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Cool Spring Downtown District Sees Impressive Growth in 2021/2022

Downtown Releases Report on Black-Owned Businesses & Other Key Metrics

Photos for Promotional Use: <https://bit.ly/3poFBHj>

Fayetteville, N.C. – Cool Spring Downtown District (CSDD) recently released its second quarterly report of the fiscal year (FY), sharing key metrics on the organization’s major accomplishments and growth.

Year to date, CSDD has welcomed 22 new businesses and has seen a 46% reduction in its vacancy rate. Additionally, downtown’s market rent per square foot has increased 14%, or \$3, this past quarter—an indicator of a rebounding commercial real estate market in the urban core.

Brian Graybill, head chef and owner of Graybill Hospitality and Napkins Restaurant, is just one of those business owners and is preparing to open Pan, a new eatery located at 105 Hay St. Graybill plans to offer fresh-made sandwiches, panini, and more at his eatery, the name of which is mainly inspired by the Spanish word for bread. A point of uniqueness about this business is the fact Graybill will be sourcing locally or producing in-house cured meats, produce, breads, and other goods.

When asked why Graybill chose CSDD as the location of Pan, he stated, “Downtown Fayetteville is full of art, culture, diversity, and creativity in its small businesses and in its people. It’s the perfect environment to bring new restaurant concepts to, thanks to the vibrant community here,” he continued. “I believe the Fayetteville area food-and-beverage scene, as a whole, is on the cusp of a bit of a renaissance, and I think that’s gotta (sic) start downtown.”

Amberly Edge, owner of the award-winning Authentique Cafe food truck, is yet another business owner who has decided to open a new eatery downtown. Just a few doors down from Graybill’s business—at 131 Hay St., Ste. 101—Edge will be opening Vibe Gastropub, a reflection of CSDD’s extensive vibe marketing campaign.

Edge expressed her enthusiasm about being a part of downtown’s dining scene: “I can’t think of a better location to open Fayetteville’s very *first* fully plant-based restaurant than the ‘heart’ of this city, [Cool Spring Downtown District].”

Downtown has also seen an upsurge in new Black-owned businesses over the past months. As a recent LendingTree [study](#) reported, Fayetteville, N.C., can boast more Black-owned businesses than any other city in the U.S., at 11.2%, and CSDD reports an even higher percentage within the district, at 26%.

Bianca Shoneman, CEO of CSDD, confirmed, “Out of downtown’s 200 businesses, we’re proud to report 51 are Black-owned, reflecting Fayetteville’s diversity, and I’m pleased to have played a role in recruiting new Black-owned businesses, like The Friend’s Table.”

In the second quarter, downtown also launched its “Can Do Coldwell Banker Trolleys,” providing free public transportation between the Historic Haymount District and Downtown Fayetteville on Fridays and Saturdays, from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. The CSDD team has since produced sold-out public events, such as comedy tours, on the trolleys and rented the trolleys out ten times for private events.

CSDD’s other area of growth is in its events. In the second quarter, downtown welcomed an estimated 45,000 people to events that CSDD curated and executed. One example of those events was A District New Year’s Eve Spectacular, which drew 10,000+ people to Festival Park on Dec. 31, 2021.

Yet another impressive statistic is related to CSDD’s management of its extensive dumpster program downtown. Shoneman estimates her team was responsible for 23,040 pounds of trash and 14,400 pounds of recycled cardboard being removed in the second quarter of FY 2021/2022.

“Our small team of three individuals has worked especially hard over the last several months to recruit new businesses, curate and execute new events, launch the downtown trolley program, manage the dumpster program, and so much more,” Shoneman shared. “Two months into our third quarter, we’re already looking forward to welcoming eight new businesses in the coming weeks and curating more exciting events downtown,” she announced.

Visitors to and residents of Cumberland County may follow CSDD’s efforts and announcements on their website at visitdowntownfayetteville.com, on Facebook at [@CoolSpringFAY.org](https://www.facebook.com/CoolSpringFAY.org) or [@downtownfayetteville](https://www.facebook.com/downtownfayetteville), or on Instagram at [@coolspringdowntowndistrict](https://www.instagram.com/coolspringdowntowndistrict) or [@downtownfay](https://www.instagram.com/downtownfay).

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The Cool Spring Downtown District, Inc. is a charitable, nonprofit corporation formed in 2017 to create and sustain an arts and entertainment district located in downtown Fayetteville, North Carolina, as a vibrant center of artistic, cultural, civic and commercial activity. Learn more at visitdowntownfayetteville.com.

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