



NEW BRUNSWICK
CITY CENTER

2020 ANNUAL REPORT



New Brunswick City Center

Managed by New Brunswick City Market

A Message from Doug Schneider, Chairman of the Board



Like the rest of the world, New Brunswick City Center was not immune to the challenges of the COVID19 pandemic in 2020.

Akin to business triage, the City Center staff immediately prepared daily support, communication and guidance to our business community. Navigating through months of uncertainty, we safely modified and held events such as Harvest Fest, Rutgers game watch gatherings, and Winter Wonderland. We encouraged our community to support our restaurants and retailers by promoting carryout and curbside pick-up, helping to sustain the vitality of the district.

New Brunswick City Center's Response to the Covid-19 Pandemic

Working with the city of New Brunswick on outdoor sidewalk, street, and parking space dining options, we provided sustainability to our hospitality businesses.

We launched a Small Business Recovery Grant providing access to \$30,000 dollars for all small businesses within the district for re-opening expenses associated with PPE, cleaning equipment, outdoor furnishings, and more.

We communicated with the business community, providing daily updates since mid-March on new programs, loans, grants and webinars, updates on regulations, and many other resources to assist the businesses in surviving the impact of the pandemic. We hosted in-person and zoom meetings to share information and engage business owners.

Mission Statement – To Promote and Enhance the Economic and Social Vitality of the Downtown Special Improvement District

We augmented the City Center website, adding a business page that served as a one-stop resource, ...ordering, and delivery options. A positivity page was also implemented, emphasizing the work that businesses were doing to give back to our community.

We worked with the Parking Authority to provide an affordable employee-parking program including 15-minute free curbside pick-up at meters, 30-minute parking in the lower Church St. deck for quick access to businesses, and partnering on multiple validation programs supporting business and artists.

We initiated ReLaunch New Brunswick, producing a commercial that promoted New Brunswick as Safe, Clean, and Fun: 'We Do It Right, We Do It Safe, We Do It Together'. The video circulated throughout all mediums. We also created a live performance program with artists performing weekly.

We supported essential workers with a blue-ribbon campaign, promoting all efforts to help feed frontline workers, schoolchildren, and constituents of houses of worship.

We collaborated with the State of NJ Health Dept., Rutgers Global Health Institute, Rutgers OTEC, NBT, and New Labor to bring free Covid-19 testing and vaccination clinics to New Brunswick non-profits, business employers, and employees, educating them on vital health and safety guidelines.

As we look forward to 2021, I can say that New Brunswick is resilient. Working together, businesses can recover from this economic adversity and excel in the post-pandemic environment. As vaccinations begin to rollout and guidelines loosen, New Brunswick will continue to be the leading destination for dining, arts and culture, commerce, and higher education in the State of New Jersey.

I would like to thank members of the board, staff, and volunteers as we celebrate the silver linings of a challenging year. We are incredibly grateful for our members, donors, sponsors, volunteers, and staff as they each play an important role in ensuring City Center is the premier destination in NJ.

2020 Financial Overview*

Total Revenue \$665,911

Property Assessments \$594,434

Contributions to Programs \$68,772

Other Income \$2,705

Total Expenses \$609,082

Retail Promos/Bus. Mktg. \$230,100

Admin. Expenses \$156,778

Program Services \$104,523

Clean Team Expenses \$104,400

Dist. Improv./Gen. Expenses \$13,281

* Audited/rounded to nearest dollar. A full financial report can be requested by emailing citymarket@newbrunswick.com.

Building Community - City Center Activities

Relaunch New Brunswick - The New Brunswick community worked together with City Center creating initiatives that promoted awareness to the hub city through extended hours, outdoor dining, and a vibrant video campaign. It began with a commercial showcasing local business through NewBrunswick.com, socials, third-party websites, and broadcast TV commercials, promoting the eminence of New Brunswick in new ways throughout Central Jersey.

Harvest Festival - Working within CDC guidelines, the city center shifted focus from its annual Oktoberfest and created a more expanded footprint celebrating the fall season. With a variety of take-home decorations displayed all along George Street and specialty menu and drink items offered by local establishments we expanded marketing outreach resulting in patrons creating their own independent video challenges on socials and written articles from local media. The program featured high-level entertainment for all ages.

Rutgers Game Watch - A big crowd-pleaser for Rutgers alumni & students alike, Rutgers Football City-Wide Game Watch program allowed Scarlet Knights fans to enjoy their team taking on Big 10 rivals with the comfort and convenience of their favorite sports establishments on George Street! Home or away, patrons were able to enjoy each game as they broadcasted from big-screen TVs every Saturday alongside food & drink specials! We saw hundreds come into the district, supporting small businesses. There were increased overnight stays at the hotels from those who travel with the teams but were unable to be at the stadium.

Chalk Mural Initiative - The Chalk Mural Program employed artists bringing their vibrant works to the community in a creative way. Messages of hope, paired with amazing artwork from local artists, students, teachers, and partnerships fostered an inviting vibrancy to New Brunswick's City Center with inspiration.

New Brunswick Winter Wonderland - While some indoor dining options were beginning to open for restaurants, the ability for small businesses to keep services outside, despite the weather, was huge for the continued foot traffic growth within the downtown. Carriage rides shifted to an online ticketed program which had massive results selling out within hours of announcements. Enhanced decorative lighting throughout the area kept the streets lively well into the night and entertainment from magicians, stilt walkers, jugglers, and ice sculptures added extra enjoyment for visitors. Despite the cold, people gathered to enjoy the holiday programing all month long.

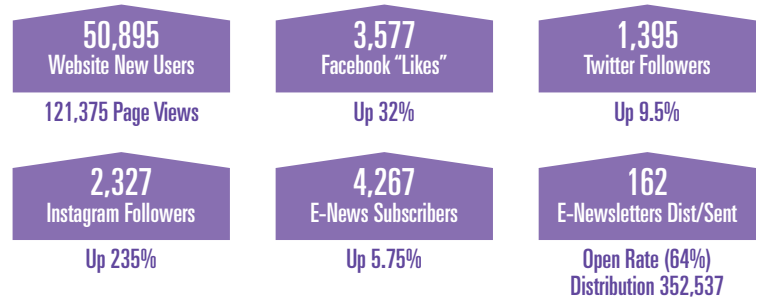
Live Music Weekends - Music always draws a crowd and the weekends in New Brunswick were full of musical productions from regional acoustic musicians, DJs, and jazz performers thanks to enhanced collaborations. Artists were located throughout the district, ready to play to the patrons enjoying outdoor dining and brought energy to the streets of New Brunswick.

Marketing - Promoting the City Center Brand

Connectivity - NewBrunswick.com is the Central Hub for Everything City Center!

The New Brunswick City Market website is the primary resource keeping people connected and informed about everything downtown, where to eat, shows to see, and special attractions. Newbrunswick.com includes interactive maps, photos of restaurants, cultural buildings, historical tours, where to stay, and where to park. The events calendar features City Center happenings every month.

Social Impact



Operations - Public Service and Beautification

The hours of the Clean Team staff were reduced due to the pandemic, but they still worked tirelessly seven days a week to ensure the City Center was maintained. The staff removes graffiti, power washes, picks up litter, weeds, and cleans alleyways and streetscape furniture.

Police foot patrols help business vitality and safety, handling nuisance and quality of life matters, providing outreach and

guidance to those in need, and working with business owners.

This past year, the City Market earmarked \$154,000 to provide façade and awning enhancement grants; ReLaunch New Brunswick business grants assisting with re-opening needs such as PPE, outdoor furniture, and third party services, and graffiti removal, streetscape maintenance and litter removal.

Staff

Pamela Stefanek, Executive Director
Christopher Moore, Program Coordinator
Donna Bosko, Administrator

2020 Board of Directors

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Kathy Romano - Amboy Bank
Kelly Ryman* - George Street Playhouse
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Melissa Selesky - Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
Lynn Sherman - Resident
Suzanne Sicora Ludwig^ - City Council Liaison
Pastor Cynthia Stouffer - United Methodist Church
Michael Tublin - The New Brunswick Jazz Project
Alexander Weiss - Weiss Properties

*Non-Voting, ^ Ex-Officio

Office

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Play an Active Role in City Center's Mission by Joining a Special Committee

District Improvement Committee • Marketing/Promotions Committee
Public Relations/Communications Committee • Special Events Committee • Town & Gown Committee

