

1. **Save the Dates 2026 blog coming soon** with all major events
2. **Community Event Planning retreat** is tomorrow at the RailPark – 35-40 RSVPs. Downtown intern Caden Lucas is building a calendar of events based on these contributions and Telia will send a link in the Downtown Planning GroupMe when it's ready.
3. **January 30 – Downtown Ambassador Academy Government & Civic Engagement Day** plans. Government Day includes tours of the Warren Co Justice Center, City Hall, Warren Co Courthouse, a mock City Commission meeting, and What Could BG Be panel. February 13 is Economic Development & Business Day, featuring the BG Chamber and a panel there, lunch at Danny's Italian with a tour of the Houchens Industries Small Business Accelerator, and Shake Rag walking tour, and more.
4. **Downtown Lights Up debrief** held last week – tweaks and updates expected for next year. Closing E Main a little later pleased the businesses on a busy holiday shopping Friday. The City intends to close all of 7th between Louisville Rd & State St. moving forward; to activate the Fringe more and create more of a street fair vibe like Harvest Fest was in 2025. The City also intends to bring a tent for information, lost and found, and volunteer access to Fountain Square Park; not just Santa's Village at Circus Square. The City is working on emergency incident and crisis plan communications for all major Downtown events in 2026; utilizing more EMS services, weather watching, and tools that help public safety guide patrol and maintenance routes.
5. **Strategic Neighborhood Grants** available to associations, informal groups, property owners, and tenants; up to \$6,000 per award and \$30,000 available total; open thru January 31. Find the link of the City of BG website. These awards are not available to "businesses" privately, but somehow must be public-facing projects, ideally beautification ones. Downtown areas are NOT excluded from this program; the City treats the Downtown footprint like a neighborhood.
6. **Downtown Improvement Grant program** is being requested for next fiscal year. Similar to the Strategic Neighborhood Grants.
7. **2026 Stage & Production RFP and 2026 Event Consultant RFP** coming soon; in final draft stage – Blue Level Productions and Tess Event Consulting handled these projects for the past 3 years and want to in 2026; restructuring how events are set in City Finance for payment; production costs is around \$50,000 and event consulting involved 500 hours of volunteer work in 2025.
8. **Crosswalk Art update** – 2 designs approved by Public Works; getting final cost update for pay out from the GM Foundation Placemaking Grant for in front of SKYPAC & BG Ballpark.
9. **Main Street Now conference 2026** in Tulsa in April – TB to attend for the first time.
10. **Concerts in the Park update** after meeting with SKYPAC, SoKY Center, and BG Hot Rods – the Circus Square fountain is getting an upgrade nearly \$500,000 in cost – the stage can no longer sit on the fountain because of this new technology. The stage must move to the green lawn where the Duncan Hines Days stage has been sitting the past 3 years. SKYPAC intends to host every Friday from June 12 thru August 25, plus the following 2 September Fridays as rain dates in case

Minutes reported by Telia Butler, Downtown Development Coordinator, City of Bowling Green.

of emergencies. The SOKY Center will no longer be used for rain. SKYPAC may also change how bookings work and experiment with multiple acts on the same night. The sponsors and food trucks/vendors layout should remain similar. City Parks and SKYPAC staff are working together to bring these to life. The City donates about \$25-30,000 in-kind as sponsorship thru an onsite electrician at every event, handling all trash pickup throughout the night, and handling the Standard Oil Station free restrooms' maintenance and cleanliness.

- 11. America 250 Plans** update for this summer – tentatively on the books – Thursday, July 2- Boston Pops style Orch Ky show at BG Ballpark with free admission; Saturday, July 4 – ticketed concert with rock/pop acts at BG Ballpark; City of BG plans to give away pocket constitutions and clear bags with the BG America 250 custom logo on them at these events. Downtown banners will be printed with BG America 250 logo and posted during summer months.
- 12. Duncan Hines Days** planning in full swing – May 31 – June 6, 2026. Telia has a call scheduled in a couple weeks with the brand to renew its baking mix donation. Ale 8 is also celebrating its 100th anniversary this year and wants to increase its DHD sponsorship and donation.
- 13. WKU Society of Lifelong Learning** – Telia needs to follow up with this semester. Attendees from the last Downtown Meet Up suggested a series of “Backstage Access” or “Store Stories” featuring a rotation of smaller groups with maybe 3-4 businesses featured in each class; where more info about the process of each retailer is shared – frame shop at Barbara Stewarts, Morris working on jewelry, pouring a candle at Candle Makers, ceramics work at Pots Place, bug pinning at Amothecary, mini yoga class at Lucky Dog, etc.
- 14. McKenna Tabor is the new Codes Enforcement Officer for the Downtown district** effective January 1. She is already sending new notices of violation to Park Row vacant properties. If you have any questions or want to report something – even anonymously – please take a photo and send to McKenna.Tabor@bgky.org. She intends to attend some of our Downtown Meet Ups.
- 15. Telia and Leyda Becker** continue to seek more info on availability at the **Houchens Small Business Accelerator**. They are on the selection panel for tenants and have several questions. One of Telia's goals this year is to encourage more collabs and invite them to participate more in other larger Downtown events. SoKY Floral Exchange attended this Meet Up and White Squirrel Brewery (also at this meeting) spoke about partnering with them on arrangements and classes.
- 16. Atomic Kitchen is opening Underground Deli soon**, a to-go option for sandwiches in the former to-go area for Mariah's Restaurant in Stadium Park Plaza –opening March 1 if all goes well.
- 17. The Southern KY Hospitality Association is partnering with the Caveland Marketing Association on a Ky State Fair booth** in August. If your business has anything to give away or promote, please keep in mind so Telia can have an association member take your items. The fair has about 500,000 attendees annually. Not all walk by these booths, but thousands do. Warren County has not had visibility at the fair in over a decade, and the hospitality association feels this is a good opportunity.
- 18. Riverfront Park** Phase 1 construction is starting this Winter. Phase 2 renderings and construction bid release coming by Summer.