Annual Report









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downtownlincoln.org



You Are Our Champion.

Downtowns are always evolving with emerging trends, reliable local businesses, fun events, and new reasons to show up. But through it all, one thing stays constant: the people. The energy, the pride, and the "let's make this better" mindset are what truly bring downtown to life.

That's why you are a Downtown Champion. You don't just support downtown, you help shape it. Your positivity builds momentum, which drives lasting growth.

More importantly, we celebrate the champions who have been here for years, the longtime businesses and supporters who built the foundation and kept downtown strong through every season.

With people like you leading the charge, I am confident that downtown's best days are always ahead.

If you are interested in becoming a Downtown Champion, visit www.DowntownChampion.org

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Maintenance

In 2025, DLA's Downtown Green Team continued to play a critical role in keeping downtown Lincoln clean, welcoming, and vibrant. In May, DLA was awarded a $127,000 grant through the Nebraska Statewide Arboretum to support new landscaping projects, allowing the team to beautify high-impact areas such as 18th & O and 17th & O. Across 2024-2025, the team planted 9,951 plants and 54 trees, enhancing the downtown streetscape while supporting long-term sustainability. Their day-to-day efforts included 2,510 hours spent collecting trash and litter from more than 400 trash cans, 2,142 hours of street sweeping, 182 hours of snow removal, and 4,092 hours dedicated to plant and turf maintenance, demonstrating an ongoing commitment to maintaining a clean, safe, and attractive downtown for residents, businesses, and visitors alike.


PinnacleBankArena
SOUTH LOBBY

Events

DLA hosted thousands of participants from far and wide during our rotation of annual events. Each event is geared toward various folks, from families to singles or students to shoppers. We focus on producing low-cost (and in many cases, free) events accessible to our community, all while supporting the fantastic local businesses that make up our BID.



Halloween in the Haymarket

October 26, 2024

Over 7,000 ghouls and goblins eagerly lined up to trick-or-treat, receive free pumpkins, and engage in many free entertaining activities. This was the biggest event of the year with 43 downtown businesses participating in the event and 21 businesses outside the BID.

Event highlights included a DJ-accompanied bubble and dance party, spooky face painting, and whimsical caricature drawings. To add to the excitement, we introduced a thrilling monster drawing contest, featuring the imaginative creations of young artists displayed on the Railyard's UBT Cube.


THE SHOP FLOCKS

Shop the Blocks

November 17, 2024

Shop the Blocks marked its 18th year with a revamped ticketing system. Participants could tailor their experience this year by selecting from Silver or Gold tickets.

Those with Silver tickets enjoyed massive discounts at the participating shops. Gold ticket holders also received these discounts and secured access to the exclusive VIP after-party at the Rococo Theatre.

Eleven businesses participated in the event offering discounts and other goodies to shoppers. That night, UBT Maker's Market opened its doors featuring over 25 booths. Over 300 shoppers went on a spending spree at the featured shops, exceeding $23,000 in merchandise sold.


MERRY
CHRISTMAS

Holidays

Lincoln North Pole

In its fourth year, the Lincoln North Pole took over Tower Square during December. The North Pole is made up of seven holly jolly zones with interactive activities, including naughty and nice lists, letters to Santa, photo props and a gingerbread house display showcasing downtown shopping. Holiday music played over the speakers, creating a whimsical and bright holiday destination for all ages. This year, visitors sent over 400 letters to Santa, submitted 2000 names to the Naughty and Nice list and over 500 people came to meet Santa during the Santa's Landing event on December 15th.

Gift Guides

To make holiday shopping easier and support local businesses, we created two Downtown Holiday Gift Guides: a Downtown Holiday Gift Guide and a Haymarket Holiday Gift Guide. Together, the guides featured items from 50 local businesses. Guides were distributed to businesses, displayed at the Lincoln North Pole in Tower Square, and shared online, helping connect shoppers with unique, local gifts.



Santa and the Grinch at Santa's Landing | 2022

12 Days of Downtown

Social Media Giveaways

Our 2024 12 Days of Downtown social media campaign brought the community together in a big way. With 38 downtown, Haymarket, and Telegraph businesses contributing giveaway items, the campaign generated over 100,000 views and 4,000 interactions across Instagram and Facebook — showcasing the strength of our local business community and the excitement around downtown.

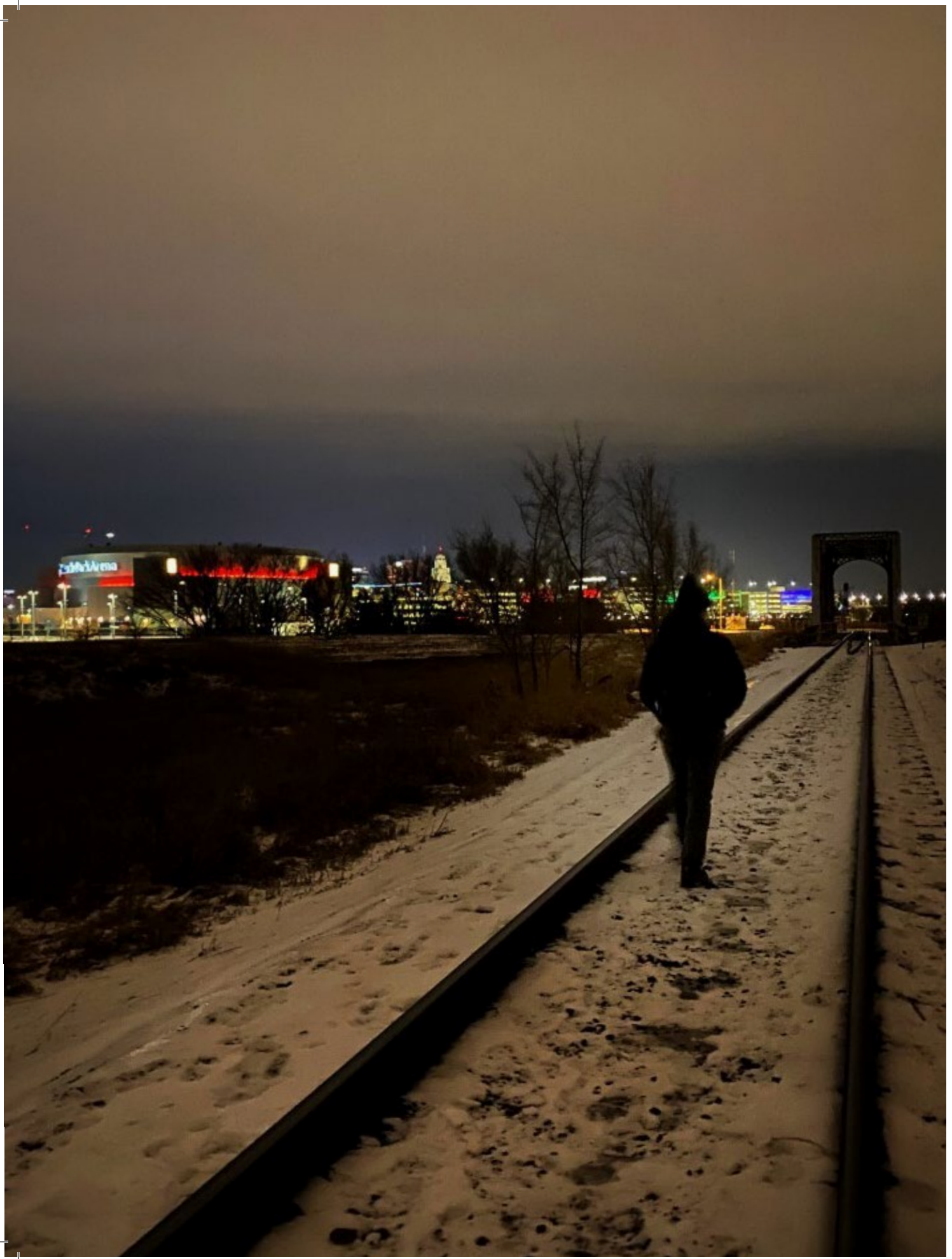
12 Days of Christmas Light Display

Last year, we relocated our 12 Days of Christmas display to the side of Union Bank Place, creating the tallest '12 Days of Christmas' display in Nebraska. At 12 stories high, the installation brought festive cheer to the heart of downtown.



Growth

Downtown Lincoln continued to see strong investment and growth in 2025, with more than $80.8 million in building permits issued across the district. Major projects included the construction of Central at South Haymarket, the affordable housing development at 9th & N, and renovations to Embassy Suites' meeting spaces and public areas, strengthening downtown's capacity to host visitors and events. Growth in the creative economy was also evident through the Constellation Studios renovation, which added 4,100 square feet to support new artist studios, a retail shop, an art demonstration room, and an outdoor courtyard. Together, these projects reflect sustained confidence in downtown Lincoln as a place to live, work, create, and invest.



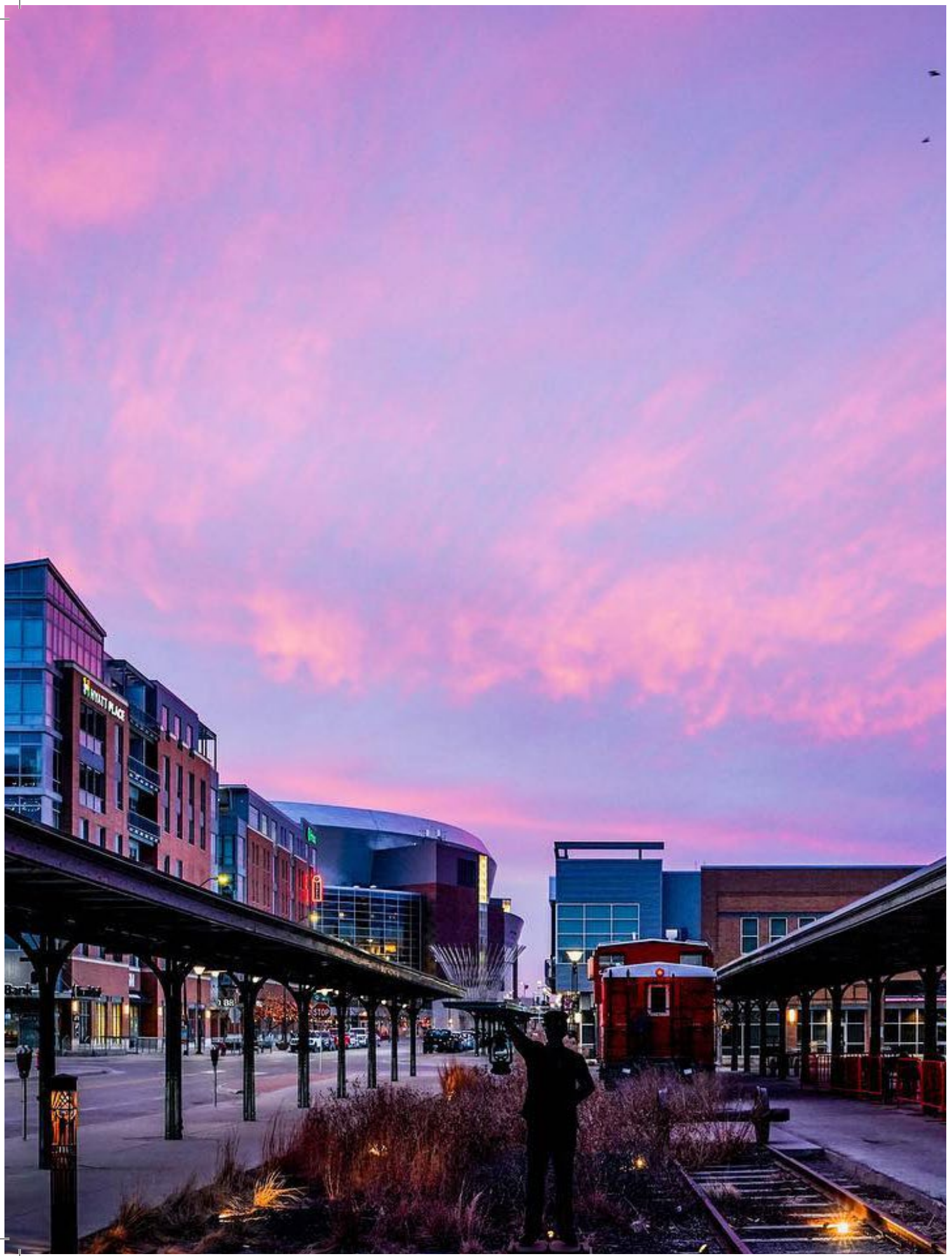
Homeless Outreach

Through DLA's contract with CenterPointe, downtown outreach remained a critical support service in 2025, connecting vulnerable individuals with resources while responding to community needs. A total of 177 individuals were enrolled in DLA outreach services, including 157 single individuals, 16 households of two, and four households of three. The outreach team responded to 687 of the 822 alternate response calls received, providing timely, on-the-ground support downtown. For newly engaged individuals, the team completed 150 screenings for services, distributed food items to 11 individuals, and facilitated referrals for case management and treatment. In addition, outreach staff distributed 265 items of camping gear and basic-needs supplies, along with 33 bus passes, helping individuals access services and meet immediate needs. This partnership reflects DLA's commitment to a compassionate, coordinated approach to downtown safety, wellness, and long-term stability.



Social Media

Downtown Lincoln's social media continues to exceed expectations year after year. With a consistent influx of new followers every day, our pages thrive. Our posts regularly resonate beyond the local scene, reaching tens of thousands in and around the Lincoln community. Our followers are captivated by the vibrant happenings downtown, and who can blame them?


HYATT PLACE
STOP

Facebook

September 1, 2024 - August 31, 2025

Our Facebook page is Downtown Lincoln's undisputed social media rockstar, boasting an epic following of over 22K fans! It's our powerhouse for spreading the word about events, our newsletter stories, and the hottest new businesses in town.

From September 1, 2024, to August 31, 2025, our Facebook game leveled up big time. A mind-blowing 273.6K accounts were reached, our content interactions reaching 8K, and 5.6K links were clicked.

Oh, and did we mention our star post? Brace yourselves — our most viewed reel had over 15K views, sparked 90 interactions, and reached 13K accounts!


ARCADE BAR
HYATT PLACE
STOP

Instagram

September 1, 2024 - August 31, 2025

Downtown Lincoln's Instagram is our fastest-growing account. It has been our most versatile tool for sharing unique perspectives of Downtown Lincoln's beauty and excitement. Comparing the performance to the last fiscal year, from September 1, 2024, to August 31, 2025, our Instagram presence has shown growth, with a reach totaling 61K individuals and 17.6K followers, over 8K interactions, 223 links clicked, and 7K visits.

Our most popular post received 16K views, 886 likes, 623 shares, 26 comments, and an additional 33 follows.


JUNCTION
IGUANA'S
PITA & NAAN
MEDITERRANEAN & EASTERN CUISINE

Website

Downtown Lincoln's website, DowntownLincoln.org, saw over 220K users and just over 552K page views in 2024. It serves the Downtown community as a convenient tool to access places to shop, eat, and live; it also gives people a place to find events, gifts, information on local news, and other updates. The list of services DowntownLincoln.org provides keeps on growing.

The top visited pages were the Historic Haymarket, Farmer's Market, Downtown Lincoln, Dining Directory, and Downtown Events. The countries that used our website the most were the United States, Poland, the United Kingdom, and Canada. In the US, the states that used our website the most were Nebraska, Illinois, Texas, Iowa, and Kansas.


the Zoo
HONORARY
BOEHMER STREET
the Zoo

Boehmer Street

Downtown Lincoln's newest entertainment destination came to life with several major milestones this fiscal year. In April 2025, MusicBox opened as a multi-use band rehearsal and recording space, providing musicians and artists of all levels with a place to create, collaborate, and develop their craft. In July 2025, Boehmer Street was unveiled, creating a new entertainment district that celebrates Lincoln's rich musical heritage while providing a dynamic space for visitors, businesses, and events. The district also saw significant alley enhancements that improved connectivity, accessibility, and the overall visitor experience. Looking ahead, Project O Street will build on this momentum with additional streetscape, infrastructure, and placemaking improvements that will further strengthen Boehmer Street as a vibrant downtown destination.

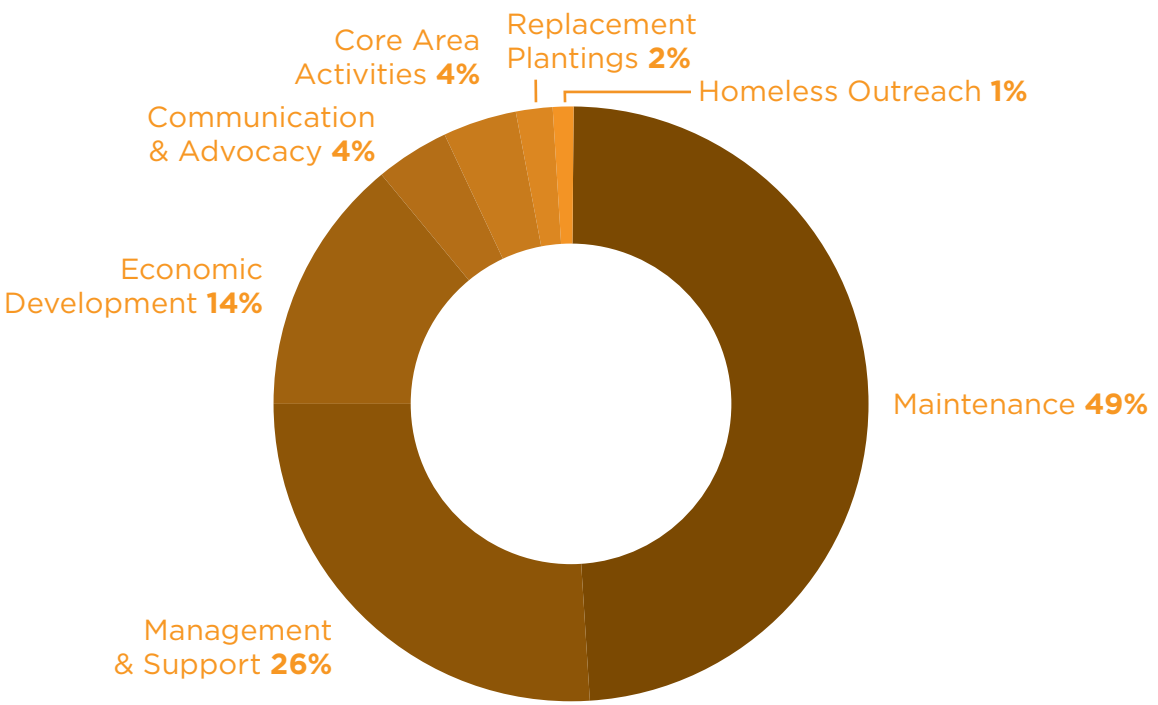


Downtown Lincoln's Gift Card

Gift Card

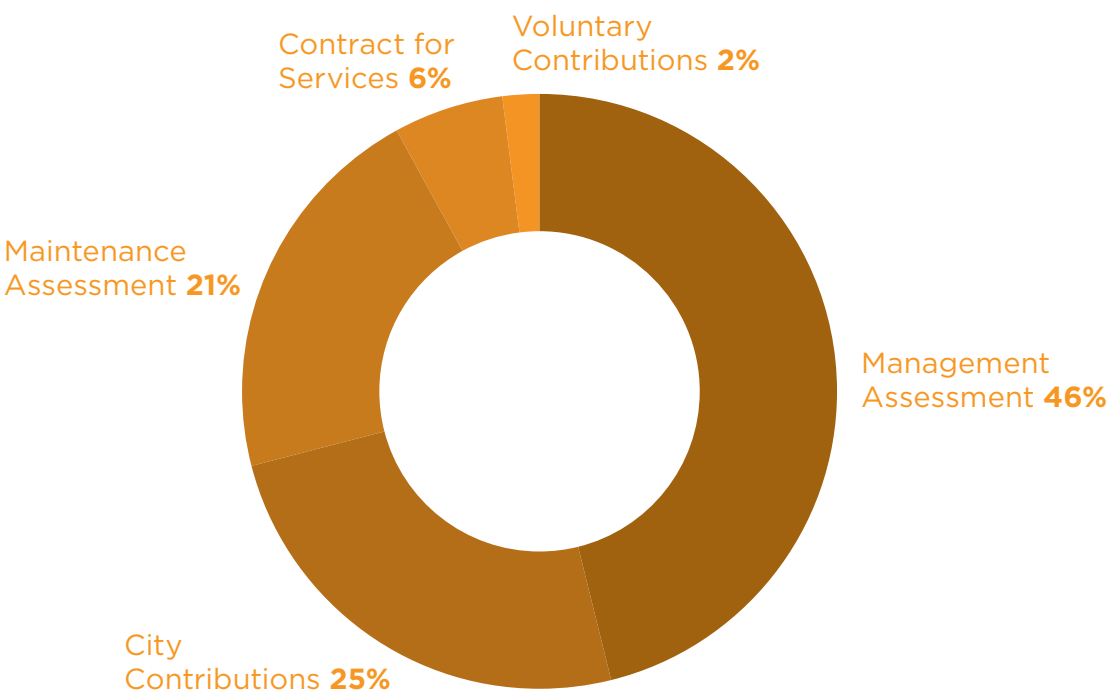
In September 2024, we transitioned our Downtown Gift Card program to a fully digital format, reducing staff time and adding new features like email reminders and a tap-to-pay option. So far, 97 businesses have signed on, with more expected in the coming year. Over the last fiscal year, 715 cards were sold, totaling $33,150. During our holiday BOGO promotion (late November–December), 74 customers participated, and DLA contributed $1,280 in bonus gift cards to support downtown businesses.

Allocation of Budget to Priorities



Budget Breakdown

Revenue Sources



DLA BID BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2024-2025

Members

Tom Klein	Downtown Resident
Bryant Bone	Downtown Advocate
Kaylen Akert	Woods Aitken
Lynnette Nelson	Pinnacle Bank
Stephanie Dinger	Union Bank & Trust
Ann Ringlein	Lincoln Running Company
Aaron Stitt	Courtyard Marriott
Greg Frayser	WRK LLC
Jeff McPeak	Olsson
Tom Gifford	Speedway Properties
Courtney Rodgers	Hudl
Amy Long	Farmers Mutual Insurance
Jill Moline	Canopy Street Market
Andrew Lempka	Nelnet
Karen Kunc	Constellation Studios
Bryan Sullivan	Embassy Suites
Brook Seacrest	Hyatt Place
Anna Wishart	Monolith
Scott Miller	Assemblage - Lincoln Leasing

Chair's Appointments

Debby Brehm	Center Associates, LLC
Brett West	Assurity
Katie Ripa	KidGlov
Dallas McGee	Gallery Antiques
Derek Zimmerman	Rev Development
Dave Miller	Allo
Earnest E.K. Franks	UNL
Jake Bergen	NEBCO
Susan Larson-Rodenburg	SLR Communications
Bryan Seck	Lincoln Literacy
Austin Mackrill	Arbor Day Foundation

Liaisons

Jon Carlson	Mayor of Lincoln designee
Hallie Salem	Mayor of Lincoln designee
Brodey Weber	City Council
Tom Beckius	City Council
Collin Christopher	City Planning Department
Jeff Cunningham	LHDC
Bob Campbell	Downtown Civic Ventures
Randy Hawthorne	Downtown Residential Council
Luke Peltz	LPED




downtownlincoln.org

