

# DOWNTOWN ANGOLA

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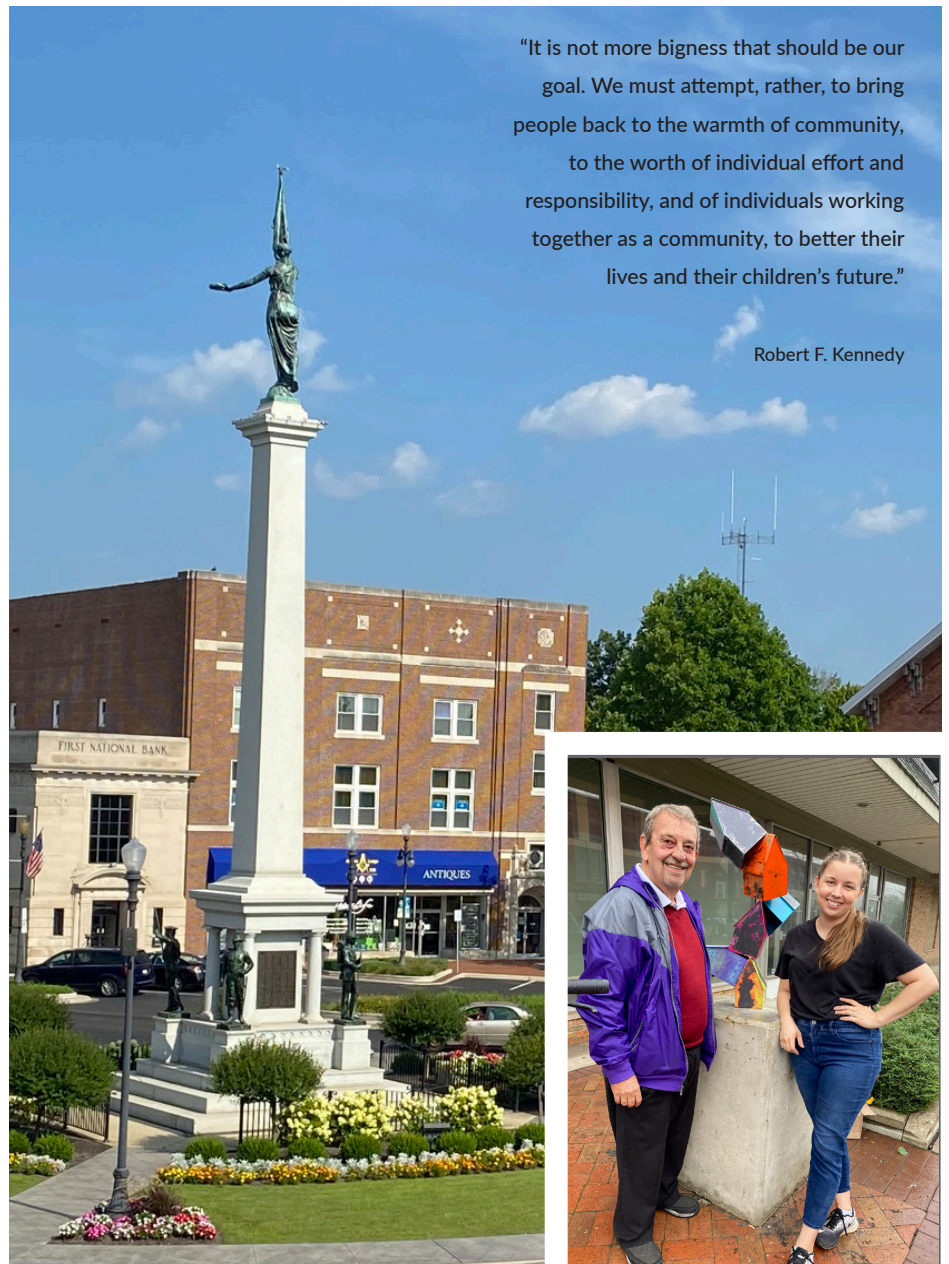
**DOWNTOWN SERVICES**  
**2021 ANNUAL REPORT**



# VITALITY

Downtown vitality depends on the people that live, play, work, and visit. The preservation and building of assets, community, and a sense of well-being are crucial to telling a cohesive story of Angola that encourages others to generously share, participate, and help shape it. This is the work of Downtown Services.

In 2021, City events, like the 4th of July Parade, Cruise to the Monument, and the installation of sculptures in the historic district continued despite the national debate on new vaccines and use of masks. Throughout Angola's history, the public square has been a site for demonstrations of freedom of speech and 2021 was no exception, affirming downtown Angola's continued relevance in community expression as the heartbeat of Angola and the center of City and County government.



"It is not more bigness that should be our goal. We must attempt, rather, to bring people back to the warmth of community, to the worth of individual effort and responsibility, and of individuals working together as a community, to better their lives and their children's future."

Robert F. Kennedy

8

The number of sculptures installed in Downtown Angola through and in partnership with the Mayor's Arts Council in 2021.

330+

The number of vehicles participating in the 8th Cruise to the Monument Event in 2021.

92

The number of pre-registered entries in the 2021 4th of July parade.



# COMMUNITY



The connection between local and global communities became even more evident in 2021. The continuation of the COVID-19 pandemic shifted Downtown Services' work to become even more focused on local small business and the search for other methods to connect community in impactful ways.

Supply chain issues compounded by a lack of workers caused some small businesses in Angola to close part-time and in some cases close permanently. Service and retail businesses were hit particularly hard with an already low unemployment rate, as the "Great resignation" showed both younger, older people, and women in particular, leave the workforce as new virulent strains of COVID-19 spread globally.

Downtown Services served as staff for the AIF/OCRA Loan Board, which will by May 2022, have loaned almost \$700,000 to assist struggling small

businesses in Angola. Many of which were located within Angola's historic district boundaries.

The City of Angola partnered with local non profit Easterseals RISE in obtaining the Community Connections for People with Disabilities (CCPWD) Grant from OCRA. Easterseals RISE initially made contact with Downtown



Services and Economic Development who then presented the partnership to Mayor Hickman and approved by Council. The CCPWD grant will create a virtual lending library with the Steuben County Carnegie Public Library and install virtual video conferencing equipment in City Hall and the Training Center, which Downtown Services worked to quote for the grant application.

## 54

The number of small Angola businesses who received AIF/OCRA loans as of December 22, 2021.

## \$515,696

The amount of money the AIF/OCRA Loan has expended as of December 22, 2021.

## \$294,896

The amount of money the AIF Loan Board has forgiven as of December 22, 2021.

## \$195,585

The amount of money granted by OCRA to the City of Angola and Easterseals RISE for the CCPWD Grant.





# PLACEMAKING



ENTERPRISE POINTE MEDIA INTERVIEW

Placemaking involves not only the physical space, but the way it is seen, valued, used, and contributes to community well-being and quality of life.

The arts have become an important community development strategy, adding assets to the downtown that invite curiosity, conversation, and educational value. Downtown assets, like its yearly sculpture installations, help to create a sense of place. With each sculpture change new conversations in the community happen as it "refreshes" downtown's "vibe" until the next installation. Under the Mayor's Arts Council, Angola's sculpture program

has become a foundational element of the current wave of investment in arts programming in Angola. Currently the arts council is looking at ways to expand and share the sculpture program to other municipalities in Steuben County. This year, the County placed a sculpture on the East lawn of the court house. This placement was a shared endeavour between the County and the Mayor's Arts Council.

The celebration of other cultural traditions to downtown life, like "Dia de los Muertos", invite others to understand and experience customs that may be different than their own. Angola's Latin community is an intrinsic part in the start and the continuation of the tradition of downtown business' display of altars during the holiday. Downtown Services is honored to play a part in that endeavor.

Working with Stakeholders - Downtown Services participates as part of:

- Trine University Humanities Institute
- Steuben County Community Foundation Impact Grants Panel
- Multi-Cultural Student Organization Committee for the Annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration
- Downtown Services participation in Lt. Gov. Crouch's Main Street Council (ended June 2021)

Finding commonality in vision and mission with community stakeholders is also an important strategy. Working towards common goals and connecting intellectual, human, and capital resources helps to strengthen inter-organizational ties, and is an ancillary way to support quality of life at large. In addition to the above, Downtown Services assists individuals through the Grow with Google program as well as connecting them with local resources.



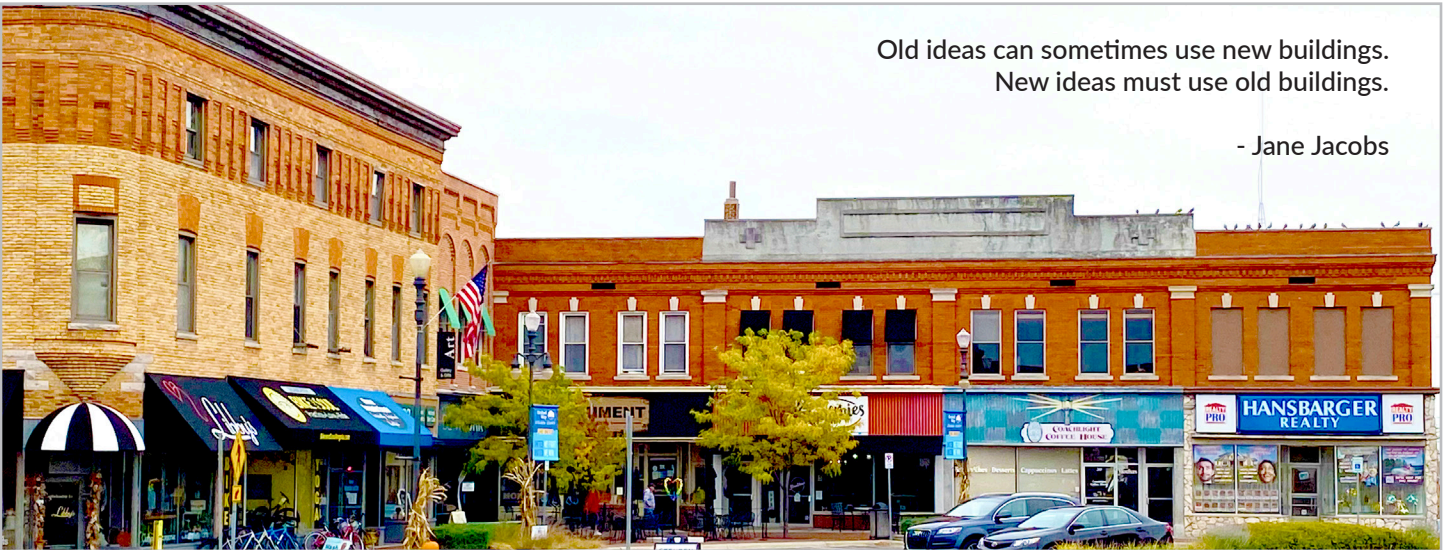
WINGS MURAL AND PAINTED FURNITURE IN IMAGINE ALLEY BY EASTERSEALS RISE CLIENTS



# PRESERVATION

Old ideas can sometimes use new buildings.  
New ideas must use old buildings.

- Jane Jacobs



Per ordinance and assignment by the Mayor, the Downtown Services Coordinator serves as the administrator for the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC). The Commission is tasked to uphold the district's building facade's historical

integrity per city ordinance 15.25. The HPC is also the gateway for the Facade Grant program. Its funding is approved by the City's Common Council as are each application that are prepared by Downtown Services.

The number of cases brought before the HPC was about half of the number that were brought for review in 2020 in spite of the pandemic that year, although the number of applications for facade grants stayed the same.

New guidelines were approved by the HPC this year. The design for

the guidelines is being worked on by the Northern offices of Indiana Landmarks, who have worked to streamline and reword them so that they are more friendly and easily understood by the general public. Downtown Services will be placing the new guidelines on the City website for public access when they are received.

In progress are also a new Certificate of Appropriateness application and updated procedures. Along with the guidelines, these efforts hope to create not only clarity, but also increased uniformity.

6

Number of applications brought before the Historic Preservation Commission in 2021.

4

Number of Facade Grants approved by the City of Angola Common Council in 2021.

**\$16,247.43**

Amount of money granted by Common Council for Facade Grants for 2021.



# OTHER



Downtown Services works with and recognizes the following vendors and partners whose diligence helps keep the downtown facilities and landscaping well-kept for the community:

- Landscaping - Franz Nursery - Brian Alexander
- Monument Plaza - Chris Rowe, CSI Heating and Cooling - Denny Steele



Fun facts: From Jan. - November, 2021 Monument Plaza electric car charging station saved 628 gallons of gasoline = 2,103 pounds of Green House Gas = 5,009 kWh of energy.

- Inter-departmental assist - MS4 - help develop educational materials
- Advertising - Develop advertising in KPC News, Coffee News, FW Newspapers



Downtown Services would like to acknowledge former Director of Economic Development Vivian Likes, who recently resigned from her position. Her invaluable experience, knowledge, determination, and support of the work of Downtown Services will be missed. She is wished the best of luck in her future endeavors.

Downtown Services remembers Patrick Mack, whose sculpture "We Are All Connected" was displayed in downtown from June 2020 - May 2021. Pat past away in 2021 shortly after the removal of his sculpture by family friends in our downtown. Pat lived and worked in Indianapolis, IN.



Education and Training:  
In person

- Ball State Community Development Course

Virtual

- Preserving Historic Places
- Findings on Economic Well Being in 2020
- Connecting Communities