

downtown partnership of baltimore

2010 ANNUAL REPORT



Malcolm Gladwell:
How thriving urban areas
redefine 'the good life'



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cover photo: Leslie Furlong
inset photo: Brooke Williams

the 2010 annual meeting featuring Malcolm Gladwell

Whether you are familiar with Downtown Partnership or not, odds are you have experienced our programs and services.

Maybe you have interacted with our uniformed crews that keep Downtown Baltimore looking and feeling sharp. Or, you have attended popular region-wide events like the annual holiday lighting of Baltimore's Washington Monument and Baltimore Restaurant Week. Or, maybe you live or work Downtown and ride the new Charm City Circulator.

Directly, or with a wide range of partners, Downtown Partnership is behind all these things, and more. For over twenty-five years, we have worked to give Baltimore a dynamic urban center using a variety of initiatives, a few of which are summarized in the following pages.

We have also led the civic conversation about what it takes to create a world-class Downtown, engaging politicians, business and community leaders, and strategic thinkers like Malcolm Gladwell along the way.

A *New Yorker* columnist and the best-selling author of books such as, [The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference](#), Mr. Gladwell was chosen to speak at our 2010 Annual Meeting because of his gift for interpreting business and social trends, and making them relevant to a broad range of people.

In interviews with WYPR 88.1 FM, and the *Urbanite* magazine (both media partners for the annual meeting) Mr. Gladwell talked about how the built environment and community around us influence the way we think and behave, and how they stimulate entrepreneurs.

"It's an excellent time for everyone to go back and read their Jane Jacobs. That book [[The Death and Life of Great American Cities](#), published in 1961] has never been so contemporary," Gladwell told *Urbanite*.

Saving old buildings and cultivating distinctive urban neighborhoods where people and small businesses can thrive was a bold idea in 1961, but Mr. Gladwell thinks it has become mainstream in 2010, saying, "We're in this environment where a whole series of technical innovations make it possible to open a small business in a way you couldn't even twenty years ago... The question is, can cities that have the physical infrastructure for small businesses capitalize on those other changes and innovations and grow that portion of the economy?"

"That's what cities offer: An alternative to what I believe is a moribund definition of success in American society."

—Malcolm Gladwell

When asked if a suburbanized America can embrace a wide-scale return to living and working in urban centers, Mr. Gladwell told *Urbanite* that, "More and more people are coming to understand that when they define the good life, a lot of what they mean is the chance to live in a culturally alive, aesthetically pleasing, diverse community."

"That's what cities offer: an alternative to what I believe is a moribund definition of success in American society. I can offer you a good school for your kids, a place to ride your bike, a job that challenges you, and if I can give you those things, then you don't care that your apartment is smaller than your neighbor's in the suburbs and that you don't have a car."

photo: Leslie Furlong



planning for the future

Downtown Baltimore is constantly evolving. A decade ago, Harbor East didn't exist. A generation ago, it was inconceivable that a dilapidated Inner Harbor could be brought back to productive use, let alone become an international business and tourist destination. More recently, Downtown's residential growth has surprised many. So, who is to say what the future may bring?

Actually, Downtown Partnership is.

Over the past year, The Partnership has convened a diverse group of planners, property owners, residents, and businesses to create a new strategic plan for Downtown that will guide development funding priorities and land use decisions. Our vision is to better connect neighborhoods where growth is happening with those that aren't as prosperous, creating one seamless, mixed-use district that thrives with activity, all day long.

To realize this vision, we need to address key questions: How do we create memorable, attractive places? How do we find new uses for outdated buildings? What's the best way to incubate new companies? What do Downtown residents and families need to prosper?

When complete, the Master Plan will include an Open Space Plan to create more parks and improve the way green space is programmed and maintained.

We are mid-way through the strategic planning process and it is clear that future government incentives and development policies should not support new business districts at the expense of Downtown. At a minimum, the older parts of Downtown should receive a comparable level of government investment that is targeted to major new office developments in other areas of the city. This is the best way to ensure the future viability of the region's single most important economic engine.

We expect that our Master Plan will set forth an exciting vision for Downtown; one that will foster and be deserving of substantial new investment.



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photo: Leslie Furlong



Downtown Partnership employees of the year, Clean Sweep Ambassador Donald Askew and Downtown Baltimore Guide Tamara Torrence.

about downtown partnership

For 27 years, people with an interest in Downtown Baltimore have counted on Downtown Partnership of Baltimore to get things done. The Partnership was one of the first organizations in the country to create a downtown management authority district. Within this district, Downtown Partnership's operations programs include all our uniformed staff: the Downtown Baltimore Guides, Clean Sweep Ambassadors, and Green Team. Our operations programs and innovative policies have been studied and replicated by other organizations here in Baltimore and around the world.

We are also a non-profit organization with more than 650 corporate members and partners that count on us to keep them connected and ahead of the curve, thanks to insider access to the region's top decision-makers. Our policies and programs create a strong business environment and dynamic quality of life. We are behind major economic development and transportation projects and, in conjunction with our partners, we produce signature business events like the State of Downtown breakfast, and popular regional events like Baltimore Restaurant Week.

Downtown Partnership also runs a non-profit foundation that supports job placement and workforce training for people who need a helping hand.

From cleaning, greening, and community policing, to business and economic development, marketing, transportation, infrastructure maintenance, and homeless outreach - support for Downtown Partnership is good for your organization, and great for Baltimore.

To learn more, visit GoDowntownBaltimore.com, or call us at 410.244.1030.

about downtown baltimore

Downtown Baltimore is known for its iconic skyline and Inner Harbor, but it's much more than that. It's the economic center of Greater Baltimore. Within a one-mile radius of Pratt and Light streets, there are 107,000 jobs, 40,000 residents, and 19,000 students. This area ranks 16th in the country for employment density and 8th for residential density, ahead of cities like Atlanta, Denver, Miami, and Washington, DC.

Within Baltimore, Downtown makes up just 3.8% of the city's total land mass, but provides 17% of all businesses and 27% of all jobs. Downtown businesses generate \$17 billion in direct economic output (30% of Baltimore's total) and pay approximately \$7.7 billion in wages. Combined, Downtown commercial and residential property owners pay \$106 million in property taxes (13.5% of Baltimore's entire tax yield) while Downtown residents pay \$64 million in income taxes (24% of Baltimore's total). Relative to its size, Downtown pays 3.7 times its weight in property taxes and more than six times its weight on income taxes – money that supports families and municipal services for neighborhoods across Baltimore.

But Downtown is more than just businesses. It's the fastest-growing residential destination in the region with entirely new neighborhoods, like Harbor East, and historic rowhome communities that are being newly rediscovered. Residents are attracted by diverse, walkable communities with distinct architecture and easy access to jobs, shopping, restaurants, and cultural destinations.

Downtown is also the gathering spot for holiday celebrations, sporting events, when friends visit, or just a night on the town. That's why, no matter where you live, Downtown Baltimore is your neighborhood, too.

"Flicks on the Hill" brings hundreds of residents out to watch movies on Federal Hill behind the American Visionary Art Museum.



photo: Michael Evitts

Downtown Baltimore Guides bring an expert knowledge of the city and a reassuring presence to streets of the Downtown Management Authority district.



photo: Michael Evitts

hospitality & outreach

downtown management authority (dma)

Downtown Partnership's operations programs include all our uniformed staff, the Downtown Baltimore Guides, Clean Sweep Ambassadors, and Green Team.

The operations teams work in the 106-block Downtown Management Authority (DMA) district and are funded by a surcharge on assessed property value within the DMA.

Since the DMA was created in 1992, property owners continuously reaffirm its value by reauthorizing its services every five years. The most recent reauthorization was in 2007 and received the total support of our stakeholders.

downtown baltimore guides

You'll find Downtown Baltimore Guides throughout the DMA, helping pedestrians, checking in on businesses, providing homeless outreach, and assisting the police.

Last year, the Guides helped approximately 360,000 people and interacted with businesses 400,000 times.

outreach programs that work

All Downtown Baltimore Guides receive special training from Baltimore Homeless Services and the Police Department through the Hands in Partnership program. HIP, as it's known, gives our Guides skills they use every day providing outreach to the homeless and citizens who may be in distress because of addiction or mental health issues.

a success worth copying

Downtown Partnership was one of the first organizations in the country to create a management authority district. Our operations programs and innovative policies have been studied and replicated by similar programs here in Baltimore, and around the world.

clean sweep ambassadors

the clean team

Downtown Partnership's Clean Sweep Ambassadors have the dirtiest job in Downtown. Every day they're out on the streets, from before dawn until well after most people have gone to bed, picking up litter, removing graffiti, emptying Downtown's public trash cans, and power washing sidewalks.

In the past year, the team has been more effective than ever, removing 1,110 tons of garbage, scrubbing graffiti from more than 11,000 locations, and creating a special unit to tackle special jobs like weeding treebeds and refurbishing Downtown's decorative trash cans.

special operations

In addition to their daily responsibilities, the Clean Sweep Ambassadors target problem areas or places that could use a little extra attention.

Each spring, *Operation Check-In* helps hotels prepare the areas around their buildings for the influx of seasonal tourists. The aptly named *Up Your Alley* initiative focuses on areas that are seldom seen but important to Downtown's overall sanitation and appearance. And the preventative *Butt Out* campaign provides portable and fixed outdoor ashtrays to keep smokers from littering Downtown with spent cigarette butts.

The CSAs also performed a special clean up of the grounds at St. Vincent de Paul. The church allows the homeless to stay there, but the area was unsightly and unsanitary. Our crews performed the initial clean up and, under a special arrangement with the church, keep it clean and well groomed on a daily basis.

photo: Michael Evitts



Clean Sweep Ambassadors use special equipment to keep streets and sidewalks looking their best.

Several Downtown
greenspaces have a
dedicated Park Steward
who tends the grounds
each weekday.



photo: Michael Evitts

the green team

keeping up appearances

When people think about cities, they often think about the buildings that comprise the skyline. But cities are just as much about the spaces in between the buildings.

Well-designed and nicely manicured public spaces pull people out of their apartment, or office, or hotel, and are integral to a successful community.

For the past several years, we've dramatically expanded our portfolio of exterior improvements by leading projects to redesign parks like Center Plaza, by creating the Green Team to improve and better maintain Downtown parks, by driving major capital improvements like the Pratt Street redesign, and

by helping developers change the way they think about the space that surrounds their buildings.

In the past year alone, we:

- took over maintenance of Preston Gardens and expanded our Green Team to include a steward dedicated to improving this historic park;
- planted and maintained more than 300 flower pots throughout Downtown, adding more color and texture to Downtown sidewalks;
- worked with the City on making major streetscape improvements to Saratoga Street, Lombard Street, and Lexington Street;
- moved forward the plans to remove the Baltimore Street skywalk, a project that eliminates an eyesore and improves access to Hopkins Plaza;
- opened Downtown's first dog park.

marketing & events

Baltimore Restaurant Week

Since Downtown Partnership and Visit Baltimore created Baltimore Restaurant Week five years ago, we have expanded it to twice a year, and have grown the number of participating restaurants and the number of diners who take advantage of the promotion. We've also inspired a host of similar promotions throughout the region. The event is now one of the leading restaurant weeks in the country, and has done much to promote the diverse range and skill of Baltimore chefs.

Dining promotions

In addition to Restaurant week, The Partnership runs the **DineDowntownBaltimore.com** website and creates ads and events, such as Oyster Week and Dine on Charles Street, that help restaurants attract customers, and that lead diners to new food destinations in neighborhoods across Downtown.

Kids Love Downtown

With a variety of cultural and educational attractions that appeal to kids, Downtown has always been a destination for parents and educators from around the region. More and more, these resources are also being enjoyed by the growing number of Downtown families who appreciate having so many kid-friendly options right in their back yard.

Wherever they live, our website, **KidsLoveDowntownBaltimore.com**, can better connect parents with exhibits, activities, and special discounts on kid-friendly happenings – particularly during October, which is officially Kids' Month in Downtown.



Media personalities and celebrated chef, John Shields (left), helped kick off Baltimore Restaurant Week during the *Appetizer Challenge* cookoff.

photo: Aubrey Westgate

To showcase future plans for the former Mechanic Theatre, Downtown Partnership installed panels with renderings of the planned renovation. We used similar window treatments to promote Downtown dining and first-floor retail opportunities with support from private property owners and the Baltimore Development Corporation.



photo: Michael Evitts

congratulations to the 2010 downtown baltimore award winners

Each year, Downtown Partnership recognizes the businesses and people who make significant contributions to the Downtown community. The recipients of the 2010 Downtown Baltimore Awards are:

- **1st Mariner Arena:** For continued excellence in managing the Arena, being named the #1 Arena in the country by *Billboard Magazine*, and drawing major national acts, like Bruce Springsteen, to Downtown Baltimore.
- **Griffith Properties:** For revitalizing the property at 1 East Pratt by attracting signature tenants like Sullivan's Steakhouse and Kona Grill, and for being among the first to incorporate tenets of the Pratt Street Redesign Plan into its operations.
- **Health Care for the Homeless:** For its ongoing work with Downtown Partnership outreach teams and for creating a signature new facility that is as innovative for its programming as it is for its LEED certified, environmentally friendly design.
- **Morgan Stanley:** For its commitment to consolidating and expanding its workforce in Downtown, and for anchoring the development of Harbor Point.
- **Okoro Development:** For leading the transformation of Downtown neighborhoods, such as the Saratoga Street corridor, and for incorporating preservation and a range of building uses into its signature projects.
- **McGladrey:** For recognizing the value of a Downtown business location and relocating more than 300 employees into Downtown from a suburban location.
- **Visit Baltimore:** For joining with Downtown Partnership to create Baltimore Restaurant Week and for helping the twice-yearly promotion become one of the most successful of its kind in the country.



Downtown Partnership was recognized as an *Innovator of the Year* for its role in creating the Charm City Circulator along with Mayor Rawlings-Blake and the Transportation Department. The service began in January 2010 and ridership has far surpassed expectations.

photo: Michael Evitts



The Partnership worked hard to help Downtown recover from record snowfall in 2010. As we do whenever there's an emergency, our staff communicated timely information to businesses and property owners. And our operations crews worked overtime to shovel sidewalks, unblock corner ramps that were plowed in, and clear storm drains.

photo: Aubrey Westgate



The Partnership worked with the City and private property owners to make major streetscape improvements to Lombard and Saratoga streets, to begin improvements to Lexington Street, and to move the Pratt Street Revitalization Plan forward.

photo: Michael Evitts



To get the inside track on business news, family events, dining deals, happy hours, or the latest scoop on what's happening Downtown, become a fan of The Partnership on Facebook and follow Kirby Fowler on Twitter. It's easy to sign up at GoDowntownBaltimore.com.

photo: Robin Shotola



BEST BUY

FILENE'S

BASEMENT

PF CHANG'S

POGO DE QUITO

Tiverno

Famous Footwear

P

photo: Linda House

retail initiatives

Even in a down economy, The Partnership has helped attract new shops and restaurants. And, in the case of Filene's Basement, we helped keep a store open when the national parent company declared bankruptcy. We regularly link building owners with prospective tenants, market to national and independent retailers, and provide the data that documents just how strong the Downtown marketplace is. And, we joined Epps Consulting to create the first-ever Baltimore Retail Week. For the ten days of this springtime promotion, more than 60 stores offered savings equal to, or greater than, the sales tax.

This past spring, we released an important survey of Downtown employees and residents. The vast majority of respondents, nearly 80%, reported that they do most of their shopping in the surrounding counties because they feel the amount of retail in Baltimore is too limited. We are using this information to guide our retail attraction efforts and better target those kinds of stores, restaurants, and services that people most want to see in Downtown.

The Partnership is also launching a new initiative, called OPERATION: Storefront, that will connect budding entrepreneurs, artists, and restaurateurs with available ground-level space in targeted Downtown neighborhoods. An RFP was issued in the fall and successful applicants will receive grant assistance of up to \$10,000 to help them create a shop, cafe, gallery, or performance space.

become a member

You don't have to be a giant corporation to become a member of Downtown Partnership. Our membership includes restaurants, non-profits, flower shops, and attorneys offices as well as Fortune 500 companies. We reward our members by keeping them connected and ahead of the curve with insider access to the region's top decision-makers through events like our *Mayor's CEO Luncheon*, *State of Downtown Breakfast*, *Developers' Dinner*, *Annual Meeting*, and targeted networking events.

Members may also receive special placements in our marketing and advertising campaigns, promotional emails, inclusion in our Member Directory, and print copies of our newsletter *'Round Downtown*. And, they can receive mailing labels to communicate directly with other Downtown Partnership members.

If you are doing business Downtown, or thinking about doing business Downtown, you'll definitely want to take advantage of our exclusive data, research, analysis, and maps. Our publications like the *State of Downtown* and *Downtown Development Report* are invaluable to real estate professionals, planning officials, and the business media. And, our customized walking tours give you a street-level view of the new developments that are shaping Downtown's economy.

As a member, you get free access to our networking and speaker events, and you get preferred pricing and advance notice of our most popular ticketed events, like the *Annual Meeting*.

Membership also means you'll have our entire staff ready to help you with whatever will make your property, business, or Downtown experience even better.

To learn more, visit GoDowntownBaltimore.com, or call us at 410.244.1030.



photo: Robin Shotola



Good for Downtown. Good for Baltimore.

our initiatives

BUSINESS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - We encourage business and retail growth by marketing the area to existing and potential businesses, engaging public and private institutions on Downtown's behalf, strategic planning, small and minority business outreach, transportation and parking improvement strategies, public arts initiatives, and by researching and analyzing trends and economic indicators that we publish in a variety of reports, including: the *State of Downtown Report* – an annual economic analysis of Downtown Baltimore; the *Downtown Baltimore Development Report*; and timely monthly business development and investment updates.

MARKETING, COMMUNICATIONS & EVENTS - The Partnership promotes Downtown as the region's top business, residential, cultural, and entertainment destination, utilizing business networking and keynote events, marketing and informational publications, media relations, and retention programs. We reach out to individual consumers with advertising and public relations campaigns, and through special events and promotions like *First Thursdays in Hopkins Plaza*, *Kids Month*, and *Baltimore's Summer and Winter Restaurant Weeks*. We support these efforts with two websites, **GoDowntownBaltimore.com**, our main site, and **GetAroundDowntown.com**, which is targeted to Downtown visitors and commuters.

HOSPITALITY, SAFETY & OUTREACH - Within the 106-block Downtown Management Authority (DMA) district, we provide a range of services that create a more comfortable and inviting environment for Downtown employees, visitors, and residents. Our efforts include deployment of Downtown Baltimore Guides, Courtesy Escorts, the Video Patrol network, the Public Safety Coalition, the Street Smart awareness campaign, outreach to the homeless, and panhandling deterrence.

IMPROVING THE EXTERIOR ENVIRONMENT - We also provide cleaning, maintenance, and landscaping services within the DMA with the goal of keeping Downtown clean, attractive, and well-maintained. Our Clean Sweep Ambassadors remove litter and graffiti on a daily basis, and provide jobs to formerly homeless individuals who need workforce training and a solid start to a new life. The new Green Team deploys Park Stewards to landscape Downtown's parks and plazas, and maintain the more than 300 flower pots we've placed throughout the area. We also make capital improvements to Downtown's open spaces, through our Streetscape and Facade Improvement Programs, and, with the help of our partners, we've deployed a wayfinding signage system to help everyone navigate Downtown's diverse neighborhoods.

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Special thanks to the 100 women and men who wear a Downtown Partnership uniform and work each day making Downtown Baltimore cleaner, friendlier, and more prosperous.

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