

July 19, 2021

Good Afternoon,

Forward High Point has a contract with the City to provide a variety of services to the City to lead the revitalization of downtown High Point. This includes the focus areas of; Economic Development, Promotions, Marketing, Business Recruitment and providing recommendation and assistance to public and private improvement. We are very appreciative of the City's ongoing commitment to our organization and goals, and funding.

Last year, we were set to launch a series of events to help bring attention and excitement to the downtown area. Unfortunately, that season was cancelled due to COVID. We feel it is necessary to hold these events in order to rekindle public spirit and excitement in downtown High Point. In May, we wrote a letter to City Council, saying that that the cost of a year of downtown events, would cost approximately \$100,000. It was difficult to plan these events in advance due to the COVID restrictions that were in place and not lifted until June.

Our Promotions & Special Events Committee started meeting to put a series of events together. This is a volunteer committee, and they suggested events including the Rock the Point Series, a Food Truck Rodeo, A Taste of Downtown Tour, a Jazz Event, a 3-week Interactive Art Exhibit and an OctoberFest.

The Rock the Point Series – a series of eight block parties – held prior to Rockers Saturday Home Games from 4 pm to 6 pm, started this past Saturday. While we were able to secure several generous sponsorships, they cover less than half of the actual cost. This eight concert series has an estimated cost of \$50,000. That does not include the \$13,000 we spent on set up materials for this and future events. Total Estimated Cost for 2021 is now about \$160,000 to \$170,000.

I am happy to say, at this point we have secured about \$107,000 in donations and sponsorships and will continue to seek more.

However, we know that additional funding is still needed. Therefore, as I stated in my last letter to you all several weeks ago, we would like to ask the City Council for financial assistance. As you know, under the current city policies, organizations like us, must pay the City of High Point for use of various equipment, services and manpower.

For the current series of events, we estimate that we would be paying the City approximately \$17,500 through the end of October.

Therefore, on behalf of Forward High Point and our event partners, we would like to request that the City of High Point sponsor our events (Rock the Point Series, Food Truck Rodeo, Interactive Art Exhibit, Jazz Event & OctoberFest.), **with in-kind support in the amount of \$30,000. We would like to ask for another \$20,000 if the City determines it can use COVID funds, for a total of \$50,000**

We have all been working hard to bring about a true revitalization of downtown. We have made an impressive start, but we need to continue expanding our offerings if we want to make downtown the fun and exciting place that people will want to live and work. While we sometimes lose track, these events are part of "Quality of Life", which is the foundation, today, for Economic Development.

Ray Gibbs, President
Forward High Point