

notes from steve cramer | february 28, 2019

If you are reading this you survived the snowiest month in state history – congratulations! We are a hearty bunch up here in the Bold North. Despite the weather, it was a busy and productive month downtown.

thank you for joining us at our annual meeting!

The highlight for our organization was the **mpls downtown council's 63rd annual meeting** held at The Armory on February 13. A record crowd in excess of 1,300 people heard reports on all aspects of life in our vital downtown. Highlights included announcement of this year's residential population, which came in at **49,781**, along with a growing number of jobs located within the boundaries of our 2025 Plan totaling **205,653**. I can't wait to see what next year's meeting has in store! Thank you to our presenting sponsors Entourage Events Group, Gardner Builders, Star Tribune, Target, The Dayton's Project, U.S. Bank and Xcel Energy, our Skyline Partners CenterPoint Energy and YA, and all our supporting and event sponsors for making this year's annual meeting possible.

member event highlighting future of mpls

Another very interesting February member event featured a presentation by Senior Economist Matthew Mowell of **Oxford Economics**, who analyzed the relative strengths and challenges of Minneapolis looking forward. The good news; there are many more strengths than areas of concern. We are well positioned to remain a strong, competitive region led by a downtown that Mowell praised frequently. No real surprises in terms of issues to focus efforts on; grow our tech and information sector, increase our attractiveness to migrants (both from within and outside the U.S.), and work to maintain our relative affordable cost of living, especially in the area of housing affordability, by expanding supply and resisting over-regulation of our market.

IDA report shows the value of our downtown

A related report on the role downtown Minneapolis plays in the economic, social and cultural life of the City was completed by the International Downtown Association, [which you can access here](#). It is

full of interesting data on a wide range of important measures of vitality.

retail report available to help recruit new business to our downtown shopping scene

Also this month we published [Yes Mpls](#), a report geared toward promoting retail investment in downtown. Our plan is to update this information each Spring so a 2018 version will be available soon.

upcoming construction on Hennepin Avenue and 8th Street

2019 will be a year of **significant street work** downtown, which our Transportation Committee discussed with Public Works officials in early February. The major project areas will be on Hennepin, where utility work between 7th and 12th streets will begin after Final Four weekend, and the repaving and reconfiguration of 8th street starting at Hennepin. You can see the entire 2019 program [on this webpage](#).

Final Four Friday festivities and more

Speaking of **Final Four**, preparations continue under the leadership of the Local Organizing Committee as the event draws closer. Activities will be clustered within a walkable “campus” downtown, with the games at U.S. Bank Stadium, concerts at The Armory, and fan activities both at the Minneapolis Convention Center and along Nicollet between 8th and 12th streets. We are also excited about the free Final Four Friday events, including [team practices open to the public for free](#). For more information visit the [Final Four Mpls website](#) for the latest updates and schedules.

thank you celebration at Wells Fargo Mpls WinterSkate

We are wrapping up the Wells Fargo Mpls WinterSkate season in Loring Park. Thanks to all who helped make this rink successful again this winter—we’ve had great programming and activities while offering free skating and complimentary skates for use to the community. We have one last event this Sunday, March 3: Join us for the [Community Thank You Celebration](#) from 1-3 pm. We’ll have giveaways, cookies, hot chocolate, crafts and more. We look forward to celebrating another great winter skating season together.

perception survey sneak peek

DID's Budget and Operations Committee has begun its work for the year, starting with a review of the **2018 Downtown Perception Survey**. Cliff Notes version – everything got better! The number of responses increased by 20% over the previous year, and ratings went up in all three categories (Safety, Cleanliness and Public Realm) across all five sectors of downtown. Still plenty of good input to help staff working with the Committee to shape DID priorities and expenditures. Taken as a bookend with the high energy and upbeat mpls downtown council Annual Meeting, a good way to start the year! Full results will be available in the coming weeks as part of the DID Annual Report.

homeless day on the hill

Lastly, our 2025 plan Ending Street Homelessness committee discussed this week the upcoming annual Homeless Day on the Hill hosted by Minnesota Coalition for the Homeless. Attending this event on Wednesday, March 13 from 9 am – 3 pm will be a great way to take part in advocacy training, legislator meetings and more that will ultimately aide in helping those in need in our community. [Click here](#) for more information on how to get involved.

Stay warm, know spring *will* arrive, and thanks for all you do to make out downtown extraordinary!



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