

# Inside Business

The Hampton Roads Business Journal

## Downtown Norfolk Council, 40 years | 2019 milestone anniversary

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Courtesy photos

Granby Street in downtown Norfolk as it appeared in the 1980s.



Staff file photo

Lights on Granby Street on April 1, 2016.



Downtown Norfolk ambassadors and the Downtown Norfolk Council's Free Ride Every Day electric shuttle.

**Founded:** 1979, Norfolk, Downtown Development Corporation

**Headquarters:** 223 E. City Hall Ave., Suite 212, Norfolk

**The business:** The Downtown Norfolk Council is an award-winning organization comprised of more than 300 businesses and individual members dedicated to promoting and enhancing business, cultural, retail and residential initiatives in downtown Norfolk. The council also manages the Downtown Improvement District, a 50-block district originally ordained by Norfolk City Council in February 1999. The council is the unifying voice of its members and stakeholders, and the primary catalyst for advancing the collective vision for the future of downtown. It is committed to being a leader, an advocate and a resource for downtown's continuing development as an attractive, dynamic and economically vital place.

**Current owners:** Mary Miller, president and CEO

**Milestones reached:** Reopening of Granby Street in 1985; established the Downtown Improvement District in 1999; Vibrant Spaces Program and opening of the Selden Market

**Obstacles overcome:** Light rail construction; development of the first 10-year plan for downtown; wayfinding program for downtown

**Keys to longevity:** "Constantly evolving and growing as an organization and responding to the needs of our constituents so downtown can remain competitive and continue to be the pride of our region," said Mary Miller, president and CEO

**What's next:** To play a larger role in economic development for downtown; support our thriving business community; advocate for positive change and

support major initiatives that will contribute to the vibrancy and success of downtown.

**For more information:** 757-623-1757, [DowntownNorfolk.org](http://DowntownNorfolk.org); Facebook; Instagram