



DOWNTOWN
FRANKFORT
INCORPORATED

KENTUCKY DISTILLED

2019 Annual Report

Downtown Frankfort, Inc. (DFI) has been focused on revitalizing our historic downtown for 33 years. A 501(c)3, 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 2019 the DFI Board of Directors continued to fine tune the organization's efficiency and professionalism by ensuring that the Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation were cohesive and reflective of current practices.

Staff undertook the lengthy process of joining the Good Giving Campaign, a regional platform enabling the ability of non-profits to widen the net of potential donors. This action introduced DFI as a credible non-profit and was the first step in updating fundraising efforts. This initial year took the place of previous letter writing campaigns and sets the stage for future growth in donations. It also gives DFI the ability to be considered for more grant opportunities.



We also participated in the Frankfort High School's mentoring program, which allowed a senior to spend half of the school year learning about our organization.

And, for the first time ever, the City of Frankfort allocated DFI an additional \$20,000 in funding to increase hours and pay for staff.

Downtown Master Plan

In early 2019 we joined forces with team organizations – Frankfort Tourist Commission (Tourism), Kentucky Capital Development Corporation (KCDC), and the Frankfort Area Chamber of Commerce (The Chamber) - to fund the creation

of a video highlighting details of the Master Plan. DFI took a lead role in collaborating



with a Louisville-based videographer to feature members of the community sharing their excitement about the new projects that were envisioned in the plan. The video aired on local Channel 10 and was added to each team's website.

Late summer, the City Commission set aside \$150,000 in seed money to help initiate Master Plan projects. DFI was tasked with assisting in prioritizing projects and we suggested the following projects: painting the crosswalks

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throughout downtown to both beautify and more prominently highlight safety features; to increase river visibility at Ann Street and begin to energize Blanton’s Landing; and, to focus on the beautification of the Wilkinson Street trestle - an important gateway to downtown. The City Commission selects which projects they will fund.

The Commonwealth’s Finance and Administration Cabinet released a Request for



Bids for redevelopment of Parcels B and C in downtown and by late fall a bid had been accepted. This initiates what we expect will be a phenomenal

amount of growth adjacent to our historic downtown, that will include a new YMCA, meeting space, and new commercial and residential units.

By year end the Mayo-Underwood Building was dedicated, and 1600 employees moved into this new state office building. DFI collaborated with KCDC on a welcome letter featuring all the downtown businesses that the new employees will have access to.

New Business

We welcomed Goodwood Brewing, along with Hoggy’s Ice Cream, which proved to be quite a phenomenon. Both businesses added wonderful energy downtown. All Things Hemp and Wicked Glass & Wanderlust Designs opened, adding additional shopping experiences. In late 2019, the Main Street Diner opened offering breakfast, lunch and dinner options to the mix. Additionally, Tourism and The Chamber relocated their offices to West Main and Saint Clair Streets in the heart of historic downtown Frankfort.

New Life for Old Buildings

In 2019, we welcomed new local ownership of the Marcus Building, which will feature 13 Air BnB rentals with, hopefully, a new restaurant at



street level in 2020. Also, under new ownership is the former

Good Shepherd Church which now known as The Elizabeth, an event venue featuring an outdoor garden.

Another new event space, The Foundry on Broadway, opened in the old Mitchell’s building.



Local investors purchased, and are renovating, the historic downtown firehouse on Main Street, and plans are underway for a bourbon-themed, boutique hotel in the former home of EH Taylor on Washington Street. Additionally, the former Simon Furniture warehouse was purchased by a local investor and is undergoing extensive renovations.

Potential Investments

Staff met with an unprecedented number of investors in 2019 and worked closely with current building owners and potential new businesses looking to move downtown. For the first time in decades, there are fewer vacant buildings to offer and more interest by investors. We expect that this momentum will continue in 2020.

DFI Events

We kicked off our event season with the Governor's Downtown Derby Celebration and are grateful to Beam Suntory for their stage sponsorship.



On Memorial Day weekend we held FrankFest at Lakeview Park. While that location is outside of our purview, Franklin County Fiscal Court asked us to create a new event to energize that county park. After months of planning this new free community event, we welcomed over 2,000 people to the park and Emergency



Management estimated that we were well on our way to a 4,000+ person event, were it not for the inclement weather. Big thanks to Traditional Bank, title sponsor, and *The State-Journal*, Feeder Supply and Franklin County Fiscal Court for their support of this new event.

Our Summer Concert Series continues to be one of the community's favorite annual events. WesBanco is the title sponsor and we are also grateful for Investor's Heritage as the new stage sponsor. The Frankfort Plant Board, Beam Suntory, Frankfort Parks and Recreation, City Police, and Emergency Management staff all pitch in to help make the series a safe and enjoyable event for the whole community.

We worked closely with organizers of the Friday night, free community event "Bourbon Street on Broadway"



which was in held during the Bourbon on the Banks weekend. Additionally, we participated in the Saturday featured Bourbon on the Banks event at Riverview Park.

In 2019 we helped dedicate the new Bourbon Tourist Marker at the corner of Main and Saint Clair Streets. The 22-foot tall pole highlights our claim as the "Cradle of Bourbon Country" as the pole designates the direction and distance to more than 30 Kentucky distilleries, 15 of which are within 20 miles of Frankfort.



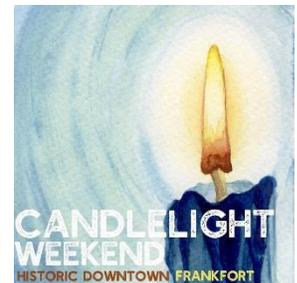
Our 4th Annual Bourbonanza was a success, thanks to our title sponsor, Independence Bank. We featured area distilleries, breweries and a local winery. We welcomed local attendees and



visitors from around the region. The live auction of rare

bourbon was very lively and, amazingly, the same out-of-town bidder from last year's auction won the coveted Buffalo Trace barrel experience again this year. This event raised over \$13,000 for DFI.

Thanks to Commonwealth Credit Union, our title sponsor for the 39th annual Candlelight celebration. And, appreciation to Harrod Brothers Funeral Home for sponsorship of the ever-popular carriage rides. This year were proud to unveil a beautiful new logo for Candlelight, heartfelt thanks to Elle Travis for her artistry!



More Great Partnerships

We continued working closely with City staff on numerous grants including: TIGER Grant, Reinvestment Grant, the National Endowment for the Arts Grant, the Environmental Protection Agency's Local Food/Local Places Grant, and the historic preservation clinic. We collaborated with City staff and partnering organizations to apply to the Commonwealth's Alcohol Beverage Commission for an Entertainment Destination designation. The City Commission has approved it and we are awaiting approval from the ABC.

We participated in the City's new Media Advisory Committee, and the creation of "Now That's Frank" and "Frankly Speaking"; efforts to communicate more effectively with the general public about staff and community happenings.



We partnered with FrankArts to help bring several gifted artists to create murals on the Bourbon on Main and Capital Cellars buildings. One additional artist rescheduled, due to weather, and will create a mural on the side of Nitro of Frankfort in early 2020. Additionally, we helped FrankArts organize the addition of six new sculptures placed throughout downtown.

Finally, after 10 years located in the McClure Building, we moved the DFI office to 230 West Main Street, a street-level office space, and hired a new Executive Director, Glenn Waldrop - a great start to a new year!