COVID-19 brought with it a lot of questions and uncertainty—not only about how to live during a pandemic, but also about how life and work would be different as we begin to emerge from it. Earlier this year, the Downtown Dayton Partnership surveyed businesses to begin to answer these questions and determine how to best help them return to work. While some feel equipped for business as usual, others expect to adjust how work is done going forward, with an increased focus on coworking, remote work, and hybrid office models. Much of the DDP’s work this quarter centered on helping our businesses navigate the changes and prepare to return to the office.

The Rediscover Downtown Dayton Action Plan was released this summer as a blueprint for downtown’s recovery after the pandemic. Implementation of the Plan’s recommendations got underway in the third quarter, and much of that work is outlined below and elsewhere in this report.

In addition to these efforts to help businesses emerge from the pandemic, much work and positive momentum has continued downtown. This report highlights some of downtown Dayton’s accomplishments, project updates, and progress during the third quarter of 2021. For additional information or answers to your questions, please contact Sandy Gudorf at 937-224-1518, ext. 224, or at gudorf@downtowndayton.org.

The DDP team continues outreach and coordination with downtown’s growing mix of coworking and shared office spaces to develop new approaches for tracking and engaging the sub-tenants of these spaces, many of which contribute to downtown’s startup and innovation community. In Q3, the DDP organized a meet-up to improve communication between shared workspace managers and our team. Additionally, we engaged the representatives of these spaces to participate in the first-ever Downtown Coworking Day (hosted in September at RiverScape in partnership with Five Rivers MetroParks, with approximately 70 attendees).

Other support of the startup and innovation ecosystem this quarter included partnering with Launch Dayton on the Dayton Startup Week at the Dayton Arcade and working with the Dayton Young Black Professionals and the Greater West Dayton Incubator to promote August’s Gem City Black Business Month. On August 14, the DDP hosted a Downtown Black Business Hop, featuring 18 Black-owned businesses.

RETURN TO OFFICE TOOLKIT
In the third quarter, the Downtown Dayton Partnership published the Return to Office Toolkit, featuring a comprehensive resource guide for employers as they welcome back employees to their downtown office locations. The toolkit includes ideas for rebuilding culture with coworkers, opportunities to connect employees with downtown progress and new attractions, Downtown Dollars promotions, resources for working outdoors, and national hybrid work best practices employers can deploy to manage changes to their workplace.
The Dayton Arcade project continued to make progress on renovations of the South Arcade, while housing units in the new Arts Lofts apartments neared full capacity.

At the Fire Blocks development, construction got underway on the Home Telephone – Journal Herald Building project, which recently was awarded $1.2 million in Ohio Historic Preservation Tax Credits.

Construction continued on Crawford Hoying and Woodard Development’s projects: The Sutton, a new five-story apartment building at 307 E. First St., and The Monument apartments across from RiverScape MetroPark.

The 130 W. Second Street building secured PACE (Property Assessed Clean Energy) financing for more than $2 million secured PACE (Property Assessed Clean Energy) financing for more than $2 million.

The Montgomery County Convention Facilities Authority approved the first $10 million in improvements at the Dayton Convention Center. The first phase of work will include a total renovation of first-floor restrooms, continued work on the heating and air conditioning system, and some immediate exterior renovations and work.

Downtown’s independent movie theater, The Neon, completed a successful fundraising campaign for technology and equipment upgrades.

The historical Biltmore Towers continued a $30M renovation of the exterior and interior the building.

Developer Weyland Ventures continued to attract new businesses to its Oregon East development with the opening of a new facial salon in The Wheelhouse.

The Dayton Bike Share expanded its network with the launch of three more bike hubs, in addition to the seven it added in May.

Office tower owners continued to make major improvements and investments, including lobby upgrades, remodeled office spaces, and new amenities. The DOP video series “Elevate” released a new video on Courthouse Plaza SW in the third quarter, with additional videos to debut later this year.

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Site Seeker Activity
The Site Seeker program is a free, confidential service that helps prospective tenants identify suitable downtown space and connects them with leasing agents and property managers and owners that would like to utilize this service should the DDP contact them at (937) 224-1518, or visit DowntownDayton.org.

In the third quarter, the Spring 2021 Retail Lab participants continued working with service providers to implement their business improvement projects. This cohort has 9 businesses, including 5 minority-owned and 7 women-owned businesses.

The Fall 2021 cohort also started their workshop series. This cohort includes 8 businesses, all of which are minority-owned, and 7 of which are also woman-owned businesses. As they head into the fourth quarter, the Fall 2021 cohort will begin identifying service providers with whom they will work on their capstone projects.

Retail Lab Update
The Downtown Dayton Retail Lab is an intensive 12-week experience for business owners aiming to launch or grow their first downtown business in downtown Dayton. During the third quarter, the Downtown Dayton Retail Lab participants continued working with service providers to implement their business improvement projects. This cohort includes 11 businesses, including 5 minority-owned and 7 women-owned businesses.

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Other highlights included Levitt Pavilion’s free weekly concerts, Dayton Dragons baseball, the City of Dayton’s Lights in Flight Festival & fireworks, and Blues, Funk, & Reggae festivals; RiverScape MetroPark’s MusiciJ Lunch, R&B Hot Summer Nights, Big Band Nights, Pickin’ in the Park, and more; indoor market reopening at the 2nd Street Market, Out on 5th in the Oregon District, First Friday, cultural festivals, including the Dayton Art Institute’s Oktoberfest, the Hispanic Heritage Festival and other favorites, and the return of long-awaited performing arts shows.

Mark your calendar for the Dayton Holiday Festival’s Grande Illumination and Dayton Children’s Parade Spectacular in Lights to kick off the holiday season on November 26, with a great lineup of other holiday fun throughout December! Find a calendar of downtown events at downtowndayton.org.

New Self-Guided Walking Tours Debut
The DDP launched new, revamped walking tours of downtown hotspots this quarter, using a new app platform, Roami, which allows users to access the tours right on their phones. These self-guided tours include an Outdoor Public Art Walk, a Downtown Brewery & Distillery Tour, and a tour of Espresso & Treats. Find more info at downtowndayton.org.
DOWNTOWN DAYTON SPECIAL IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

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AMBASSADORS KEEP DOWNTOWN CLEAN & SAFE

The DDP oversees the Downtown Dayton Ambassador Program. Our downtown Ambassadors have continued their work keeping the city clean and safe while following all the necessary pandemic protocols. Here is a summary of the Ambassadors’ work in the third quarter of 2021.

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Q3</th>
<th>YTD</th>
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<tr>
<td>CUSTOMER SERVICE ASSISTANCE</td>
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<td>PANHANDLING INCIDENTS ADDRESSED</td>
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<td>GRAFFITI REMOVED</td>
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Downtown’s the place to be for holiday fun!

Visit DaytonHolidayFestival.org for details on great ways to enjoy the holiday season!

Did You Know?

Dayton now has protected bike lanes!

The DDP continued an educational campaign through social and earned media this quarter to help the public understand how to use the new protected bike lane on Jefferson Street. See the image here for details.