

2025 ANNUAL REPORT

**DISCOVER
DOWNTOWN
FRANKLIN**
Fun. Fresh. Familiar.





Discover Downtown Franklin staff attend the National Main Street Conference in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

2025 was a year of momentum and meaningful impact for Downtown. From Love Local and First Fridays to our signature festivals and summer Farmers Market, downtown continued to thrive as a place to gather, shop, and celebrate. Over 80,000 people visited downtown through our events, and the Franklin Farmers Market earned the title of Indiana's Ultimate Farmers Market. None of this would be possible without the generous support of our sponsors. With strong community backing and even bigger plans ahead, we're excited for what comes next, and we invite you to be part of it.

Thank you,

Danny Causey
Executive Director

Jen Weltich
Assistant Director

What's Main Street?

DDF is one of only 19 Nationally Accredited Main Street organizations in Indiana. As part of the Main Street America network, **we are proud** to support place-based economic development, community preservation, and vibrant downtowns nationwide.



MAIN STREET
AMERICA

Indiana
MAIN STREET

INDIANA
OFFICE OF
COMMUNITY &
RURAL AFFAIRS

As **Board President of Discover Downtown Franklin**, and as the owner of a downtown business, Franklin Jewelers, I have a unique appreciation for the impact this organization has on our community. 2025 was an exceptional year, marked by strong growth, targeted community grants, and programming that continues to strengthen our downtown economy and sense of place. I see firsthand how these efforts support local businesses, create memorable experiences, and make Downtown Franklin a place people are proud to visit, live, and invest in. On behalf of the Board of Directors, thank you for your continued support and belief in our mission.

Gratefully,

Joshua Shanafelt, Board President

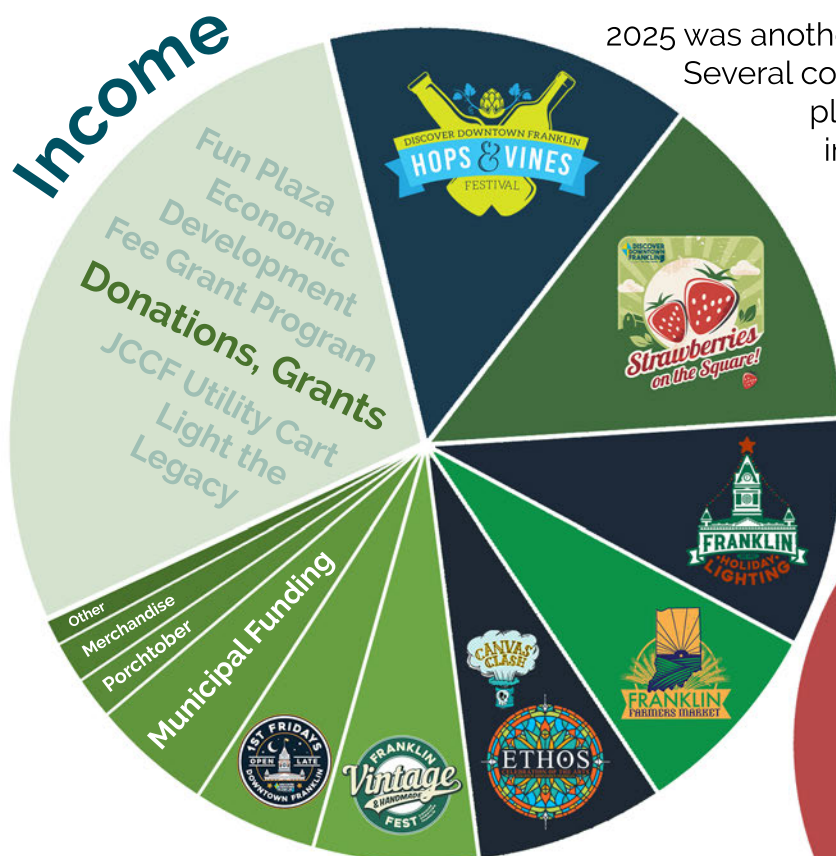


▲ Thanks to a **Johnson County Community Foundation grant**, we purchased a utility vehicle from downtown business Johnson County Golf Carts. This cart has vastly **improved our capability and safety** during events.

Financial Summary

2025
ANNUAL
REPORT

2025 was another year of **meaningful growth**. Several community programming grants played a key role in growing our impact - allowing us to expand our promotions & events, placemaking efforts, and advertising campaigns that **support the downtown economy**.



Holiday Lighting: DDF raised \$30,000+ for the 2025 holiday light installation and introduced Light the Legacy, raising \$40,000+ for the Holiday Lighting Endowment (learn more on page 14).

Sponsorships: Event sponsors make up almost 40% of our total organizational revenue. We could not succeed without the **generosity** of our sponsors and donors.

Creating Economic Impact

- **80,000+** visitors brought downtown through our 2025 events & promotions
- **3.5 MILLION+** views on Facebook and Instagram
- **Over 30,000** visitors at the Franklin Farmers Market
- **18 billboards** on US 31 and I-65 in 2025, reaching 100K+ travelers each day
- **FM radio ad** campaigns that reached 100K+ listeners
- **20 sidewalk signs** installed, increasing visitor spending & dwell time
- **Successfully recruited** a 4-day, 400 person conference to Franklin in 2026
- **\$20,000 contributed** by board, staff, and DDF toward Light the Legacy

Main Street Groups = Economic Development Groups!

Supporting Main Street at the Statehouse ▶



Ordered in 2025, this billboard is coming to I-65 in early 2026



Economic Impact - Through the use of an Economic Development Fee grant, Discover Downtown Franklin leveraged a coordinated marketing strategy that included billboard advertising, radio spots, sidewalk signage, and other promotional tools. This multi-channel approach expanded awareness of Downtown Franklin, drove increased visitation, and reinforced the district as a vibrant destination.



Promotion Committee



A Proven Approach - The Main Street America Four-Point Approach - Organization, Promotion, Design, and Economic Vitality - guides downtown revitalization nationwide. We use this framework to shape our work, combining partnerships, events, placemaking, and business support to create a vibrant and resilient Downtown Franklin.





◀ Placemaking

Opening in early 2026, the Fun Plaza will bring games, laughter, and free outdoor fun to downtown! This partnership with Festival Country Indiana and Toodleydoo Toys features games like corn hole, checkers, connect-4 and more.



▲ Staying Sharp

DDF representatives attended state and national conferences in Ft. Wayne & Philadelphia.

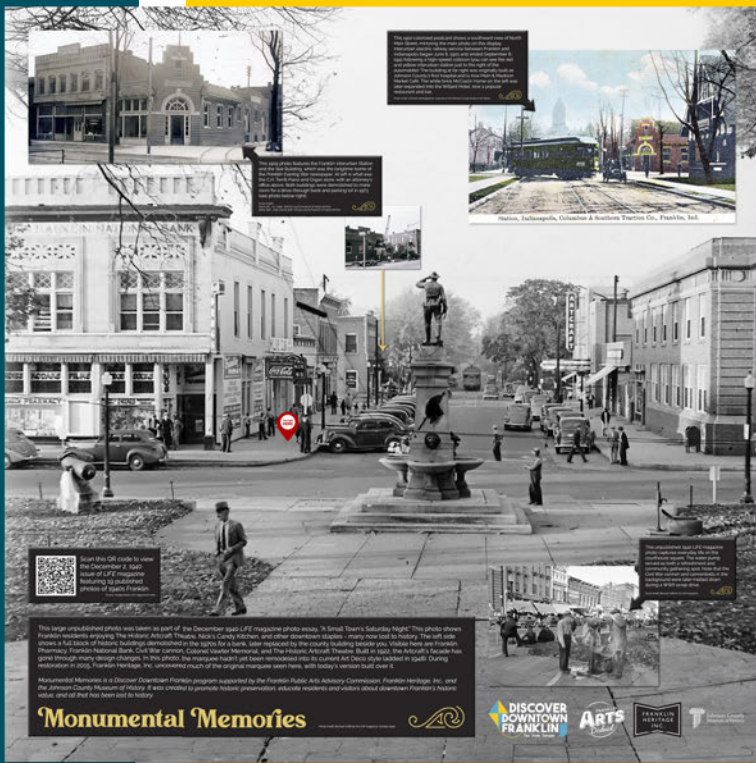


▼ **Connecting the Business Community** DDF hosts an informational semi annual meeting for all community business & city leaders at City Hall.



Carolyn Williams wins the prestigious Indiana Main Street mentor Award ▼▼▼





Monumental Memories

Monumental Memories **promotes historic preservation** by sharing the stories, buildings, and streetscapes that shaped Downtown Franklin. A partnership among Discover Downtown Franklin, Franklin Public Arts Advisory Commission, Franklin Heritage, Inc., and the Johnson County Museum of History, these 4'x4' metal signs were ordered in 2025 and will be installed on the back of downtown map cases in early 2026.



Love Local Franklin

February 7-16, 2025

Downtown was energized with 40+ participating businesses, \$1,000 in prizes, and a push to shop small during this annual promotion - **designed to support downtown businesses** during the traditionally slow month of February.

A partnership with downtown merchants.



2025 ANNUAL REPORT

▲▲▲ Kelly & Jeff, 2025 Grand Prize winners



DOWNTOWN FRANKLIN
Holiday
Open House



Downtown Franklin Holiday Open House November 7-9, 2025

Holiday cheer filled downtown during our 13th Annual Holiday Open House, featuring 44 local businesses, \$1,250 in prizes, and festive fun that **boosted downtown businesses** at the start of the holiday retail season.

A partnership with Middle Davids Candles



**FIRST FRI & SAT
IN NOVEMBER!**

EAT, SHOP, AND EXPLORE DOWNTOWN
FRANKLIN! HOURS VARY BY BUSINESS

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www.DiscoverDowntownFranklin.com

FRANKLIN'S BEST SHOPPING WEEKEND!





Chocolate Walk participants



First Fridays

First Friday of each month: Feb-June, Aug-Dec

We turned downtown into a monthly celebration, intentionally designed to drive foot traffic, **support downtown businesses**, and create a vibrant sense of place through shopping, entertainment, and community connection.

Sponsored by: Festival Country Indiana and the Franklin Development Corporation



Spring/Fall Vintage & Handmade Fest

April 26 and October 4, 2025

This spring & fall event brought over **8,000 vintage shopping enthusiasts** downtown to enjoy live music, delicious food, and shopping at 150+ vendor booths. Vendors were strategically located on both sides of downtown, encouraging guests to stroll and **discover unique local shops** along the way.

Main Event Sponsor: Indiana American Water



Photo: Tim Gallan





Strawberries on the Square

Friday, May 23rd, 2025

With live music filling the air, DDF volunteers served over **6,000 strawberry shortcakes** while the community gathered to celebrate the unofficial start of summer. This event is the perfect example of **community collaboration** - volunteer groups from the Franklin Chamber, Rotary Club, FCHS Interact Club, senior citizen groups, and more put in hundreds of volunteer hours helping out!

Main Event Sponsor:
Fletcher Chrysler Dodge Jeep Ram



Photo: Tim Gallan



▲▲▲ Local market. Statewide bragging rights!

2025 ANNUAL REPORT



▼▼▼ The market has gone to the dogs!

Franklin Farmers Market 16 Saturdays, May 31 - Sept. 13

The market experienced a banner year, achieving record attendance and earning the title of **Indiana's Ultimate Farmers Market** after a second-place finish in 2024. The market is a cornerstone of downtown life, supporting local farmers and makers while creating a vibrant weekly tradition that **strengthens Franklin's economy and sense of community.**

Main Event Sponsor:
Duke Energy

2025 was Jayne Rhoades' last year as our market manager. We got her a billboard. She was mortified... and it was perfect!

THANK YOU, JAYNE!

FOR BEING AN AMAZING FRIEND AND FRANKLIN FARMERS MARKET MANAGER



▶▶▶ Jukebox Luke wowed the crowd at 'Hops' with a high-energy show!



Photo: Tim Gallan



Hops & Vines Festival

Saturday, August 9th, 2025

Over 6,000 patrons braved the heat to enjoy

Franklin's premier beer and wine festival!

14 Indiana breweries and wineries were represented and Jukebox Luke headlined a night of rockin' fun.

Main Event Sponsor: CroadRoad Engineers, P.C.



Photo: Tim Gallan



Canvas Clash

Friday, June 7th, 2025

The Johnson County Museum of History buzzed with excitement as contestants competed in a high-energy art contest, fueled by a record crowd.

Main Event Sponsor: Hoffmann & Newcomb Law

Ethos Celebration of the Arts

Saturday, June 27, 2025

Our biggest Ethos yet showcased 65 fine art booths, the Festival Country Indiana Chalk the Block competition, live music, and nonstop fun, demonstrating how **arts energize downtown** and contribute to a thriving local economy.

Main Event Sponsor: Franklin Jewelers



2025
ANNUAL
REPORT



Photo: Tim Gallan

Best in Show Winner



Porchtober

Oct. 4, 11, 18, 25, 2025

Porchtober featured an excellent lineup of live music across 8 Franklin neighborhood porches. Fun was had, neighbors met, and a **stronger community was built** one jam at a time.

Main Event Sponsors:
Mutual Savings Bank &
MNM Construction





▼▼▼ Ms. Johnson County reacts to the courthouse lighting



▼▼▼ A Festival Country Indiana grant enhanced the courthouse lighting



Photo: Tim Gallan



Light the Legacy

Community support raised over \$40,000 for the Holiday Lighting Endowment, including a \$20,000 DDF match.



Festival Country INDIANA



Holiday Lighting & Winter Market

Saturday, December 6th, 2025

With more than **12,000 attendees**, Downtown Franklin sparkled as the courthouse square and beyond transformed into a winter wonderland - combining dazzling holiday lights with a festive Winter Market that jump started the holiday shopping season.

Main Event Sponsor: Fletcher Chrysler Dodge Jeep Ram

Thank You 2025 Sponsors!

2025
ANNUAL
REPORT

Main Event Level Sponsors



FRANKLIN
JEWELERS



Gold Level Sponsors



Silver Level Sponsors



Bronze Level Sponsors

CFS Title

CRANE Credit Union

Denali Title

Franklin Chamber

Franklin Heritage, Inc.

Franklin Public Arts

Advisory Commission

Generation Art & Frame

Horizon Bank

Huddleston & Huddleston Law

Huston Electric

Kelly Promotional Products

Leugers Insurance Group

Meijer (Franklin Location)

Modern Woodmen

Fraternal Financial

NSK Precision America

SCS Construction

Tri Kappa Franklin

Under One Woof

Vaught Family Eye Care

Sponsor support makes it possible to deliver high-quality events, attract visitors, and strengthen the Downtown Franklin economy.



Want to get involved?

Interested in volunteering? Email
info@discoverdowntownfranklin.com
to join our volunteer opportunities list.
We'd love to have you!

2025 ANNUAL REPORT



The ribbon is cut for the 2025 Franklin Farmers Market



Discover Downtown Franklin is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization
and is a nationally accredited Main Street Program.

Our Mission: Connecting people to
our downtown community

Our Vision: To nurture a space where
business, history and culture can flourish

Our Motto: Keep Franklin Fun, Fresh, & Familiar

120 E. Jefferson Street
Franklin, IN 46131
463-222-2007

www.DiscoverDowntownFranklin.com

Board of Directors & Staff

Board of Directors

Joshua Shanafelt, President
Emily Olibo, Vice President
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Toni Breeden, Secretary
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Stephanie Northern
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Mackenzie Steagall
Taylor Tyndall
Jody Veldkamp
Carolyn Williams

Staff:

Danny Causey, Exec. Director
Jen Weltich, Asst. Director
Jayne Rhoades, Market Mgr.



All event crowd numbers from
Placer.ai software courtesy of:



Cover photo provided by:

