

## FY2023 ACTION PLAN

**Objective 1: Downtown Norfolk Council will steer progress in Downtown through healthy, flexible, and responsible management.**

Strategy - Ensure the continuity of business with a responsible financial plan supported by an efficient core team

Tactics:

- Maintain fiscal responsibility by utilizing the finance committee for necessary checks and balances and resources
- Utilize annual budget planning, monthly departmental reviews and quarterly projections to ensure budget variations are kept to a minimum
- Ensure accurate and thorough preparation for auditors
- Seek additional revenue for projects through grants, sponsorship and fundraising utilizing the Downtown Norfolk Fund
- Maintain and update organizational SOP's
- Utilize the "Smart System" to track operations data to inform optimal deployment of staff
- Continue to train staff for technology enhancements to ensure business continuity, allow for maximum flexibility, effective collaboration and sharing of resources
- Establish a reserve for real estate tax appeals

Strategy - Retain and nurture a strong internal team, including staff and Board of Directors

Tactics:

- Encourage staff development through education, networking, and industry connections
- Ensure staff and contract employees are knowledgeable regarding all organizational policies and procedures, including health, safety, and emergency plans
- Focus on staff team building, internal communication and engagement
- Engage Board members in strategic initiatives and advocacy efforts
- Annually evaluate employee compensation and benefits
- Conduct orientation program for new employees and hold comprehensive annual evaluations

Strategy - Be an essential source of information and guidance to DNC membership base

Tactics:

- Focus on member retention by methodically communicating with existing member base through regular touches and providing comprehensive resources to include in person interactions
- Work towards increasing year-end net memberships by 5%
- Encourage board engagement for member retention and support
- Utilize a CRM management system for member renewals and interactions
- Provide membership with educational opportunities at no charge to help support and grow their businesses
- Provide members with opportunities to become involved with DNC through participation in DNC committees and volunteer opportunities
- Meet with the membership committee on a quarterly basis

- Utilize community outreach and networking opportunities to increase our visibility and contribute to membership recruitment and retention efforts
- Ensure the value of membership is clear to existing and prospective members

Strategy - Be a convener and advocate around topics impactful to the economic success of downtown

Tactics:

- Assess areas of need in the economic regrowth of downtown and convene industry drivers to lead those efforts
- Ensure and support the health and recovery of the small business community with all available resources, including financial, when possible
- Overcommunicate the services the organization can provide to small businesses
- Protect and strengthen relationships with other organizations through resource sharing, planning, advocacy and partnerships
- Build and maintain relationships with elected officials and private sector leadership for advocacy and involvement downtown
- Partner with the City to ensure programs are implemented around safety and security
- Continue to advocate for a parking system that supports the economy of downtown with upgraded technology, new wayfinding and a rate structure that maintains our economic competitiveness in the region
- Use the Downtown Plan 2030 as a guide to support development in surrounding neighborhoods and advocate for improved connections to downtown
- Maintain open communication with NRHA, the City of Norfolk and private stakeholders regarding the phased development of the St. Paul's neighborhoods surrounding downtown

**Objective 2: Downtown Norfolk Council will provide essential services for a consistently clean, safe and welcoming experience throughout the downtown core.**

Strategy - Provide a high level of maintenance and cleaning services in the Downtown Improvement District

Tactics:

- Continue over and above efforts to ensure robust sanitation of public surfaces and spaces
- Remove graffiti within 24 hours and educate property owners on removal procedures
- Power wash and sanitize sidewalks, signage and street furniture following a deliberate schedule, utilizing new equipment to increase speed and cleanliness
- Attend to public alleyways on a consistent basis for pedestrian traffic and small business support, including outreach and education to alley users
- Keep weeds, litter, and overgrowth in the DID under control to deter the "broken window" effect
- Utilize the "Smart System" to submit maintenance issues to the City of Norfolk and track all maintenance measurables
- Deploy additional trash receptacles to meet increased demand
- Support placemaking initiatives with Operations staff
- Work in concert with City of Norfolk to prevent any lapses in baseline municipal services provided within the Downtown Improvement District

Strategy - Reinforce the overall safety and security of Downtown

Tactics:

- Maintain a steady visual presence on the street with regular security checks, utilizing foot, bike and vehicular patrols and daily reporting
- With the support of the Norfolk Police Department, track monthly crime stats and Daily Operations Report for trends, business closures, openings and potential threats to the downtown community
- Work with the Norfolk Police Department to track and monitor impactful activities and situations
- Support efforts of the City of Norfolk's new Business Compliance Unit
- Develop a program for late night entertainment establishments that focuses on safety and security
- Implement a security camera cost share grant program for street level businesses
- Address nuisance crime through monitoring problem areas and deploying staff as needed
- Analyze Police Incident Reports from Norfolk Open Data on a monthly basis for trends
- Work with city EOC staff to review and maintain an Emergency Action Plan as a resource for DNC and downtown
- Work with the Community Services Board to identify resources for at risk populations and potential health issues
- Intervene to stop aggressive panhandling that could deter downtown visitation

Strategy - Be a welcoming, reassuring and respected presence to residents, businesses and visitors, providing an unparalleled level of service to all

Tactics:

- Support VisitNorfolk to ensure visitors and convention delegates have a positive experience
- Operate F.R.E.D. as a free service in downtown and adjust operations as appropriate for changing uses in downtown
- Utilize the bicycle mobile kiosk to engage with visitors, workers and residents on an as needed basis
- Maintain regular communications with the Property Managers Coalition with bi-monthly meetings
- Engage with the Downtown Norfolk Civic League to support their priorities and resolve concerns
- Inform administrative staff of timely security and traffic alerts to communicate externally
- Support DNC and partner events, activities and placemaking

**Objective 3: Downtown Norfolk Council will position Downtown as the regional center for economic growth, innovation and industry.**

Strategy - Support the economic success of Downtown

Tactics:

- Collect and disseminate accurate information about available grant and loan programs

- Advocate as necessary for economic recovery projects and initiatives
- Troubleshoot vulnerable businesses on a case-by-case basis and work with local leaders and Economic Development to intervene
- Promote tech, creative and economic development incentives and programs for new and existing eligible businesses
- Create marketing campaigns that focus on the benefits of working Downtown, and the support of Downtown businesses
- Continue to support the DT100 to cultivate our young leaders and the future of Downtown

Strategy - Retain and support street level businesses

Tactics:

- Continue to implement recommended strategies from the Streetsense retail consultancy
- Manage and promote Selden Market as an incubator for one-of-a-kind small businesses and a retail destination
- Execute the expansion plan for Selden Market
- Encourage the utilization of Vibrancy Grants as a tool to refresh and attract small businesses to Downtown
- Promote the new City of Norfolk Outdoor Dining Guidelines and support implementation with grants
- Hold regular Restaurant Coalition meetings to understand needs and enhance ongoing communication between DNC and businesses that will build relationships to support an economically viable and safe place
- Share information from the City of Norfolk's Business Compliance Unit
- Further establish DNC as a trusted and necessary resource by assisting businesses with the navigation of city resources, codes and processes

Strategy - Support the office market and core industries to Downtown that fuel economic development

Tactics:

- Support peer to peer and business to business networking opportunities
- Phase in small-scale street activations and placemaking initiatives to instill pride and engage with the employee base
- Research and advocate for opportunities to expand and improve amenities for Downtown workers
- Support the Norfolk Innovation Corridor by partnering on messaging and placemaking initiatives
- Promote Downtown amenities to differentiate Downtown as desirable place to be employed
- Conduct a Workers Survey to understand the return-to-work status of office tenants
- Continue to produce LiveNFK in partnership with Greater Norfolk Corporation to attract and retain talented young professionals

**Objective 4: Downtown Norfolk Council will strengthen the perception of Downtown as a premier destination through innovative programming, storytelling and placemaking.**

Strategy - Utilize Downtown spaces and unique attributes to create opportunities for community engagement, interactions, and connection through inspiration

Tactics:

- Explore unique street activations to drive sales and patronage to Downtown businesses
- Continue to solicit input from downtown businesses on the types of events and activations that benefit them the most and provide the best return on investment for DNC and the city
- Support and promote partner events and initiatives that add to vitality of Downtown
- Host community events in the NEON District at The Plot
- Continue to advance opportunities for public art in the NEON District
- Create places and encourage unique venues to showcase local artists and makers

Strategy - Create targeted marketing and public relations initiatives that promote Downtown as a safe, active, diverse, unique and inspiring destination

Tactics:

- Create hyper-local focused promotions that tap into local markets to support small businesses
- Create ongoing targeted multimedia campaigns focused on events, happenings, and consumer friendly curated content specific to the Downtown experience
- Use social media as a feel-good and reliable resource and continue to grow social media following and engagement
- Increase our presence on Twitter
- Utilize listening tools across all platforms to monitor community sentiment regarding Downtown
- Utilize website analytics and established personas to make informed decisions on messaging and content
- Ensure website content is up to date and use identified best practices for best consumer experience and SEO, focusing on the latest information, directories, and services available
- Visually and verbally tell positive district stories and accolades through testimonials and highlights, enhance comfort levels, and promote special services and perks
- Manage effective communication to constituents and email subscribers
- Aid VisitNorfolk in local and regional travel marketing efforts that drive traffic to our downtown attractions and businesses
- Create campaigns that focus on education, awareness and what makes our community different, special, and safe
- Produce collateral material featuring downtown businesses and experiences

Strategy - Support public space enhancements and improved connections within downtown and to the surrounding neighborhoods

Tactics:

- Support the education, deployment, and best use practices of micro transit options with recommendations on safe usage
- Continue to implement the Downtown wayfinding program and guide additional partner wayfinding projects
- Support the ongoing efforts to develop a Multimodal Transportation Master Plan to include an effective curbside management plan
- Work with the City of Norfolk on the implementation of the NEON Streetscape Project
- Regularly address landscaping in tree wells and public spaces with staff and volunteer opportunities
- Support implementation of outdoor dining

- Utilize outdoor furniture to create a welcoming atmosphere for placemaking and enhanced user experience
- In partnership with the city explore ideas to make the Cofer Lot a welcoming and safe neighborhood space
- Advocate for additional public green space

**Objective 5: Downtown Norfolk Council will create holiday initiatives and experiences that support the downtown economy and enhance Downtown as a regional holiday destination.**

Strategy - Increase vibrancy during the holiday season through placemaking initiatives and events that create a unique and impactful atmosphere that encourage people to move throughout the downtown.

Tactics:

- Work with local artists for NEON District holiday placemaking and décor
- Develop numerous opportunities for photo ops and striking visuals throughout Downtown in the public realm and on private property by encouraging participation by owners and businesses
- Focus on opportunities for live holiday entertainment on the street throughout the season
- Visually enhance connections between districts to encourage movement
- Partner with arts organizations and businesses for micro events and activations throughout the season

Strategy - Drive traffic to Downtown street-level businesses during the holiday season

Tactics:

- Rebrand Downtown's overall marketing for the Holidays to better support new initiatives
- Explore opportunities to bring a first-to-market holiday installation to Downtown
- Create a dedicated marketing campaign that focuses on the holiday season in Downtown
- Produce and promote Hot Cocoa Wars
- Promote Downtown's robust holiday shopping
- Explore opportunities for display of a train or other exhibit for the season Host NEON Holiday Market
- Produce and promote events that drive traffic to downtown providing a strong ROI

Strategy - Support and promote Downtown partners, organizations and businesses during the holiday season

Tactics:

- Promote Downtown as a unique shopping destination
- Create a dedicated holiday calendar and website landing page to promote all downtown holiday events and happenings
- Assist partners with production of micro events and pop-up promotions as needed