consult town leadership. 2. Research small-scale agriculture and local food production. Could district support such areas and serve local needs + act as a rural economic driver? Recruitment efforts - CBL? 3. Address parking demand during peak dining hours (daytime demand) through Railway Parking Project. 4. Understand high startup costs associated w/ food businesses, as well as the high failure rate. Can the Main Street organization offer/advocate for any incentives to alleviate such costs and better ensure success of food-related businesses in the district? <i>*Secure testimonials - perhaps illuminate to town leadership</i> 5. Promote Longwood SBDC services, especially their no-cost, confidential consultations that center around "management." Business owners could utilize education services. 	<p>Activities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to develop the Blackstone Town Square as a (food) gathering place for district workers + residents through added amenities, e.g. umbrellas (shade). Are there grants for creating/installing pavilions (stage)? Contact local officials in Kenbridge about pavillion grant for their local farmer's market. 2. Create more outdoor dining areas and seating, e.g. benches, picnic tables. Speak w/ Classic Grill about lot space across from restaurant to explore development of new pocket park/green space. 3. #EatLocal Sidewalk Art - Paint dining symbol and call-to-action (hashtag) on the sidewalk in front of restaurant entry ways.  <p>#EatLocal</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Advocate for downtown banners that reinforce district branding and Transformation Strategies. Military-themed banners are suitable but perhaps interchangeably? <i>*Priority</i> 	<p>Activities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sandwich Competition - Participating restaurants compete to be crowned Blackstone's Sandwich King or Queen (public vote) 2. Develop rack cards that showcase district eateries, highlighting entertainment, specialties, and services, i.e. delivery and/or catering 3. Pop-Up Restaurant(s) - Area vendors that seek more exposure, showcase local culinary talent, raise funds for civic/community causes, and other uses. Check w/ municipality for temporary permits and other rules and regulations. <i>*Supporting entrepreneurship</i> <i>*Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) or other small loan/grant usage?</i> 4. "In the Kitchen with..." video series that highlights speciality dishes, "how-to" cooking segments and other behind-the-scenes facts about restaurants in Downtown Blackstone, VA. <i>*Potential #EatLocal campaign</i> 5. Dessert Exchange: cross-promotional efforts to highlight desserts from other eateries, particularly the new bakery opening. 	<p>Activities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Feedback Coasters - Use blank/white coasters to receive public input on various downtown matters. Consult restaurants about collection and distribution, e.g. wish list, reviews, etc. 2. Expand downtown farmer's market into Town Square. Coordinate w/ Church St. vendors to ensure there's no competition or overlap. Inquire if vendors would like more exposure through the downtown market. 3. Explore partnership w/ the Southern VA Food Hub and Richlands Dairy Farm. Can we attract small farmers + food artisans to sell their products in the district? 4. Partner w/ local health & wellness businesses in the locality to promote healthy options on restaurant menus to more effectively diversify consumer groups. 5. Restaurant Association - If business owners do not wish to meet physically, can DBI spearhead closed/secret FB group(s) that allow specific business categories to communicate and share ideas/tips for continued success.

Transformation Strategy	Economic Vitality	Design	Promotion	Organization
<p>Strategy: Family-Friendly District</p> <p>Goals:</p> <p>Objectives:</p>	<p>Activities:</p>	<p>Activities:</p>	<p>Activities:</p>	<p>Activities:</p>

