A photograph of a boardwalk with shops and people walking. The scene is outdoors, featuring a paved walkway lined with small, white, gabled shops. People are seen walking and browsing. There are red umbrellas, wooden benches, and a large potted plant in the foreground. The sky is blue with some clouds. The text "If You Build it, Will They Come? Creating a Successful Incubator Space." is overlaid on the top right of the image.

If You Build it, Will They Come? Creating a Successful Incubator Space.

Batavia MainStreet
Boardwalk Shops
Beth Walker & Kristen Desler

How it Started

- Visited the Chalets in Muskegon, Michigan
- Received a \$110,000 grant from the City as well as use of an underutilized parking lot adjacent to our thriving Farmers' Market.
- Built 8 shops in the spring of 2020 with lots of volunteers and donations



Two additional shops built in 2021 with help by the local high school building trades class.





8 Shops Opened June of 2020



Additional Amenities

- Provided:
 - Heat/Air conditioning
 - Electric
 - WiFi
 - Exterior Security cameras
 - Waste removal and port-a-potties
 - General maintenance
 - Digital locks
- Fill Planters twice a year – summer/holidays
- Sundays with Santa – 4 Sundays after Thanksgiving 12- 2 pm



Four Years at the Boardwalk:

- 35 Tenants
- 14 currently in brick-and-mortar locations
- \$1,380,201 in sales as of October 2023



14 Businesses now in Brick-and-Mortar



Supporting the Shops

THE BATAVIA MAINSTREET
BOARDWALK
SHOPS



Preseason

- Preseason
 - Release and Promotion of Application
 - December – January
 - Coordination of jury process
 - Distribution of applications
 - Collect applicant samples
 - Facilitate jury session
 - Contact all applicants on jury selection





Working with Tenants

- Collect
 - Leases
 - High resolution logo
 - Insurance certificates
 - Necessary health department permits
- Invoice and collect payments
- Shop placement and access codes
- Coordinate pre-season meeting
- Select dates and times for monthly tenant training
 - Reserve selected location

Preseason Promotion

- Issue press release
- Update website
- Social media post announcing tenants leading up to opening day
 - Cross promote where possible
- Encourage tenants to follow and share posts to increase reach



Boardwalk Shop Committee

- Introduce committee to tenants
- Assign weekly tenant visits
- Determine topics and recruit speakers for monthly meetings
- Meet monthly to discuss ongoing issues and ways to improve the Boardwalk



Season Marketing Support

- A minimum of two social media posts weekly as well as cross promotion on other MainStreet accounts
- Logo on website
- Mention in bi-monthly publications sent to all Batavia households
- Mention in regional visitors' guide
- Inclusion in MainStreet annual event poster, rack cards, weekly newsletter and downtown directory
- A-frame promotion at the Farmers' Market (2500+ attendees weekly)



MainStreet Staff Support

- Work with Shops to create promotions
 - Create and share social events & posts
 - Add to MainStreet community calendar
- Professional Photography
 - Twice a year – opening/holidays
- Coordination of monthly meetings
- Share Boardwalk Shop information with City Council





Lessons Learned



Set Clear Expectations

- Provide tenants with what they can expect for MainStreet before the start of the season
- List what MainStreet expectations of the Boardwalk Shop tenants

THE BATAVIA MAINSTREET BOARDWALK SHOPS

Support Boardwalk Shop tenants can expect from MainStreet

AMENITIES & SPECIAL EVENTS

- Provision of space which includes:
 - Heat/air conditioning
 - Electric (up to a specified amount)
 - Internet
 - Overall site security cameras
 - Waste removal & port-a-potties
 - General maintenance
 - Digital locks
- Planters filled twice a year – summer and holidays
- Access to Farmers' Market patrons (2,500+ weekly)
 - May – October
- Sundays with Santa in December

EDUCATION, NETWORKING & SUPPORT

- Open communication with MainStreet staff and Boardwalk Shop Committee
- Monthly education sessions with business experts
- Monthly meetings to collaborate with shops and MainStreet
- Inclusion in quarterly merchant meetings
- Monthly Survey results



MARKETING & PROMOTION

- Advertising support
 - Social media
 - Boardwalk Instagram and Facebooks
 - Monthly post on:
 - MainStreet
 - Farmers' Market
 - Artisan Collective
 - Logo and link to website on MainStreet Boardwalk Shop website
 - Inclusion in Downtown Batavia Rack Card, event poster, and other MainStreet promotions
 - Weekly mention in MainStreet Newsletter
 - At least two press releases (start of season and Sundays with Santa)
- Signage
 - Shop sign
 - A-frame at Farmers' Market
 - A-frame at the Boardwalk Shops with Hours
 - Banner with Hours on Rt 25 fence
 - 6 x 4 banner for corner of Wilson and Rt 25 with holiday hours
 - Professional photos twice (to be used in MainStreet marketing) – start of season & holidays
 - Mention in Aurora CVB guide and The Batavian
- Inclusion in Batavia Chamber of Commerce Chamber bucks program



MAINSTREET EXPECTATIONS OF BOARDWALK SHOP TENANTS

- Timely payment of rent
- Must keep shop and surrounding area clean, neat and safe
 - No merchandise can be displayed outside the shop other than directly on individual porch.
- Tenants will be responsible for weekly rotation of chores
 - Complete list of tasks and weekly schedule will be posted in the shed
- Insurance must be current the entire length of the lease
- Any tenant caused damage is the responsibility of the tenant to repair
- Shops must be open during the mandated hours
 - Friday 9:00 am to 5:00 pm
 - Saturday 9:00 am to 5:00 pm
 - Sunday 11:00 am to 4:00 pm
- Tenants are expected to promote their business. To gain additional exposure, tag @bataviaboardwalkshops and @downtownbatavia
- Must get approval from the Boardwalk Shop committee when adding products not included in application (email to Beth@downtownbatavia.com).



If questions or concerns arise, tenants are asked to promptly contact MainStreet staff.
Beth Walker, Executive Director- beth@downtownbatavia.com
and/or Kristen Desler, Assistant Director- kristen@downtownbatavia.com.

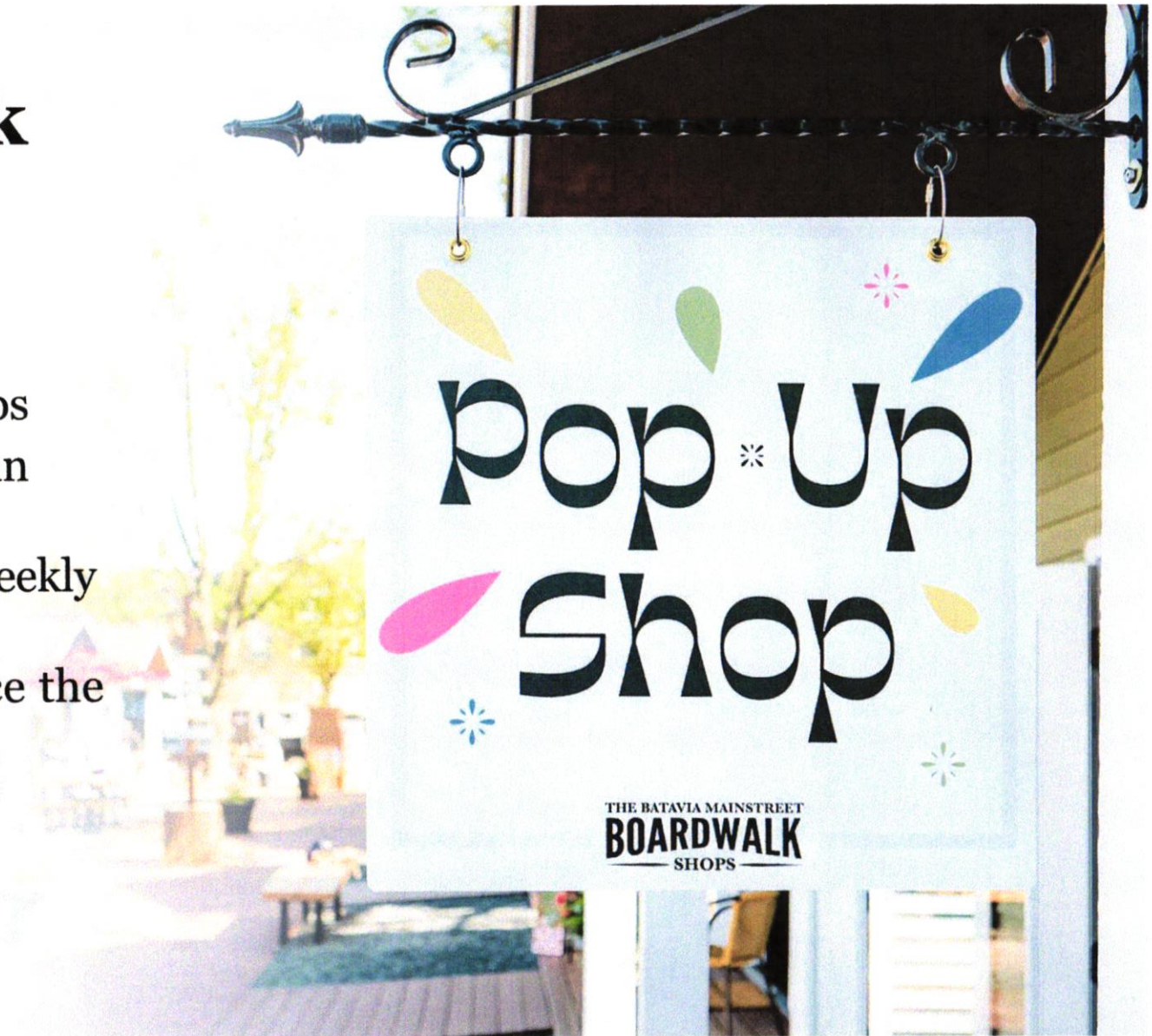


Convey realistic picture of life on the Boardwalk

- Retail slow times and how to fill down time
- Tenants are responsible for creating their own promotions
- MainStreet is a support tool

Combating Lack of Variety in Applicants

- Creating of the Pop-up Shops
 - Offered to current Artisan Collective participants
 - Offers something new weekly
 - Gives businesses an opportunity to experience the boardwalk
 - Hope to increase the application pool for upcoming seasons



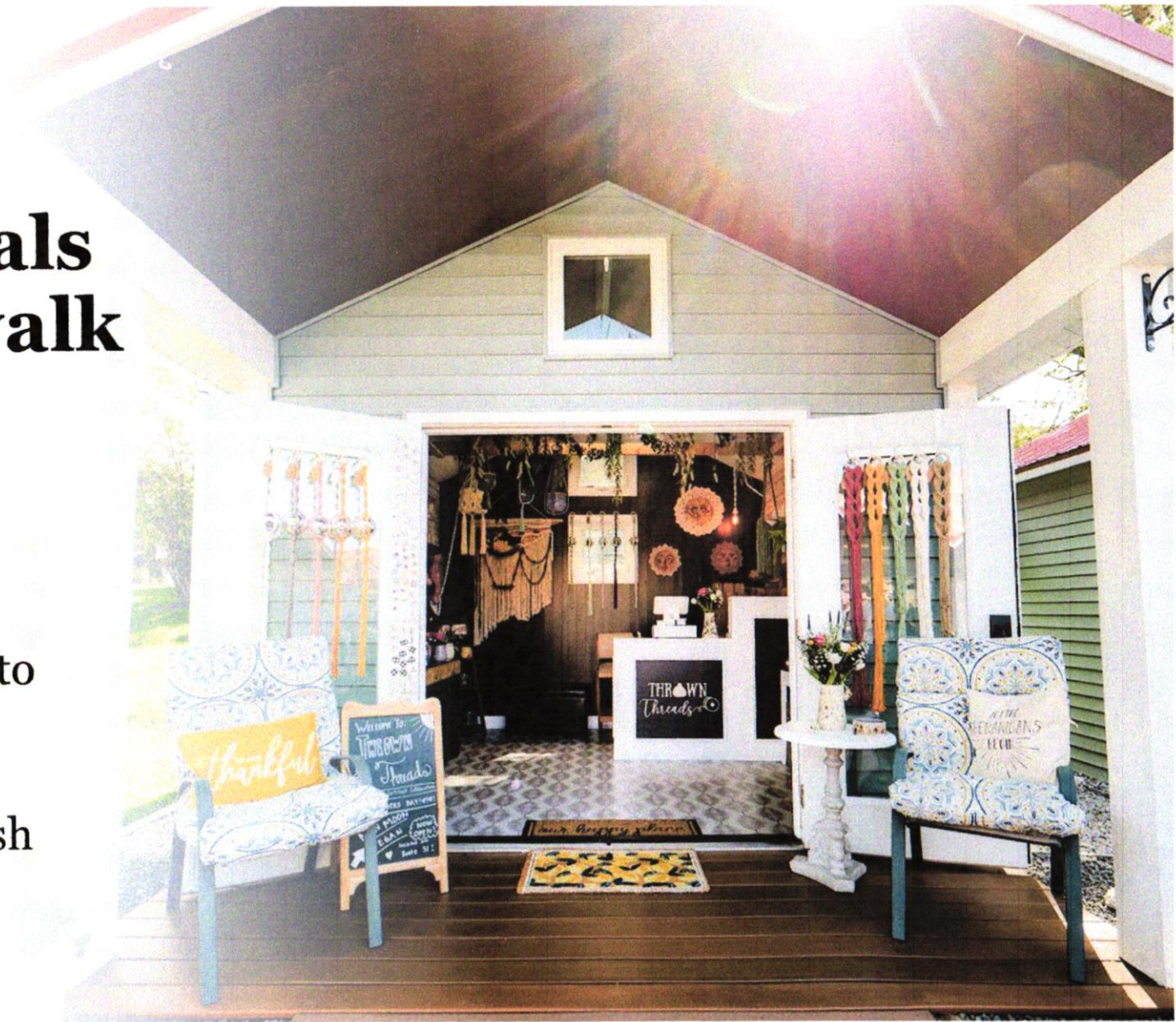
Recruiting Businesses to Apply

- Build relationships with vendors who participate in our other programs
 - Artisan Collective
 - Farmers' Market
 - WinterFest Art Market
- Be proactive about soliciting vendors
 - Visit other markets
 - Think about what your downtown is missing
 - Have a consumable to create repeat visits



Adjusting long-term Goals for the Boardwalk

- Started as an incubator to fill vacancies in town but now most small spaces are filled
- Has become a destination to increase foot traffic downtown
- How to keep the shops fresh for the future.





Questions

