



Here Comes Santa Claus

2020 RECAP



Credit: Alpha Digital

DOWNTOWN  
Rochester, Minnesota



# About Here Comes Santa Claus 2020

Despite the impact of COVID-19, Santa Claus still came with a bound to (down)town Rochester! The holiday event, which typically includes in-person family-friendly activities, was adapted to include a 12 Days of Magic downtown scavenger hunt, Kindness Tree donation drive for the Salvation Army, and a drive-thru parade featuring lighted trees and an appearance by Santa Claus himself!



Mayo helicopter gives Santa Claus a lift

12 Days of  
Magic:  
Nov. 16-27



Altra Federal Credit Union Kindness Tree Donations

Drive-thru  
Parade:  
Nov. 27



Santa Claus Drive-Thru Parade

Credit: Alpha Digital

# Here Comes Santa Claus Event Partners

## Presenting Partner:



## Experience Partners:



## Special Thanks To:



- Brandon Helgeson and Big Bang Companies
- Premier Banks
- Northern Sun Productions
- Rochester Police Department
- Rochester Fire Department
- Jeff Allman and Residences at Old City Hall
- The City of Rochester
- Tom Claymon and the Clean and Safe Ambassador Team
- Reef Parking
- Warning Lites
- Galleria at University Square
- Crystal Landherr and Hiawatha Homes
- Sarah Miller
- Hotel Indigo

# Components of Here Comes Santa Claus



## 12 Days of Magic Scavenger Hunt

During Santa Claus' visit to Rochester on November 16 for his yearly check-up at Mayo Clinic, his reindeer went missing! In order to wrangle them up before the holidays, Santa recruited help from the RDA (Reindeer Detection Agency) to hold a scavenger hunt for our community to help track down his crew. For 12 consecutive days, folks solved riddles on Facebook and Instagram that lead to downtown locations and the whereabouts of Santa's reindeer, earning them stickers and additional prizes along the way!



## Altra Federal Credit Union Kindness Tree

Here Comes Santa Claus Presenting Partner Altra Federal Credit Union brought back the Kindness Tree for the second year. We asked the community to donate new gloves, hats, and scarves for those less fortunate by pinning them to the Kindness Tree located on the first floor of Galleria at University Square. The items were donated to the Salvation Army following the event to provide warmth for those in need, just in time for the holidays and the approaching winter weather.



## Santa Claus Drive-Thru Parade

The streets of downtown Rochester were flooded with joy as families safely loaded up their cars and headed downtown to see Santa Claus at the drive- thru parade! Folks tuned into Y105 FM to enjoy the sounds of the season, received treat bags filled with goodies, and were delighted to see the trees along the route aglow with holiday lights. The parade route led folks north on 1st Avenue, past Old City Hall, to Santa Claus who was waiting to greet each car with a warm smile and wave from a safe distance, thanks to a little help from the Rochester Fire Department!



# New Approaches, New Learnings



Times change, and events inevitably must too. Annually, RDA staff, downtown stakeholders, and partners must weigh the merits of adhering to local traditions against opportunities to evolve events based on new needs, best practices from peer organizations, and community feedback. In 2020 RDA worked with a new Santa Claus who was able to do live acting work and create videos for virtual components. While we know our community members have great affection for our alumnus Santa, we hope the spirit of the event was well served by our new Mr. Claus.



We can bring cars to downtown, but we prefer bringing people. While our first foray into the COVID-19-safe drive thru parade allowed 500 cars to attend in two hours, we confirmed that downtown truly is best enjoyed by foot with full freedom to explore shops and restaurants and greet friends. Should we attempt another drive-thru event, we will plan for additional points of interest and entertainment along the route and waiting areas.



Renaming events may serve us better than simply adapting them in response to COVID-19. Some survey respondents indicated confusion or disappointment that this event was very different from the in-person Santa rescue of years past. RDA is exploring name changes for future event adaptations (e.g. Improv-ICE instead of Social-ICE), to help set realistic expectations for attendees.



Video and audio are key to our digital engagement efforts. As we continue to utilize these formats as an alternative to in-person gatherings, we will incorporate more video, watch metrics carefully, and respond accordingly.

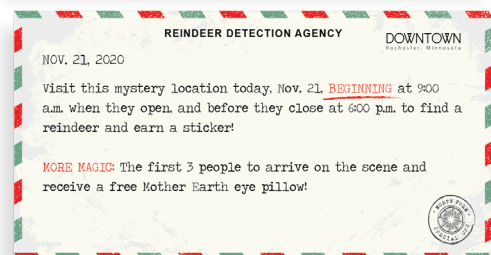


# 12 Days of Magic

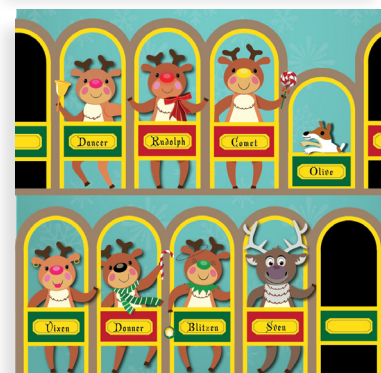
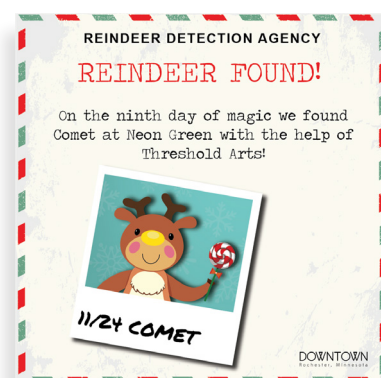
- 12 Days of Magic scavenger hunt aimed to safely encourage the community to come downtown for a fun activity, do additional holiday shopping for friends and family, and support local businesses during the holidays.
- The scavenger hunt kicked off with an amazing video of Santa Claus at Mayo Clinic taking a ride in the Mayo helicopter.
- Eleven business throughout the 44 blocks of the downtown Special Service District participated as prize destinations.
- Each day, upon arriving at the correct location participants were rewarded with a unique sticker of the reindeer they found. A limited number of 'More Magic' offerings were also available to the first detectives on the scene. Gifts ranged from sweet treats and games, to holiday socks and more!
- While the scavenger hunt paused on Thanksgiving Day, we asked participants to vote online for a charity of their choice to receive a \$50.00 to in place of a "More Magic" offering. We were proud to donate to the Tim Rasmusson Foundation for donor awareness.
- On the 12th Day of Magic, once the last reindeer was found, Santa thanked Rochester with the drive-thru parade!

"This promotion brought in customers right up until the time we closed...Several of those customers told me that they haven't been into the Galleria for years, so it did a great job of getting people downtown that may not have otherwise come downtown. Mission successful!"

- Greg Gernes, Games by James Rochester



Facebook clue posts



Instagram answer reveal posts



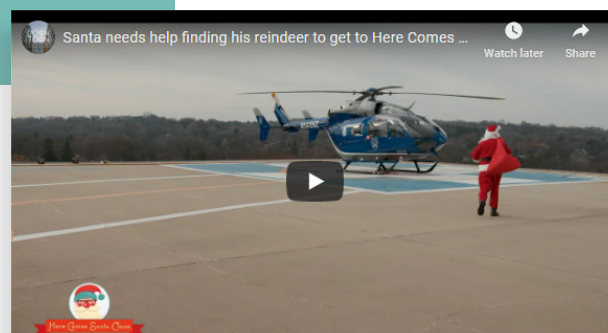
Daily sticker offerings



Day 2 limited "More Magic" offering from Carol's Corn!



No- contact sticker station



Video kicking off 12 Days of Magic at Mayo Clinic



# Drive- Thru Parade



Visiting Santa Claus from the safe and warm distance



Residences of Old City Hall lit up in holiday colors



Mayor Norton safely greeting parade-goers



Community members made signs and lined the parade route



Cars lined up along 1st Avenue in downtown



Credit all: Alpha Digital



Santa Claus and friends celebrating safely





# Surveys



Santa catching a ride on the Mayo helicopter atop the Clinic



Credit: Alpha Digital

Parade route cheerleaders

**"Loved the reindeer scavenger hunt. It was fun to work to solve the clues and find more fun businesses downtown that we didn't know about...the kids were very motivated to get each one."**

**-Here Comes Santa Claus Attendee**

**"It was so easy and stress free to visit Santa Claus. Our girls were thrilled!"**

**-Here Comes Santa Claus Attendee**

- 91% of respondents were Rochester area residents
- 89% of respondents participated in the drive-thru parade
- 88% of respondents spent or anticipated spending \$1-\$24 while downtown for Here Comes Santa Claus
- 75% of respondents heard about the event through social media
- 73% of respondents would like to see Here Comes Santa Claus continued
- 44% of respondents were first time attendees
- 44% of respondents would attend this event next year
- 22% of respondents got take-out from a restaurant or bar while downtown for the event
- 21% of respondents were Mayo Clinic employees
- 16% of respondents felt more connected to the community after attending



Event survey handed out in parade goodie bag



# Digital Marketing

- **DowntownRochesterMN.com Marketing**

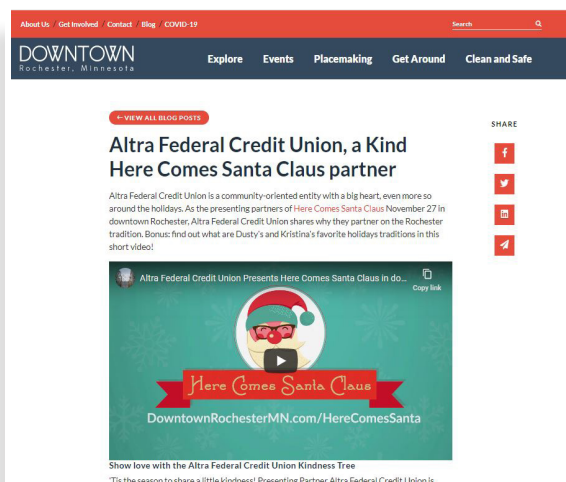
- Event Page (from January 1 through December 1, 2020)
  - Pageviews: 3,633
  - Time spent on page: 2:27
- RDA weekly e-newsletter (October 28 through December 2)
  - Sent to 40,827 people throughout the season
  - Average weekly email list: 8,165 people
  - 15.71% average open rate
  - 2,539 clicks
- Community Calendars
  - Published to more than 30 online event calendars
- Here Comes Santa Claus Blog Features on RDA Blog
  - Sleigh Guide to Here Comes Santa Claus, November 9 (144 Pageviews)
  - Altra Federal Credit Union, a Kind Here Comes Santa Claus partner, November 10 (52 Pageviews)
  - Here Comes Santa Claus: A Holiday Playlist November 21 (15 Pageviews)
  - Here Comes Santa Claus Drive-Thru Parade November 27 (2,369 Pageviews)
  - Fill out the Here Comes Santa Claus 2020 survey November 30
- Press Release
  - Here Comes Santa Claus 2020 Announcement (released October 29)
  - Here Comes Santa Claus schedule and drive-thru parade details (Released November 24)

**Santa has arrived in downtown!**

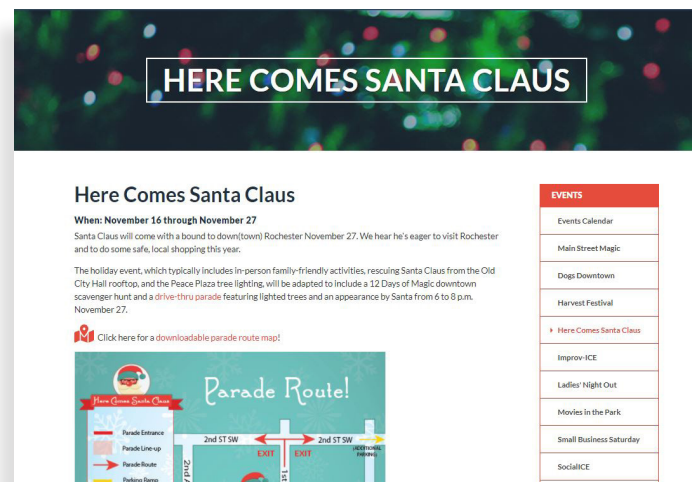


On the first day of magic, Santa's quick visit to Rochester has run amuck. His reindeer have fled, and now he is stuck. Could you help Santa track down his crew? Each day they've promised to leave a clue! So grab your mask and sharpen up quick As we embark on Twelve Days of Magic!

12 Days of Magic launch feature in RDA e-newsletter



Altra Federal Credit Union Partner Blog

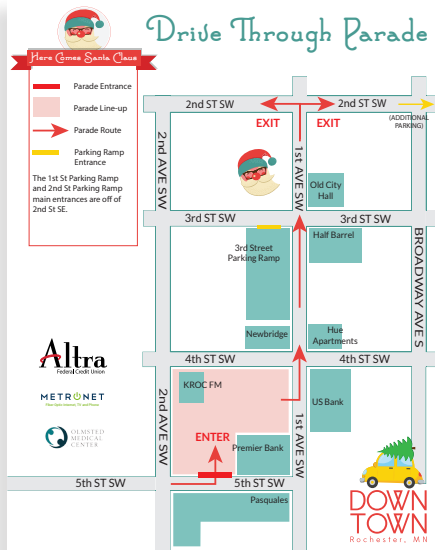


Event page on RDA website

# Print Marketing

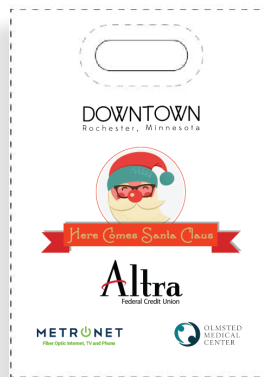


Here Comes Santa Claus Event Poster

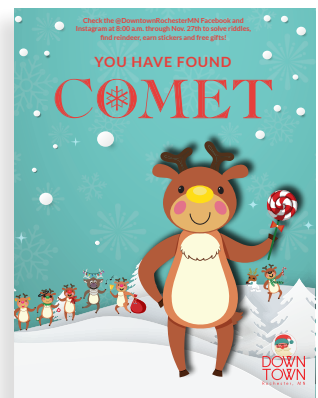


Here Comes Santa Claus drive-thru parade route printable map

- 11"x17" posters (150 count) distributed throughout downtown, in Peace Plaza poster stands, and in the greater Rochester community
- 6'x3' banners placed October 30 and displayed through November 29
  - o On fence outside City Hall
  - o People's Food Co-op
- Printed parade route maps available on the website and inside goodie bags handed out during parade
- Custom goodie bags printed with sponsor logos for contact-less handout at parade.



Here Comes Santa Claus Parade Goodie Bag



12 Days of Magic scavenger hunt Signage posted at each mystery location



Here Comes Santa Claus large banners

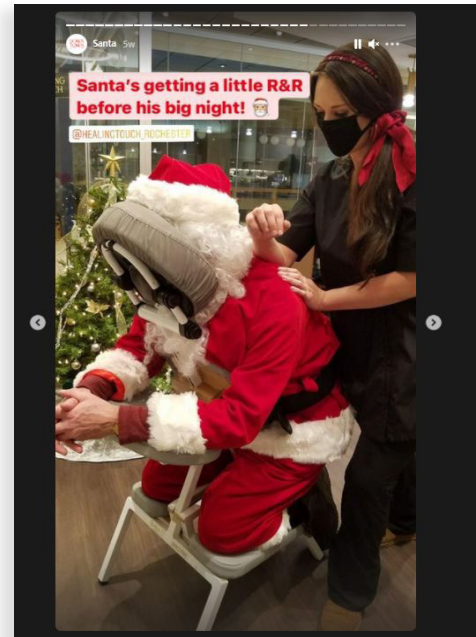


# Social Media Marketing

- **Here Comes Santa Claus Facebook event**
  - 18,700 people reached
    - 2,100 page views
    - 851 responses
  - 21 posts
- **Downtown Rochester, MN Facebook page**
  - 42 posts
    - 66,578 Reach
    - 2,676 Reactions, Comments, and Shares
    - 3,356 Post Clicks
- **Thursdays Downtown Facebook page**
  - 15 posts
    - 15,782 Reach
    - 496 Reactions, Comments, and Shares
    - 16,278 Post Clicks
- **Downtown Rochester, MN Instagram page**
  - 35 posts
    - 49,133 Views
    - 1,156 Likes
    - 58 Comments
    - 652 Video Views
  - 47 Stories
    - Estimated 34K Reach
- **Downtown Rochester, MN YouTube Channel**
  - 2 video posts
    - 965 Impressions
    - 681 Views

Here Comes  
Santa Claus  
Facebook Event  
Reach :  
**18,655**

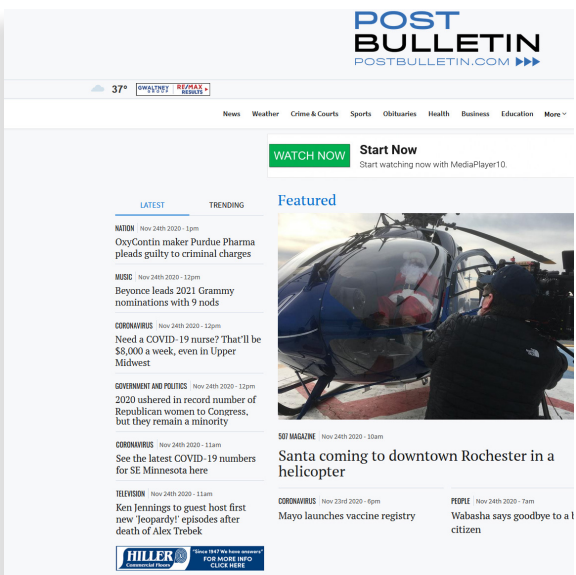
Here Comes  
Santa Claus  
Instagram Post  
Views:  
**49,133**



Downtown Rochester, MN Instagram Story slide



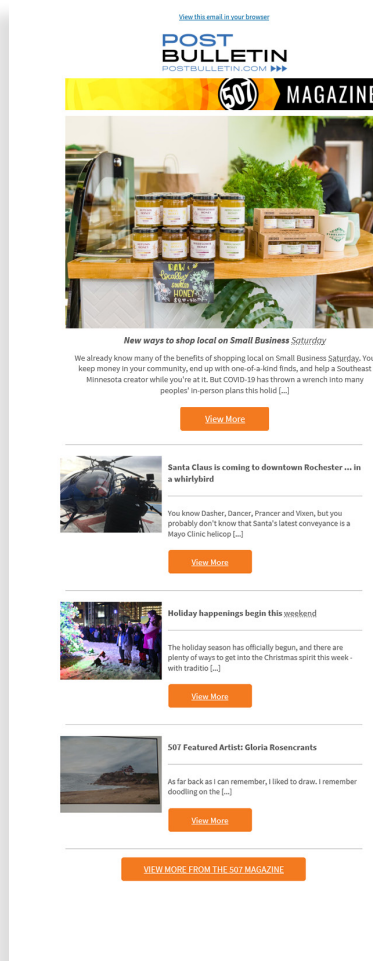
Various posts from the Downtown Rochester, MN Instagram grid



Post Bulletin Homepage

# Event Generated Media

## Event Generated Media



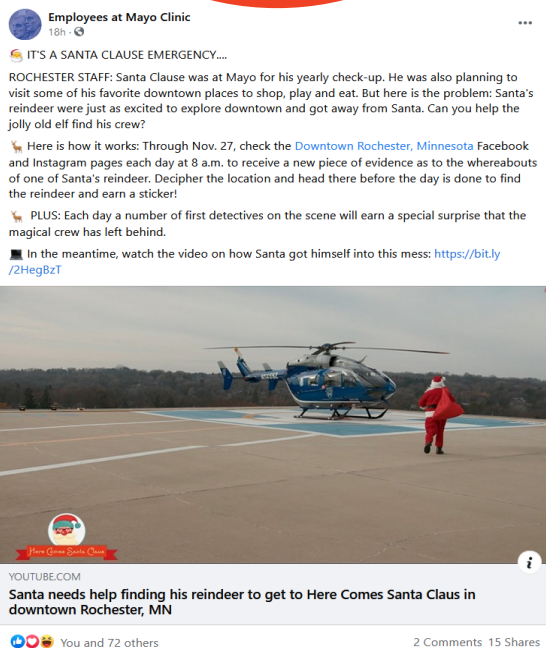
507 Magazine's feature article in November 26 issue



Instagram story from 12 Days of Magic scavenger hunt

Event Generated  
Media Impact:  
**2,188,000**  
Estimated Reach

Public social media  
post mentions:  
**1,024,699**  
Estimated Reach



Employees at Mayo Clinic Facebook Group



Posts from parade attendees



Everything else is wonky different this year, why not mix up seeing Santa too! Lil and I loved waving hello to Santa from a distance. We need to keep him safe so he can visit all the boys and girls in a few short weeks! Thanks @DowntownRochMN for adapting our tradition this year!





# RDA Staff



## Holly Masek / Executive Director

Before joining the RDA, Holly served as Director of Public Realm for Ashkenazy Acquisition Corp. (AAC), a real estate investment firm, where she managed community engagement, placemaking, and tourism strategies for AAC's Iconic Portfolio, with a focus on the Boston market.



## Karli McElroy / Senior Director of Placemaking

In this role, Karli is responsible for creation and development of innovative and collaborative placemaking projects within Downtown Rochester. She works with partners to help the community envision how we see our Downtown spaces differently. Karli also oversees the Start-Up and the Façade Improvement Grant programs. Additionally, she manages Peace Plaza rentals on behalf of the City of Rochester.



## Katie Adelman / Director of Content & Communications

Although a native of Ortonville (west-central Minnesota), Katie spent her childhood traveling to the Rochester area to visit extended family and considers Rochester a second hometown. She received an associate degree in digital art and design from Rochester Community and Technical College in 2010 and a bachelor's degree in mass media with an emphasis in public relations from Minnesota State University, Mankato in 2014.



## Monika Kopet / Events Manager

Monika received her bachelor's degree from Metropolitan State University for Communications/Violence Prevention with a minor in Psychology. She has lived in the Twin Cities her whole life and moved to Rochester to be closer to her fiancé and his daughter. She has volunteered previously at the Minneapolis VA Hospital escorting veterans to their doctor appointments, etc., and she is also a huge animal lover with two dogs she rescued.



## Lauren Rockwell / Administrative Coordinator

Lauren Rockwell moved to Rochester in 2019 from Seattle, Washington. She received her bachelor's degree in psychology with a minor in film studies from Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles. Prior to joining RDA, Lauren was a program manager for the Employer Engagement and Internal Brand team at Amazon Prime Video in Seattle. She is a lover of film and TV, design, podcasts, trivia, and all living things, especially her miniature dachshund, Honey.

# Support the community we all call home.

We at the RDA are generating ways to connect and reconnect consumers with downtown small businesses to sustain them through challenges related to COVID-19, construction, and subsequent reduced foot traffic downtown. We are offering financial partnership opportunities for these ideas, and for our current slate of 2021 events and programs. We would also love to discuss any ideas you may have for our downtown Rochester community.

## Improv-ICE

Feb 4-11, 2021

## Movies in the Park

Summer 2021

## Ladies Night Out

Spring 2021

## Thursdays Downtown

Summer 2021

Thank you for your partnership and support of our organization. Thanks to you, Downtown Rochester is stronger together.



**DOWNTOWN**  
Rochester, Minnesota

Rochester Downtown Alliance  
311 South Broadway South Suite A2  
Rochester, Minnesota 55904

Have questions/interested in partnering with us?

Contact Monika Kopet, our events manager, at  
507.216.9882 or [mkopet@rdowntownalliance.com](mailto:mkopet@rdowntownalliance.com)