

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Cindy Mackey, 757-754-4553, cindymackey@cox.net

VIBRANT SPACES ANNOUNCES SELDEN MARKET
Downtown Norfolk's First Retail Incubator

NORFOLK, Va. – (May 2017) – Downtown Norfolk Council is pleased to announce that [Vibrant Spaces](#), an incentive program developed to stimulate street-level business, is partnering with the City of Norfolk to open Selden Market. Located in the Selden Arcade that sits between Main and Plume Streets in Downtown, Selden Market will serve as a storefront incubator for new businesses.

Selden Arcade is the historic connector between Slover Library and Hilton Norfolk The Main. Selden Market will be transformed into a vibrant space with multiple small-business tenants, mentors and kiosks for pop-up businesses. The program will stimulate street-level activity with low rents and short-term leases to help businesses shape their model, learn from each other and build community in a low-risk environment.

“This market concept is a culmination of all of the lessons we’ve learned from the successful Vibrant Spaces program,” said Drew Ungvarsky, chairman and CEO and executive creative director of Grow. “Vibrant Spaces matched new businesses with existing spaces in Downtown and provided grants and reduced rents. Additionally, grants were awarded to existing businesses that brought unique concepts to create street-level vibrancy. The goals for Selden Market are regular activation, a unique atmosphere and continual transformation.”

“One thing we discovered was the need for smaller spaces that allow businesses to get started and then grow,” added Mary Miller, president and CEO of Downtown Norfolk Council. “We anticipate this will stimulate businesses across the city and provide a learning and sharing environment. Plus, the synergy of the location adjacent to Slover Library and The Main is a huge benefit. The market is an interim use for two to three years, and we are working with Work Program Architects on a moveable design approach.”

The Slover Library Maker Studio, an initiative of the Slover Library Foundation, will be added to the library’s first floor in the Arcade for patrons to experiment with all kinds of new technologies and tools to create and invent. It will include a sound recording studio, laser cutter and sewing machines.

The Selden Market concept is progressive but not uncharted. Downtown Norfolk Council has incorporated the best practices in retail incubation, markets, food halls and hybrid spaces across the country.

Downtown Norfolk Council and the Vibrant Spaces committee will accept applications for potential tenants. Applications are available online at www.seldenmarket.com.

Tenant selections will be made for those that communicate the following qualities:

- Exciting and unique street-level businesses
- Inclusive of retail, experience, food, service and especially hybrids and non-traditional business models
- Exemplifies the original program criteria: incredible design, regular activation, exceptional offerings

Selden Market will be operated by the Downtown Norfolk Council, and the call for entry is available now through July 13. In addition to incubator storefronts, DNC will offer a few mentor spaces to help with tenant education and traffic generation. Kiosk rentals will allow businesses to test concepts by the day or week. Construction will begin on connectors to The Main and Slover Library this summer, and a fall launch is anticipated.

Vibrant Spaces started in 2015. The first phase attracted 86 applicants for six spaces in seven weeks. Three businesses opened in Downtown: Prince Ink at 433 Granby, Lamia's Crepes at 401 Granby Street and Muddy Paws Downtown at 400 Granby Street. Eight additional grants were awarded to existing businesses including Brick Anchor Brew-House, Work | Release, Leone's and Hurrah Players. Additional vacancies have been filled through connections with Vibrant Spaces including Pinot's Palette (Ghent); Town Center Cold Pressed (Ghent); Jollity & Co. (Ghent); Pacers (35th Street); Bearded Bird Brewing (NEON); Corks & Caps (Downtown); Bonchon (Downtown) and The Rustic Tart (Downtown).

Downtown Norfolk Council (DNC) 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 48-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.

###