

An aerial photograph of downtown Norfolk, Virginia, showing a dense urban grid with various buildings, streets, and green spaces. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent green filter. The text 'YEAR IN REVIEW' is prominently displayed in large, bold, yellow-orange letters across the top half of the image.

# YEAR IN REVIEW

DOWNTOWN NORFOLK COUNCIL FY2023

Downtown  
Norfolk 

**OFFICERS**

- Jim Wofford**, MacArthur Center, Chair\*
- Mel Price**, Work Program Architects, Vice Chair
- Jenny Bonsiewich**, PBMares LLP, Treasurer
- Tommy Leeman**, Steward Partners Global Advisory, Immediate Past Chair
- Mary Miller**, Downtown Norfolk Council, President & Corporate Secretary

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

- Raffaele Allen**, Marathon Development Group, Inc.\*
- Scott Campbell**, VIA Design Architects\*
- Preston Carraway**, Residential Rate Payer/DNCL Officer\*
- Lorraine Connaughton**, Residential Rate Payer/DNCL Officer\*
- Christian Conway**, Dominion Enterprises\*
- Matthew Crowe**, Hilton Norfolk The Main\*
- Patrick Edwards**, The Stockpot Norfolk
- Michael Fowler**, Even Keel Wealth Advisors of Raymond James
- Jesse Hemphill**, Norfolk Waterside Marriott\*

**Ray King**, Woods Rogers Vandevanter Black PLC

**Miles Leon**, S.L. Nusbaum Realty Co.\*

**Christy Marron**, Grace O'Malley's Irish Pub & Restaurant

**Michelle Nichols**, TowneBank\*

**Lacy Peterson**, Glass Light Hotel & Gallery\*

**Ellis H. Pretlow**, Kaufman & Canoles

**Jimmy Schools**, Hertz Corporation\*

**Judy Swystun**, Hampton Roads Transportation, Inc.

**Brittany Treble**, KPMG

**Alec Yuzhbabenko**, Hanbury

**EX-OFFICIO**

- The Honorable Kenneth C. Alexander**, Mayor, City of Norfolk
- Pete Buryk**, Chief of Staff, Office of the City Manager

**GENERAL COUNSEL**

**Dean T. Buckius**, Woods Rogers Vandevanter Black PLC

*\*Representing the Downtown Improvement District*



**The Downtown Norfolk Council is the unifying voice of its members and stakeholders, and the primary catalyst for advancing the collective vision for the future of Downtown. We are committed to being a leader, an advocate and a resource for Downtown's continuing development as an attractive, dynamic and economically vital place.**

FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Thoughts from Mary Miller, President & CEO

We're back to the future.

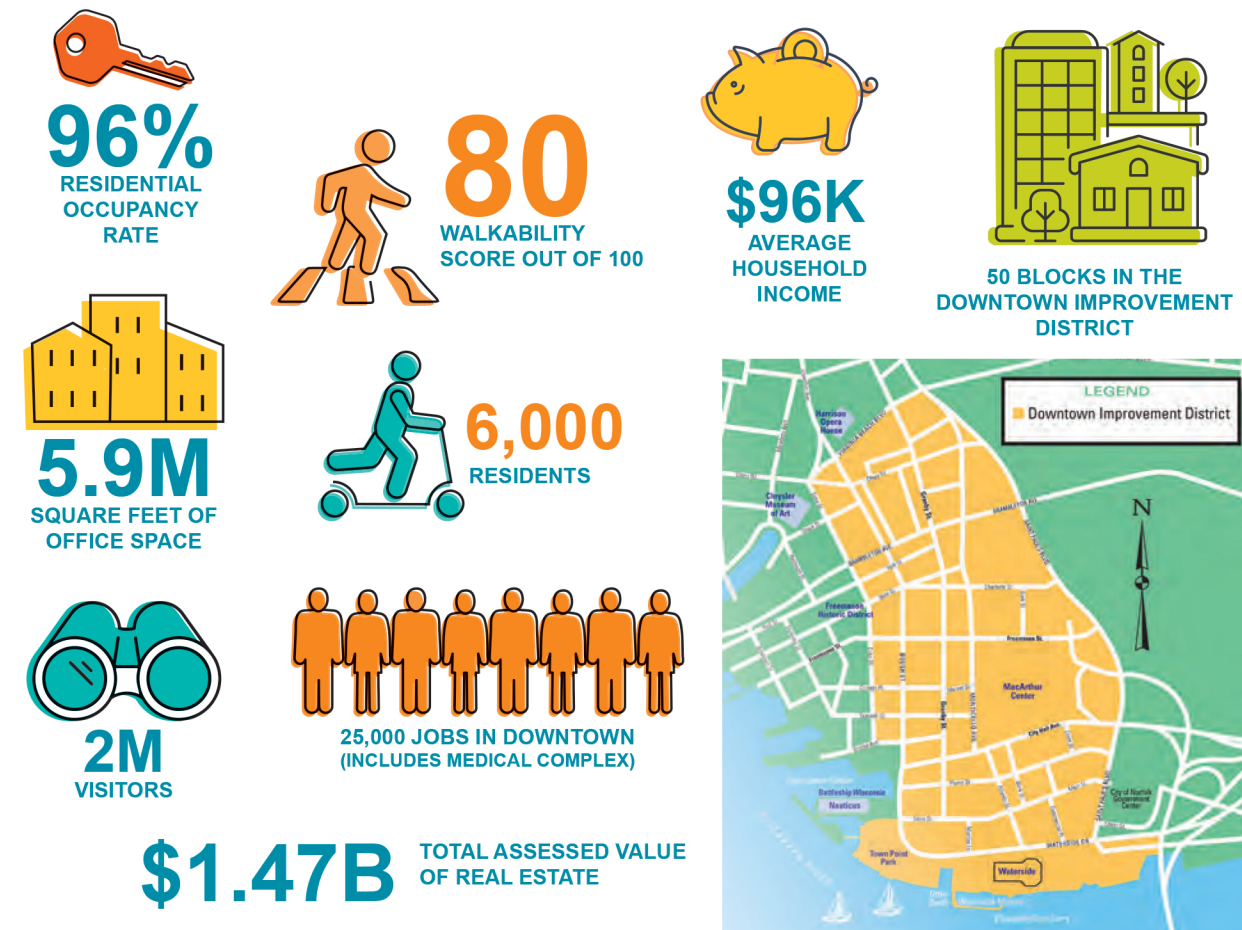
With COVID and all its disruption mostly in the rear-view mirror, Downtown Norfolk Council is now focused on building a new vision for our future. The dynamics of downtowns across the country have changed, no doubt. But while we still face many unknowns, we have shown before that with challenges come new opportunities, and with that spirit we are moving ahead excited for the future. Our staff, board and stakeholders are developing a five-year strategic plan to ensure that Downtown remains the city's economic generator that it has been for decades.

In the process, we have updated our core values: to become even more welcoming of everyone to Downtown, to offer the widest range of activities that appeal to all ages, to ensure Downtown is safe and to develop pathways for the next generation to take the reins on civic engagement and leadership.

This past year we were thrilled to bring the beloved family tradition, The Grand Illumination Parade, back to the community for the holidays. Moving forward, we will look for even more opportunities to bring people together in our public spaces throughout the year. In an encouraging sign, Downtown is well ahead of the national curve in converting underused office space for residential purposes. More residents translate into more customers for businesses, entertainment destinations and restaurants.

We were also very proud to host the International Downtown Association's Economic Development summit this year, showcasing our city to place management professionals from across the country. We had so many positive comments from IDA visitors who were surprised by what Downtown has to offer, reminding us never to take for granted our many and varied amenities: a working waterfront, world-class arts and culture, authenticity, history, character and an engaged citizenry. All of which are assets upon which we can build a better and more robust Downtown.

We look forward to what the future holds for us and bringing the vision to life with all of you.



DNC is at the center of Downtown Norfolk's value, energy and activity.

DNC ensures a clean, safe and vibrant urban experience.

DNC serves and advocates for Downtown businesses, employees, residents and visitors.

DNC celebrates and contributes to Norfolk's unique and diverse culture.

DNC is an accessible, reliable and dedicated Downtown resource.

DNC is actively translating Norfolk's history into a visionary future.

# DOWNTOWN NORFOLK COUNCIL MEMBERS

13News Now  
 219 Bistro  
 456 Fish on Granby  
 757 Creative ReUse Center  
 801-814 Granby Street, LLC  
 ADP, LLC  
 AFR Tours  
 American Red Cross  
 Anders Williams Ship Agency, Inc.  
 APTIM  
 Assembly  
 Associates In Primary Care  
 Audacy (95.7 R&B, 101.32WD, 94.9 The Point, & Z104)  
 B.Grace Design LLC  
 Bank of America  
 Baxter's Sports Lounge  
 BDO  
 Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Towne Realty  
 Better Business Bureau of Greater Hampton Roads  
 Big Easy Oyster Bar  
 Bleubeing Studios  
 Blocker Norfolk Family YMCA  
 The Breeden Company  
 Breeden Construction  
 Bress Realty LLC  
 Brothers  
 Brown & Brown Insurance  
 Burgess & Niple, Inc.  
 Business Document Solutions, Inc.  
 Byrd & Baldwin Bros. Steakhouse  
 Café Geneviève  
 Café Milo  
 Capo Capo  
 Cardinal Skate Shop  
 Certy Partners  
 Chicho's Backstage  
 Children's Hospital of The King's Daughters  
 Chrysler Museum of Art  
 City of Norfolk  
 City of Norfolk Dept. of Cultural Facilities, Arts & Entertainment  
 City of Norfolk, Division of Parking  
 Coastal Ride  
 Codex  
 Cohen Investment Group  
 Colliers International  
 Collins Enterprises, LLC  
 Cooper Hurley Injury Lawyers  
 Copy Connection  
 Courtyard by Marriott

Covalent Consulting Group  
 Cox Communications  
 Crenshaw, Ware & Martin  
 Commune  
 Cruise Norfolk  
 CV International, Inc.  
 d'Art Center  
 Deadline Digital Printing  
 Decker Law Firm  
 D'Egg Diner  
 Delphine Carnes Law Group, PLC  
 Dillard's  
 Divaris Real Estate  
 Dominion Enterprises  
 Downtown Norfolk Civic League  
 Eastern Virginia Medical School  
 Elizabeth River Crossings  
 Elizabeth River Trail Foundation  
 Entry Guard Systems  
 Epworth United Methodist Church  
 Eure Site Solutions, Inc.  
 Even Keel Wealth Advisors of Raymond James  
 Expansive  
 Famous Uncle Al's Hotdogs & Grill  
 Foodbank of Southeastern Virginia  
 Forvis  
 Four Eleven York  
 Fox Pest Control  
 Freemason Abbey Restaurant  
 Freemason Street Area Association  
 Freemason Street Baptist Church  
 Ganderson Law, P.C.  
 Gather  
 Geocentric  
 Gershwin's  
 Gilbert Eyecare  
 Glass Light Hotel & Gallery  
 Governor's School for the Arts  
 Grace O'Malley's Irish Pub & Restaurant  
 Grain  
 Granby Bistro  
 Granby Street Pizza  
 Gray Building Condo  
 Greater Norfolk Corporation  
 The Grilled Cheese Bistro  
 Grow  
 The Gym Downtown  
 Hackworth  
 Hair of the Dog  
 Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce  
 Hampton Roads Community Foundation

Hampton Roads Moving & Storage  
 Hampton Roads Transit  
 Hanbury  
 Harbor Group International, LLC  
 Harbour Place Condominium Association  
 Harrington Graphics  
 Harvey Lindsay Commercial Real Estate  
 HeadWaters Resort and Casino  
 Hell's Kitchen  
 Hermitage Museum & Gardens  
 Hilton Norfolk The Main  
 Hope House Foundation  
 Hummingbird Macarons & Desserts  
 Hunter House Victorian Museum  
 Hurrah Players  
 Independent Services of VA, Inc.  
 Istorica  
 J&A Racing  
 Jim White Fitness & Nutrition Studios  
 JLL  
 Jpixx LLC  
 Kaufman & Canoles, P.C.  
 Kelleterlaw PC  
 Kemper Consulting  
 Kotarides Developers  
 KPMG LLP  
 La Brioche Bakery & Coffee  
 Lamia's Crepes  
 Lanier Parking Solutions  
 Lanpher Productions Inc.  
 Lawson  
 Leone's  
 Lime  
 Lizard at Prince Books  
 The Lofts at Front Street  
 Lorak Jewelry  
 MacArthur Center  
 MacArthur Memorial Museum  
 MacArthur Pharmacy  
 Marathon Development Group  
 Marfret USA, Inc.  
 McCormick Law & Consulting  
 McGuire Woods LLP  
 Mode5  
 Moe's Southwest Grill  
 Monastery Restaurant  
 Morrisette Architecture  
 Museum Apartments  
 Muse Writers Center  
 Nauticus  
 The Neon House

Neptune's Fury Coffee Co  
 New York Times Company  
 Norfolk Admirals (ECHL Professional Hockey Team)  
 Norfolk and Portsmouth Bar Association  
 Norfolk Botanical Garden  
 Norfolk Circuit Court Clerk's Office  
 Norfolk Festevents  
 Norfolk Innovation Corridor  
 Norfolk NATO Festival  
 Norfolk Preservation Collective  
 Norfolk Redevelopment & Housing Authority  
 Norfolk Seafood Co.  
 Norfolk Sheriff's Office  
 Norfolk Sister City Association  
 Norfolk SPCA  
 Norfolk State University  
 Norfolk Tides (Triple A Affiliate of the Baltimore Orioles)  
 Norfolk Tour Company  
 Norfolk Waterside Marriott  
 The NorVa  
 Old Point National Bank  
 Omar's Carriage House  
 Orbis Landscape Architecture  
 Pagoda & Oriental Garden  
 Patrick D. Thrasher, MD, PC  
 PB Mares, LLP  
 Pedego Norfolk  
 Pender Building Condominium Association  
 People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA)  
 Percolator  
 Petit a Petit  
 Plant Norfolk  
 Prime 255  
 Primeplus Norfolk Senior Centers  
 Primm Advertising  
 Prince Books  
 Prince Ink  
 Principle Strategies  
 Push Comedy Theater  
 Residence Inn Norfolk Downtown  
 Retail Alliance  
 Rich Port Coffee  
 Rick Kiefner Insurance  
 Riddick Fiedler Stern, PC  
 River Park Condominium  
 The RMR Group  
 Roadstead Montessori High School  
 Robinson Development Group

Ronald McDonald House Charities of Norfolk  
 Rover Cruises  
 Rutter Mills, LLP  
 S.L. Nusbaum Insurance Agency, Inc.  
 S.L. Nusbaum Realty Company  
 Saffron Indian Bistro  
 Saltine  
 Saint Patrick Catholic School  
 Sanctuary  
 Security 101  
 Selden Market  
 Selden Optometry  
 Sentara Norfolk General Hospital  
 Sheraton Norfolk Waterside Hotel  
 Sinclair Communications (WNIS, FUNNY850, BOB-FM, 96X, US106)  
 Slone Chiropractic Clinic  
 Slover Library Foundation  
 Smooth  
 S'mores Amore  
 Southern Bank  
 Special Events Virginia  
 Spirit of Norfolk by Hornblower  
 St. Paul's Episcopal Church  
 Standard Parking - SP+  
 Stanton Partners, Inc.  
 Steward Partners Global Advisory  
 The Stockpot Norfolk  
 Stripers Waterside  
 Stromberg/Garrigan & Associates, Inc.  
 Sugar & Grace Candle Co.  
 Sway Creative Labs  
 Syd's FishPig Cafe  
 Tag-Ink  
 Tag It Brand It  
 The Talbot on Granby  
 Tap It Local  
 Temp-Power Inc.  
 Third Rock Events  
 Tidewater Community College  
 TOCCreative  
 Todd Jurich's Bistro  
 TowneBank  
 TRAFFIX  
 TRDance Center  
 Trolley Pub Norfolk  
 Truist  
 UBS Financial Services  
 VA Goods  
 Varia  
 VCACA, Inc.  
 VEER

VIA design architects, pc  
 Vino Culture Wine Shop  
 Virginia Arts Festival  
 Virginia Business  
 Virginia Business Systems  
 Virginia Maritime Association  
 Virginia Opera  
 Virginia Ship Repair Association  
 Virginia Stage Company  
 Virginia Symphony Orchestra  
 Virginia Wesleyan University  
 Virginia Zoo  
 VisitNorfolk (Norfolk Convention & Visitor's Bureau)  
 Visual Vibes  
 Voila! Cuisine Internationale  
 VOLUNTEER Hampton Roads  
 Wall, Einhorn & Chernitzer, P.C.  
 Waterside District  
 Waterside Marina  
 Waterside Seafood Company @ Sheraton Norfolk Waterside  
 Wave Church  
 WB Marketing  
 Wells Fargo  
 Wells Fargo Advisors  
 Werther Leather Goods  
 WHRO-TV/WHRO-FM  
 Wilbanks Smith & Thomas  
 Willcox & Savage, P.C.  
 Williams Mullen  
 Wisteria by Cuisine & Company  
 Wolcott Rivers Gates  
 Woods Rogers Vandeventer Black  
 Work Program Architects  
 Worth Higgins Associates, Inc.  
 WTKR  
 YWCA South Hampton Roads

A very special thank you to our sponsors, whose financial support was critical in making this event special and successful.

Gratitude is also expressed to the staff of the Hilton Norfolk The Main for their generosity and commitment to the success of the event.

Lastly, we pay tribute to our Membership and Downtown Norfolk District Ratepayers, who, through their financial and volunteer support, allow the Downtown Norfolk Council to be a positive voice for change in the City of Norfolk.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



## OPERATIONS FOR A CLEAN AND SAFE DOWNTOWN

*DNC's clean and safe team is a steady presence on Downtown streets, consistently and diligently cleaning, monitoring, weeding, patrolling, saying hello and welcoming everyone into Downtown Norfolk. Next time you see them out and about or behind the wheel of F.R.E.D. give them a wave or say, thanks!*

- 67,000 complimentary dog waste bags provided
- 11,400 hours of safety patrols
- 5,517 scooter assists
- 2,800 hours of bike patrol
- 1,815 homeless outreach contacts
- 1,302 F.R.E.D. passengers
- 1,050 stickers removed
- 583 plants added
- 444 hours of business support

- 430 hours of training
- 313 panhandling resolutions
- 281 tons of trash collected
- 224 graffiti removals
- 7 days a week supporting downtown

## PLACEMAKING

*You know you are in the right place when you're in Downtown Norfolk. It's a feeling you have, but also a distinctive look that's instantly recognizable. You're surrounded by public art, plenty of places to sit, flowers in nearby planters, some shade, outdoor "streateries," the iconic arch lighting of Granby Street, and of course, people. To paraphrase Jane Jacobs, people are really what make a city, not buildings. Come enjoy the place we call home, Downtown Norfolk.*

- 6,000 attendees to the 7th Annual NEON Festival
- 3,000 attendees to community-driven, seasonal events and classes at The Plot
- 223 Hampton Roads Transit riders served through DNC's HRT GoPass 365 Savings Program
- 27 working artists hired for local art projects
- 17 free curated art and history tours
- 12 new works of temporary and permanent public art added to the NEON District
- 3 beautification volunteer days
- 2 public art grant applications

Partner to the Downtown Norfolk Community Garden

Produced Norfolk Bike Month with City of Norfolk

Advocated for new crosswalk and pedestrian signal at Boush Street and Brooke Avenue

Supported the development of permanent Outdoor Dining Design Guidelines for public and private property

Gourmandizing NEON partnership with The Governor's School for the Arts produced a permanent mural, art exhibition, school curriculum and was named Veer Magazine's Best Outdoor Mural of 2022



## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

*From Vibrant Spaces programs that help our businesses stand out and enhance the pedestrian experience to a nightlife accreditation program aimed at improving relationships among Norfolk's businesses, municipal agencies, and community, Downtown Norfolk Council's economic development initiatives support and facilitate growth in our unique business community, solidifying Downtown's position as an economic hub for the city and region.*

Launched Gold Bar Norfolk to enhance Downtown Norfolk's nightlife economy, support hospitality workers, create best practices for the restaurant industry and maintain the vitality of Norfolk's cultural center

Hosted the International Downtown Association 2023 Economic Development Summit

Successfully advocated for the loosening of restrictions on permitted business use categories in order to support a greater diversity of tenancy within Downtown

Awarded \$35,000 in Vibrancy Grants to support Downtown businesses

d'Art Center

801 Boush Street

Roadstead Montessori High School

Brothers

Supported 11 new street level businesses

The Pit and the Peel

Cocojam

Legacy

Neptune's Fury Coffee Co.

ReStore Dental

Birds & Bourbon

Dong Tay

GypSea Roots Collective

Shark City Naturals

Town Center Cold Press at The Main

Rich Port Coffee

## MARKETING

*The marketing department tells the story of Downtown Norfolk, bringing awareness to all that Downtown has to offer from its can't-miss events and chef-driven restaurants to its role as a center for business, civic, and creative activity. Special marketing initiatives and events help to create Downtown's unique energy all year long.*

Increased total website page views by 3.5% over FY22, with nearly 2 million page views for FY23 and an average of 3.74 pages viewed per session

More than 5,500 newsletter subscribers

Marketing initiatives dedicated to Downtown as a destination, including Seasonal Tourism, Favorite Seafood Spots, Iconic Downtown Restaurants, Restaurant Week, Black-owned Businesses, Top Tips for Getting Around, Fall Favorites, Valentine's Day, Family-Friendly Downtown Activities, Brunch, Holiday Activities, and more

Celebrated Downtown Employees with \$2,000 worth of giveaways and special programming directed at engaging the Downtown workforce

Targeted advertising campaign for Richmond market

Production of Downtown Exploration Guide, Holiday Experience Map, and Downtown Norfolk "Good Time Guide"

Over 130 marketing and information sharing email communications to our database

Successful influencer marketing campaign in celebration of Black History Month, reaching 84.4% more non-follower accounts and gaining over 1,000 new IG followers

Successful production of the Grand Illumination Parade and accompanying Facebook Live broadcast, reaching over 25k people and increasing engagement on stream by 10k

Relaunch of newly designed NEON District website with a focus on user experience and image-driven content

Generated over \$1 million in total public relations value, including 2 national press mentions

WeTransfer named Norfolk one of the top 3 emerging creative hubs in the United States, with NEON District and NEON businesses recognized

Mentions in Forbes' "Pharrell Launches The Mighty Dream Forum, With Lewis Hamilton, Maverick Carter And Global Brands Coming Together In Norfolk For 'The Davos For DEI'" among other Mighty Dream press coverage



## EVENTS

Annual Meeting Breakfast

Summer and Winter Restaurant Weeks

Curated Walking Tours

7th Annual NEON Festival

Holiday Movie Food and Drink Week

Downtown Norfolk Holiday Food & Fund Drive

Grand Illumination Parade

Hot Cocoa War

Small Business Saturday

Selden Holiday Market

Holiday Train Exhibit

NEON Holiday Market

Downtown Outdoor Happy Hour Boot Camp

Bike to Work Day

Glow Ride

Employee Appreciation

LiveNFK Summer Career Launch

## SOCIAL MEDIA AND WEBSITE

Over 133,500 total followers (IG, Twitter, Facebook) – a 15% increase over FY22

Over 500,000 annual website visitors

More than 180,000 direct click thrus to Downtown business and member websites

Ongoing Google Ad Words campaigns click thrus are up 11.5% over 2022



## SELDEN MARKET

*You won't find a more unique place to shop in all of Hampton Roads than Selden Market. It's a collection of the best and brightest in independent retail located steps from everything in a historic arcade, but it's also driving a highly supportive and diverse world of entrepreneurship in the 757.*

- 117,500 visitors
- 23,500 social media followers
- 1,376 Hot Cocoa War votes
- 1,180 hours of guest parking validated
- 250+ pop-up businesses
- 90% woman or minority-owned businesses
- 78 tenant workshops and special events
- 62 press mentions
- 37 official Selden Market events
- 8% increase in foot traffic
- 6 business education workshops
- 5 storefronts signed leases or agreements to grow their business beyond Selden Market
- 4 field trips with local schools
- 2 Coastal Virginia Magazine "Best Of" awards for Best Shopping Center and Best Incubator/Startup
- Partnership with Norfolk State University's Innovation Center for continued business education for area small businesses, with 60 participants in the first class

## MEMBERSHIP

*There's never been a better time for you, your business or organization to join forces with us. DNC's members don't just get a perk here or there, they are who we serve every day. From knowledge to networking, there's always something to do and a way to join in.*

- Retained and served 375 DNC members
- Member Briefings covered current issues facing our membership, including Norfolk's Coastal Storm Risk Management Project, improvements to Norfolk International Airport and the Hampton Roads Bridge-Tunnel expansion
- Launched Coffee with the CEO, a new networking and education program designed to directly hear from our membership
- Annual Guide to Downtown Norfolk
- 200 complimentary hospitality benefits to members
- 52 Member Highlights in weekly Fast Facts newsletter featuring DNC members
- Member engagement opportunities with Virginia Stage Company and Festevents



## DT100

*Emerging as the leaders of tomorrow, the Downtown 100 are committed to the growth and prosperity of Downtown Norfolk. Dedicated to the community, fun-loving and armed with gardening gloves, DT100 members donate their time and resources to volunteer and support DNC's mission.*

- Supported Ronald McDonald House, the Adopt-a-Student program and the Downtown Norfolk Community Garden
- More than 600 volunteer hours on projects benefitting Downtown
- Leadership forums with local Hampton Roads business leaders
- 25 events, networking sessions and service 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 2022, DNC continued its advocacy work through coordinated efforts to improve the parking experience, support improvements regarding safety and security and champion additional hospitality and nightlife resources.

DNC is currently undergoing a Downtown Norfolk Strategic Plan Update with Progressive Urban Management Associates. The purpose of the Strategic Plan Update is to refine the long-term vision and identify priority improvements and investments for Downtown over the next five years and beyond. Our goal is to align the organization to a rapidly changing economic, social, and political landscape, while building on our fundamental strengths and exploring meaningful ways to become more responsive to community needs, goals and inclusion.

