



DOWNTOWN NORFOLK COUNCIL ACTION PLAN FY19

Strategic Initiatives Focus Area Objectives

Departmental Focus Area Key Objectives





STRATEGIC INITIATIVES FOCUS AREA

OBJECTIVE #1: NURTURE A VIBRANT URBAN ENVIRONMENT ATTRACTIVE TO RETAIL AND BUSINESS.

APPROACH & STRATEGIES: CONSISTENT ATTENTION TO SMALL AND CORPORATE BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT; STRIVE FOR PLACEMENT OF HIGH QUALITY STREET LEVEL BUSINESSES; DEVELOP RELATIONSHIPS WITH PROPERTY OWNERS AND COMPANY LEADERS

Vibrant Spaces Program

- Support continued operation of the catalyst program’s new businesses
- Process ongoing grant applications for downtown businesses
- Encourage well-designed storefronts and signage for all street level businesses utilizing the Retail Signage Handbook and design guidelines
- Maintain an accurate street level property inventory

Business Recruitment and Retention

- Welcome new businesses to downtown
- Regular outreach to existing businesses
- Utilize marketing and social media to promote commercial real estate opportunities
- Expand DNC’s role in economic development within downtown

Retail Incubator

- Support the launch of a downtown incubator center for retailers, makers and innovators
- Work with a market director to implement best practices in the retail field
- Activate the retail market on a regular basis with events, promotions and activities

Measurable Outcomes:

Attractive storefronts, signage and outdoor dining areas	Number of applicants to Vibrant Spaces grant program
# of hits from commercial real estate social media campaigns	Number of interactions with existing businesses
Number of new businesses downtown	Successful second year of business for Vibrant Space selections
Number of grants and dollar value awarded through Vibrant Spaces grant program	Successful first year of a retail market



OBJECTIVE #2: REINFORCE AUTHENTICITY AND INNOVATION, ENHANCE CONNECTIVITY, AND CREATE UNIQUE AND INVITING PLACES THAT VALUE PEDESTRIANS.

APPROACH & STRATEGIES: WORK WITH PARTNERS AND BUILD COMMUNITY SUPPORT FOR ALL INITIATIVES THAT SUPPORT DOWNTOWN AS A PLACE AND ENHANCE THE SAFETY AND CONNECTIVITY OF OUR STREETS.

Complete Streets

- Encourage strong pedestrian connections between the waterfront and the rest of downtown
- Encourage improvements that will enhance the pedestrian and bike connections to the neighborhoods surrounding downtown through supporting the City of Norfolk’s Bike Master Plan, Pilot Loop
- Plan activities and promote Bike Month with partners
- Support the implementation of a bike share program and placement of more bike amenities
- Support the development and adoption of a Complete Streets implementation plan by the City of Norfolk

Amenities & Placemaking

- Support the activation and public engagement for MacArthur Square encouraging permitted social activities and comfortable gathering places
- Encourage both holiday and year-round lighting as a feature of placemaking in the right-of-way and on private property
- Seek to improve and promote the Elizabeth River Trail as a visitor and residential attraction
- Encourage and advocate for plantings and landscape improvements to beautify downtown
- Support the annual placement of parklets
- Advocate and partner to provide residential amenities such as greenspace, playground and gathering places

Wayfinding

- Advocate for the City of Norfolk to adopt a comprehensive, phased wayfinding plan for downtown
- Expand the signage and short term solutions for wayfinding into permanent connections
- Expand creative wayfinding in the NEON District for more signage and connectivity

Measurable Outcomes:

Improved connectivity with the waterfront and surrounding neighborhoods	Increase in number of bike amenities
Increase in number and attractiveness of parklets, seating and recreational areas	Increase in number of resident amenities
Number of wayfinding signs in downtown and NEON	Improved lighting
Increased daily activity of MacArthur Square	



OBJECTIVE #3: PUBLICLY AND PRIVATELY STEWARD THE NEON DISTRICT TOWARDS A SAFE, CREATIVE, AND ALWAYS ATTRACTIVE ENVIRONMENT FOR ARTISTS, CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS, BUSINESSES, AND RESIDENTS.

APPROACH & STRATEGIES: CREATE STRONG PARTNERSHIPS WITHIN THE COMMUNITY BY UTILIZING THE NEON BRAND, PUBLIC EVENTS, STREET ENVIRONMENT, AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT.

Public Art Initiatives

- Encourage the addition of artistic elements or creative work environments to new developments
- Promote the usage of a grant program for artists and businesses

Pedestrian Connectivity and Infrastructure

- Work with Public Works to mitigate the impact of improving the Brambleton intersections at Granby and Monticello
- Advocate for an improved streetscape that includes lighting, new sidewalks and landscaping
- Explore the creation of a public space for recreation and events using a public input process

Events and Marketing

- Host a fall NEON Festival
- Support other organizations' programming in the NEON District that drives foot traffic and generates a positive economic return
- Create supplemental NEON District marketing materials that continue to build the NEON brand and promote existing public art and businesses

Economic Development and Resiliency

- Create a business incentive package and seek adoption by the City of Norfolk
- Support efforts to build the NEON into an example of coastal, financial and disaster resiliency
- Advocate for more residential dwellings and creative live/work space

The Plot

- Host regular events and encourage organizations to utilize the space as an event location
- Continue to maintain the site's amenities and landscaping seasonally

Measurable Outcomes:

Improved connectivity and foot traffic within the NEON District	Number of public art grants awarded and new art pieces added
Increased number of events at the Plot	Number of brochures distributed
Improved sidewalk conditions	Increase in residential units
Number of new businesses in the NEON	Growth in social media audience

Downtown Norfolk Council Action Plan Fy19

