



2018 Annual Report

Downtown Frankfort, Inc. (DFI) has been focusing on revitalizing our historic downtown for over 32 years. A 501c3, DFI is funded by the City of Frankfort, Franklin County Fiscal Court, event sponsorship, and private donations. Areas of interest include, economic development, historic preservation, community events, and the arts.

In 2018 the DFI Board of Directors made significant strides in restructuring DFI for better efficiency and to enhance the professionalism of the organization. The board increased staff compensation and benefits to better align with other local organizations. We saw an increase in current sponsorship dollars and welcomed several local businesses as new sponsors, as well. We are now poised to be an even more dynamic partner in 2019 to help champion the next phase of redevelopment of our historic downtown and riverfront.

Following are some of the highlights of 2018:

Downtown Master Plan

In Spring 2018, the landscape of downtown was



The Capital Plaza Tower implosion – *The Courier Journal*

forever changed when the Capital Plaza Tower, the Convention Center, and Fountain Place Shops were demolished.

This created a once in a lifetime opportunity for Frankfort to dream up a better, brighter future for the entire community.

The City of Frankfort and Franklin County Fiscal Court partnered in hiring Louisville consultants, CityVisions, to guide us through the process of creating a Master Plan encompassing the newly deconstructed state property, the riverfront, historic downtown, and adjacent areas. The length and breadth of public input was extensive; including public presentations, stakeholder meetings, attendance at numerous public events, and a website for those interested in participating who were unable to attend those events. Remarkably over 4,000 citizens shared their thoughts and hopes for the future of Frankfort. CityVisions incorporated citizen input with their extensive development expertise and crafted the Master Plan. By the end of the year the City and County adopted the plan and work has already begun to implement some of the recommendations in the Master Plan.



Rendering from CityVisions Master Plan

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Sunday Alcohol Sales

DFI, the Frankfort/Franklin County Tourist & Convention Commission, the Frankfort Area Chamber of Commerce, and the Kentucky Capital Development Corporation continued their collaboration and worked toward revising the City of Frankfort and Franklin County ordinances regarding alcohol sales on Sundays. The message focused solely on the economic value of allowing anyone who sells alcohol to do so on Sunday, regardless of food sale offerings. This change was important because it leveled the playing field, allowing smaller independent businesses to compete with the large chain stores, groceries and box stores. And, it also created a much more attractive business environment for potential breweries, distilleries, restaurants, and bars to consider opening in Frankfort.

Sippin' Sundays in September

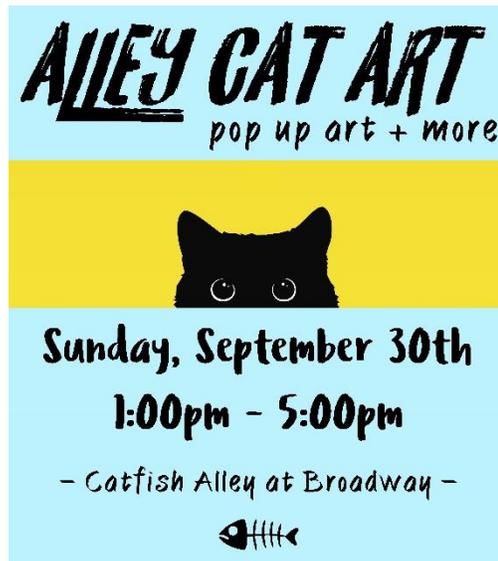
DFI, the City of Frankfort, Frankfort/Franklin County Tourist & Convention Commission, *The State Journal*, and Kentucky Employees Credit Union created a four-week promotion, "Sippin' Sundays in September" to highlight new ordinances and promote downtown activities.



Bill May and Friends playing at Bourbon on Main during Sippin' Sundays in September – *The State Journal*

The City of Frankfort's Public Transit provided free round-trip trolley service to/from Buffalo Trace Distillery to encourage visitors to extend their stay and enjoy our historic downtown.

The promotion ended with "Alley Cat Art" - a pop-up art event on Catfish Alley featuring music and art; our new endeavor to feature art in unique places downtown.



Bourbon

Bourbonanza – Our third annual "Bourbonanza – A Festival of Spirits" was, once again, a great success. This is becoming one of the community's favorite events with great food, music, and a unique live auction of rare bourbon.



This event enables us to continue to strengthen relationships with our local distillers and it attracts a larger crowd each year from across the region and beyond. This year the auction knocked it out of the park with the addition of an opportunity to win a Buffalo Trace Weller 107 Barrel pick. After a very lively, competitive session, the highest bidder spent \$17,500 for this unique opportunity. This was DFI's most successful fundraiser yet – clearing \$13,000.

DFI continued to partner with the Frankfort/Franklin County Tourist & Convention Commission to promote Frankfort's

other signature Bourbon events; “Bourbon and Browns” and “The Salato Sampler.” We also continued to highlight a variety of unique bourbon-related experiences through the “**Kentucky Distilled Experience**,” to entice visitors to extend their stay in Frankfort while in the area.

DFI Events

Our signature events continued to grow in number of attendees and additional community sponsorships. These free community events help our citizens and visitors celebrate the good quality of life we enjoy in Frankfort and are made possible by our many generous sponsors.

Thank you to WesBanco Bank, Inc., Beam Suntory, Rogers Funeral Home, Raymond James, Frankfort Parks Recreation & Historic Sites, Frankfort Plant Board, Frankfort Police Department, and Frankfort Fire & EMS for their support of the Summer Concert Series.

Thank you to Beam Suntory for sponsoring the stage and music at the Governor’s Downtown Derby Celebration.

Thank you to Independence Bank for helping us grow Bourbonanza the last two years.

Thank you to Kentucky Employee Credit Union for supporting arts activities in downtown Frankfort – specifically ArtWalk and Alley Cat Art.

Thank you to Commonwealth Credit Union, Chick-fil-A, Harrod Brothers Funeral Home, and Virginia’s Place, for sponsoring the annual Candlelight Tradition.



Thank you to Traditional Bank and Franklin County Fiscal Court for sponsoring “Frankfest,” our newest event. This free community event will be held in Lakeview Park on Sunday, May 26, 2019. The event committee began planning this event in 2018 and have already lined up music, arts activities, car cruises, balloon rides, and delicious refreshments. We are looking forward to making it a great success.

New Businesses Downtown

Welcome Back, Sig Lüscher Brewery! What a rare treat to witness the rebirth of Frankfort’s first brewery! Originally created by Swiss immigrant, Sigmund Lüscher in 1866, the brewery was located on the current Kentucky Transportation Cabinet site. His great-great-great grandson, Tim Lüscher, has revived the brand and created a wonderful new addition to the downtown scene that connects beer, bourbon, and history.



Downtown also welcomed two new clothing stores on West Main Street – Bella 234 and SerV in 2018. Glitterati Treasures also opened, as did T. Bennett Home + Gift. These new stores provide additional shopping opportunities in the heart of downtown.

Welcome, Goodwood Brewery! Louisville based Goodwood Brewery announced plans for a full- service restaurant in the former T-Boat Marine building, next to Bourbon on Main. Construction is underway and plans are to open in the spring of 2019.

Other new businesses on the horizon include Hoggy’s Ice Cream, Mortimer Bibb’s Public House, and Trifecta BBQ – plus we suspect there will be more good business news on the way!