

Our Mission Is Moving Forward

Downtown Norfolk Council 20-21 Year in Review and Looking Ahead

Downtown
Norfolk 



FROM OUR PRESIDENT & CEO

If there ever was a time to look forward rather than back, this is it. This past year was extremely challenging for Downtown Norfolk Council, our residents, businesses and every constituent connected here. But we rose to that challenge and we're coming out the other side with a new appreciation for all that we have. While we are clear-eyed about the road ahead, our mission truly is moving forward with plenty to be optimistic about and much to build on.

I want to call out the heroic work – I don't use that phrase lightly – of our ambassadors. There is neither time nor space to describe all the hours, effort and care that these dedicated men and women brought to the task of keeping Downtown clean, safe and, honestly, open. And, with the sudden exodus of nearly 20,000 pre-COVID Downtown workers, their presence on our streets was reassuring to say the least.

I also want to commend my team. As is often the case, so much of DNC's work goes on behind the scenes. But our constituents made it clear to me that those efforts did not go unnoticed this last year. Early on, it's no exaggeration to say that things changed day to day with new rules, orders, opportunities. By keeping lines of communication open, we were able to respond quickly. By partnering with the City and other agencies, we were able to hold the line, finding new ways to assist our businesses, funnel vital resources and, more times than I can count, simply lend emotional support.

Signs of our re-emergence are all around us. Events are being scheduled, workers are returning, occupancy rates are rising. New projects are on the drawing board and under construction. New ideas such as our "streateries" concept were popular and may endure. Yes, there are unknowns ahead. Our recently honed traits of patience and flexibility will certainly be tried. But this DNC team and I have worked too hard and for too many years to make Downtown the thriving destination that it is, to stop pushing now. Not while we're so close, and never while we have so many of you pushing right along with us.

Mary Miller
President & CEO



DOWNTOWN COMMITTEES MAKE A DIFFERENCE

DNC gets things done. That does not mean we do it all. As the advocate and catalyst for Downtown's economic development, visitor experience and overall success, one key is engaging the right people for the right projects to keep us moving forward. In other words, delegation is a beautiful thing. Here are some of the groups we lean on for their insights and energy.

RESTAURANT COALITION – monthly meetings with restaurant owners and managers to foster a high level of communication, resource- and information-sharing, and leverage the strength of the Downtown restaurant community

PROPERTY MANAGERS COALITION – bi-monthly meetings with Downtown property managers to address issues, concerns and share resources and information

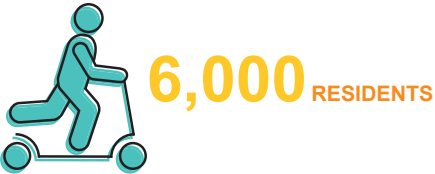
NEON DISTRICT COMMITTEE – dedicated to advancing Norfolk's arts district through marketing, programming, public art and business development

VIBRANT SPACES COMMITTEE – working to define and execute the vision for the most vibrant composition of street-level businesses

COMPLETE STREETS COMMITTEE – focusing on multi-modal initiatives and impacts, wayfinding, outdoor dining, alleys and overall beautification efforts

MACARTHUR CENTER TASK FORCE – city and local leaders dedicated to creating a plan for the future of the mall and supporting the vision outlined as part of the Downtown Plan 2030

SNAPSHOT OF DOWNTOWN IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT



OPERATIONS

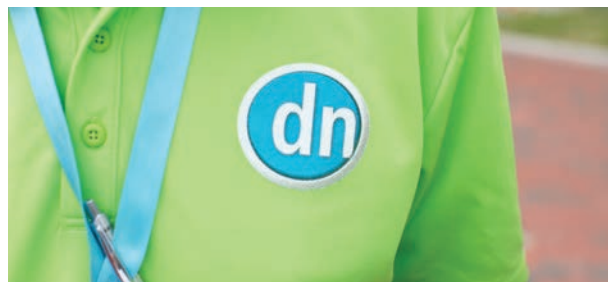
FOR A CLEAN AND SAFE DOWNTOWN

FY21 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- 1,911 homeless outreach
- 1,235 panhandling resolutions
- 108,600 complimentary dog waste bags
- 1,500 distribution of hand sanitizer
- 855 graffiti removals
- 227 tons of trash collected
- 3,949 stickers removed
- 12,480 hours of safety patrols
- 520 hours of training
- 720 hours of bike patrol
- 1,546 plants added
- 8,114 scooter assists
- 7 days a week supporting Downtown

FY22 OBJECTIVES

- Support placemaking initiatives with Operations staff dedicated to landscaping
- Improve communication protocols for use during public emergencies
- Continue over-and-above efforts to ensure a clean and safe Downtown
- Deploy additional trash receptacles to meet increased demand
- Retain a steady visual presence on the street with regular security checks, utilizing foot, bike and vehicular patrols and daily reporting
- Work with the Norfolk Police Department to track crime stats and monitor impactful activities and incident reports
- Work with the Office to End Homelessness to identify resources for at-risk populations
- Support VisitNorfolk to ensure the return of visitors and a positive experience including a new bicycle mobile kiosk
- Operate F.R.E.D. as a free service



DNC COVID RESPONSE

However you define an essential worker, DNC staff truly fit that definition this past year. Our office team worked tirelessly and was an invaluable resource for constant, clear and informative communication. Whether inside the office or out, their work was noticed and appreciated. Our ambassadors stepped up, too, braving the elements and the pandemic to keep our streets safe and clean, their presence providing residents a calming influence after so many Downtown workers vacated their offices. Thank you to all these frontline workers for their dedication.

FY21 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Partnered with Work Program Architects, Yard & Co., Team Better Block and the City of Norfolk on the award-winning OpenNorfolk initiative for comprehensive response to the COVID-19 pandemic
- Over 600 hours of business support from DNC Administrative and Operations staff
- 87 restaurants and retailers contacted
- 75% of Downtown restaurants assisted
- 24 temporary outdoor dining areas created
- 140 pieces of furniture and 120 barricades loaned
- 75 signage toolkits delivered
- Free and safe programming at The Plot
- Streets initiative guidelines and grants to restaurants



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

FY21 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Downtown Norfolk Retail Strategy Initiative with national consultants, StreetSense

Selden Market fully leased

Vibrant Spaces awarded \$34,000 in grants

New street-level businesses:

- The Cellars on Tazewell
- Gallagher
- The CBD Shoppe
- S'mores Amore
- Tender Heart Tattoo
- Cherry-O' To-Go
- Caïor Lounge
- Aunt Dorian's
- Petit a Petit
- Canvas
- Major Phillie Cheesesteaks
- Brothers
- Bonaire
- VA Goods

FY22 OBJECTIVES

Collect and disseminate accurate information about available grant and loan programs including DNC Vibrancy Grants and Streatery Program

Develop collateral materials to provide essential market intelligence to retain and attract Downtown businesses

Ensure and support the health and recovery of the small business community with all available resources, including financial, when possible

Create marketing campaigns that focus on return to work, events and the support of small businesses

Manage and promote Selden Market and develop an expansion plan and new lease terms for one-of-a-kind small businesses

Support the Norfolk Innovation Corridor by partnering on messaging and infrastructure

Produce LiveNFK in partnership with the Greater Norfolk Corporation to attract and retain talented young professionals



MARKETING

FY21 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

International Downtown Association Awards for 2019 holiday placemaking initiative and LiveNFK intern program

Developed digital marketing strategies, including e-mail, social media and the website, to effectively support Downtown businesses throughout the rapidly changing COVID-19-related impacts

Produced video highlighting DNC's COVID-19 response and Downtown's resiliency for constituents, city leaders and the community

Effectively told the story of Downtown's successes and accomplishments through concentrated public relations efforts - public relations value of \$2,138,394

Over 5,000 newsletter subscribers

Marketing initiatives dedicated to Black- and Brown-owned businesses

Downtown Misses You! Supported restaurants by purchasing gift cards to "have lunch on us" and distributed to Downtown employees who are working remotely

Spend and Win Downtown Dollars – the show-your-receipt campaign increased sales to many Downtown businesses and DNC awarded \$2,000 in gift certificates to Downtown businesses to winners

Downtown Norfolk Is Hiring – a marketing initiative to fill available positions for Downtown businesses

FY22 OBJECTIVES

Implement programs and activities with the objective of driving foot traffic and sales for Downtown Norfolk businesses

Create ongoing targeted multimedia campaigns focused on events, happenings and businesses specific to the Downtown experience

Use social media as a feel-good and reliable resource and continue to grow our audience

Visually and verbally tell positive Downtown stories and accolades

Create campaigns focused on education, awareness and what makes our community special, unique and safe

Produce collateral material featuring Downtown businesses and experiences



PLACEMAKING

FY21 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Scooter corrals
- Wayfinding signs
- Additional street furniture
- 2 new murals
- Downtown Planting Days
- 3 open calls for public art
- 3 public art grant applications
- Upgrades and improvements at The Plot

FY22 OBJECTIVES

- Continue to advance opportunities for public art
- Work with the city to develop a streetscape plan that reflects the creativity and needs of the NEON District
- Support education, deployment and best-use practices of micro-transit options
- Continue to implement wayfinding program and guide additional partner wayfinding projects
- Support ongoing efforts to develop a Multimodal Transportation Master Plan
- Refresh landscaping in tree wells and public spaces
- Utilize outdoor furniture to create a welcoming atmosphere and enhanced user experience
- Advocate for additional green space



ONGOING ADVOCACY

Since 1979, DNC has led an organization of businesses and individuals dedicated to making Downtown more dynamic, attractive and prosperous. In our role as advocate for our constituents and catalyst for positive change, we develop policy, aid and support economic development, and facilitate parking, wayfinding, bikeability and placemaking. Our 350-plus member organization is entering its fifth decade of unwavering responsibility to the Downtown community, and we are proud to be recognized for our innovations and successes by national and international downtown associations.

In 2020, DNC continued its advocacy work through the adoption of the Downtown Norfolk 2030 Plan, coordinated efforts to improve the parking experience for visitors, residents and workers, and support for the City of Norfolk's Multimodal Transportation Master Plan.



DOWNTOWN

100



\$1,000 SCHOLARSHIP
to Norfolk Public School senior



VOLUNTEER PROJECTS
benefiting Downtown



LEADERSHIP FORUMS



EVENTS
Virtual social and networking

FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION

FY21 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- On-boarded new Director of Finance
- Ensured clean audit and transparent financial activities
- Transitioned to Microsoft Cloud
- Established a Finance Committee to ensure sound financial processes and controls

FY22 OBJECTIVES

- Work with established Finance Committee to ensure fiscal responsibility and checks and balances
- Seek additional funding for projects and initiatives through grants and sponsorships
- Technology enhancements to support optimal work productivity and utilization of available resources
- Staff development through education, industry connections and virtual networking
- Engage Board members in strategic initiatives and advocacy efforts

SOCIAL MEDIA & WEBSITE

   **109,315**
total followers

Digital advertising campaigns including summer tourism, best brunch and seafood, outdoor oasis, cozy soups, holiday destination and more

Website traffic increased 37% year over year

Ongoing Google Ad Words campaigns to generate awareness and improve SEO

EVENTS

FY21 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Virtual Annual Meeting
- Virtual Member Briefings
- Summer and Winter Restaurant Weeks
- Produced inaugural Holiday Movie Food and Drink Week with 28 participating restaurants
- Grand Illumination Celebration and Holiday Kickoff
- Small Business Saturday
- Selden and NEON Holiday Markets
- Train Exhibit
- Hot Cocoa War
- Ongoing street activation
- Curated walking tours
- Push Comedy Theater at The Plot
- Glow Ride
- Fitness classes at The Plot

FY22 OBJECTIVES

- Phase in small-scale street activations and placemaking initiatives to instill pride, re-create connections and drive sales to Downtown businesses
- Solicit input from Downtown businesses on the types of events and activations that benefit them the most and will provide the highest return on investment for DNC and the city
- Work with partners to develop unique holiday experiences to further establish Downtown as a holiday destination and build on partner events
- Ongoing holiday activations and placemaking initiatives
- Restaurant Week, and Holiday Movie Food and Drink Week
- Reimagine First Fridays concept utilizing new ABC permit to expand footprint and support businesses
- Host community events at The Plot



MEMBERSHIP

FY21 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Virtual Member Briefings – at no charge to support and engage community
- 350 members
- Weekly member business highlights in Fast Facts newsletter
- Business support – social media training, assistance with city processes
- Hospitality and Restaurant Appreciation initiative for member businesses

FY22 OBJECTIVES

- Provide more comprehensive and valuable resources to membership, including educational opportunities and marketing support
- Establish Membership Committee
- Develop a membership retention plan that includes goals and benchmarks



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Chairperson
- Tommy Leeman
Partner / Senior Vice President, Wealth Management, Steward Partners Global Advisors
- 1st Vice Chair
- Drew Ungvarsky
*CEO and Executive Creative Director, Grow**
- 2nd Vice Chair
- Perry Frazer, Sr.
Vice President, Colliers International
- Immediate Past Chair
- Melodi Albert
Senior Director, CoStar
- Treasurer
- Jenny Bonsiewicz
Manager, P.B. Mares, LLP
- President/Corporate Secretary
- Mary Miller
President & CEO, Downtown Norfolk Council
- Raffaele Allen
*Director of Assets, Marathon Development Group, Inc.**
- Jarrett Beeler,
Owner, Sway Creative Labs
- Linda Bress
*Owner, Bress Realty Company**
- Scott Campbell
*Principal, VIA design architects**
- Matthew Crowe
*Catering Sales Manager, Hilton Norfolk The Main**
- Patrick Edwards
Owner, The Stockpot Norfolk
- Brendan England
*General Manager, Sheraton Norfolk Waterside Hotel**
- Kathy Ferebee
*Senior Vice President/Commercial, TowneBank**
- Mike Fowler
First Vice President, Even Keel Wealth Advisors of Raymond James
- Nancy Howard
Agent, Nancy Chandler Associates
- Vineet Lal
*Ignition Holdings Group**
- Miles Leon
*President, S.L. Nusbaum**
- Robert (Doug) Martin
*Operations Director, MacArthur Center**
- Rob Murphy
*General Manager, Glass Light Hotel**
- Richard Ottinger
Attorney, Vandeventer Black
- Matt Paddock
Director of People Operation, Grow
- Ellis H. Pretlow
*Attorney, Kaufman & Canoles**
- Mel Price
Principal, Work Program Architects
- Jae Roe
*Senior Property Manager, The RMR Group**
- Jimmy Schools
*Senior Property Manager, Hertz Corporation**
- Jutta Spencer
*Manager Energy & Facilities Service, Norfolk Southern**
- Judy Swystun
President, Hampton Roads Transportation
- Eva Wiggins
Director of Marketing, Harvey Lindsay Commercial Real Estate
- James Wofford
*General Manager, MacArthur Center**
- *DID Rate Payers

VALUED PARTNERS
AND SPONSORS



208 East Main Street, 2nd Floor, Norfolk, VA 23510
DowntownNorfolk.org

