



Reimagining Connection

Welcome to 2026: A transformative year focused on innovation, inclusion, and revitalization. We're strengthening how we connect with residents, visitors, businesses, and partners—modernizing our organization while expanding our reach and impact across Downtown Somerville.





Reimagined Experiences

Expanding Audience Reach & Foot Traffic



New Pet-Friendly Events

Launching **Puppy Pawlooza** and a comprehensive **Dog-Friendly Downtown Initiative** to welcome four-legged visitors and their families.



Cultural Expansion

Bringing **Candlelight Concerts** to Somerville—establishing Central Jersey's new home for this beloved intimate concert series.



Redesigned Favorites

Our **Music Festival**, **Summer Stage**, and **Starlit Cinema** are being reimagined to attract wider, more diverse demographics.

Our Goal: Drive increased foot traffic, encourage longer downtown visits, and create compelling reasons for people to return again and again.

Organizational Modernization

Building a Streamlined, Transparent & Effective Foundation



Updated Policies

Comprehensive new **Employee Handbook** and modernized **HR policies** that reflect best practices.

Clear Processes

Establishing accountability at all organizational levels with transparent procedures and expectations.

Stronger Communication

Enhanced internal communication systems and crystal-clear role clarity for every team member.

Future-Ready

Building a sustainable organization prepared to meet tomorrow's challenges and opportunities.



Business Engagement & Communication

Listening and Collaborating with Our Merchant Community



Regular Feedback Loops

Implementing **ongoing surveys** and structured feedback mechanisms to shape our engagement strategies and event participation opportunities.



Two-Way Communication

Creating clearer, more consistent dialogue between the Downtown Somerville Alliance and our merchant partners—ensuring every voice is heard.



Data-Driven Decisions

Using insights and analytics to continuously improve business involvement, measure impact, and refine our collaborative approach.

Grants & Creative Placemaking

Investing in Downtown's Visual & Cultural Identity

New Grant Applications

Pursuing targeted funding opportunities focused on **creative placemaking** and **public space activation** that transform how people experience our downtown.

Strategic Reallocation

Reallocating existing grant dollars to refresh critical amenities—updated signage, comfortable seating areas, and welcoming gathering spaces.

Art & Storytelling

Leveraging art, thoughtful design, and compelling storytelling to define and celebrate Somerville's unique downtown character and experience.



Economic Vitality & Partnerships

Strengthening Our Economic Ecosystem

Landlord Collaboration

Proactive outreach to **property owners** and landlords to collaborate on addressing vacancies and encouraging strategic investment in our downtown.

Small Business Support

Continued commitment to fostering **entrepreneurship** and providing resources that help small businesses launch, grow, and thrive in Somerville.

Lasting Partnerships

Building meaningful, sustainable **partnerships and sponsorships** that support both signature events and essential downtown infrastructure improvements.

Sponsorship & Partnership Growth

From Transactions to Meaningful Relationships



Expanded Opportunities

Broadening sponsorship tiers with diverse engagement opportunities that fit various budgets and organizational goals.

Year-Round Engagement

Creating continuous visibility and collaborative opportunities for partners throughout the entire year, not just during major events.

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Community Impact Alignment

Connecting sponsors directly with measurable community impact goals—making partnerships meaningful beyond visibility.

Modern Marketing Approach

Reaching Today's Audiences Where They Are

Digital-First Strategy

Shifting to **digital-first marketing** through strategic social media campaigns, streaming platform partnerships, and authentic influencer collaborations that amplify our reach.

Destination Marketing

Promoting **Downtown Somerville as a destination**—not just individual events—to build lasting awareness and establish our downtown as a must-visit location.

Enhanced Storytelling

Creating compelling narratives through high-quality video content and brand-focused campaigns that showcase the heart and soul of our community.



Social Media Growth & Engagement

Our digital presence continues to expand, reaching new audiences and driving meaningful engagement across platforms. Both Instagram and Facebook show robust growth, fueled by strategic content and community partnerships.

Instagram Performance

- Peak reach of 29K accounts in May, representing a remarkable 46.9% month-over-month increase
- Consistent views ranging from 175K to 315K+ monthly
- Steady engagement with 3K - 6K interactions per month
- Follower growth of 1,657 since January (17.2K → 18.9K)

Facebook Metrics

- Average reach of 70K - 105K accounts monthly
- Stable views around 190K - 250K
- Engagement levels: 1.2K - 3.7K interactions per month
- Followers increased from 21.3K to 22.2K
- Strong advertising performance contributing up to 25% of total views

📌 **Growth Drivers:** Strategic influencer collaborations with accounts like @gracietravelsnj and @njhipsturbia have significantly amplified our reach and credibility within the community.



Email Marketing Excellence

35-40%

Open Rate

Consistently high performance (industry avg: ~25%)

2.7%

Click Rate

Improved from 1.5% baseline

<0.1%

Unsubscribes

Negligible rate indicates strong content relevance

Our Mailchimp campaigns continue to outperform industry benchmarks, demonstrating the value of targeted, relevant content. Business-focused emails show particularly strong results, with open rates exceeding 42% and click rates reaching up to 7%.

Business Emails

Open rates >42%

Click rates up to 7%

Public Newsletters

Strong engagement

Above-average performance



Key Takeaways



Social Media Momentum

Engagement remains robust and growing year-over-year across both Instagram and Facebook, with strategic influencer partnerships driving significant reach expansion.



Email Excellence

Our campaigns consistently outperform industry averages, with business-focused content achieving exceptional open and click rates.



Visitor Recovery

Downtown foot traffic demonstrates steady recovery and strong visitor retention, with positive year-over-year growth trends.



Growth Formula

Strategic collaborations, consistent content delivery, and event-driven campaigns continue to fuel our success across all channels.

Looking Ahead: The data confirms that Downtown Somerville Alliance's multi-channel approach is effectively driving awareness, engagement, and foot traffic. Continued investment in digital marketing and community partnerships will build on this strong foundation.

2026 Budget Breakdown: Strategy for Sustainable Success

\$994,728

Anticipated Revenue

Strategic revenue sources position us for growth and sustainability in 2026.

\$994,014

Anticipated Expenses

Balanced allocation across operations, infrastructure, and community initiatives.

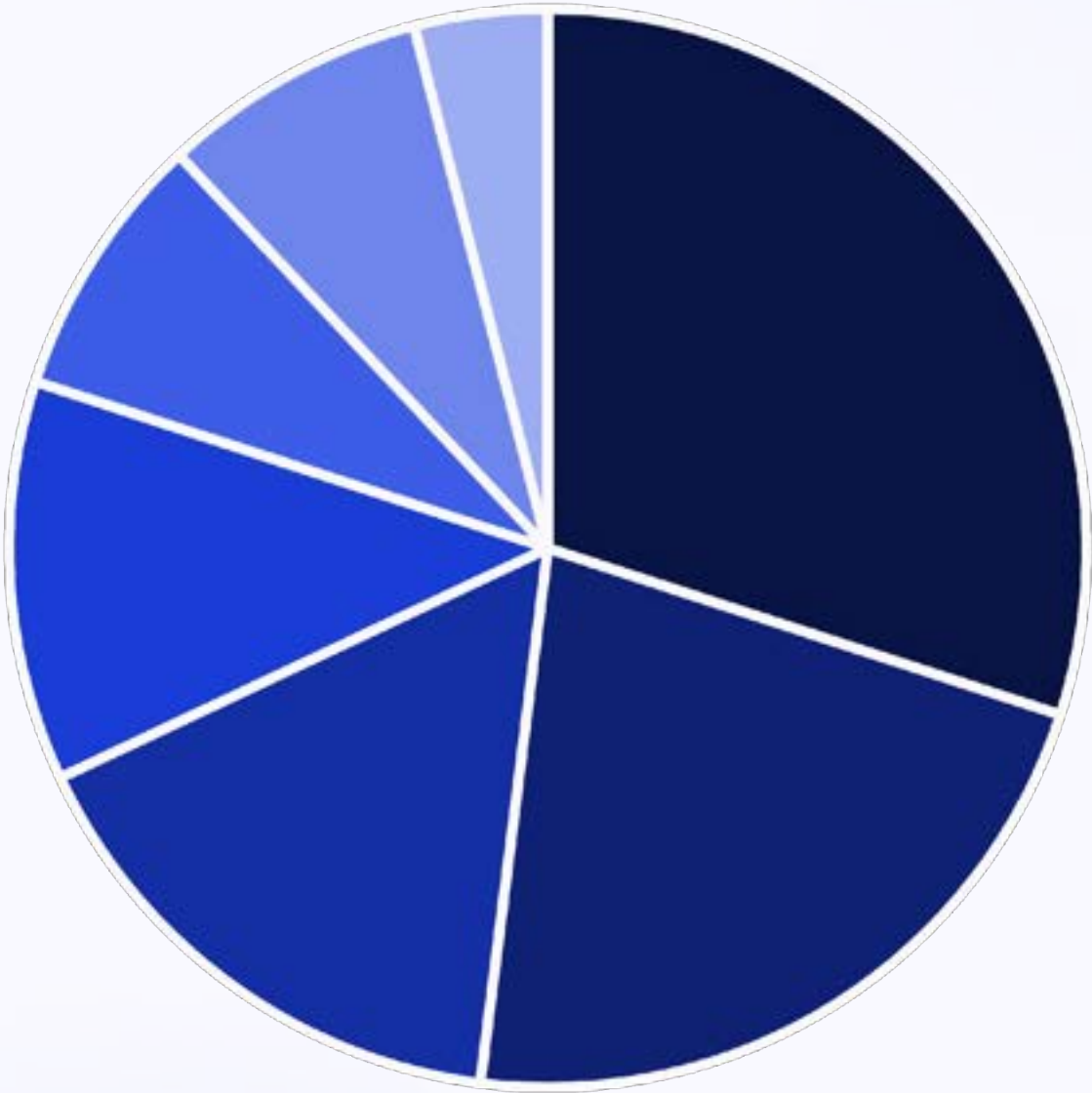
Assessment Revenue \$865,628 projected base \$25,000 estimated increase Core funding through strategic assessment growth	Sponsorships & Events \$25,000 sponsorships \$79,100 ticket & event revenue Community engagement driving sustainable income	Grant Funding \$75,000 total grant funds \$75,000 allocated expenses Strategic partnerships amplifying impact
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Strategic Expense Allocation

Office Management \$294,198 ensuring operational excellence	30%	Streetscape Support & Service \$219,410 investing in streetscape services	22%
Events & Programming \$162,500 activating community spaces	16%	Marketing & Communications \$115,499 amplifying our message	12%
Debt Service & Reserves \$80,000 maintaining fiscal responsibility	8%	Office Support \$74,907 operational capacity	8%

Additional allocations include \$25,000 for grant program matching and \$22,500 for economic vitality initiatives, ensuring comprehensive community development.

Our budget reflects a strategic allocation of resources to ensure sustainable operations and impactful community initiatives. This breakdown highlights where our funding is channeled.



■ Office Management ■ Streetscape Support & Service ■ Events & Programming ■ Marketing & Comms ■ Debt Service & Reserves ■ Office Support ■ Grant Matching & Economic I...

This comprehensive distribution ensures we maintain efficient daily operations, invest in vital community infrastructure, foster engagement through events, and strategically market our efforts, while also securing our financial future.



2026: Reimagining Connection

Our Path Forward



Broader Audiences

Attracting more diverse audiences through inclusive, innovative events that welcome everyone to downtown.



Stronger Foundation

Building a transparent, accountable organizational structure that ensures long-term sustainability and effectiveness.



Deeper Engagement

Fostering meaningful relationships with businesses, property owners, and community partners through consistent collaboration.



Smarter Strategies

Leveraging data-driven marketing and strategic grant utilization to maximize our impact and reach.

Together, we're building a connected, creative, and future-ready Downtown Somerville.