



## Downtown NFK's "Vibrant Spaces" Wins National Award

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During its 62nd Annual Conference and Tradeshow in Atlanta, the International Downtown Association (IDA) recognized Downtown Norfolk Council (DNC) with a Merit Award for its Vibrant Spaces initiative. DNC also received an IDA Merit Award in 2015 for its Park Happy campaign.

Vibrant Spaces was among 10 qualified entries in the category of Economic and Business Development. This category features projects and initiatives that deliver successful programs and strategies that have recruited new businesses or improved retention efforts in downtown, recruit new sectors of the economy to downtown, and/or create or enhance economic development efforts through creative financing, unique operating strategies, or public-private partnerships.



image | The Prince Ink Co.

The initiative, a catalyst program, was developed to attract new vibrant businesses in addition to enhancing exiting business. Vibrant Spaces received 97 applications. To date, Vibrant Spaces has added three new businesses downtown, Muddy Paws Downtown, Prince Ink and Lamia's Crepes in addition to

awarding grants to four existing businesses for enhancements.

"This is a truly innovative and one-of-a-kind program," said Mary Miller, president and CEO of Downtown Norfolk Council. "We could not have achieved our goals without the hard work and dedication of the Vibrant Spaces Committee. We are thrilled with the success of Vibrant Spaces and are extremely proud to be acknowledged by our peers."

"Downtown Norfolk Council's project received the IDA Merit Award for conducting best practice work in our industry of urban place management", said David Downey, IDA President and CEO. "The Vibrant Spaces initiative is a shining example of excellent downtown management delivering real value to the city." Mary Miller was also appointed to the IDA Board of Directors. The IDA Board of Directors is comprised of 40 board members and eight ex officio members, ranging from the US, Canada, and across the globe. The current Chair is Tim Tompkins, of the Times Square Alliance in NY. Mary's term officially began after the board meeting in Atlanta. She is eligible to serve for three years and then goes through re-election.

The Washington, D.C. based International Downtown Association (IDA) is a champion for vital and livable urban centers and strives to inform, influence, and inspire downtown leaders and advocates. With 500 member organizations and thousands of professionals, IDA is a guiding force in creating healthy and dynamic centers that anchor the well-being of towns, cities, and regions.