



**Downtown Vision, Inc.
FY 2010-2011 Annual Report**

During the past year, Downtown Vision, Inc. (DVI) worked on a number of major initiatives to provide a higher level of service for Downtown Improvement District stakeholders and to improve Downtown:

- **Advocating for Downtown.** We continued advocating for the recommendations outlined in our 2010 white paper, *Turning the Corner: Rethinking & Remaking Downtown*, with emphasis on educating elected officials and Downtown partners on Downtown issues. Areas of emphasis include focusing on the core, activating Downtown through smaller, more incremental events and promotions, and providing incentives and a stronger business attraction and recruitment program to bring more office workers Downtown.
- **Supporting business retention and attraction efforts.** Reducing the office vacancy rate is necessary to move Downtown forward. We partnered with the Mayor's Office, Jacksonville Economic Development Commission (JEDC), JAX Chamber, the National Association of Industrial and Office Professionals (NAIOP) and Downtown realtors to support Downtown business retention and attraction efforts by providing advocacy, tours, research and support to existing and prospective Downtown businesses.
- **Activating Downtown through arts, culture and the creative class.** DVI continued activating Downtown through the arts with several partnerships, including *Off the Grid*, a co-working demonstration program and the Arts Core Initiative. Our goal is to activate more than 50,000 square feet of available space and make Downtown the premier destination in Northeast Florida for arts, culture and the creative class.
- **Promoting Downtown and bringing more people Downtown through promotions, events and partnerships.** Last year, we expanded our grassroots promotion of Downtown, including a revamped website and mobile website, additional social media use and participation in the Go Local (GOLO) initiative. Through partnerships, we continued promotions of the entertainment district, The Core, and worked with Downtown supporters to create and promote new events to support Downtown businesses.
- **Implementing the Laura Street Façade Improvement Grant Program.** We developed and launched the Laura Street Façade Improvement Grant Program, a \$100,000 grant program to leverage the city's investment along Laura Street and spur private investment to further improve the pedestrian environment. Our goal is that this program will be used as a model for other façade improvement grant programs in other areas of Downtown.

Advocating for Downtown

- **Downtown In-depth.** Worked with Urban Land Institute (ULI) North Florida, JAX Chamber Downtown Council and Downtown residents to host a mayoral candidate forum and City Council candidate forum to discuss Downtown issues and to educate candidates about Downtown's needs. Also partnered with ULI North Florida on *Downtown In-depth* forums to discuss Downtown governance and activation issues.
- **Education of elected officials.** Continued to meet with the mayor and City Council to discuss Downtown's needs and best practices to move Downtown forward.
- **Advocacy for Downtown issues.** Advocated in support of Downtown on a number of issues, including providing incentives to attract businesses Downtown, City Council redistricting, creating higher design and maintenance standards for parking lots, creating a public plaza in front of the new courthouse, expanding the Bay Street Entertainment Zone to allow bars on additional streets to have outdoor seating, supporting the construction of a new Greyhound Bus Terminal in LaVilla, locating a new sustainability center Downtown and providing additional parking for Downtown businesses and visitors along Riverplace Boulevard.
- **Partnership and leadership.** Continued to coordinate with JAX Chamber, Jacksonville Civic Council, JEDC, NAIOP and Visit Jacksonville on shared Downtown goals to ensure that we speak with one voice to move Downtown forward.

Supporting Downtown Business Retention & Attraction Efforts

- **Partnerships to support business attraction efforts.** Partnered with JEDC to develop a Downtown information package for prospective businesses. DVI also helped organize a Downtown stop on the 2011 NAIOP Bus Tour and hosted an information booth at JAX Chamber's 2011 Small Business Expo.
- **Realtor and business information and support.** Provided information to area realtors and more than 25 prospective businesses on why Downtown is a great location for business.
- **Promotion of new Downtown businesses.** Promoted twenty new Downtown businesses and retailers in DVI's monthly email updates.
- **Downtown Green Initiative.** Worked with U.S. Green Building Council North Florida to locate a new sustainability center Downtown and promoted Downtown as the most sustainable neighborhood in Northeast Florida.
- **Database of available retail space.** Created a database of more than 80 available retail spaces in the Downtown Improvement District to assist businesses looking for space Downtown. The database is updated regularly and is available on DVI's website.

Activating Downtown through Arts, Culture and the Creative Class

- **Off the Grid.** This partnership with the Cultural Council of Greater Jacksonville, Downtown stakeholders and local artists has resulted in 20 galleries and studios opening Downtown during the past two years, with 13 currently active. The program has activated more than 44,000 square feet of vacant retail space.
- **Co-working demonstration program.** Partnered with CoWork Jax to launch a two-week demonstration co-working location Downtown, attracting more than 60 creative coworkers (e.g., web designers, graphic designers, writers, etc.) from different professions to share office space Downtown. DVI also assisted CoWork Jax in finding a permanent location Downtown.
- **Arts Core Initiative.** Partnered with the Planning Department, the Cultural Council, JEDC and other city departments in support of the Arts Core Initiative. The initiative explored the feasibility of developing artist live/work spaces in the Northbank core along Adams and Forsyth Streets from Hogan Street to Newnan Street.

Promoting Downtown and Bringing More People Downtown through Promotions, Events and Partnerships

- **Redesigned website and mobile site.** Redesigned the Downtown Jacksonville website, downtownjacksonville.org, to provide more Downtown information and include more images and video. The website attracts more than 15,000 unique monthly users. The revamped mobile site, dtjax.org, includes on-the-go access to parking information, a Downtown directory and events calendar, and receives more than 3,000 page views per month.
- **Social media and email updates.** Communicated Downtown news and updates to more than 2,600 Facebook fans and 2,300 Twitter followers. We also participated in the GOLO initiative, a grassroots buy local initiative between the urban neighborhoods, to provide unique blog posts on Downtown businesses. Additionally, we increased the frequency of our events email, which features more than 120 Downtown events per month, to a weekly format to better communicate with Downtown visitors.
- **First Wednesday Art Walk.** Continued to expand and improve the Art Walk, which attracts 6,000 to 8,000 patrons, includes more than 45 self-programmed venues and more than 20 live music performances per month.
- **Eat Up Downtown.** Seventeen venues participated in the fifth year of Eat Up Downtown, six of which extended the promotion for a third week. More than half of the participating restaurants reported an increase in attendance, with 37% reporting a 300% increase in attendance.
- **The Core, Downtown's entertainment district.** Continued partnership and joint marketing efforts with Downtown nightlife venues and the Jacksonville Jaguars. DVI also fostered partnerships between entertainment district owners/managers and marketing directors of the Jacksonville Sharks and Giants, partnered with venues on multiple promotions including the Pirate Party and Bardi Gras, and addressed logistical and parking concerns to create a more business-friendly environment
- **Movies in the Park.** More than 3,000 patrons enjoyed Movies in the Park on the Southbank, a four-week, free movie series in Treaty Oak Park.
- **Downtown Historic Church Tour.** Partnered with ten active, historic churches to attract more than 450 visitors Downtown, and worked with the Office of Special Events to open Historic Snyder Memorial to tour-goers.
- **Downtown supporters.** Worked with various Downtown supporters to help them create and promote new events to support Downtown and Downtown businesses. New events include Jacksonville Jaguars CFO Bill Prescott's Dine with Us Downtown, JAX Chamber Downtown Council's Downtown Straight Up and CBRE Group, Inc. realtor Traci Jenks' Downtown Catalyst Club.

Downtown Vision, Inc.

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- **Coordination of Marketing Directors.** Worked with marketing directors from other Downtown-related agencies, including the Mayor's Office, JAX Chamber, Visit Jacksonville and the Jacksonville Port Authority, to coordinate Downtown communications.
- **Other marketing support.** Worked with local media outlets on more than 80 Downtown stories. DVI also provided information and support via our website and social media to dozens of Downtown event providers, produced 60,000 copies of the Downtown Guide & Map and maintained 21 Downtown information kiosks.

Implementing the Laura Street Façade Improvement Grant Program

- **Program development.** Developed and launched \$100,000 façade grant program for properties along Laura Street between Monroe Street and Independent Drive. The program included \$1,500 grant with no matching requirements and a 50% match up to \$20,000. The goal of the program was to leverage the city's investment along Laura Street and spur private investment to improve the pedestrian environment.
- **Partnership with the city.** Secured funding support from the City of Jacksonville Planning Department to provide design assistance to support this initiative.

Supporting Downtown Stakeholders

- **Requests for information, service and assistance.** Responded to more than 2,000 requests for information, service or assistance from Downtown stakeholders. These included requests for statistical data and market information, assistance with cleanliness and safety concerns and marketing support for Downtown retailers, events and partnerships.
- **Communications about Downtown.** Sent more than 100 emails to Downtown stakeholders and supporters filled with information on Downtown development, retail, events, parking and more.
- **One-stop shop for information.** Continued to be the one-stop shop for information on Downtown, from our online Downtown directory and parking map to the Downtown Safety Paper to the State of Downtown report.

Making Downtown Cleaner

- **Litter removal.** Removed more than 15 tons of litter from Downtown Improvement District sidewalks.
- **Graffiti removal.** Removed 908 graffiti tags from public property and infrastructure.
- **Pressure washing.** Pressure washed 196 block faces and removed more than 1,200 spills and odors from sidewalks in the Downtown Improvement District.
- **Weed and tree fall abatement.** Removed more than six tons of leaves, acorns and weeds from Downtown Improvement District sidewalks.
- **Additional cleaning staff.** Worked with City of Jacksonville to continue city funding for two additional cleaners for Downtown.

Making Downtown Safer

- **Nuisance activity intervention.** Reported and/or resolved more than 1,900 instances of nuisance activity (panhandling, open container violations, etc.).
- **Safety and hospitality patrols.** Provided daily walking, bicycle and Segway patrols of the district.
- **Safety escorts.** Provided nearly 500 safety escorts upon request.
- **Ingress/egress deployments.** Deployed Ambassadors daily to key ingress/egress points to provide a watchful eye and friendly greeting as employees and visitors walked between their parked vehicle and their destination.
- **Property damage & safety hazard surveys.** Reported more than 300 instances of property damage or safety hazards to the appropriate agency for resolution.
- **Broken street light surveys.** Reported more than 300 broken street lights to JEA for repair.
- **Advocacy for increased police.** Advocated that the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office review current beat deployment Downtown and provide additional deployment at night and on weekends.

Making Downtown More Attractive

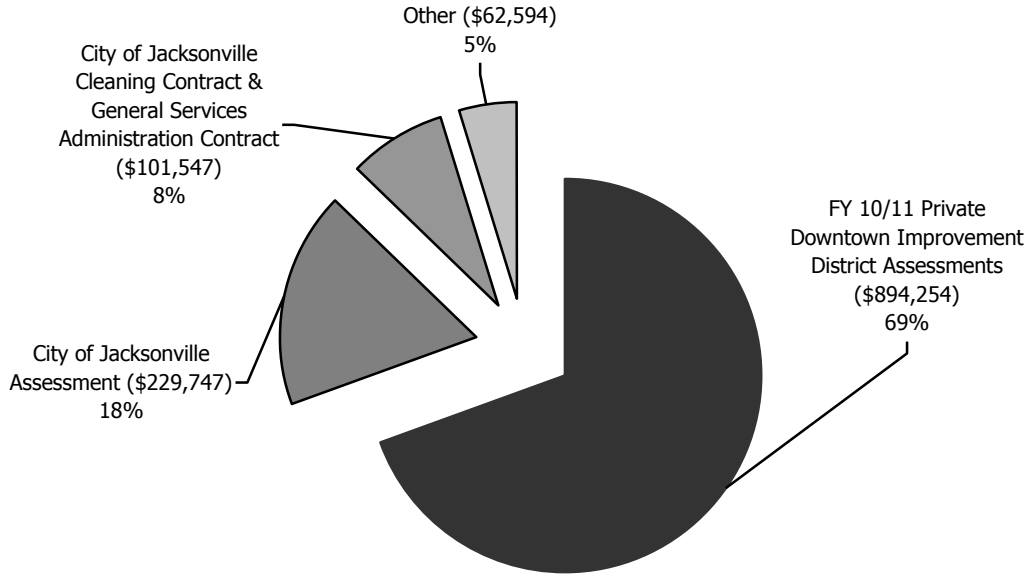
- **Hanging flower basket maintenance.** Maintained and watered 70 hanging flower baskets in the district.
- **Tree bed maintenance.** Mulched and weeded 600 Downtown Improvement District tree beds.

Making Downtown Friendly

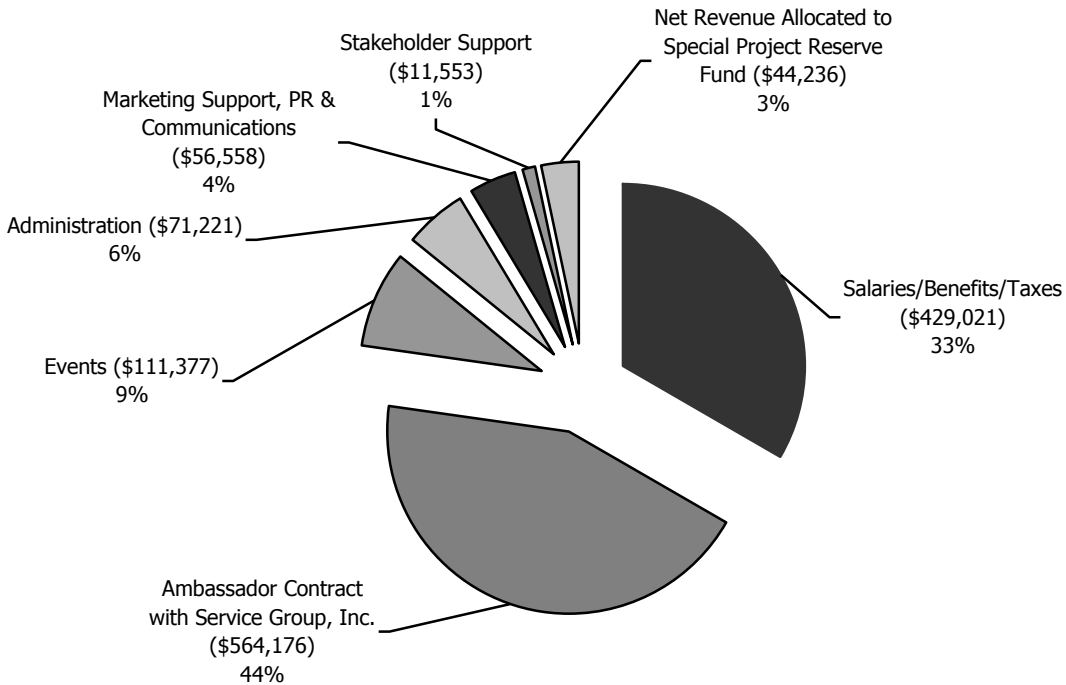
- **Directions and information.** Provided directions or assistance to more than 14,000 people.
- **Umbrella escorts.** Provided more than 1,000 umbrella escorts in the rain.

**Downtown Vision, Inc.
FY 10/11 Sources & Uses of Funds**

**Funds Collected
\$1,288,142**



**Funds Expended
\$1,288,142**



DVI FY 10/11 Board of Directors

| Chair | Vice Chair | Secretary | Treasurer | Immediate Past Chair |
|---|--|--|---|---|
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| DVI Staff | | | | |
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| Downtown Ambassadors | | | | |
| | Bill Wimmer <i>Program Manager</i> | Nate Washington <i>Supervisor</i> | Liz Wilson <i>Supervisor</i> | |
| Lydia Cobbert Quintin Miller | Cedrick Council Monica Roberts | Joshua Givens Mike Ryan | Darrell Hall Beverly Waters | Troy Harris Wesley Weston |

FY 10/11 Partners & Sponsors

We would like to thank the Downtown property owners in the Downtown Improvement District whose funding supports the services provided by Downtown Vision, Inc. We are also grateful to our dedicated volunteers and interns.

Special thanks to the following partners and sponsors for their support in FY 10/11:

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City of Jacksonville | City of Jacksonville Office of Special Events | City of Jacksonville Planning Department
Colliers International Northeast Florida | Cornerstone | CoWork Jax | CSX | Cultural Council of Greater Jacksonville
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Jacksonville Economic Development Commission | Jacksonville Fashion Week | Jacksonville Fire & Rescue Department
Jacksonville Historical Society | Jacksonville Jaguars | *Jacksonville Magazine* | Jacksonville Main Library
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Urban Land Institute North Florida | UNF | U.S. Census Bureau | U.S. Green Building Council of North Florida | Vestcor
Visit Jacksonville | *Where Magazine*

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