

notes from steve cramer | april 30, 2019

I think it's safe to say spring has sprung, which means many fun weeks and months ahead in downtown. Here's a quick look back at April.

final four success!

The reviews are in, and Minneapolis held a fantastic **Final Four!** Congratulations to the Local Organizing Committee led by Kate Mortenson, Meet Minneapolis/Sports Minneapolis, the City, the many staff in our office who pitched-in, and all other supporting organizations and volunteers. Not only were the games compelling, the activities across [downtown attracted big and enthusiastic crowds](#). Nicollet was buzzing for the entire long weekend! Another feather in our cap and great national/international exposure for mpls, the region and the state.

don't miss chameleon shoppes pop-up retail

We picked a good time during Final Four weekend to launch our pop-up retail initiative **Chameleon Shoppes**. This effort brought several dozen small business entrepreneurs, many from North Minneapolis, to the heart of downtown commerce in three spaces in Gaviidae Common throughout April. We enjoyed a [fun celebration on April 25 with Council Members Ellison and Fletcher joining us](#) to meet and support the retailers taking part. The plan is to continue "popping-up" with an extension on May 1-3 and May 8-10, and again in the future -so stay tuned for announcements! As with the overall Final Four effort, standing up this initiative "took a village" (including many staff from mdc/DID) but the indefatigable ring leader was our mdc director of downtown partnerships Dan Collison.

street project updates

After taking a quick post Final Four breath, major **street projects** downtown commenced, with **Hennepin Avenue and 8th Street** being top of mind. For more information, including an option to sign up for regular updates, visit the [project website](#). Our Transportation Committee will also keep tabs on how downtown projects are proceeding, so if you have any interest in joining that committee let us know.

transportation action and vision zero pedestrian safety plans

Another topic the Transportation Committee is tracking is the City's new **Transportation Action and Vision Zero Pedestrian Safety Plans**. A public meeting for interested downtown parties was held at the Central Library, and more information is available at <http://go.minneapolismn.gov/>. No doubt these plans will exert influence on future street redesign projects and mobility options for downtown, so if interested it's worth plugging in to this discussion.

Nicollet bus relocation

One of the consequences of the [much-needed reconstruction of Hennepin Avenue](#) is **relocation of bus routes** to Nicollet. The mpls downtown council and DID staff have been and will remain in regular contact with Metro Transit and Mpls Public Works officials about any impact that higher volumes of buses and transit riders has on events and businesses that call Nicollet home. There was also a good exchange of information at a stakeholder meeting we co-sponsored in April with BOMA Greater Minneapolis. Transit is an important part of the fabric of downtown, as is maintaining a quality and active pedestrian environment along Nicollet.

transit funding

Speaking of **transit**, mdc continues to advocate for **supportive funding and policy decisions** at the **State Capitol** in this area. Along with Jonathan Weinhagen from the MPLS Regional Chamber, Met Council Chair Nora Slawik and other officials, Chis Behrens (CEO of YA and mdc executive committee member) and I participated in a transit advocacy event at the Hopkins Crossroads park and ride adjacent to I-394 in Minnetonka. I also offered supporting testimony at a House of Representatives hearing. Transit and transportation funding is one of many weighty issues to be resolved by our state elected officials in the next several weeks.

great sports to enjoy in our city

Downtown business organizations held our annual meeting with professional **sports teams and venues**. Hope springs eternal as the Twins are off to a good start, the Vikings have a favorable schedule, and the T-Wolves and Lynx prepare for bounce-back seasons! Fun fact: MSP is one of just six regions in the county hosting all six major professional sports leagues, with three of the sports (combining

men's and women's pro basketball) playing downtown in Target Field, U.S. Bank Stadium and Target Center. And queue "Wonderwall" ...Congrats to MN United FC for securing their first win at Allianz Field this weekend over DC United!

looking back at last month's member events

It was an active month for **member events**, featuring:

- a panel highlighting film and television production in mpls, with discussion of the state of that industry today, and ways to increase investments in our market
- the East Town Business Partnership Annual Meeting, featuring a focus on the eclectic set of arts-oriented organizations in that dynamic part of downtown
- discussion of "smart cities" technologies, programs and policies from a variety of public and private sector perspectives as they relate to downtown mpls now and in the future.

looking ahead to a busy may

But things aren't slowing down as we head into May. Here are a few highlights to look for this month:

- **May 2+:** [Nicollet Farmers Market](#) (Thursdays, 6 am–6 pm)
- **May 7+:** [Go Outside with Hennepin County Farmers Market](#) (Tuesdays, 10 am–1 pm, Government Center South Plaza)
- **May 18:** [Twin Cities Heart Walk](#) (8:30 am, Target Field)
- **May 18:** [Explore Downtown Living](#) (10 am–5 pm)
- **May 18-19:** [Doors Open Minneapolis](#) (10 am–5 pm)
- **May 22:** [SprIngtacular #OnNicollet](#) (11 am–1 pm, Nicollet between 6th and 7th)
- **June 1+:** [Pianos on Parade](#) (daily through June)



81 south 9th st
suite 260
mpls, mn 55402

It was a busy April, with much more to come. Enjoy, and thanks for all you do to make our downtown extraordinary!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Steve Cramer'.

steve cramer
president & ceo, mpls downtown council and Mpls
Downtown Improvement District