



BETHLEHEM PENNSYLVANIA'S

SOUTH*Side*



**ARTS  
DISTRICT**

**ANNUAL REPORT 2024-2025**





*"The SouthSide Arts District plays such an important role in our city. As a local business owner, I value Erin and Katy's passion for promoting the SouthSide's small business community and for organizing fantastic events which encourage people to shop and dine small."*

Lara Bly, Owner  
Lara Bly Designs





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# LETTER FROM ERIN ZEBERTAVAGE

## SOUTHSIDE ARTS DISTRICT DOWNTOWN MANAGER



As the SouthSide Arts District enters its 10th year of operation, we celebrate the progress we have achieved together and eagerly anticipate the boundless opportunities ahead as Bethlehem continues to transform and flourish. We are attracting new businesses, welcoming residents, and drawing visitors to our vibrant community.

While challenges such as inflation and a tight labor market have led to some recent closures, the small business outlook for the coming year remains highly optimistic.

In 2024, South Bethlehem reached significant milestones with the completion of two mixed-use developments—Taylor Flats and 610 Flats—as well as the renovation of the historic Goodman Building. These projects have reinvigorated 3rd Street, bringing fresh energy that enhances its appeal for new businesses and residents alike.

Beyond private development, the City of Bethlehem’s recent acquisition to connect the South Bethlehem Greenway with the Saucon Rail Trail promises to draw even more visitors to our community, enriching its vibrancy.

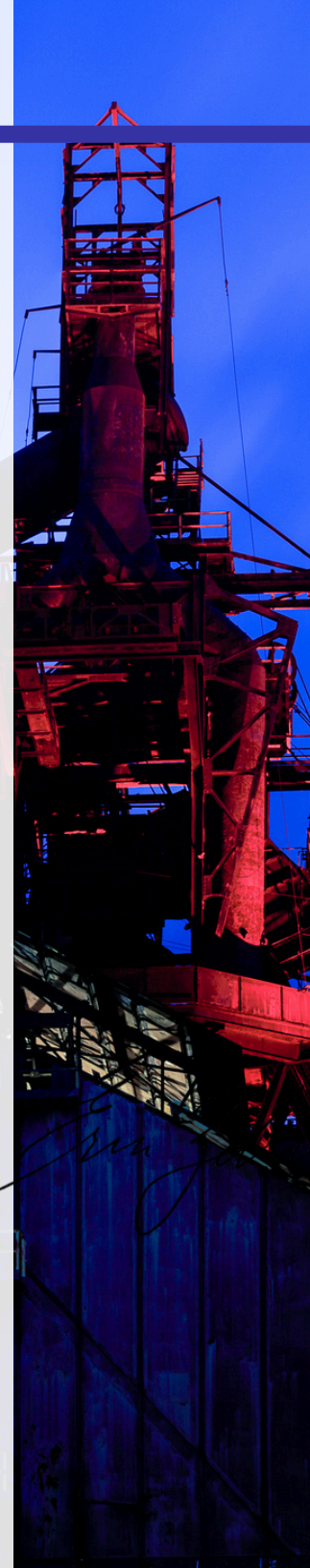
This progress sets the stage for 2025, with several transformative projects on the horizon, including the groundbreaking of ArtsQuest’s Creative Factory and the construction of Tempo by Hilton, a new hotel on 3rd Street.

As our city’s landscape evolves, the SouthSide Arts District remains committed to fostering growth while safeguarding the unique character of our small business community. We will collaborate with developers to address challenges arising from large-scale construction and continue delivering beloved seasonal programming alongside new initiatives to empower businesses to thrive.

We are thrilled to embrace these exciting changes, ensuring that Bethlehem remains a dynamic destination for all to enjoy. Thank you for your support as we move into this exciting new chapter!

Warm Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Erin Zebertavage". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.





## OUR MISSION

To build upon the community's entrepreneurial, cultural, and artistic heritage to support economic development for the businesses of South Bethlehem.

## OUR VISION

To be recognized as the most dynamic and welcoming place in the Lehigh Valley where existing businesses thrive and new businesses launch.

# A BETHLEHEM ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION NONPROFIT INITIATIVE

Formalized in 2015 in partnership with Lehigh University, the SouthSide Arts District is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit program of the Bethlehem Economic Development Corporation (BEDCO), whose other initiatives include the SouthSide Ambassador Program, the Southside Bethlehem Keystone Innovation Zone, and Pi: Partnership for Innovation.





# OUR APPROACH TO COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION

The organization's structure is modeled after the National Main Street Center's Main Street Approach™ which focuses on four key areas of community improvement:

- Organization
- Promotions
- Design
- Economic Vitality

In late 2024, BEDCO submitted an application to the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) for the Main Street Matters Planning Grant intended for the SouthSide Arts District program.

SouthSide Arts District will obtain an official Main Street Designation and gain access to additional resources and funding opportunities if approved for the grant in 2025.



## THE FOUR POINTS: MAIN STREET APPROACH

Build a diverse economic base | Catalyze smart new investment | Cultivate a strong entrepreneurship ecosystem

Create an inviting, inclusive atmosphere | Celebrate historic character | Foster accessible, people-centered public spaces



Build leadership and strong organizational capacity | Ensure broad community engagement | Forge partnerships across sectors

Market district's defining assets | Communicate unique features through storytelling | Support buy-local experience



Photo Credit: Civic Property Management (2024)



# PENNSYLVANIA DOWNTOWN CENTER & THE MAIN STREET AMERICA PROGRAM

*“Main Street is a comprehensive, community-based approach to revitalizing downtowns and central business districts, which has been applied across the United States since the early ‘80s.*”

*The Pennsylvania Downtown Center (PDC) is a Main Street America® Coordinating Program and provides technical assistance, board and committee support, and education to designated programs while the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) provides access to funding opportunities and oversight of designated Main Street and Elm Street Programs in Pennsylvania*

*As a Main Street America® Coordinating Program, the Pennsylvania Downtown Center is part of a powerful, grassroots network consisting of over 40 Coordinating Programs and over 1,200 neighborhoods and communities across the country committed to creating high-quality places and to building stronger communities through preservation-based economic development.”*

**Main Street Program**  
[padowntown.org](http://padowntown.org)





# SAFE, CLEAN, & GREEN

## OUR PARTNERSHIP WITH THE SOUTHSIDE AMBASSADORS

**The SouthSide Arts District** has a close relationship with the SouthSide Ambassadors, who provide essential community services in the downtown by picking up litter, removing graffiti, emptying trash receptacles, clearing weeds and leaves from sidewalks, and more!

They also work directly with Bethlehem's police department to conduct safety patrols, serving as a highly visible but approachable presence in key areas of the district.

Through their daily efforts, the SouthSide Ambassadors bolster the appearance and atmosphere of the district. They provide warm, personal hospitality—offering friendly greetings, directions, recommendations, and other forms of assistance to visitors and residents of Bethlehem.

*The SouthSide Ambassadors Program is administered by BEDCO, managed by Block by Block, and was launched in partnership with Lehigh University in 2014. Lehigh University provides most of the funding for the program and other funders include Community Action Development Bethlehem, Northampton County, and Sycamore Hill Farm Development.*



**SouthSide Ambassador Team (left to right):**  
Sandra Zajacek (Operations Manager), Carl, Danielle (Team Lead), and Kyle



# WE ♥ LEHIGH

As the SouthSide Arts District enters its tenth year of operation, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to Lehigh University for a decade of unwavering support and commitment to our programming. As a steadfast funder and partner, Lehigh's dedication and investment has been pivotal in shaping the SouthSide of Bethlehem into the creative community and innovative hub for small businesses that it is today.

Lehigh has given us the extraordinary opportunity to collaborate with countless students, alumni, staff, and teaching professionals, whose talents and passion have enriched our organization and strengthened our impact in SouthSide's neighborhoods.

Together, we've celebrated many milestones, cultivated meaningful connections, and laid the groundwork for future successes and initiatives.

Thank you, Lehigh University, for your belief in our mission and your enduring partnership since the beginning of our journey.



LEHIGH  
UNIVERSITY



TM



# OUR VOLUNTEERS

We are an organization of volunteers representing a diverse and growing SouthSide Bethlehem. Our volunteers lend their time and experiences to their respective committee projects throughout the year.

## ADVISORY BOARD

The Advisory Board supervises the organization's overall fiscal health and is responsible for resource management, advising staff on each committee's development, and leading strategic decision-making to ensure all initiatives and programming fulfill the mission and vision of the SouthSide Arts District.

**Stacie Brennan**

Lehigh University Art Galleries

**Audree Chase**

Northampton Community College

**Laura Collins**

City of Bethlehem

**Lawrence Eighmy**

Stone House Group LLC

**Steven Fernstrom**

Bethlehem Parking Authority

**Joanne Garcia**

ArtQuest

**Louis Intile**

Fifth Street Properties

**Lisa Jordan**

Touchstone Theatre

**Tracey King**

Lehigh University

**Adrienne McNeil**

Lehigh University

**Anna Smith**

Community Action  
Development Bethlehem

**Donna Taggart**

Taggart Associates

**Derek Wallen**

Roasted | Country Club Brewing | Lehigh Valley Printing

**Sean Ziller**

BEDCO



# COMMITTEES

The SouthSide Arts District's committees—Organization, Promotions, Design, and Economic Vitality— are comprised of dedicated volunteers and stakeholders. Each committee focuses on advancing its specific projects and initiatives, contributing to the district's growth and success throughout the year.

## DESIGN

**Stacie Brennan, Chair**  
Lehigh University Art Galleries

**Joseph Anthes**  
Bethlehem Area School District

**Karen Beck-Pooley**  
Lehigh University

**Barbara Fraust**  
Bethlehem Fine Arts Commission

**Joanne Garcia**  
ArtsQuest

**Corey Gray**  
City of Bethlehem

**Lisa Harms**  
ArtsQuest

**Darlene Heller**  
City of Bethlehem

**Katie Hovencamp**  
Northampton Community College

**Sean Kernan**  
Tagency Designs

**Ian Panyko**  
Cafe the Lodge

## ORGANIZATION

**Lisa Jordan, Chair**  
Touchstone Theatre

**Antonia Fernandez**  
Northampton Community College

**Alex Miller**  
City of Bethlehem

**Linda Rentschler**  
Humanitarian Social Innovations

**Jasmita Saini**  
Small Business Development  
Center, Lehigh University

**Donna Taggart**  
Taggart Associates

## ECONOMIC VITALITY

**Erin Zebertavage, Interim Chair**  
SouthSide Arts District

**Adrienne McNeil**  
Lehigh University

**Alex Miller**  
City of Bethlehem

**Jasmita Saini**  
Small Business Development  
Center, Lehigh University

## PROMOTIONS

**Derek Wallen, Chair**  
Roasted | Country Club Brewing |  
Lehigh Valley Printing

**Chris Kunzmann**  
ArtsQuest

**Shannon Morris**  
National Museum of Industrial  
History

**Tara Nagabyru**  
Color Me Mine

**Katie Rymon**  
National Museum of Industrial  
History

**Shanoon Sigafos**  
St. Luke's University Health Network

**Tiffany Sondergaard**  
TS Brand Elevation

**Susan Stachowski**  
Wind Creek Bethlehem

**Kim Veeran**  
Color Me Mine





# PROMOTIONS COMMITTEE: SEASONAL EVENTS

**The Promotions Committee** kicked off the year with the Spring on the SouthSide celebration on the Bethlehem Greenway with exercise, yoga, art appreciation tours, and outdoor activities. From May to June, the Live on the Greenway Summer Concert Series brought four Sundays of free live music to Harmony Pavilion with delicious eats from SouthSide eateries and breweries.

Our Sip & Slide Summer Cocktail Crawl cooled us down in the July heat, attracting visitors and driving foot traffic to the business district during a popular vacation season. October brought some spice to SouthSide with the 28th ChiliFest, a flavorful competition that celebrated our local culinary talents and drew chili enthusiasts from near and far.

The holiday spirit came to life at the end of the year with the help of Touchstone Theatre at SouthSide's Annual Christmas Tree Lighting. Last but not least, the Naughty or Nice Cocktail & Cookies Crawl capped off the year with festive fun and seasonal flavors while boosting holiday shopping in the district.







# OUR EVENTS DRIVE ECONOMIC GROWTH

**According to the 2022–2023 Americans for the Arts’ “Arts & Economic Prosperity Economic and Social Impact Study” for the Lehigh Valley Region:**

*“2.9 million attendees at Lehigh Valley Region’s nonprofit arts and culture events spend an average of \$31.75 per person, per event, beyond the cost of admission on items such as meals, parking, and lodging—vital income for local businesses...the sector generated \$171.4 million in economic activity during 2022—\$80.6 million in spending by arts and culture organizations and an additional \$90.8 million in event-related expenditures by their audiences. That economic activity supported 2,590 jobs, provided \$104.0 million in personal income to residents, and generated \$32.1 million in tax revenue to local, state, and federal governments.”*

**In 2024, SouthSide Arts District events attracted approximately **4,825 people** thereby contributing an estimated **\$153,193.75** in economic impact to South Bethlehem’s commercial business district.**



# DESIGN COMMITTEE - 2024 IMPROVEMENTS

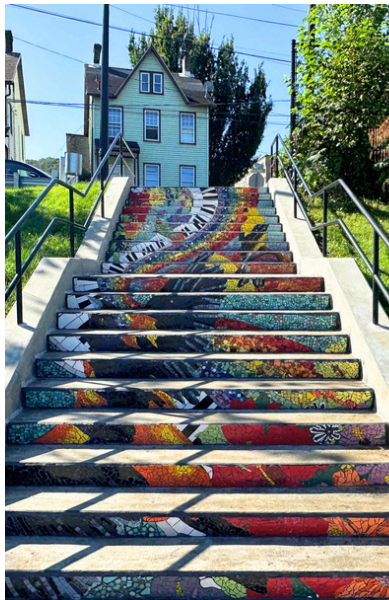
The **Design Committee** cultivates the visual assets of the SouthSide Arts District including public art and streetscape improvements.

In 2024, the committee executed the following projects for the district:

- Dog Waste Disposal Station Pilot Program on the Greenway (3 stations installed)
- Biannual plantings / holiday decor for SouthSide flower planters (70 planters dressed across 3rd Street, 4th Street, and the Greenway)
- New “Star of Bethlehem” illuminated sculpture decoration for the Greenway during the holiday season
- *Changemakers* Greenway Public Art Exhibition (September – August) coordinated and sponsored by Lehigh University Art Galleries. Five years running, this annual outdoor exhibition brings free art to the public on the South Bethlehem Greenway.







## TOWNIE AWARD WINNERS!

The SouthSide Arts District was honored with a 2024 Townie Award in the Physical Improvements & Design category from the Pennsylvania Downtown Center. Townie Awards celebrate excellence in revitalizing Pennsylvania's downtowns and communities. The district was recognized for the "Hope in Flight" Mosaic Stair Mural Project, led by Bethlehem Area School District art teachers Tiffany Anderson and Carla Majczan.

This project transformed a concrete staircase into a colorful mosaic showpiece and demonstrated the district's commitment to enhancing public spaces and fostering community engagement with local artists and youth.

## PRESERVING A PRICELESS PIECE OF OUTSIDER ART

The Design Committee engaged in discussions with ArtsQuest's Banana Factory Arts & Education Center to help preserve and relocate original artworks in preparation for the exciting 2025 construction of the new ArtsQuest Creative Factory, powered by PPL.

A standout piece is the iconic Mr. Imagination Bus Shelter, created in 2002 by internationally acclaimed "outsider artist" Gregory Warmack, better known as Mr. Imagination, with the help of local SouthSide youth. This artistic treasure, weighing a remarkable 25,000 lbs, is adorned with thousands of eclectic baubles—shells, bottle caps, buttons, and pebbles—making it a one-of-a-kind masterpiece. However, its unique construction presented complex relocation challenges.

After months of careful research and collaboration with industry professionals, a plan was developed to preserve portions of the structure and move them offsite during construction. Once the Creative Factory is complete, the shelter will make a grand return—reimagined and ready to inspire as part of the vibrant programming on ArtsQuest's campus for years to come!





# ORGANIZATION COMMITTEE

The **Organization Committee** plays a vital role in fostering community engagement and collaboration within the SouthSide Arts District. Through outreach to local businesses, organizing volunteer events, and growing our membership program, the committee strengthens ties across the district and beyond.

## 2024 HIGHLIGHTS

### COMMUNITY CLEANUPS

- Seasonal cleanup efforts tackled litter on the Greenway, 3rd & 4th Streets, and Yosko Park

### BLOOD DRIVES

- Supported local blood donations through a partnership with Miller Keystone Blood Center and BSI Corporate Benefits

### LUMINARIA NIGHT

- Partnered with New Bethany Ministries and Victory House Lehigh Valley to illuminate the Greenway with luminaria lanterns

### HOLIDAY FOOD & TOY DRIVE

- Collaborated with the Bethlehem Parking Authority to collect donations benefiting New Bethany Ministries, Hispanic Center Lehigh Valley Food Pantry, Northeast Community Center, and the Marvine-Pembroke neighborhood







# THANK YOU TO OUR MEMBERS

**Cafe the Lodge | Candlewood Suites Bethlehem South | Cheesy Charlie  
 Colony Meadery | Country Club Brewing | Crew Cafe | F&A Grog House  
 Five Maidens Cider Company | Godfrey Daniels | Lara Bly Designs  
 Lehigh Valley Charter High School for the Arts | Lehigh Valley Public Media  
 Mister Lee's Noodles | National Museum of Industrial History  
 Northampton Community College | Playa Bowls Bethlehem | Roasted  
 Social Still Distillery | Stone House Group LLC  
 Taggart Associates | TS Brand Elevation | Touchstone Theatre  
 Venture X Bethlehem | Victory House of the Lehigh Valley | Zest Bar & Grille**



# HOW TO BECOME A MEMBER

*The SouthSide Arts District membership program was created for the nonprofit organizations and small businesses of SouthSide Bethlehem. Membership grants access to valuable resources and opportunities such as curated trainings and workshops, increased visibility from participating in district-organized events, and exclusive marketing opportunities in esteemed local publications such as Fig Lehigh Valley and Edible Lehigh Valley.*

*We take pride in showcasing our members and fostering their prominence within Bethlehem and the Greater Lehigh Valley community. If your nonprofit or small business is interested in becoming a member, contact us at:*

*[info@southsideartsdistrict.com](mailto:info@southsideartsdistrict.com)*





# ECONOMIC VITALITY COMMITTEE

The **Economic Vitality Committee** seeks financial and economic resources to support and strengthen both new and established businesses in the district. We work closely with partners like **Northampton County Community College** and the **Lehigh Small Business Development Center** to host workshops and trainings for business owners and entrepreneurs.

The committee also encourages connections between local businesses and new audiences through collaboration on events such as:

- Lehigh University's "Faux Friday" celebration that introduced a record-breaking 1400 freshman students to South Bethlehem
- "Welcome to Lehigh" tours for Lehigh freshman student leaders
- The SouthSide Small Business Crawl in partnership with the Iacocca Center for international business students and entrepreneurs

These events create unique connections and significantly impact the likelihood of young people exploring and frequenting SouthSide to dine, shop, and engage with local entertainment.





# HELLO NEW BUSINESSES!

**The SouthSide Arts District** remains attuned to the evolving landscape of our business district, monitoring new developments to provide resources and support for incoming businesses. We proudly celebrated several new small businesses in 2024 and look forward to even more openings in 2025!

- Crewy Cafe & Crewy Woo Boutique | 21 E 3rd St
- B-Side Bottle & Larder | 514 E 3rd St
- La Madame Biscuit | 716 E 4th St
- Sizzling Bites Halal | 312 E 3rd St

## Coming soon in 2025!

- Batter Up by Batch Microcreamery | 307-311 E 3rd St
- The Barbeque Boys | 306 S New St
- La Kang Chicken And Rice | 15 E 4th St
- Mercatino Italiano | 528 E 3rd St
- Paranormal Pizza | 125 E 3rd St







## OUR DIGITAL REACH

- 1.2K+ EMAIL SUBSCRIBERS MONTHLY
- 8.2K + INSTAGRAM FOLLOWERS TO DATE
- 7.9K + FACEBOOK FOLLOWERS TO DATE
- 20K+ UNIQUE WEBSITE PAGE VIEWS ANNUALLY



*"...Thank you for your hard work and dedication in making Southside such a fun place to get together with friends and family!"*

-Kathy | Cocktail Crawl Attendee

*"This is an amazing organization! They put on so many great events throughout the year. And every event ties the neighborhood and the local businesses together. All while drawing in visitors to experience all the charms of the SouthSide...Thank you guys for all you do for the neighborhood! I will keep supporting your events!"*



-Carlos, Local Guide | Google Reviews





# IN PRINT

We actively showcase SouthSide businesses and the arts district through features and advertisements in local publications, including *Fig Lehigh Valley Magazine* (sponsored by Wind Creek Bethlehem), *Edible Lehigh Valley Magazine*, the City of Bethlehem's newsletter, and seasonal ArtsQuest publications, generously sponsored in-kind by ArtsQuest.

These features provide a valuable opportunity for businesses to gain visibility and connect with new audiences in Bethlehem, throughout the Lehigh Valley, and beyond!



**Fig Magazine Issue No. 41 | Spring 2024**  
**Business Featured: Donerd's Donuts**



# BUDGET SUMMARY (2024)

The SouthSide Arts District operates on a fixed annual budget, which is supported by our primary funding partners:

- Lehigh University
- The Bethlehem Parking Authority

We also receive generous support from our corporate sponsors:

- Wind Creek Bethlehem
- St. Luke's University Health Network

## TURNING PARKING REVENUE INTO COMMUNITY IMPACT

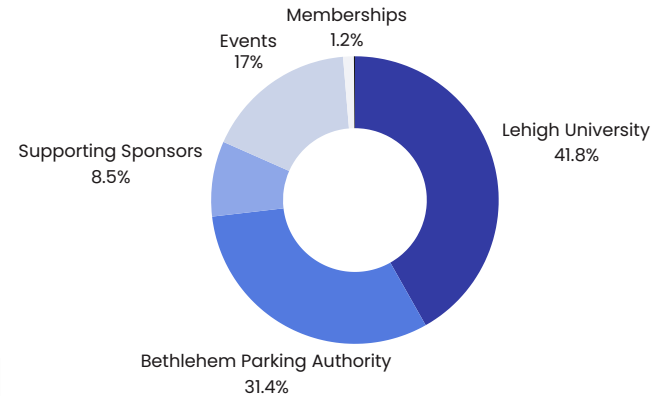
The Bethlehem Parking Authority's **PARKBETHLEHEM** initiative, which aims to optimize parking efficiency and visitor experience in Bethlehem, has enabled a greater investment into the SouthSide Arts District's programming.

We are deeply grateful for the BPA's support, and their commitment demonstrates how funds raised from parking meters and related services can be reinvested and transformed into a resource that benefits and enriches our entire community.



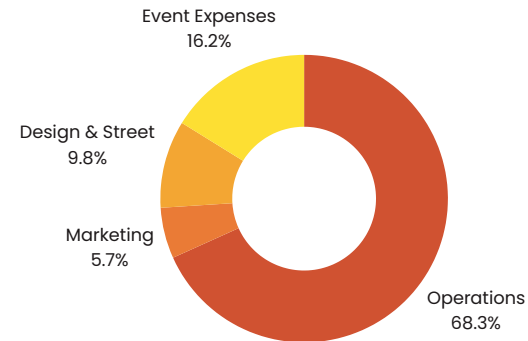
## REVENUE

**PROJECTED: \$211,000 | ACTUAL: \$239,036**



## EXPENSES

**BUDGETED: \$211,000 | ACTUAL: \$211,553**





# SPONSORS



**LEHIGH**  
UNIVERSITY



*The Benner Family*



**TOUCHSTONE  
THEATRE**  
*Theatre that Transforms*





**GET INVOLVED &  
VISIT US TODAY!**



**OFFICE ADDRESS**

324 South New Street  
Bethlehem, PA 18015

**HOURS**

Monday - Friday  
9:00 AM - 5:00 PM

**PHONE**

610-360-5778

**EMAIL**

[info@southsideartsdistrict.com](mailto:info@southsideartsdistrict.com)

**WEBSITE**

[southsideartsdistrict.com](http://southsideartsdistrict.com)

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**@SOUTHIDEARTSDISTRICT**

