

ONWARD DOWNTOWN

Downtown Norfolk Council 21-22 Year in Review and Looking Ahead

 Downtown Norfolk

Downtown
Norfolk 

FROM OUR PRESIDENT & CEO

If I had been granted a wish for Downtown a few years ago, it would have been far more grandiose than what I would wish for today. In light of what we have all been through since the winter of 2020, my wish now would be humble and probably a little boring. All I would ask is that we could simply pick up where we left off.

Because I loved what we – and I mean all Downtown constituents – had achieved, and where we were headed before it all shut down. Thriving businesses, bustling streets, growing residential ranks and a spirit that we could do and accomplish anything we wanted.

The good news is, signs of that return are popping up all around us. Events are back on the schedule, cruise ships are docking again, offices are filling back up. Residential occupancy is an unheard of 98%, with construction ongoing to meet demand.

Within DNC, our team carries on, most of us performing the duties of two or three. Our Selden Market incubator, to call out one name, has been a very pleasant success. Our streateries have taken hold, and we are awarding grants for their continuation. New businesses keep coming.

And, just when I think we have acknowledged our Ambassadors enough, they astound us once again, recently winning a hospitality award from VisitNorfolk. Downtown was immaculate during the NATO Festival thanks to them, and ambassador presence on our streets continues to offer comfort as well as guidance. They are our glue.

So, yes, we're moving in the right direction again. We still have big dreams and plans for Downtown over the next five, ten, twenty years. Our vision for this dynamic generator of culture and economics for the entire region remains intact. But it's first things first, one step at a time, that will set us back on track.

In the meantime, dealing with the obstacles as they arise, we continue to advocate for change and improvements in Downtown every day. The challenges are real. But determination, partnerships and perseverance will win out, I know they will. In fact, it's a wish that is already coming true.

Mary B. Miller
Mary Miller
President & CEO



DOWNTOWN COMMITTEES

MAKE A DIFFERENCE

With a bustling 50-block district, there is seemingly no end to the list of to-do's. DNC relies heavily on our committees and truly value the participation, time and effort of our engaged constituents that are making an impact. Here are some of the groups that are essential to the success of our community.

RESTAURANT COALITION – *regular 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 commercial and residential property managers to address issues, concerns and share resources and information*

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

VIBRANT SPACES COMMITTEE – *working to define and execute the most vibrant composition of Downtown's economy envisioned by the Downtown Plan 2030*

SELDEN MARKET COMMITTEE – *devoted to the success of DNC's award-winning retail incubator, from recruitment to small business support to planning future stages*

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

DOWNTOWN IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

SNAPSHOT OF



5.9M
SQUARE FEET OF
OFFICE SPACE



81
WALKABILITY
SCORE OUT OF 100



50 BLOCKS IN THE
DOWNTOWN IMPROVEMENT
DISTRICT

\$98K AVERAGE
HOUSEHOLD
INCOME



98%
RESIDENTIAL
OCCUPANCY
RATE



6,000
RESIDENTS



28,000 DOWNTOWN WORKERS
(INCLUDES MEDICAL COMPLEX)



1.9M
VISITORS

\$1.5B TOTAL ASSESSED VALUE
OF REAL ESTATE



OPERATIONS

FOR A CLEAN AND SAFE DOWNTOWN

FY22 accomplishments

2,907 homeless outreach contacts
887 panhandling resolutions
78,000 complimentary dog waste bags provided
1,107 graffiti removals
153 tons of trash collected
3,733 stickers removed
10,559 hours of safety patrols
236 hours of training
7,374 scooter assists
3,900 hours of bike patrol
1,326 plants added
7 days a week supporting Downtown

FY23 objectives

Continue over and above efforts to ensure a clean and safe Downtown

Maintain 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 incident reports and monitor impactful activities and situations

Attend to maintenance issues such as graffiti, weeds, litter, alley waste and overgrowth in the Downtown Improvement District consistently and diligently

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

Work with the Community Services Board to identify resources for at risk populations

Support VisitNorfolk and partner organizations to ensure visitors have a positive experience, utilizing the bicycle mobile kiosk for engagement

Deploy additional trash receptacles to meet increased demand

Operate F.R.E.D. and pedestrian escorts as a free service in Downtown



SELDEN MARKET

FY22 accomplishments

- 6 new incubator businesses
- 44 storefront applications
- 300+ pop-up businesses
- 100% leased storefronts, kitchen and storage
- 90% minority owned business
- 103,500 visitors
- 107% increase in foot traffic over 2020
- 4 graduated incubator businesses
- 39 official Selden events
- 98 tenant workshops and special events
- 22,500 social media followers
- 55 press mentions
- 1 Coastal Virginia Magazine Reader's Choice "Best Of" Bronze award - Best Shopping Center Southside
- 1,449 hours of guest parking validated
- 12 business education workshops
- 6 holiday billboards
- 707 hot cocoa war votes
- \$1.5M in grants awarded for Phase 2 renovations



FY23 objectives

- 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
- Explore opportunities for display of a train or other exhibit for the season
- Produce unique events and experiences to drive traffic to the market

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

FY22 accomplishments

Adopted the Downtown Norfolk Retail Strategy with national consultants, StreetSense

Distilled the Retail Strategy into 6 priority projects in a tactical workplan

Awarded \$44,000 in Vibrancy Grants and Streatory Grants

Supported 21 new street level businesses

Bags to Riches

Bleubeing

Café Genevieve

Cocojam

Codex

Fresh Dawgs at MacArthur Center

Ghent Grab & Go

Granby Waffle Shop

Love Bride Boutique

Magoo's Cigar Bar

Plant Norfolk

Prime 255

Republic

Rich Port Coffee

Shake It Up Shakes

Soiree Bistro

Springfield Frames

Three Ships

Tida Thai

Vino Culture

WB Marketing

FY23 objectives

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

Implement recommended strategies from the Streetsense Retail Strategy Workplan

Support the refinement of Downtown zoning standards to allow for current trends in the retail sphere

Implement a tenant signage grant program that produces high quality and visible retail signs

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

Remain a trusted and necessary resource by assisting businesses with the navigation of city resources, codes and processes

Promote Downtown amenities and produce small-scale street activations and placemaking initiatives to differentiate Downtown as desirable place to be employed

Conduct a Workers Survey to understand the return-to-work status of office tenants



MARKETING

FY22 accomplishments

Website updates including updated image driven style for featured content, reimagined map and upgraded HTML email marketing capabilities

Effectively told the story of Downtown's successes and accomplishments through concentrated public relations efforts - \$1.5 million in total public relations value

More than 5,000 newsletter subscribers

Marketing initiatives dedicated to Summer Tourism, First Fridays, Nightlife, Favorite Seafood Spots, Iconic Downtown Restaurants, Restaurant Week, Black-owned Businesses, Top Tips for Getting Around, Fall Favorites, Valentine's Day, Brunch and more

Celebrated Downtown Employees with \$9,000 worth of giveaways

Gold and Best In Show Addy Awards for video honoring Ambassadors for their COVID response

Targeted advertising campaign for Richmond market

Refreshed format and produced Downtown Exploration Guide

Over 130 marketing and information sharing email communications to our database

FY23 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 and encourage engagement

Increase our presence on Twitter

Utilize website analytics and established personas to make informed decisions on messaging and content

Visually and verbally tell positive district stories and accolades through testimonials and highlights, enhance comfort levels and promote special services and perks

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

Produce collateral material featuring Downtown businesses and experiences



EVENTS

FY22 accomplishments

- Annual Meeting Breakfast
- Member Briefings – virtual and in-person
- Summer and Winter Restaurant Weeks
- First Fridays
- Holiday Movie Food and Drink Week
- Grand Illumination Celebration and Holiday Kickoff
- Small Business Saturday
- Hot Cocoa War
- Selden Holiday Market
- Train Exhibit
- Curated Walking Tours
- NEON Holiday Market
- Glow Ride and Rudolph Ride
- Live NFK Summer Career Launch
- The NEON Festival

FY23 objectives

- 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 the vitality of Downtown
- 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
- Work with the city and partners for the successful return of First Fridays
- Host community events in the NEON District and at The Plot

SOCIAL MEDIA & WEBSITE



- Over 116,000 total followers (IG, Twitter, Facebook)
- Over 500,000 annual website visitors
- More than 127,000 direct click throughs to Downtown business and member websites
- Ongoing Google Ad Words campaigns click throughs are up 18,200 over last year



MEMBERSHIP

FY22 accomplishments

Virtual and In-Person Member Briefings

375 members

Weekly Member business highlights in
Fast Facts newsletter

Business support – social media training,
assistance with city processes

Members only marketing session

More than 300 hours of membership outreach

FY23 objectives

Provide 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

OFFICERS

Jim Wofford, *MacArthur Center, Chair**

Mel Price, *Work Program Architects, Vice Chair*

Jenny Bonsiewicz, *PBMares LLP, Treasurer*

Tommy Leeman, *Steward Partners Global Advisory, Immediate Past Chair*

Mary Miller, *Downtown Norfolk Council, President & Corporate Secretary*

BOARD OF DIRECTORS FY2022

Linda Bress, *Bress & Company**

Scott Cambell, *VIA Design Architects**

Lorraine Connaughton, *Residential Rate
Payer/DNCL Officer**

Christian Conway, *Dominion Enterprises**

Matthew Crowe, *Hilton Norfolk –
The Main**

Patrick Edwards, *Stockpot Norfolk*

Kathy Ferebee, *TowneBank**

Michael Fowler, *Even Keel Wealth
Advisors of Raymond James*

Perry Frazer, *Colliers International*

Jesse Hemphill, *Norfolk
Waterside Marriott**

Ray King, *Woods Rogers Vandeventer
Black LLP*

Miles Leon, *S.L. Nusbaum**

Christy Marron, *Grace O'Malley's*

Robert (Doug) Martin, *MacArthur Center**

Lacy Peterson, *Glass Light
Hotel & Gallery**

Ellis H. Pretlow, *Kaufman & Canoles*

Jae Roe, *The RMR Group**

Reid Sabin, *Hanbury*

Jimmy Schools, *Hertz Corporation**

Angela Z. Simpson, *Marathon
Development Group, Inc.**

Judy Swystun, *Hampton Roads
Transportation, Inc.*

Brittany Treble, *KPMG*

Eva Wiggins, *Harvey Lindsay
Commercial Real Estate*

EX-OFFICIO

The Honorable Kenneth C. Alexander,
Mayor, City of Norfolk

The Honorable Courtney Doyle,
Councilwoman, City of Norfolk

The Honorable Andria McClellan,
Councilwoman, City of Norfolk

GENERAL COUNSEL

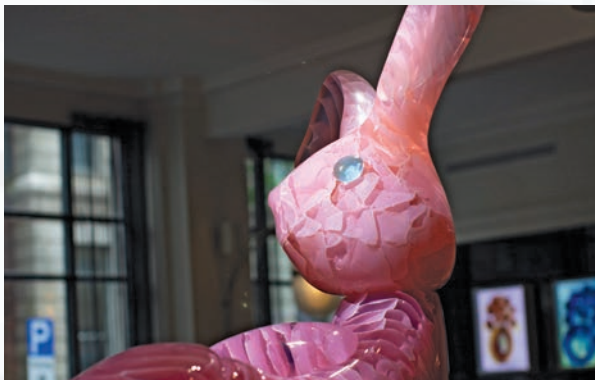
Dean T. Buckius, *Woods Rogers
Vandeventer Black LLP*

** Representing the Downtown Improvement District*

PLACEMAKING

FY22 accomplishments

- Supported the installation of scooter corrals and racks
- Updated 27 and added 18 wayfinding signs in Downtown garages
- 3 beautification volunteer days
- 34 works of temporary and permanent public art displayed
- 2 juried art exhibitions accompanied by 8 community-led programs
- 3 public art grant applications
- 36 holiday star decorations added to Granby Street arch lighting
- Completed The Plot upgrade with a canopy, outdoor heating, improved power and lighting and 38 additional items of furniture
- Hosted more than 1,500 visitors to The Plot events and classes
- Produced free and seasonal art and history tours
- 4 umbrellas added to MacArthur Square
- Furthered the design and scope for alleyway improvements in McCullough's Lane



FY23 objectives

- Continue to advance opportunities for public art in the NEON District
- Create places and encourage unique venues to showcase local artists and makers
- Work with the City of Norfolk on the implementation of the NEON Streetscape Project
- Support the education, deployment, and best use practices of micro transit options with recommendations on safe usage
- Support the ongoing efforts to develop a Multimodal Transportation Master Plan to include an effective curbside management plan
- Continue to implement the Downtown wayfinding program and guide additional partner wayfinding projects
- Advocate for additional public green space
- In partnership with the city explore ideas to make the Cofer Lot a welcoming and safe neighborhood space
- Utilize outdoor furniture to create a welcoming atmosphere for placemaking and enhanced user experience
- Host community events in the NEON District at The Plot
- Introduce new City of Norfolk Outdoor Dining Guidelines and support the implementation with outreach to the restaurant community
- Regularly address landscaping in tree wells and public spaces with staff and volunteer opportunities



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 advocates for our constituents and a catalyst for positive change, we develop policy, aid and support economic development, and facilitate parking, wayfinding, bikeability and placemaking. Our 375 plus member organization is in 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 2021, DNC continued its advocacy work through coordinated efforts to improve the parking experience, support improvements regarding safety and security, secure ARPA funding, and champion additional hospitality/nightlife resources.

FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION

FY22 accomplishments

Ensured clean audit and transparent financial activities

Worked with the Finance Committee to ensure sound financial processes and controls

Created new positions for an Office Manager and Executive Assistant and Administrative Assistant to better support the needs of the Finance Department and staff

FY23 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 resources available

Staff development through education, networking and industry connections

Engage Board members in strategic initiatives and advocacy efforts

Establish reserve for real estate tax appeals



Partnered with Access College Foundation to award a **\$6,000** scholarship to a Norfolk Public School senior



VOLUNTEER PROJECTS
benefiting Downtown



LEADERSHIP FORUMS



EVENTS
social and networking

DOWNTOWN 100

VALUED PARTNERS
AND SPONSORS



FORV/S

HARVEY LINDSAY
COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE



MacArthur Center



OLD DOMINION
UNIVERSITY



S.L. NUSBAUM
REALTY CO. | SINCE 1906



SWAY



**Downtown
Norfolk** 

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DowntownNorfolk.org

