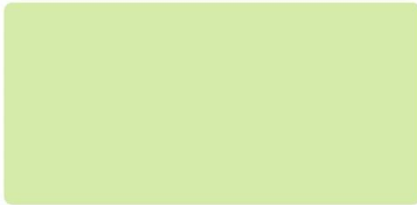




LOCAL FOODS, LOCAL PLACES

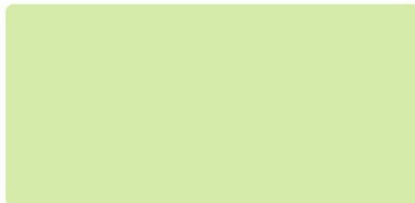
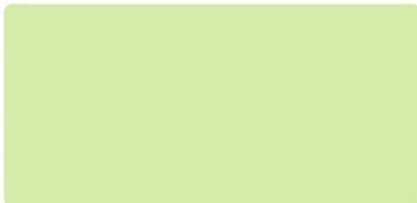
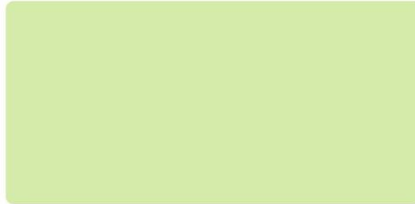
Technical Assistance Program



An Action Plan for Strengthening Downtown Christiansburg with Local Foods

Christiansburg, VA

January 20, 2017



Community Story

Christiansburg, Virginia is a town of nearly 22,000 people nestled in the foothills of southwest Virginia. The town is the county seat of Montgomery County, which is also home to Blacksburg and Virginia Tech, which are just north of the town limits. The area is known for its natural beauty, with places such as George Washington and Jefferson National Forests, and the New River providing ample opportunities for outdoor recreation and tourism. While somewhat isolated from major metropolitan areas, the region is also known for its high quality of life and has seen steady economic expansion for several decades, driven in large part by Virginia Tech, which is the area's largest employer.



Figure 1 - The Downtown Farmers Market is an anchor of downtown on the west end of Main Street. Image Credit: Stephanie Bertaina, EPA.

Christiansburg has shared in the region's economic growth, but local officials are concerned that the downtown area has lagged the rest of the town in development and business growth. In response, the town has invested in rebuilding the streets and sidewalks to create a more walkable and attractive downtown. In 2015 the town established a farmers market downtown to draw more people and increase economic activity. The market has improved access to nutritious food for residents, supports local producers and businesses, and provides a much needed downtown public gathering space.



Figure 2 - The town has rebuilt its sidewalks downtown and used curb extensions to shorten crossing distances. This has improved the walkability of the area. Image Credit: Mike Callahan, Renaissance Planning.

The farmers market anchors the west end of the town's compact business district on Main Street. On the east end are several civic uses, including the county courthouse and town hall. The farmers market is open for business on Thursdays from 3 to 7 PM, May to October. For its first two years of operation, the town has shut down Hickok Street for the market. Hickok is a small local street connecting Main Street and College Street. The vendors set up on either side of Hickok Street and customers stroll down the center of the street. The Town manages the farmers market and has formed a Farmers' Market Committee to support its development. The market accepts Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits and offers a program to double the value of SNAP benefits used at the market.

The market is one of several strategies the town is using to increase activity downtown. Christiansburg also hosts food truck rodeos, art events, movie screenings, and the Wilderness Trail Festival. The town's Christmas at the Market event in 2015 brought 65 vendors and 7,000 people downtown. Meanwhile, the food truck rodeo brought in about 6,000 people and 20 food trucks.

In addition to events, the town is also looking at possibilities for investing in infrastructure and business incentives for the downtown area. One major opportunity is the regional Huckleberry Trail, which connects downtown Blacksburg with Christiansburg. It provides a safe place for people to bike, run, and stroll between the communities. But the trail terminates just north of the downtown area, which is a missed opportunity to bring additional people and activity into the downtown. Additionally, a small college is moving from the outskirts of Christiansburg to an old church downtown, which happens to be across the street from the farmers market. The Ignite Life Pacific College will bring between 200 and 300 students downtown each day once it completes its move.

While the town has taken several positive and successful steps towards achieving a more active downtown, it faces several challenges. First, the farmers market is small and there is a desire among town officials to see more vendors and customers. While the vendors that participate report doing well financially due to the small, but committed customer base, more vendors and customers would bring the additional activity that the town is seeking. Second, the downtown area lacks public park space. The market is a temporary event for a few hours once per week. And third, the town would like to see a more diverse mix of businesses in the downtown area. Town officials are especially interested in attracting more restaurants or a brewery to the area, which would increase foot traffic.

The town in 2015 applied for technical assistance through the Local Foods, Local Places (LFLP) program to achieve its goals for the farmers market and downtown. The LFLP program is supported by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC), and the Delta Regional Authority (DRA). The goals of the LFLP program are to create:

- More economic opportunities for local farmers and businesses.
- Better access to healthy, local food, especially among disadvantaged groups.
- Revitalized downtowns, main streets, and neighborhoods.

Christiansburg, through the LFLP program, focused on planning for the development of the farmers market as an anchor of the downtown. During a two-day workshop, town officials, citizens, and key stakeholders came together to craft an initial vision for the market's future, with a focus on its design and operations. The group also identified new ways to promote both the market and downtown to new customers and potential businesses. The results of the workshop are captured in this action plan, which

LOCAL FOODS, LOCAL PLACES STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Randy Wingfield, Assistant Town Manager

Bill Aldridge, Town Building Inspector

Sarah Belcher, Christiansburg Farmers' Market Manager

Dr. Pamela Ray, New River Health District

Barry Robinson, Sustainable Agriculture Consultant

Donna Speaks, Owner, Mockingbird Café and Bakery

Figure 3 – LFLP Steering Committee in Christiansburg.

lays out a set of goals and next steps the town can take to implement them. The plan also includes a series of illustrations developed through the workshop that reflect a vision for the future of Hickok Street, which could evolve into the type of great public space the town would like to see downtown.

While many people were involved in the development of this plan, the people listed in Figure 2 were part of a Steering Committee that helped organize the LFLP workshop. The committee plans to continue working after the workshop to help implement the goals and actions outlined in this plan. The remainder of this report and appendices document the engagement process, the workshop activities, and most importantly, the action plan and next steps for achieving the community's goals.



Figure 4 - Town officials and the LFLP team meet over lunch on Day 1 of the workshop. Image Credit: Mike Callahan, Renaissance Planning.

Engagement

The technical assistance engagement process for LFLP has three phases, illustrated in Figure 3 below. The assessment phase consists of three preparation conference calls among EPA and partner federal agencies, the consulting team, and the LFLP Steering Committee from the local community. The purpose of these calls is to establish the workshop goals, agenda, logistics, and stakeholder invitation lists. The convening phase includes the effort's capstone event—a two-day workshop in the community. The next steps phase includes three follow up conference calls as well as process reporting and documentation.

The workshop occurred on October 6th and 7th, 2016, and included a lunch gathering with the Steering Committee members and regional, state, and federal partners; a tour of the community; and an evening community meeting at town hall (Day 1); and an action-planning session, also at town hall (Day 2). Key stakeholder groups, residents, and local leaders participated in the all-day working session. The workshop sign-in sheets are provided in Appendix C.

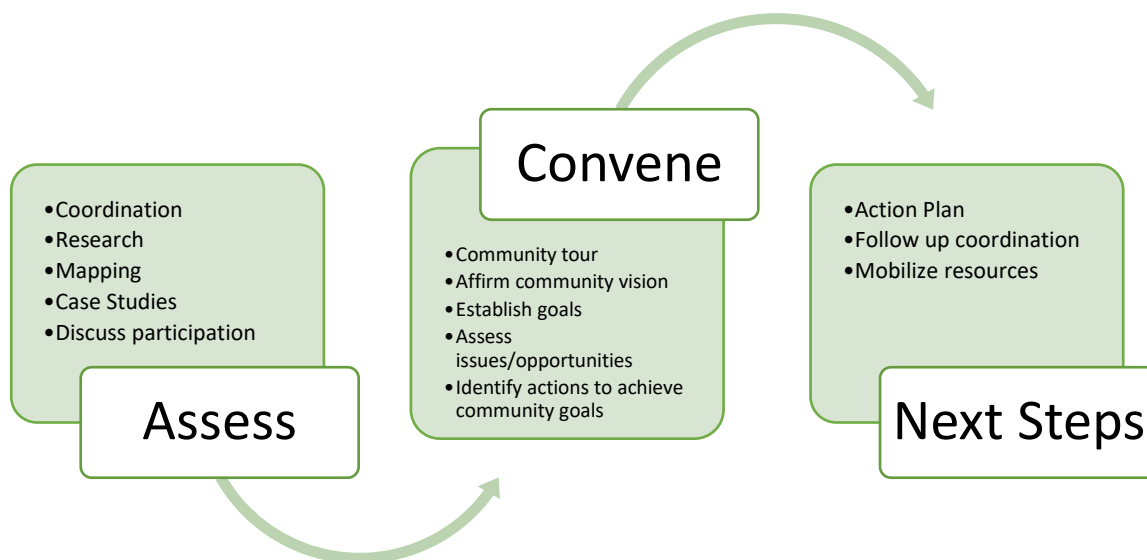


Figure 5 - Local Foods, Local Places Technical Assistance Process Diagram.

Community Tour

The LFLP Steering Committee organized a luncheon on October 6th with key stakeholders at town hall to kick off the workshop. Town officials, the consulting team, and federal agency representatives discussed the town's hopes for the workshop and its downtown area. Following the luncheon, the Steering Committee led a tour of key places and projects in the downtown, including the farmers market, recent streetscape improvements to Main Street streetscape, the historic district that anchors the east end of Main Street, and the Ignite Life Pacific College, which is renovating a church across Main Street from the farmer market. The market and college have tremendous potential as anchors on the west end of Main Street that would increase overall activity downtown.

The tour also highlighted important sites outside the downtown area including the Huckleberry Trail, which is popular for walking and bicycling between Blacksburg and Christiansburg; the Christiansburg Institute, which started as a school for freed slaves in 1866 and continued operation for a century; the Christiansburg Aquatics Center; the site for a large new park near a key suburban commercial strip on Virginia Route 114; and several newer housing developments. The tour showed a clear distinction between the fast-growing suburban areas of the town, and the downtown area, which has great potential but has seen far less development.

Vision and Values

The community's values and hopes for the future of downtown and the farmers market underlie this entire action plan. Several citizens and town officials came out to a community meeting on the evening of Day 1 to share their ideas, and this section captures the major themes that emerged. More than two dozen residents and community leaders attended the community meeting, which began with an overview presentation of the LFLP program and several success stories from other communities that have used local foods to revitalize their downtown areas and provide better access to healthy foods for citizens. Following the presentation, the consulting team introduced a series of discussion

DOWNTOWN & FARMERS MARKET ASSETS AND CHALLENGES

Downtown Assets

- Central location in the region that is easy to access from highways
- Historic buildings that can be repurposed
- Huckleberry Trail nearby with potential to extend it to downtown
- Affordable real estate
- Diverse people and economy
- Authentic
- The population is less transient than Blacksburg where students come and go
- Small town feel
- Recreational opportunities
- Government center that brings jobs and customers for restaurants/retail
- Vision and leadership
- Dense core
- Town is supportive of business

Challenges:

- Want more vendors at the market
- Lack of knowledge on how to use and prepare local products
- Getting more people to the market
- Providing more things to do downtown once people are at the market
- Lack of downtown restaurants
- Lack of transit access to downtown
- Could be more bikeable
- Poor walk/bike connections to nearby neighborhoods
- Perception that parking is difficult
- Visibility of the market from Main Street
- Lack of restrooms at the market
- Need incentives to attract invest to underutilized buildings
- Lack of green space downtown

Figure 6 - Downtown and farmers market assets and challenges identified during the community meeting.

questions to reveal hopes for the future of Christiansburg, assets that set downtown apart in the region, and challenges for revitalizing downtown.

To gain a sense for what citizens would like to see downtown in the future, the consulting team asked the meeting attendees to develop a story about what the farmers market and downtown look like in 20 years. People then shared their stories with each other in small groups and then reported out the highlights of their discussion to the larger group. This exercise revealed the several desires for downtown Christiansburg in 2036:

- People of all ages arrive downtown via car, train, and trail.
- You see families, people strolling, children playing, people talking in the street, people dining on the sidewalk.
- People are enjoying live music, the downtown brewery, locally-owned restaurants, and the farmers market.
- The market has indoor and outdoor space, the outdoor space is covered, it has a stage for music and entertainers.
- It's bustling during the day too with many businesses and entrepreneurs set up in co-working spaces.

Meeting attendees next discussed their views on what sets downtown Christiansburg apart. These assets set the town apart and can help attract investment in the future. They also discussed what they think are the greatest challenges towards the downtown and farmers market reaching their full potential. The attendees recorded their thoughts regarding both assets and challenges on index cards and shared their ideas again in small groups. Following a discussion period, each small group reported on the major themes and ideas that emerged. A summary of these themes is provided in Figure 4 above.

The themes that emerged during the community meeting revealed a desire for new downtown businesses and entrepreneurship opportunities afforded by local foods and products; a walkable downtown with a variety of shops, offices, and housing; more transportation choices for arriving in downtown Christiansburg including passenger rail service and a trail; and an attractive public space to anchor the west end of downtown and host the farmers market.

It was against this positive backdrop of values and visions for the future that the remainder of the workshop unfolded. The public participation in the community meeting helped shape the goals for this action plan, which became the focus of the work sessions on Day 2 of the workshop. The goals also influenced a design charrette, which occurred simultaneously on Day 2 with the two work sessions. The outcome of the design charrette is a vision for the future of a public space and market on Hickok Street, and is presented later in this action plan.



Figure 7 - Citizens and key stakeholders discuss their hopes for the future of downtown Christiansburg and the farmers market. Image Credit: Mike Callahan, Renaissance Planning.

Action Plan

The goals and actions introduced in this section, and described in greater detail in Appendix A, are the culminating product of the workshop. The plan is organized around four goals and includes actions that participants brainstormed at the meeting and the Steering Committee refined during follow up conference calls. The action plan matrix helps to further clarify, prioritize, and define roles and responsibilities for moving forward on these actions. The goals and actions that are part of this plan are summarized below and are contained in their full detail in Appendix A.

GOAL 1: *Build*: Design a future market that meets the needs of customers, vendors, and downtown businesses.

An initial vision for the future of Hickok Street and the downtown farmers market is a key outcome of the workshop. The town will need to take several more steps if it decides to implement this vision. The actions described below lay out those steps, which include getting feedback on the vision and refining it, studying the feasibility of the vision, redesigning Hickok Street, and funding the preferred design.

- **Action 1.1:** Present and discuss with vendors and nearby property owners the design concept for a public space and market on Hickok Street.
- **Action 1.2:** Present the initial design concept to the Town Council, along with feedback from residents, vendors, and property owners.
- **Action 1.3:** Consider a feasibility study for the Hickok Street public space and market concept, and research grant and funding opportunities.
- **Action 1.4:** Prepare a preliminary design for the Hickok Street public and market space, and secure funding for construction.

GOAL 2: *Market*: Promote downtown and the market.

Downtown Christiansburg has many assets that can attract investment in infill development downtown. One of these assets is the downtown farmers market. While the market has been a successful endeavor for vendors, who report earning higher income in Christiansburg than many other markets, town leaders feel it could draw even more people and vendors downtown on Thursday evenings. Workshop participants agreed that promoting the downtown and the farmers market is a key to attracting more investment and more customers and vendors for the market. Successfully promoting the area will require information on why people do and do not come downtown. It also will require signs that direct people to the main attractions, which is especially important for the market, which lacks good visibility from Main Street for people passing by in their vehicles. The town's recruitment and management of events, such as the farmers market and festivals, is also an important factor in achieving this goal.

- **Action 2.1:** Conduct a citizen survey to gather insights on what non-customers would like to see at the farmers market, and what it would take to turn them into customers.
- **Action 2.2:** Design and order temporary directional signs to guide people to the market from Franklin and Main Street, and add the market to eventual wayfinding signs.
- **Action 2.3:** Get an affiliate venue of the Crooked Road music trail in downtown Christiansburg and participate in the Junior Appalachian Musicians program.
- **Action 2.4:** Expand the role of the market manager to increase the visibility of the market through promotion at existing events such as Wilderness Trail Days, the Heritage Festival, and Food Truck Rodeos.

GOAL 3: *Operate*: Grow the vendor and customer base.

The operation of the market is another important factor in attracting more vendors and customers. The market is run by the town, and has a professional market manager on staff. Being a new market, there are still a few operational issues to work out. This goal lays out some actions that can be taken in relatively short order to continue improving upon the operation of the market.

- **Action 3.1:** Organize a meeting with vendors over the winter to debrief on what worked well and what might work better in 2017.
- **Action 3.2:** Consider combining the special events and farmers market management into a single position or program with 1 to 1.5 full time equivalent staff.
- **Action 3.3:** Increase awareness and grow the customer base of the farmers market by using marketing tools such as direct mail, a water bill flyer, and social media, and installing infrastructure such as benches to make the area more welcoming.
- **Action 3.4:** Find out what the other 16 farmers markets in the region require of vendors for liability insurance.



Figure 8 - A vendor sets up before the farmers market on October 6, 2016. Image Credit: Mike Callahan, Renaissance Planning.

GOAL 4: *Incentivize*: Attract private investment to downtown properties.

The farmers market is one key strategy for attracting people to the downtown area. This is an important step for increasing activity, which can attract new businesses that want to take advantage of the increased activity. However, there are also financial obstacles to renovating or repurposing older buildings. The town can help accelerate investment in older downtown buildings by providing financial incentives or investing in infrastructure in the downtown area. The actions in support of this goal lay out a few near-term steps the town can take to make infill and redevelopment more attractive.

- **Action 4.1:** Create a plan and seek funding for a façade improvement matching grant program for the downtown.
- **Action 4.2:** Develop a conceptual plan to connect downtown to the Huckleberry Trail.
- **Action 4.3:** Study the feasibility of other incentives the town could provide for downtown development and redevelopment, including a service district to fund enhanced services downtown, a tourism development zone, and property tax abatement to encourage improvements.

Hickok Street Market Design Concept

As the market concludes its second season in 2016, Christiansburg is looking ahead to the future of both Hickok Street and the farmers market. The town would like to build an attractive and vibrant public space downtown that can host the farmers market and other events. Prior to the workshop, Christiansburg had been considering several options for this space, including closing Hickok Street to traffic and building a pavilion on the street right-of-way near its intersection with Main Street. The town used the LFLP workshop to explore this idea and several others. By the conclusion of the workshop the town had settled on an initial design concept to present to key stakeholders and property owners near Hickok Street.

The first step in the design process was to identify the broader context for the farmers market on Hickok Street within the framework of the downtown. The consulting team analyzed both the site and surrounding area from a professional planning perspective and sought the input of participants in the workshop. They expressed concerns about the visibility of Hickok Street, which is partially shielded from the view of motorists on Main Street by building facades and trees. Main Street also has less traffic than nearby Franklin Street, which is both an advantage and disadvantage. While the lower traffic volumes contribute to a more walkable street environment, there are less vehicles passing by the market on Hickok Street. The advantages of the Hickok Street site are that the town controls the street and it has light traffic (less than 2,000 vehicles per day), making it viable to close the street either temporarily or permanently. Hickok is also an anchor on the western edge of the Main Street business district. Building an attractive public space here would enclose the compact business district with a green public space on either end. As Figure 9 below shows, Hickok Street forms one end of the most important block in the downtown from a design character perspective. This block has the most walkable destinations, authentic older buildings and improved streetscape in the downtown area. Another advantage of the Hickok Street location is the Ignite Life Pacific College, which is renovating an old church on the south side of the Hickok and Main Street intersection. The college will eventually have up to 300 students on site and envisions using its campus as a community space. The college and the public space on Hickok Street could make the area an entertainment hub for downtown.



Figure 9 - Downtown Context Map

After weighing the merits of the Hickok Street location, the workshop attendees decided to proceed with developing a design concept for the space. However, the attendees decided that the space should be

designed with future flexibility as a key principle so that it would continue to be a useful space even if the market eventually outgrows it and moves elsewhere in the downtown. This was a key principle in the design approach, which recognized that whatever was designed for this location needed to be a civic amenity for the town for the very long term.

Figure 10 below shows the current market configuration. Vendors park their vehicles on either side of Hickok Street and customers stroll down the center. Workshop participants said this is a convenient set up for vendors, who bring heavy equipment and products to the market. Close access to their vehicles is important.



Figure 10 - Current Market Configuration

Based on a site analysis and extensive participant input and discussion, the consultant team developed a design plan for presentation to the broader community. Figure 11 below is the initial vision that the workshop participants agreed to present to nearby property owners, farmers market vendors, and the town council. The key principles that informed this design are convenience for vendors, traffic calming, walkability, event space, and space for people to sit and linger. The site design plan in Figure 11 shows several key features. First is the transformation of Hickok street into a “shared street.” A shared street is one where the curbs have been eliminated and replaced by decorative paving that separates the street into loose zones for pedestrian and vehicular circulation in an informal shared approach rather than strict relegation of cars away from pedestrians. In other words, the vehicle right-of-way is flush with the sidewalks. Shared streets have the benefit of calming vehicular traffic and enhancing pedestrian traffic through landscaping, street furniture and decorative paving. The vehicular way is purposely not in a straight line and is indicated on the plan in yellow. It follows a meandering path between College Street and Main Street, which also slows speeds and reinforces Hickok Street as a pedestrian space by forcing vehicles to drive slowly through the area. Pedestrian space is delineated in red and is protected from the vehicle space by bollards, but traffic speeds are slow enough that pedestrians feel comfortable walking in the street and crossing it at any point. Bicyclists also feel comfortable using the entire vehicle right-of-way. While the design allows the street right-of-way to become a safe public space, it also maintains street connectivity by allowing vehicles to pass between College and Main Street. This is important because street connectivity is a key principle of urban design in downtown areas.

This vision keeps the farmers market in the street right-of-way, with vendors setting up tents on either side of Hickok Street near their vehicles. However, their vehicles can be temporarily parked in the pedestrian zone on the far side of the bollards. Near the intersection of Hickok and Main Street is a decorative structure that provides an overhanging awning for shade and protection from the elements for market vendors and shoppers, and during other events. The awning hangs over the street right-of-way, but its supporting posts are in the pedestrian zone and protected from vehicles by the bollards. The structure would be sufficiently high to allow for the passage of trucks.

The entrance to Hickok Street from Main Street also features a gateway arch. This arch is envisioned as a steel lattice structure in a traditional style that would have the name of the farmer’s market in steel letters interwoven into the lattice as a formal gate or entry into the space. The location of the arch is shown in Figure 11. It is not shown in Figure 12 because it would have blocked from view other key elements of the design concept.

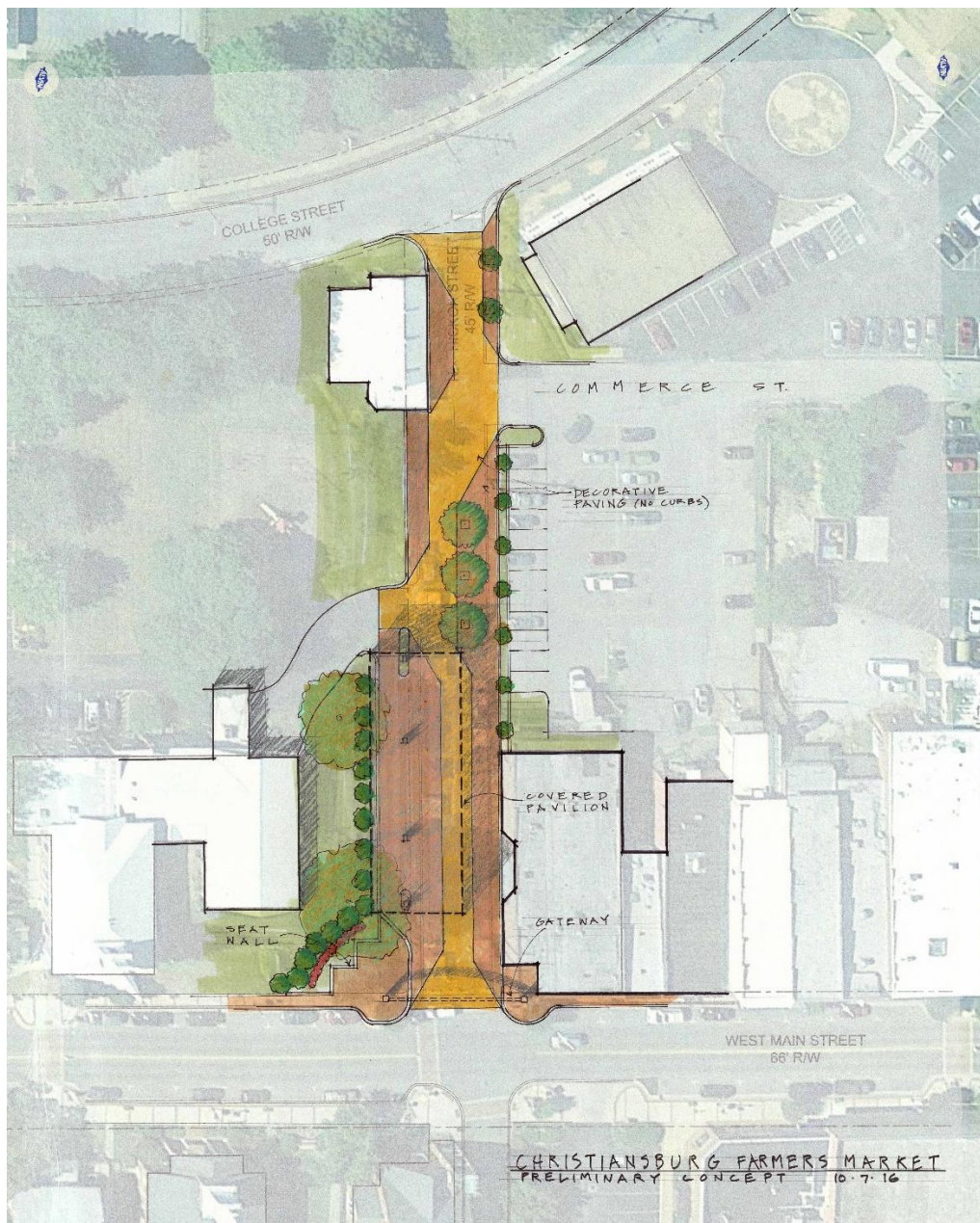


Figure 11 - Site Design Plan for Hickok Street

Figure 12 below shows the design concept at street view as a cross section through the street. This shows Hickok Street during a Thursday market. Vendors are set up on either side of the street and customers are strolling down the center. The street is flush with the curb. The west side of Hickok (left side of the illustration) shows a sitting wall along where the public right-of-way touches the church's right-of-way. Street trees and the overhanging awning provide shade for pedestrians. It also shows the design concept for the permanent awning structure. The structure would be of lightweight steel and wood construction with a curving roof that would collect rainwater which could be channeled into a rain garden on the adjacent church site to provide natural stormwater management. The form of the awning structure is reminiscent of a tree branching structure in keeping with the natural theme of the farmers market but would be designed with modern materials and permanent finishes appropriate to its role as a permanent civic structure and amenity for the town.



Figure 12 - Street Level View of Hickok Street Design Concept

One important caveat regarding this design concept is the need for the town to negotiate with the Christiansburg Presbyterian Church to acquire a portion of its property that abuts Hickok Street. This would be required to enlarge the right-of-way to a sufficient width to allow for the shared street, awning, wide sidewalks, gateway sign, and sitting wall. Town officials plan to discuss the design concept with adjacent property owners before advancing it further.

Implementation and Next Steps

During three post-workshop conference calls the Steering Committee worked to refine this action plan and set priorities for a \$20,000 implementation support award from the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC). This final section describes the priorities and how the town intends to use this funding.

Appalachian Regional Commission Implementation Assistance

The ARC is making available to each of the LFLP communities in its service area implementation funding assistance of up to \$20,000. The funding is to be targeted towards actions identified in the workshop and post-workshop action planning effort. The Steering Committee identified action items 2.2 and 3.3 as the top priorities for this targeted funding assistance. Action 2.2 calls for taking steps to improve the visibility of the market on Hickok Street. The Town may seek ARC assistance to install wayfinding signs. Action 3.3 calls for taking steps to grow the customer base. The Town may seek ARC assistance to procure and install benches and other infrastructure to make the market more welcoming to visitors.

Appendices

- Appendix A – Action Plan Implementation Tables
- Appendix B – Community Data Profile
- Appendix C – Workshop Sign-in Sheets
- Appendix D – Funding Resources
- Appendix E – References
- Appendix F – Workshop Photo Album

Appendix A:

Action Plan Implementation Details

GOAL 1 – *Build*: Design a future market that meets the needs of customers, vendors, and downtown businesses.

Action 1.1: Present and discuss with vendors and nearby property owners the design concept for a public space and market on Hickok Street.

What this is and why it's this important	Vendor input is critical for the long-term success of the market. The design should be practical, convenient, and allow for the vendor pool to expand over time. Nearby property owners are also a key stakeholder group to engage. The initial design concept developed at the LFLP workshop depends on gaining access to some adjacent property. The purpose of these meetings is to get feedback from these key groups. This feedback may be used to refine the design, or consider other options.
Measures of Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Meetings scheduled with the vendors and property owners. ▪ Attendance at the meetings. ▪ Reaching consensus on a design option.
Timeframe	Winter 2016/2017, which will enable greater participation from vendors that are busy during the growing season.
Taking the Lead	LFLP Steering Committee and Farmers Market Committee.
Supporting Cast	Vendors and property owners, and Central Business Advisory Committee.
Costs/Resources Needed	Low cost; Potentially some funds for printing and food.
Possible Funding Sources	Town of Christiansburg

Action 1.2: Present the initial design concept to the Town Council, along with feedback from residents, vendors, and property owners.

What this is and why it's this important	Town Council support is needed to move forward with the design.
Measures of Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Town Council consensus on a design concept. ▪ Number of residents, vendors, and property owners providing feedback.
Timeframe	Short term (0 to 6 months)
Taking the Lead	LFLP Steering Committee, Farmers Market Committee, and Todd Walters (Engineering and Planning)
Supporting Cast	Town Council, residents, extension agents, Central Business Advisory Committee.
Costs/Resources Needed	Low cost; Potentially some funds for printing and staff time.
Possible Funding Sources	Town of Christiansburg

Action 1.3: Consider a feasibility study for the Hickok Street public space and market concept, and research grant and funding opportunities.

What this is and why it's this important	To make sure the project is reasonable, practical, and affordable for the community. The study would also compare the concept with the town's plans for downtown.
Measures of Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identification of funding resources. ▪ Clear understanding of concept feasibility.
Timeframe	Medium term (6 months to 1 year)
Taking the Lead	Town Council (for authorization)
Supporting Cast	Town staff (engineering), LFLP Steering Committee, Farmers Market Committee, outside contractor, Central Business Advisory Committee.
Costs/Resources Needed	Moderate cost. At least \$5K.
Possible Funding Sources	ARC Implementation Assistance, town funds.

Action 1.4: Prepare a preliminary design for the Hickok Street public and market space, and secure funding for construction.

What this is and why it's this important	This is an important step on the path to implementation. The design will work out the details, provide a solid cost estimate, provide a timeline, and provide more visuals for how the space will fit with Main Street and surrounding properties.
Measures of Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Design approved. ▪ Funding secured. ▪ Timeline set. ▪ Community support.
Timeframe	Medium to long term (6 months to 2 years). Follows the feasibility study.
Taking the Lead	Contractor hired to provide support.
Supporting Cast	LFLP Steering Committee, Town engineering.
Costs/Resources Needed	Medium to high. Will depend on the project cost.
Possible Funding Sources	ARC Implementation Assistance; town contributions; VDOT revenue sharing or SMART SCALE for implementing the shared street concept.

GOAL 2 – Market: Promote downtown and the market.

Action 2.1: Conduct a citizen survey to gather insights on what non-customers would like to see at the farmers market, and what it would take to turn them into customers.

What this is and why it's this important	The farmers market has a loyal following, but there is potential to attract more customers, which would benefit the vendors by bringing
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Action 2.1: Conduct a citizen survey to gather insights on what non-customers would like to see at the farmers market, and what it would take to turn them into customers.

	additional revenue. The purpose of this action is to learn about the potential customer base that is not shopping at the market.
Measures of Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Market has more customers. ▪ Market can better target is programming to meet their needs.
Timeframe	Medium term (6 to 12 months).
Taking the Lead	Town of Christiansburg.
Supporting Cast	Health District (Pam); Extension Service (Kelli); schools, religious groups, and university partners to help distribute the survey; regional tourism office; private partners to gain permission to conduct intercept surveys; incentives for school kids to get responses from their parents.
Costs/Resources Needed	Minimal.
Possible Funding Sources	USDA Farmers Market Promotion Program and Virginia Tourism Corporation Marketing Leverage Program (Lisa Bleakley is a point of contact).

Action 2.2: Design and order temporary directional signs to guide people to the market from Franklin and Main Street, and add the market to eventual wayfinding signs.

What this is and why it's this important	The Hickok Street location is not visible from Franklin Street, and sneaks up on Main Street travelers. Clear directional signage on these streets would help raise awareness of the market, and potentially attract people traveling home from work or running errands on these streets. Directing people to parking is also important to the market's success.
Measures of Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Signs are designed. ▪ Signs are installed or in use on market Thursdays.
Timeframe	Short term (0 to 6 months) for temporary signs; Long term (1 to 2 years) for permanent wayfinding signs.
Taking the Lead	Town staff.
Supporting Cast	Town Council and VDOT.
Costs/Resources Needed	Low cost for temporary signs; up to \$7,000 per sign for permanent wayfinding signs.
Possible Funding Sources	Town funds.

Action 2.3: Get an affiliate venue of the Crooked Road music trail in downtown Christiansburg and participate in the Junior Appalachian Musicians program.

What this is and why it's this important	Music is an important part of the Appalachian region's culture. The Crooked Road Music Trail is an important asset that brings tourists to
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Action 2.3: Get an affiliate venue of the Crooked Road music trail in downtown Christiansburg and participate in the Junior Appalachian Musicians program.

	southwest Virginia. Having an affiliate venue in downtown Christiansburg can draw people in and support revitalization and the farmers market.
Measures of Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More people are visiting downtown Christiansburg to see and play music. Formalize partnerships with Ignite and promote the venue.
Timeframe	Long term (1 to 2 years).
Taking the Lead	Regional Tourism Office (Lisa Bleakley) and the town (Andrew Warren).
Supporting Cast	Ignite Life Pacific College (potential space for the venue), SW Virginia Cultural Foundation; Regional Tourism Office; Town public relations.
Costs/Resources Needed	No cost to become an affiliate; About \$10K to start a branch of the Junior Appalachian Musicians program.
Possible Funding Sources	Private investors, grants, town funds.

Action 2.4: Expand the role of the market manager to increase the visibility of the market through promotion at existing events such as Wilderness Trail Days, the Heritage Festival, and Food Truck Rodeos.

What this is and why it's this important	The farmers market manager is a part time position focused on operating the market. Promoting the market also requires time and attendance at other events. Support for additional staff time would help the town promote the market to new groups.
Measures of Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expansion of hours for market manager position. Market is better advertised at existing events.
Timeframe	Short term (0 to 6 months) for a council retreat discussion; long term (1 to 2 years) to make decisions about the market manager position and business development.
Taking the Lead	Town Manager
Supporting Cast	Town Council make the decision, Farmers Market Committee, and town public relations.
Costs/Resources Needed	Medium to high. Up to \$50,000 to make the position full time.
Possible Funding Sources	Town general fund, Montgomery Regional Tourism Council.

GOAL 3 – *Operate*: Grow the vendor and customer base.

Action 3.1: Organize a meeting with vendors over the winter to debrief on what worked well and what might work better in 2017.

What this is and why it's this important	The vendors are busy during the growing season, making it difficult to obtain their input to decisions about how the market is operated. But their input is critical to the long-term success of the market. So having a meeting during the winter months is an appropriate solution.
Measures of Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number of vendors that attend. ▪ Improvements made to market operations. ▪ Feedback during the following season indicates the changes have been beneficial.
Timeframe	Short term (0 to 6 months). The meeting is ideally during the winter months when vendors are more likely to attend. 1 st Thursday of November.
Taking the Lead	Farmers market manager.
Supporting Cast	Vendors, extension agent, town staff, health department.
Costs/Resources Needed	Low cost. Food and refreshments, market manager's time.
Possible Funding Sources	Town and farmers market budget.

Action 3.2: Consider combining the special events and farmers market management into a single position or program with 1 to 1.5 full time equivalent staff.

What this is and why it's this important	The town is focused on increasing vitality downtown and is looking at several programs to accomplish this goal. To realize its full potential, downtown could use a staff person that is dedicated to managing all future programs centered on downtown. Consolidating the special events and farmers market management could help to make downtown events a success and create new opportunities for events.
Measures of Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ More downtown events. ▪ More downtown visitors. ▪ Greater awareness of downtown events.
Timeframe	Short term (0 to 6 months).
Taking the Lead	Town Manager
Supporting Cast	Town Council
Costs/Resources Needed	Medium cost. 1 to 1.5 full time equivalent staff.
Possible Funding Sources	Shared among stakeholders including town, county tourism, and potentially state/federal grants.

Action 3.3: Increase awareness and grow the customer base of the farmers market by using marketing tools such as direct mail, a water bill flyer, and social media, and installing infrastructure such as benches to make the area more welcoming.

What this is and why it's this important	Increasing the vendor base is critical to the long-term success of the farmers market. More customers will mean more income for vendors, which make them likely to attend the market each week, and can help attract additional vendors.
Measures of Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Market sales. ▪ Foot traffic. ▪ Happy vendors.
Timeframe	Mid term (6 to 12 months).
Taking the Lead	Farmers market manager and town staff.
Supporting Cast	Town public relations (social media support), Downtown Christiansburg Inc., Central Business Advisory Committee (council appointed).
Costs/Resources Needed	Medium cost to print and mail flyers. Medium cost to procure and install benches and other infrastructure to support the market.
Possible Funding Sources	Town funds with potential support from downtown businesses. USDA's Farmers Market Promotion Program. ARC implementation assistance.

Action 3.4: Find out what the other 16 farmers markets in the region require of vendors for liability insurance.

What this is and why it's this important	The town has identified its liability insurance requirement for vendors as a potential obstacle to getting more vendors to participate. The purpose of this action is to talk with each of the market managers in the region to see if the town's requirements are in line with the requirements of other markets, especially those run by local governments.
Measures of Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Information that allows Christiansburg to compare its liability insurance requirements with other markets in the region, state, and nation.
Timeframe	Medium term (6 to 12 months).
Taking the Lead	Farmers market manager.
Supporting Cast	Virginia Farmers Market Association.
Costs/Resources Needed	Low cost. Farmers market manager's time.
Possible Funding Sources	Town funds for staff time.

GOAL 4 – *Incentivize: Attract private investment to downtown properties.*

Action 4.1: Create a plan and seek funding for a façade improvement matching grant program for the downtown.

What this is and why it's this important	Downtown has many historic buildings. However, as in many towns across the state and country, the historic facades have been altered. In response, many towns have used a façade grant improvement program to incentivize building owners to restore their facades to their historic character or to make other improvements to increase the attractiveness of the downtown district.
Measures of Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program is established. Property owners are investing their own funds in reaction to the program matching funds.
Timeframe	Mid term (6 months to 1 year).
Taking the Lead	Town Manager/Assistant Town Manager
Supporting Cast	Farmers Market Committee, Cooperative Extension, and Central Business Advisory Committee.
Costs/Resources Needed	Medium cost. Funds to provide matching grants and to study the feasibility of such a program.
Possible Funding Sources	Town funds, USDA Rural Business Development Grant (for revolving loan fund), Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, and the Virginia Department of Historic Resources.

Action 4.2: Develop a conceptual plan to connect downtown to the Huckleberry Trail.

What this is and why it's this important	The trail terminates about one mile from downtown Christiansburg. Connecting it to downtown Christiansburg would bring more visitors downtown and potentially making the area more attractive for commercial and residential development. It would also be another mechanism for bringing shoppers to the downtown farmers market. Once complete, people could walk or bicycle from downtown Blacksburg to downtown Christiansburg.
Measures of Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify a preferred route. Develop a plan. Trail is extended to downtown Christiansburg.
Timeframe	Long term (1 to 2 years).
Taking the Lead	Town Planning, Town Engineering, consulting team.
Supporting Cast	VDOT for financial support.
Costs/Resources Needed	Funding for a study and eventually construction.
Possible Funding Sources	The Town, SmartScale state competitive transportation grants, VDOT Transportation Alternatives Program, Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation Recreational Trails Program.

Action 4.3: Study the feasibility of other incentives the town could provide for downtown development and redevelopment, including a service district to fund enhanced services downtown, a tourism development zone, and property tax abatement to encourage improvements.

What this is and why it's this important	The town is making downtown a priority and would like to attract new businesses. Other towns in the state and nation have used incentives to draw business back into the downtown. This approach could work in Christiansburg, but the town would need to decide which incentives it's willing to offer and understand what could work in the town.
Measures of Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implement program. ▪ Businesses are using the program. ▪ At least 2 new restaurants and a microbrewery open downtown.
Timeframe	Long term (1 to 2 years).
Taking the Lead	Town Council with support of staff and potentially consultants.
Supporting Cast	Central Business District Committee, Montgomery County Tourism, property and business owners, citizens, and town staff.
Costs/Resources Needed	Medium to high depending on the incentives the town decides to pursue.
Possible Funding Sources	Town funds and potentially grants to study the options.

Appendix B:

Community Data Profile

This appendix provides some key data impacting Christiansburg’s food system across a number of topic areas: demographics, socioeconomics, health, food insecurity, grocery store access, business, agriculture, and community food assets.

Abbreviations

ACS American Community Survey
 AMS Agricultural Marketing Service
 BLS Bureau of Labor Statistics
 BRFSS Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System
 CDC Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
 CES Consumer Expenditure Survey
 CPS Current Population Survey
 NASS National Agricultural Statistics Service
 SAIPE Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates
 SFMNP Senior Farmers’ Market Nutrition Program
 SNAP Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
 TRF The Reinvestment Fund
 USDA United States Department of Agriculture
 WIC Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children

DEMOGRAPHICS	Jurisdiction	Statistic
Percentage minority population ¹	Christiansburg, VA	11.47%
Percentage Black ²	Montgomery County	3.85%
Percentage Hispanic ³	Montgomery County	2.69%
Percentage Asian ⁴	Montgomery County	5.39%

SOCIOECONOMICS	Jurisdiction	Statistic
Poverty rate ⁵	Christiansburg, VA	10.76%
	Virginia	8.03%
Child poverty rate ⁶	Montgomery County	17.2%

¹ Healthy Food Access Portal Mapping Tool, <http://www.healthyfoodaccess.org/get-started/research-your-community>

² USDA Food Environment Atlas, <http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-environment-atlas/go-to-the-atlas.aspx>

³ Ibid.

⁴ USDA Food Environment Atlas, <http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-environment-atlas/go-to-the-atlas.aspx>

⁵ Healthy Food Access Portal Mapping Tool, <http://www.healthyfoodaccess.org/get-started/research-your-community>

⁶ USDA Food Environment Atlas, <http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-environment-atlas/go-to-the-atlas.aspx>

Median household income⁷	Christiansburg, VA	\$50,348
	Virginia	\$63,907
Local median household income as a share of area median income⁸	Various Census Tracts in Christiansburg, VA	96%-145.76% of area median income to
USDA-defined low-income (>20% poverty or median family income <80% state or metro area median) ⁹	Northeast Christiansburg, VA Census tract	Yes
Percentage students eligible for free lunch¹⁰	Montgomery County	30.38%
Percentage students eligible for reduced-price lunch	Montgomery County	6.28%

HEALTH¹²	Jurisdiction	Statistic
Adult obesity rate	Christiansburg, VA	28.61%
	Virginia	27.09%
Adult diabetes rate	Christiansburg, VA	9.15%
	Virginia	9.84%
Coronary heart disease death rate	Montgomery County	230 deaths per 100,000
	Virginia	171.8 deaths per 100,000
Percentage adults consuming less than 1 serving fruits and vegetables per day	Christiansburg, VA	9.55%
	Virginia	7.46%
Percentage adults consuming less than 5 servings fruits and vegetables per day	Christiansburg, VA	85.56%
	Virginia	82.24%

FOOD INSECURITY	Jurisdiction	Statistic
Food insecurity rate¹³	Montgomery County	14.8% (14,050 people)
	Virginia	11.9%

⁷ Healthy Food Access Portal Mapping Tool, <http://www.healthyfoodaccess.org/get-started/research-your-community>

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ USDA Food Access Research Atlas, <http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-access-research-atlas/go-to-the-atlas.aspx>

¹⁰ USDA Food Environment Atlas, <http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-environment-atlas/go-to-the-atlas.aspx>

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Healthy Food Access Portal Mapping Tool, <http://www.healthyfoodaccess.org/get-started/research-your-community>

¹³ Feeding America Map the Meal Gap, <http://map.feedingamerica.org/county/2013/overall>

Childhood food insecurity rate¹⁴	Montgomery County	18.9%
	Virginia	16.8%
Average meal cost¹⁵	Montgomery County	\$3.19
	Virginia	\$2.92
Additional money required to meet food needs¹⁶	Montgomery County	\$7,934,000
Estimated SNAP eligibility among food-insecure populations¹⁷	Christiansburg, VA	70%
	Virginia	49%
Percentage receiving SNAP¹⁸	Montgomery County	8.54%
	Virginia	11.43%

GROCERY STORE ACCESS	Jurisdiction	Statistic
Low grocery store access at 1 mile (urban) and 10 miles (rural)¹⁹	Christiansburg, VA	Yes
Low grocery store access at ½ mile (urban) and 10 miles (rural)²⁰	Christiansburg, VA	Yes
Low vehicle access (>100 households have no access to a vehicle and live >1/2 mile from supermarket) ²¹	Christiansburg, VA	Yes (all Census tracts except northwest)

BUSINESS: Spending potential	Jurisdiction	Statistic
Average amount spent on food at home per household per year²²	Christiansburg, VA	\$4,217
Average amount spent on fruits and vegetables per household per year²³	Christiansburg, VA	\$798

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Healthy Food Access Portal Mapping Tool, <http://www.healthyfoodaccess.org/get-started/research-your-community>

¹⁹ USDA Food Access Research Atlas, <http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-access-research-atlas/go-to-the-atlas.aspx>

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

²² ESRI Business Analyst Retail Goods and Services Expenditures, <http://bao.arcgis.com>

²³ Ibid.

Average amount spent on food away from home per household per year²⁴	Christiansburg, VA	\$2,695
Total spending on food and beverages per household per year²⁵	Christiansburg, VA	\$49,053,000
Total spending on specialty store supply per household per year²⁶	Christiansburg, VA	\$1,062,000
Spending potential index for food at home and fruits and vegetables²⁷	Christiansburg, VA	81
Spending potential index for food away from home²⁸	Christiansburg, VA	81

BUSINESS: Grocery	Jurisdiction	Statistic
Number of grocery stores²⁹	Christiansburg, VA	13
Number of speciality food stores³⁰	Christiansburg, VA	3
Demand for grocery retail (dollars and square feet)³¹	Block groups within Christiansburg, VA	2,420-5,620 square feet
Demand (retail potential) for grocery stores³²	Christiansburg, VA	\$49,053,000
Demand (retail potential) for specialty food stores³³	Christiansburg, VA	\$1,514,000
Supply (retail sales) for grocery stores³⁴	Christiansburg, VA	\$81,914,000
Supply (retail sales) for specialty food stores³⁵	Christiansburg, VA	\$1,062,000
Retail gap (potential minus sales) for grocery stores³⁶	Christiansburg, VA	-\$32,891,000
Retail gap (potential minus sales) for specialty food stores³⁷	Christiansburg, VA	\$451,813
Leakage/surplus factor for grocery stores³⁸	Christiansburg, VA	-25.1, meaning people come in

²⁴ ESRI Business Analyst Retail Goods and Services Expenditures, <http://bao.arcgis.com>

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ ESRI Business Analyst Retail MarketPlace Profile, <http://bao.arcgis.com>

³⁰ ESRI Business Analyst Retail MarketPlace Profile, <http://bao.arcgis.com>

³¹ Healthy Food Access Portal Mapping Tool, <http://www.healthyfoodaccess.org/get-started/research-your-community>

³² ESRI Business Analyst Retail MarketPlace Profile, <http://bao.arcgis.com>

³³ ESRI Business Analyst Retail MarketPlace Profile, <http://bao.arcgis.com>

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid.

		from outside city
Leakage/surplus factor for specialty food stores³⁹	Christiansburg, VA	17.5, meaning people leave city limits

BUSINESS: Non-grocery⁴⁰	Jurisdiction	Statistic
Number of full-service restaurants	Christiansburg, VA	36
Number of limited-service restaurants	Christiansburg, VA	43
Demand (retail potential) for full-service restaurants, special food services, and drinking places	Christiansburg, VA	\$16,288,000
Demand (retail potential) for limited-service restaurants, special food services, and drinking places	Christiansburg, VA	\$12,490,000
Supply (retail sales) for full-service restaurants, special food services, and drinking places	Christiansburg, VA	\$22,507,000
Supply (retail sales) for full-service restaurants, special food services, and drinking places	Christiansburg, VA	\$41,633,000
Retail gap (potential minus sales) for full-service restaurants, special food services, and drinking places	Christiansburg, VA	-\$6,219,000
Retail gap (potential minus sales) for limited-service restaurants, special food services, and drinking places	Christiansburg, VA	-\$29,142,000
Leakage/surplus factor for full-service restaurants, special food services, and drinking places	Christiansburg, VA	-16, meaning people come into city limits
Leakage/surplus factor for limited-service restaurants, special food services, and drinking places	Christiansburg, VA	-53.8, meaning people come into city limits

AGRICULTURE	Jurisdiction	Statistic
Change in number of farms <9 acres, 10-49 acres, 50-179 acres, etc., 2007-2012⁴¹	Montgomery County, VA	Significant decrease
Farms with direct sales⁴²	Montgomery County, VA	42

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ ESRI Business Analyst Retail MarketPlace Profile, <http://bao.arcgis.com>

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² USDA Food Environment Atlas, <http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-environment-atlas/go-to-the-atlas.aspx>

Total amount of direct farm sales⁴³	Montgomery County, VA	\$171,000
Percentages of farms with sales <\$10k, \$10k-250k, >\$250k⁴⁴	Montgomery County, VA	65.34%, , 30.35%, 4.31%

COMMUNITY FOOD ASSETS	Jurisdiction	Statistic
Farmers market locations accepting SNAP, WIC, and SFMNP⁴⁵	Christiansburg, VA	Accepts SNAP but not WIC or SFMNP

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ag Census Web Maps, http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2012/Online_Resources/Ag_Census_Web_Maps/

⁴⁵ Ibid.

Appendix C:

Workshop Participants

Workshop Attendees: Sign-In Sheets Day One

Below are images of the workshop attendee, sign-in sheets.

October 6-7, 2016

Christiansburg, VA



LOCAL FOODS, LOCAL PLACES

Name	Title	Affiliation/Org	Telephone	E-Mail Address
Andrew Wynne	Environmental Scientist	EPA Region 3	215-814-5312	wynne.andrew@epa.gov
Lynn Klappich	Env. Engineer/Citizen	Citizen	540-230-7419	klappich@daa.com
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Randy Wingfield	Assistant Town Mgr	Town of Christiansburg	540-382-6128 x1119	rwingfield@christiansburg.org
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Meissa Powell	PR Director	Town of Christiansburg	540-382-6128	mpowell@christiansburg.org
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TODD WATSON	Assistant Mgr of Environment	Town of Christiansburg	(540) 382-6120	twatson@christiansburg.org
Wayne Nelson	Engr. Director	Town of Christiansburg	(540) 382-6120	wnelson@christiansburg.org
JUSTIN SANDERS	Board Member	Downtown Christiansburg Inc	276-608-1640	jsanders@downtownchristiansburg.org
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Samuel Bishop	Town Council	Council		SB
Brea Hopkins	Planner	Mont. Co.	540-354-2148	hopkinsb@montgomerycountygov.edu
Carlie Shealy	MPH Student	Virginia Tech	843-364-7499	ecse@vt.edu

October 6-7, 2016

Christiansburg, VA



Name	Title	Affiliation/Org	Telephone	E-Mail Address
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Jim Ray	Health Educ	NRTH	540-585-3296	jay@parkrealty.com
Angie Hall	Deputy District Director	Congressman Morgan Griffin	540-381-567	angie.hall@mail.house.gov
Bill Aldridge	TOC	TOC		waldridge@christiansburgva.org
Mike Barber	TOC	TOC	540-818-6179	mbarber@christiansburgva.org
Meredith Ledlie Johnson	Coordinator	SNAP-Ed / VT	540-231-1704	meredit@VT.edu
Sharon Scott		Chairman		
Ray Alcorn	Pres.	Papa Commercial Real Estate	540-808-4746	ray@parkrealty.com
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October 6-7, 2016

Christiansburg, VA



Name	Title	Affiliation/Org	Telephone	E-Mail Address
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Vanessa Ingles	Area Specialist	USDA-Rural Development	540-382-0267 x114	vanessa.ingles@va.usda.gov
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Randy Wingfield	Assistant Town Mgr.	TOC	(540) 382-6128 x119	rwingfield@christiansburgva.org
Kelli Scott	VCE Extension Agent	VCE	540 382-5790	kescott1@vt.edu
Jason Jespie		Renaissance Planning consultant	434 296 2554	jespie@citiesthatwork.com
Andrew Warren	Town of Christiansburg Planning Director	USDA/RS	540 382-6120 x130	awarren@christiansburgva.org
Ann HERRING				
BARRY ROBINSON	Sustainable Ag Hort Consultant	Self-employed/FM Steering Cmttee/citizen	(540) 230-1695	SustainAg@gmail.com
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October 6-7, 2016

Christiansburg, VA



Name	Title	Affiliation/Org	Telephone	E-Mail Address
Terry Caldwell	Dir. of Ag. & Ext.	Town	381-7665	tcaldwell@christiansburg.org
Vanessa Ingles	Area Specialist	USDA	540-382-0267 x119	Vanessa.ingles@va.usda.gov
Dave Hughes	Biz Dev Spec	ARC	202-884-7740	dhughes@arc.gov
Michael Gottfredson	Regional Planner	Shenandoah Valley Regional Commission	540-639-9313	michaelg@svrvc.org
Sarah Belcher	Market Manager	Town	540-998-2939	sbelcher@christiansburg.org
Lisa Blakely	Dir. of Tourism	Montgomery Co. Regional Tourism	540-394-2120 x4225	Lisa@GotoMontVA.com

Appendix D:

Funding Resources

Local Food Systems Funding Programs – Federal/State

Cities and towns can strengthen their local food systems through a variety of federal projects and programs. The USDA and other federal agencies are committed to supporting local food systems – whether it's by working with producers, engaging with communities, financing local processing and distribution, or helping retailers develop local food connections. Below is a list of just some of the resources available. This information and more can be found on the **USDA's Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food** initiative website at www.usda.gov/knowyourfarmer.

USDA Resources in the Local Food Supply Chain (overview)

USDA is committed to supporting robust regional food economies across the food chain through the programs noted below. This document provides an overview listing of the many USDA programs, across departments, that fund elements of the local food supply chain including: land conservation, production, processing, aggregation/distribution, and markets/consumers. This one pager has hyper-links to the many USDA programs along the supply chain:

http://www.usda.gov/documents/FoodSupplyChain_v8.pdf

USDA Agricultural Marketing Service

Farmers' Market and Local Food Promotion Program

This new program makes approximately \$30 million available annually to farmers markets, other direct producer-to-consumer venues, and other businesses in the local food supply chain. Funding is evenly split between two components: Farmers Market Promotion Program (FMPP) for direct consumer-to-producer marketing opportunities, and Local Food Promotion Program (LFPP) for local and regional food business enterprises. Both FMPP and LFPP have a maximum grant of \$500,000, and the LFPP applicants must have 25% matching funds or in-kind donations. By supporting development and marketing activities for farmers markets, food hubs, roadside stands, agri-tourism activities and other local and regional enterprises, the grants can help small and mid-sized farmers access new markets and meet growing consumer demand. Agricultural cooperatives, producer organizations, nonprofit corporations, farmers market organizations, Tribal and local governments, and other business entities are among those eligible to apply for the grants. For more information, visit

<https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/grants/fmpp> (FMPP) or
<https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/grants/lfpp> (LFPP).

Specialty Crop Block Grant Program

The purpose of USDA's Specialty Crop Block Grant Program (SCBGP) is to enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops, which include fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, horticulture and nursery crops, including floriculture. These investments strengthen rural American communities by supporting local and regional markets and improving access to fresh, high quality fruits and vegetables for millions of Americans. These grants also help growers make food safety enhancements, solve research needs, and make better informed decisions to increase profitability and sustainability. USDA encourages states to submit projects related to the following priority areas: benefitting underserved communities and veterans, improving producer capacity to comply with the

requirements of the Food Safety Modernization Act, developing adaptation and mitigation strategies for farmers in drought-stricken regions of the country, increasing opportunities for new and beginning farmers, developing strong local and regional food systems, protecting pollinator habitats and improving pollinator health, and supporting the growth of organic specialty crops. Organizations or individuals interested in the SCBGP should contact their state departments of agriculture – which administer the grant program – for more information. The 2014 Farm Bill significantly increased funding for the program. More information is available here:

<https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/grants/scbgp> .

Specialty Crop Multi-State Program

Created by the 2014 Farm Bill, the SCMP funds projects to develop solutions to problems affecting the specialty crop industry across state boundaries. It is designed to support food safety and research; address plant pests, disease, and crop-specific issues; and increase marketing opportunities for specialty crops which include fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, horticulture and nursery crops, including floriculture. USDA encourages partners to submit projects related to the following priority areas: benefitting underserved communities and veterans, improving producer capacity to comply with the requirements of the Food Safety Modernization Act, developing adaptation and mitigation strategies for farmers in drought-stricken regions of the country, increasing opportunities for new and beginning farmers, developing strong local and regional food systems, protecting pollinator habitats and improving pollinator health, and supporting the growth of organic specialty crops. Specialty crop producer associations and groups, other state agencies, Tribal governments, universities, non-profits, and other stakeholder groups and organizations can submit proposals to one of the participating state departments of agriculture. Proposals must include partners located in at least two different states to qualify. More information is available at

<https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/grants/scmp>.

Organic Certification Cost Share Programs

The 2014 Farm Bill also gave USDA new tools and resources to support the growing \$35 billion organic industry by more than doubling previous support through the organic cost-share programs, making certification more accessible than ever for even the smallest certified producers and handlers. Organic producers and handlers can now apply directly through their State contacts to get reimbursed for up to 75 percent of the costs of organic certification, up to an annual maximum of \$750 per certificate. More information is available at

<https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/grants/occsp> .

Federal State Marketing Improvement Program (FSMIP)

This grant program provides matching funds to state departments of agriculture, state agricultural experiment stations, and other appropriate state agencies to assist in exploring new market opportunities for U.S. food and agricultural products, and to encourage research and innovation aimed at improving the efficiency and performance of the marketing system. FSMIP is designed to support research projects that improve the marketing, transportation, and distribution of U.S. agricultural products. FSMIP is a collaborative effort between Federal and State governments – matching funds go toward projects that bring new opportunities to farmers and ranchers. More information is available at <https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/grants/fsmip> .

USDA Rural Development

Business and Industry Guaranteed Loan Program

The purpose of USDA's Business and Industry (B&I) Guaranteed Loan Program is to improve, develop, or finance business, industry, and employment and improve the economic and environmental climate in rural communities. Through this program, USDA provides guarantees on loans made by private lenders to help new and existing businesses gain access to affordable capital by lowering the lender's risk and allowing for more favorable interest rates and terms. Projects that are eligible under the locally or regionally produced agricultural food products initiative may be located in urban areas as well as rural areas. Locally or regionally produced agricultural food products are loan guarantees made to establish and facilitate entities that process, distribute, aggregate, store, and/or market locally or regionally produced agricultural food products to support community development and farm and ranch income. The term "locally or regionally produced agricultural food product" means any agricultural food product that is raised, produced, and distributed in the locality or region in which the final product is marketed, so that the total distance that the product is transported is less than 400 miles from the origin of the product, or in the State in which the product is produced. The Business and Industry Loan Guarantee program is available on a rolling basis throughout the year. More information is available here: <http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/business-industry-loan-guarantees/>

Community Facilities Direct Loan and Grant Program

USDA's Community Facilities Direct Loan and Grant program provides infrastructure support in rural communities under 20,000 people. Grants and loans have been used for commercial kitchens, farmers markets, food banks, cold storage facilities, food hubs and other local food infrastructure. Grants are available to public entities such as municipalities, counties, and special-purpose districts, as well as non-profits and tribal governments. Grant funds can be used to construct, enlarge, or improve community facilities and can include the purchase of equipment required for a facility's operation. More information is available here: <http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/community-facilities-direct-loan-grant-program>.

Socially-Disadvantaged Groups Grant (SDGG)

The primary objective of the SDGG program is to provide technical assistance to socially-disadvantaged groups through cooperatives and Cooperative Development Centers. Each fiscal year, applications are requested through a Notice published in the Federal Register and an announcement posted on Grants.gov. Examples of technical assistance are feasibility studies, business plans, strategic planning and leadership training. More information is available here: <http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/socially-disadvantaged-groups-grant>

Value-Added Producer Grants (VAPG)

The primary objective of USDA's Value-Added Producer Grant Program (VAPG) is to help agricultural producers enter into value-added activities related to the processing and/or marketing of bio-based value-added products. VAPG grants are available to producers or producer groups in urban and rural areas. Eligible projects include business plans to market value-added products, evaluating the feasibility of new marketing opportunities, expanding capacity for locally and regionally-grown products, or expanding processing capacity. More information is available here: <http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/value-added-producer-grants>.

Rural Business Development Grants

This USDA-RD program essentially combines the former Rural Business Enterprise Grant program (RBEG) and the Rural Business Opportunity Grant program (RBOG). The competitive grant program supports targeted technical assistance, training and other activities leading to the development or expansion of small and emerging private businesses in rural areas. Programmatic activities are separated into enterprise or opportunity type grant activities. Towns, cities, state agencies, and non-profit organizations are among the eligible applicants.

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.

For more information, visit: <http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/rural-business-development-grants>.

USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service **Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)**

EQIP provides cost-share and technical assistance to farmers and ranchers in planning and implementing conservation practices that improve the natural resources (e.g. soil, water, wildlife) on their agricultural land and forestland. A practice supported through EQIP is the installation of seasonal high tunnels (also known as hoop houses), which are unheated greenhouses that can extend a producer's growing season while conserving resources. In addition, EQIP can help producers transition to organic production or help those growers already certified maintain their certification. More information is available here:

<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/financial/eqip/>.

USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture

Community Food Projects Competitive Grant Program

Community Food Projects are designed to increase food security in communities by bringing the whole food system together to assess strengths, establish linkages, and create systems that improve the self-reliance of community members over their food needs. Grants are intended to help eligible private nonprofit entities in need of a one-time infusion of federal assistance to establish and carryout multipurpose community food projects. More information is available here:

http://www.nifa.usda.gov/funding/cfp/cfp_synopsis.html.

Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive (FINI) Grant Program

The 2014 Farm Bill created this program, which supports projects to increase the purchase of fruits and vegetables among people participating in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. Applicants may propose small pilot projects (up to \$100,000 for 1 year), multi-year community-based projects (up to \$500,000 for up to 4 years), or larger-scale multi-year projects (more than \$500,000 for up to 4 years). USDA is looking to fund innovative projects that will test community based strategies for how to increase the purchase of fruits and vegetables by SNAP participants through incentives at the point of purchase. USDA will give priority to projects in underserved communities and to projects that provide locally- or regionally-produced fruits and vegetables. More information is available here:

<http://nifa.usda.gov/program/food-insecurity-nutrition-incentive-fini-grant-program>

Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program

This program provides grants to organizations that train, educate, and provide outreach and technical assistance to new and beginning farmers on production, marketing, business management, legal strategies and other topics critical to running a successful operation. The Agriculture Act of 2014 provided an additional \$20 million per year for 2014 through 2018. The reasons for the renewed interest in beginning farmer and rancher programs are: the rising average age of U.S. farmers, the 8% projected decrease in the number of farmers and ranchers between 2008 and 2018, and the growing recognition that new programs are needed to address the needs of the next generation of beginning farmers and ranchers. More information is available here:

<https://nifa.usda.gov/program/beginning-farmer-and-rancher-development-program-bfrdp>.

Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) program

SBIR grants help small businesses conduct high quality research related to important scientific problems and opportunities in agriculture. Research is intended to increase the commercialization of innovations and foster participation by women-owned and socially and economically disadvantaged small businesses in technological innovation. Grants can be applied towards many areas of research, including projects that manage the movement of products throughout a supply chain, develop processes that save energy, and capture and relay real-time market data. More information is available here:

<http://nifa.usda.gov/program/small-business-innovation-research-program>.

Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE)

The mission of the SARE program is to advance sustainable innovations in American agriculture. SARE is uniquely grassroots, administered by four regional offices guided by administrative councils of local experts. Non-profit organizations, researchers, and individuals producers are eligible to apply. More information is available here: <http://www.sare.org/>.

Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI)

AFRI is charged with funding research, education, and extension grants and integrated research, extension, and education grants that address key problems of national, regional, and multi-state importance in sustaining all components of agriculture, including farm efficiency and profitability, ranching, renewable energy, forestry (both urban and agroforestry), aquaculture, rural communities and entrepreneurship, human nutrition, food safety, biotechnology, and conventional breeding. Providing this support requires that AFRI advances fundamental sciences in support of agriculture and coordinates opportunities to build on these discoveries. This will necessitate efforts in education and extension that deliver science-based knowledge to people, allowing them to make informed practical decisions. For more information: <http://www.nifa.usda.gov/funding/afri/afri.html>.

USDA Farm Service Agency

Microloan Programs

The Farm Service Agency's (FSA) Microloan Programs are available to agricultural producers in rural and urban areas and provides loans of up to \$50,000 for Farm Operating and Farm Ownership. Microloan Programs may be used for essential operating expenses - equipment, feed, livestock, fertilizer, and irrigation expenses - or funds may be used to purchase a farm or ranch. Streamlined paperwork and flexible eligibility requirements accommodate new farmers and small farm operations. Larger loans are also available through FSA. Contact your local FSA office and visit [http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Assets/USDA-FSA-Public/usdafiles/FactSheets/2016/FACT%20SHEET%20-%20Microloans%20\(Revised%2002-29-16\).pdf](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Assets/USDA-FSA-Public/usdafiles/FactSheets/2016/FACT%20SHEET%20-%20Microloans%20(Revised%2002-29-16).pdf) for more information.

Farm Storage Facility Loans

These loans finance new construction or refurbishment of farm storage facilities. This includes cold storage and cooling, circulating, monitoring equipment, and pack lines which can be particularly important to those growing for local fresh markets. Interested producers should contact their local FSA office and visit <https://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/price-support/facility-loans/farm-storage/index>.

Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP)

NAP provides financial assistance to producers of noninsurable crops when low yields, loss of inventory, or prevented planting occur due to natural disasters. NAP fees are waived for new, limited resource, and traditionally underserved farmers. For more information visit <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/disaster-assistance-program/noninsured-crop-disaster-assistance/index>

USDA Food and Nutrition Service

Farm to School Grants

Farm to School Grants are available to help schools source more food locally, and to provide complementary educational activities to students that emphasize food, farming, and nutrition. Schools, state and local agencies, tribal organizations, producers and producer groups, and non-profits are eligible to apply. Planning, implementation, and support service grants are available from \$20,000 to \$100,000. More information and resources are available at www.fns.usda.gov/farmtoschool/farm-school.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

As of 2014, more than 2,500 farmers' markets nationwide are set up to accept SNAP's electronic benefit transfer (EBT) cards. Benefits can be used to purchase many of the foods sold at farmers' markets, including fruits and vegetables, dairy products, breads and cereals, and meat and poultry. They can also purchase seeds and plants which produce food for the household to eat. More information about SNAP benefits at farmers' markets is available from USDA here:

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/ebt/snap-and-farmers-markets>.

WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP)

This program provides coupons for local food purchases to women, infants, and children that are eligible for WIC benefits. The coupons can be used to purchase eligible foods from farmers, farmers' markets, and roadside stands. Only farmers, farmers' markets, and roadside stands authorized by the State agency may accept and redeem FMNP coupons. Individuals who exclusively sell produce grown by someone else such as wholesale distributors, cannot be authorized to participate in the FMNP. For more information, visit: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/fmnp/overview>.

Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program

This program, similar to FMNP, awards grants to States, United States Territories, and federally-recognized Indian tribal governments to provide low-income seniors with coupons that can be exchanged for eligible foods (fruits, vegetables, honey, and fresh-cut herbs) at farmers' markets, roadside stands, and community supported agriculture programs. For more information, visit: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/sfmnp/overview>.

Funding Programs in Support of Other Livable Community Projects

The programs listed below are popular resources that support a variety of livability projects. The publication "Federal Resources for Sustainable Rural Communities" is a useful guide from the HUD-DOT-EPA Partnerships for Sustainable Communities that describes several additional resources:

https://www.sustainablecommunities.gov/sites/sustainablecommunities.gov/files/docs/federal_resources_rural.pdf

National Endowment for the Arts Our Town Grants

The National Endowment for the Arts' Our Town grant program is the agency's primary creative placemaking grants program. Projects may include arts engagement, cultural planning, and design activities. The grants range from \$25,000 to \$200,000. Our Town invests in creative and innovative projects in which communities, together with their arts and design organizations and artists, seek to:

- Improve their quality of life;
- Encourage greater creative activity;
- Foster stronger community identity and a sense of place; and
- Revitalize economic development.

More information: <http://arts.gov/grants/apply-grant/grants-organizations>

EPA Brownfields Programs

- **Area-Wide Planning Pilot Program:** Brownfields Area-Wide Planning is an EPA grant program which provides funding to recipients to conduct research, technical assistance and training that will result in an area-wide plan and implementation strategy for key brownfield sites, which will help inform the assessment, cleanup and reuse of brownfields properties and promote area-wide revitalization. Funding is directed to specific areas, such as a neighborhood, downtown district, local commercial corridor, or city block, affected by a single large or multiple brownfield sites. More information: <https://www.epa.gov/brownfields/types-brownfields-grant-funding#tab-5>.
- **Assessment Grants:** Assessment grants provide funding for a grant recipient to inventory, characterize, assess, and conduct planning and community involvement related to brownfields sites. Eligible entities may apply for \$200,000 and up to \$350,000 with a waiver. More information: <https://www.epa.gov/brownfields/types-brownfields-grant-funding#tab-1>.
- **Revolving Loan Fund Grants:** Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) grants provide funding for a grant recipient to capitalize a revolving loan fund and to provide subgrants to carry out cleanup activities at brownfield sites. More information is available here: <https://www.epa.gov/brownfields/types-brownfields-grant-funding#tab-2>.
- **Cleanup Grants:** Cleanup grants provide funding for a grant recipient to carry out cleanup activities at brownfield sites. An eligible entity may apply for up to \$200,000 per site. More information is available here: <https://www.epa.gov/brownfields/types-brownfields-grant-funding#tab-3>.

Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)

The Federal Highway Administration's TAP provides funding for programs and projects defined as transportation alternatives, including on- and off-road pedestrian and bicycle facilities, infrastructure projects for improving non-driver access to public transportation and enhanced mobility, community improvement activities, and environmental mitigation; recreational trail program projects; safe routes to school projects; and projects for planning, designing, or constructing boulevards and other roadways largely in the right-of-way of former Interstate System routes or other divided highways. In

rural areas, these funds are typically allocated by state departments of transportation. For more information, visit: <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/map21/guidance/guidetap.cfm>. For more information on Safe Routes to School projects and programs (which are eligible for funding under TAP), visit: http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/safe_routes_to_school/.

SMART SCALE

Virginia's SMART SCALE (§33.2-214.1) is a state funding program for transportation projects. Local governments, such as Christiansburg, can apply through SMART SCALE for transportation improvements that support Urban Development Areas. The town recently worked to designate UDAs. Therefore, the improvements for Hickok Street described in the action plan may be a good candidate for SMART SCALE funds. More information is available at <http://vasmartyscale.org/about/default.asp>.

Appendix E: References

USDA Economics of Local Food Systems Toolkit

The **Local Food System Toolkit** was developed by the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) to help communities reliably evaluate the economic impact of investing in local and regional food systems. The Local Food System Toolkit's provides detailed guidance in seven modules to measure and assess the expected economic impacts of local food investments.

- <https://www.ams.usda.gov/sites/default/files/media/Toolkit%20Designed%20FINAL%203-22-16.pdf>

USDA Know Your Farmer Know Your Food

The **Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food** initiative is a USDA-wide effort to carry out the Department's commitment to strengthening local and regional food systems. The Know Your Farmer Know Your Food website provides a "one stop shop" for resources, from grants and loans to toolkits and guidebooks, from agencies and offices across the Department. The website also contains the Know Your Farmer Know Your Food Compass Map, which shows efforts supported by USDA and other federal partners as well as related information on local and regional food systems.

- <http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/knowyourfarmer?navid=KNOWYOURFARMER>

Farmers' Markets General

USDA National Farmers Market Directory

Provides members of the public with convenient access to information about U.S. farmers' market locations, directions, operating times, product offerings, and accepted forms of payment.

- <http://search.ams.usda.gov/farmersmarkets/>

USDA's "National Farmers Market Manager Survey"

Nearly 1,400 farmers' market managers responded to this national survey conducted in 2013.

- <https://www.ams.usda.gov/sites/default/files/media/2014%20Farmers%20Market%20Managers%20Survey%20Summary%20Report%20final%20July%2024%202015.pdf>

USDA's "Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) at Farmers Markets: A How-To Handbook"

This 2010 report from USDA describes how farmers' markets can accept SNAP benefits. SNAP is the federal government's nutritional assistance program. It was formerly known as food stamps.

- <https://www.ams.usda.gov/sites/default/files/media/SNAPat%20Farmers%20Markets%20Handbook.pdf>

Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project's "Sharing the Harvest: A Guide to Bridging the Divide between Farmers Markets and Low-Income Shoppers"

This 2012 report from ASAP describes strategies for bridging the divide between farmers' markets and low income shoppers.

- <http://asapconnections.org/downloads/asap-farmers-market-access-guide.pdf>

USDA’s “Connecting Local Farmers with USDA Farmers Market Nutrition Program Participants”

This 2010 report from USDA describes how providing transportation can help low-income individuals overcome barriers to accessing farmers markets.

- <https://www.ams.usda.gov/sites/default/files/media/Connecting%20Local%20Farmers%20with%20USDA%20Farmers%20Market%20Nutrition%20Program%20Participants.pdf>

Farmers’ Markets Management

Oregon State University’s “Understanding the Link Between Farmers’ Market Size and Management Organization”

This report, supported by the USDA, explored internal management issues of farmers’ markets and describes tools that can help make farmers’ markets sustainable.

- http://smallfarms.oregonstate.edu/sites/default/files/small-farms-tech-report/eesc_1082-e.pdf

Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project’s “25 Best Practices for Farmers’ Markets”

This report describes 25 best practices in the areas of management, regulations, risk management, food safety, improving vendor sales, and marketing/outreach/promotion/social media.

- <http://asapconnections.org/downloads/market-makeover-25-best-practices-for-farmers-markets.pdf>

Food Hubs

USDA’s “Moving Food Along the Value Chain: Innovations in Regional Food Distribution”

This 2012 report from USDA examined eight case studies of food value chains and provides some practical lessons about the challenges they face and lessons learned.

- <http://www.redtomato.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/USDA.pdf>

USDA’s “Regional Food Hub Resource Guide”

USDA released this primer on food hubs and the resources available to support them in 2012.

- <https://www.ams.usda.gov/sites/default/files/media/Regional%20Food%20Hub%20Resource%20Guide.pdf>

Michigan State University’s and Wallace Center’s “State of the Food Hub – 2013 National Survey Results”

This survey of more than 100 food hubs across the United States quantifies the scope, scale, and impacts of local food hubs.

- <http://www.wallacecenter.org/resourcelibrary/state-of-the-food-hub-2013-national-survey-results>

Wholesome Wave’s “Food Hub Business Assessment Toolkit”

The toolkit provides tools to assess a food hub businesses’ readiness for investment.

- <http://www.wholesomewave.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/HFCI-Food-Hub-Business-Assessment-Toolkit.pdf>

Community Kitchens

Culinary Incubator’s Community Kitchen Database

This site provides a description and interactive map of community kitchens across the United States.

- <http://www.culinaryincubator.com/maps.php>

Community Gardens

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s Community Gardens Website

- <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces/healthtopics/healthyfood/community.htm>

Vermont Community Garden Network’s Garden Organizer Toolkit

- <http://vcgn.org/garden-organizer-toolkit/>

Farm to School

USDA’s Farm to School Website

USDA provides information on its website about Farm to School programs and how to get one started in your community.

- <http://www.fns.usda.gov/farmtoschool/implementing-farm-school-activities>
- <http://www.fns.usda.gov/farmtoschool/farm-school>

Land Use

American Planning Association’s (APA’s) “Zoning for Urban Agriculture”

The APA in 2010 prepared an article on urban agriculture zoning in its March 2010 *Zoning Practice*.

- <https://www-static.bouldercolorado.gov/docs/mar-1-201304100938.pdf>

American Planning Association’s (APA’s) “Zoning for Public Markets and Street Vendors”

The APA also prepared an article on zoning for public markets in its February 2009 *Zoning Practice*.

- <https://www.planning.org/zoningpractice/previous.htm>

Other

CDC’s Report “Recommended Community Strategies and Measurements to Prevent Obesity in the United States”

Report documenting strategies to implement for obesity prevention.

- <http://www.cdc.gov/obesity/resources/recommendations.html>

Food Value Chains: Creating Shared Value to Enhance Marketing Success

The report provides an overview of how food value chains are initiated, structured, how they function and the business advantages and challenges of this approach.

- <https://www.ams.usda.gov/sites/default/files/media/Food%20Value%20Chains%20Creating%20Shared%20Value%20to%20Enhance%20Marketing%20Success.pdf>

Wholesale Markets and Facility Design

Provides technical assistance and support to customers regarding the construction of new structures or the remodeling of existing ones. These facilities include wholesale market, farmers markets, public markets, and food hubs.

- <https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/local-regional/facility-design>

Organic Agriculture

USDA is committed to helping organic agriculture grow and thrive. This is a one-stop shop with information about organic certification and USDA-wide support for organic agriculture.

- www.usda.gov/organic

Fruit and Vegetable Audits

Audits for Good Agricultural Practices and Good Handling Practices can help producers access commercial markets by verifying that fruits and vegetables are produced, packed, handled, and stored in the safest manner possible to minimize risks of microbial food safety hazards.

- <https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/auditing/gap-ghp>

USDA Certification for Small and Very Small Producers of Grass-fed Beef and Lamb

Allows small and very small-scale producers to certify that their animals meet the requirements of the grass-fed marketing claim standard, helping them differentiate themselves and communicate value to their customers.

- <https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/auditing/grass-fed-SVS>

Local and Regional Market News

Provides reports on local and regional food outlets, providing producers and consumers with instant access to prices from farmers markets, farmers' auctions, food hubs, and direct-to-consumer sales, providing support to even the smallest farmers and producers.

- <https://www.ams.usda.gov/market-news/local-regional-food>

Local Food Systems Resources

Virginia Farm to School Program

Provides resources for people interested in the state's farm-to-school program.

- <http://www.vdacs.virginia.gov/marketing-virginia-farm-to-school-program.shtml>

Virginia Grown

Provides market information for locally-grown produce and products in Virginia.

- <http://www.vdacs.virginia.gov/vagrown/index.shtml>

Virginia Agritourism

Provides information about the agritourism industry and opportunities in Virginia.

- <http://ext.vt.edu/agriculture/agritourism.html>

Virginia Beginning Farmer & Rancher Coalition Program

Supports the development and enhancement of whole farm planning curriculum and training, online resources, social networking, and farmer mentoring.

- <http://www.vabeginningfarmer.alce.vt.edu/>

Community, Local, and Regional Food Systems

Resources regarding local food systems in Virginia.

- <http://ext.vt.edu/food-health/nutrition-wellness/clrfs.html>

Appendix F:

Workshop Photo Album



Figure 1 – Lunch with town elected officials and staff; EPA, ARC, and USDA representatives; and the consulting team.



Figure 2 – The Oaks Victorian Inn is in the Town's E. Main Street Historic District.



Figure 3 – Example of downtown streetscape improvements – wider sidewalks and new lighting, plantings, and seating.



Figure 4 – Workshop participants on a walking tour of downtown Christiansburg.



Figure 5 – Main Street in downtown Christiansburg.



Figure 6 – Downtown farmers market on Hickok Street.



Figure 7 – Ignite Life Pacific College is moving into a former church across from the farmers market.



Figure 8 – Farmers market operations on October 6, 2016.



Figure 9 – The Huckleberry Trail connects Christiansburg with Blacksburg and Virginia Tech.

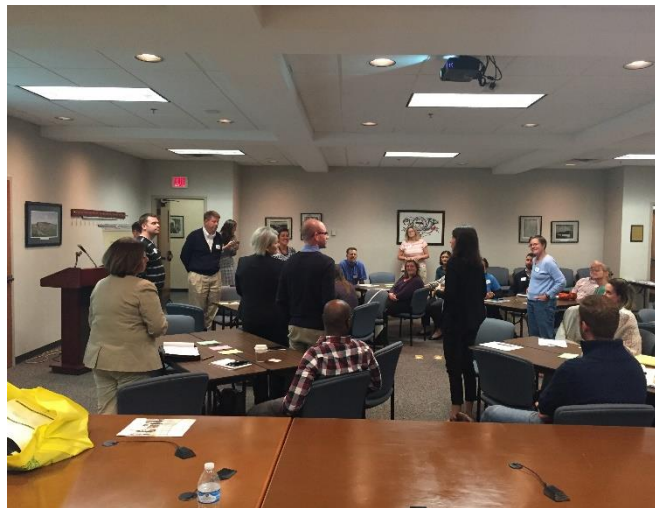


Figure 10 – Citizens share their hopes for the future of downtown Christiansburg during a community meeting.



Figure 11 – Workshop participants provide feedback on initial design concepts for the future of Hickok Street.

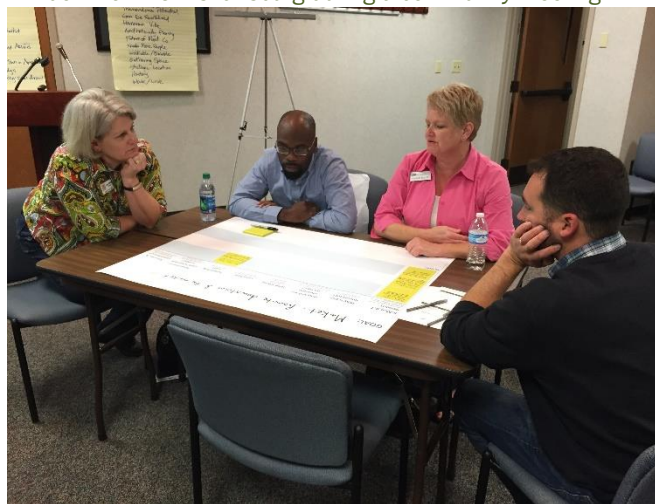


Figure 12 – Workshop participants discuss strategies for promoting the farmers market and downtown Christiansburg.