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## **The 35<sup>th</sup> Annual Grand Illumination Parade, Presented by MacArthur Center, Starts the Holiday Magic Downtown on November 23**

NORFOLK, Va. – (November 2019) – The 35<sup>th</sup> Annual Grand Illumination Parade starts the holiday magic on November 23 at 7 pm in Downtown Norfolk. The parade, presented by MacArthur Center, starts at the corner of St. Paul’s Blvd. and Main Street and follows a two-mile course. The theme “Toyland” will come alive through marching bands, animal brigades, motorized units, walking units and floats. The parade is free and open to the public. The finale, per tradition, brings Santa to Downtown on a spectacular float.

The official kick off to the holiday season brings thousands of spectators to experience the beauty, magic and lights. The Grand Illumination Parade is a beloved holiday tradition for many families in the region. The parade immediately follows the Grand Illumination that lights up the Downtown skyline at 7 pm. The lights will continue to adorn Downtown Norfolk throughout the holidays.

“We’ve produced the region’s ultimate holiday parade for 35 years and are proud of the hundreds of volunteers and participants who bring their creativity and energy to Downtown each year,” said Mary Miller, president and CEO of Downtown Norfolk Council.

The Grand Illumination Parade won a Merit Award from the [International Downtown Association](#) and it has been a Southeast Tourism Top 20 Event, since 1985.

### **Parade Tips & Extras**

#### **Waterside District VIP Experience \$40**

Join Waterside District for a VIP viewing experience of the parade and annual lighting of the Downtown, along with access to festive food, drinks and holiday activities! Bring your own folding chair for a comfortable seating experience. Admission to the VIP Viewing Area is \$40 and includes \$20 promotional gift card to Waterside District and one ticket for hot cocoa. Enjoy a festive holiday atmosphere with food tents, holiday garb and non-alcoholic drinks available

for purchase. Kids 10 and under are FREE to attend. <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/grand-illumination-parade-vip-experience-tickets-72317699185>

### **Come Early and Enjoy the Fun**

Spectators are encouraged to arrive before 5 pm to avoid traffic. There's plenty to do for the whole family including Dickens' Christmas Towne at Nauticus, Impulse Giant Seesaw Experience and ice skating at MacArthur on Ice, and plenty of [shopping](#) and [dining](#) options. Various entertainment options will also be available at Waterside District and on the parade route starting at 5:30 pm.

### **Special Event Parking Prices**

**Early bird parking rates of \$2 are available until 5 pm.** All city garages, including MacArthur Center, are collect-on-entry and accept CASH or CREDIT. The garage at Norfolk Hilton The Main Hotel will NOT be collect-on-entry. Regular hourly rates apply. Dominion Tower is \$5 collect-on-entry from 3 pm – 6 pm CASH or CREDIT. For all garage locations click [here](#).

### **See the Parade Online or on Social Media**

The Grand Illumination Parade will be on Facebook Live @DowntownNorfolk on November 23 at 7 pm. You can enjoy the parade's marching bands, giant balloons, floats and walking units along with colorful commentary, and you will be able to interact with hosts in real time. On your mobile device, follow @DowntownNorfolk on Facebook. If you don't have Facebook, you can still watch live on your laptop or desktop at [DowntownNorfolk.org](http://DowntownNorfolk.org). The Facebook Live broadcast will be available after the parade on [Facebook](#). You can also see behind-the-scenes fun on Instagram @Downtown757.

The Grand Illumination Parade, produced by Downtown Norfolk Council, kicks off the annual Holidays in the City celebrations in both Downtown Norfolk and Olde Town Portsmouth. It's a magical time to visit with holiday music, festive lights and decorations and special creations at nearby restaurants. Holiday placemaking displays adorn Downtown in addition to doorways and windows of shops and hotels. For a complete list of activities and events, visit [DowntownNorfolk.org](http://DowntownNorfolk.org). Click [here](#) for **Grand Illumination Parade sizzle reel**.

MacArthur Center, located on Monticello Avenue in downtown Norfolk, features one million square feet of retail offerings, including the region's flagship Dillard's department store. Shoppers can explore more than 120 stores including Apple, J.Crew, Michael Kors and Fink's Jewelers. Entertainment and dining options occupy approximately 25 percent of the tenant mix. MacArthur Center also offers Live 360°, an interactive program of classes, demonstrations, workshops and more, allowing the community to actively engage around their interests. For more information, visit [ShopMacarthur.com](http://ShopMacarthur.com) or follow us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

Downtown Norfolk Council is a private, not-for-profit membership organization comprised of businesses and individuals working toward a dynamic, attractive and prosperous Downtown. DNC also manages the Downtown Norfolk Improvement District, a 50-block special services district with enhanced services that keep Downtown friendly, safe and spotless. Connect with Downtown Norfolk on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram or visit [DowntownNorfolk.org](http://DowntownNorfolk.org).

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