



# ANNUAL REPORT 2019





# DEAR DOWNTOWN STAKEHOLDER

**ONE OF MY FAVORITE** times of the year at **Portland Downtown** is when we are getting ready for the upcoming fiscal year. Taking stock in what our small but mighty team has accomplished alongside our volunteer board of directors never ceases to provide me with moments of awe. Looking forward, we are able to prepare for challenges that lie ahead.

Looking back on our fiscal year 2019, which encompasses July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019, I am struck by how much care was put into assessing our programs, services, and events to determine what needed to be improved and what we wanted to leave behind. Our organization continued to provide opportunities for further engagement in advocacy issues by hosting forums on topics that were on our stakeholders' minds, like the earned paid sick leave ordinance and the impact of homelessness on our community. We also turned a very detailed eye to our Master and Supplemental Services contract with the **City of Portland** and spent months meeting with city staff to find ways to improve the contract for ease of implementation, while ensuring quality outcomes for our downtown stakeholders. Recognizing that transportation concerns were bubbling up as downtown welcomed more businesses and residents, we embarked on a partnership with the **City of Portland** and local transit providers to launch the **Drive Less, Do More** campaign. I mention these as just a few of the highlights of fiscal year 2019. In the pages ahead, you'll learn much more about the breadth and depth of our work.

As I reflect on our collective accomplishments, I am doing so at a time when there is great change and uncertainty. When COVID-19 arrived in our community late this winter of 2020, it was hard to predict the impact that it would have on our vibrant downtown. We are navigating what might unfold in the months ahead with renewed dedication to our mission and the community and alongside partner organizations who share our commitment.

The year ahead will mark changes for our organization as we welcome a new executive director and new board members over the summer. Personally, I have been honored and delighted to assist the search committee and, while I will make a professional and geographic transition in June, I know that I will stay connected and ready to lend my knowledge and insights.

On behalf of **Portland Downtown**, I wish to extend a note of gratitude to all of our fans, friends, and supporters. Partnerships are an essential part of how we are able to fulfill our mission, as are all of the individuals who chip in with their time, their kind words, and belief in our team. Thank you.



*Casey T. Gilbert*

**Casey Gilbert**  
Executive Director  
Portland Downtown

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 2** Dear Downtown Stakeholder
- 3** District Map / About Us
- 4** Top 10 Highlights of 2019
- 6** Partnerships
- 7** Financials
- 8** Board of Directors & Staff

## STAY CONNECTED

Portland Downtown  
549 Congress Street  
Portland, ME 04101  
207.772.6828

[portlandmaine.com](http://portlandmaine.com)



**DISTRICT BOUNDARIES**  
As of July 2018

## ABOUT US

**Portland Downtown**, a nonprofit downtown improvement district, has been serving the Portland community since 1992. Dedicated to economic revitalization and the provision of a clean, safe, and vibrant downtown, we are proud to work alongside the **City of Portland** and other nonprofit partners as we deliver a supplemental level of programs and services to our downtown stakeholders. As a 501c4 nonprofit, the impact of our programs and reach of our mission goes beyond the direct benefit of our constituents to ensure that the entire community is bolstered by our good work.

Our organization is funded through a supplemental tax paid by property owners within the district. In addition, many of our events are made possible thanks to the support of generous sponsors and community partners.



## OUR MISSION

Portland Downtown stimulates a vibrant, thriving, and sustainable downtown community.



# TOP 10 HIGHLIGHTS OF 2019

## 1 DRIVE LESS, DO MORE

Addressing parking concerns downtown is complex, but that's never stopped our team from working toward solutions. The recommendations from a 2017 parking study of downtown indicated that a marketing campaign focused on multimodal options could help reduce the strain on our parking & transportation landscape. Fast forward two years, and [Drive Less, Do More](#) was born!

Created in partnership with local transit leaders and the brand experts at [Warp + Weft](#), [Drive Less, Do More](#) encourages residents and visitors to "join the movement toward a happier, healthier Portland" by considering ways of getting around the city beyond driving a car. The campaign messaging calls for Portlanders to "break for coffee, not for traffic" and "connect with people, not your GPS" - demonstrating that carpooling, walking, biking, and taking the bus are enjoyable alternatives that help reduce drive-alone behavior.

The final campaign consists of beautifully branded collateral for print, digital, and social channels, as well as a website - [drivelessportland.com](#) - that promotes the many benefits of a multimodal lifestyle.

## 2 SPOTLIGHT ON CLEANLINESS

In alignment with Portland Downtown's mission to stimulate a vibrant downtown, our organization focuses on enhancing cleanliness, safety, and beautification year-round. 2019 was a productive and accomplished year for our [Clean + Safe Committee](#), which oversaw a number of beautification projects including the installation of a permanent poster display board in Monument Square and the addition of 40 new self-watering planters along Congress Street. We are so grateful for our designated [Downtown Public Works](#) crew, who treat our streets, sidewalks, and public spaces with special care. Sometimes this important work is taken for granted - but every hour invested in cleaning and maintenance makes a world of difference in the place we call home.

## 3 CULTIVATING COMPASSION

In partnership with [Preble Street](#), [Homeless Voices For Justice](#), and other nonprofit leaders, we were proud to host [Cultivating Compassion: A Workshop on Homelessness](#). The two-day event brought our business community together to explore the causes & impacts of homelessness and how we can work together to effect change through advocacy in action.

## 4 SHOPPERS SHOW LOVE FOR LOCAL

One of our favorite and most meaningful events - [Shop For A Cause](#) - raised over \$12,000 for two outstanding nonprofits that serve the downtown community every day: [LearningWorks](#) and [Boys & Girls Clubs of Southern Maine](#). It's all thanks to our generous downtown merchants, who continually join together to lift up their friends and neighbors. In the past five years alone, [Shop For A Cause](#) has raised over \$50,000 for deserving nonprofits. Amazing!

## 5 HELP WHERE IT'S MOST NEEDED

2019 marked the second year of our [Peer Outreach Worker Program](#) in partnership with [Amistad](#). This vital program ensures that downtown's most vulnerable people - including those experiencing homelessness or mental health and substance use disorders - are connected to potentially life-saving resources. [Ashish Shrestha](#) said: "In my role as Peer Outreach Worker, I get to learn about people's lives, their thoughts and wishes. I accompany people in their current experiences and work with them toward their goals, whether it is finding a doctor, securing housing, or simply enjoying warm coffee and good conversation on a cold day."

## 6 TEAMING UP FOR SAFETY

Given our "dream team" of summer cadets and their work to enhance public safety downtown, it is clear to see why our [Cadet Program](#) is the winner of a Downtown Achievement Award from the [International Downtown Association](#) (IDA). This cherished program - a partnership with the [Portland Police Department](#) - is not only a pathway to a career in law enforcement for young professionals; it's a proven approach to address occurrences of smoking in public parks, abusive solicitation, and public drinking. Our cadets patrol the downtown on foot May through September, and their presence makes a big difference!

## 7 A PARTY FOR DOWNTOWN WORKERS

Nothing creates community pride quite like another favorite event of ours: [Downtown Worker Appreciation Day](#). In 2019, we threw an epic bash for 1200 of our closest friends. Our guests received complimentary local coffee, breakfast treats, fresh flowers - and we even handed out Portland Downtown frisbees and bandanas - a hit with humans and pets alike!



## 8 SHINING THE LIGHT

When our downtown district expanded in 2018, we saw new opportunities to bring [Pandora's Winter Lights](#) to even more public spaces including Pleasant Street Park and Lincoln Park. These dazzling light displays now add warmth and color to nearly every corner of downtown. To learn more about [Pandora's Winter Lights](#), check out our new [Self-Guided Walking Tour Brochure](#) - available at our office at 549 Congress Street.

## 9 SO LONG, OLD PORT FESTIVAL

In 2019, we bid a fond farewell to one of our organization's longest-running community events: the [Old Port Festival](#). It is always hard to say goodbye, but in doing so, the organization was able to celebrate the event achieving its mission, while making way for new endeavors in the years ahead.

## 10 YOUR VOICE MATTERS

Central to our success each year is the work of our dedicated volunteer committees. From [Clean + Safe](#) and [Marketing + Events](#) to [Nightlife Oversight](#) and [Multimodal Transportation](#), these gatherings provide a forum for idea-sharing and collaboration that sparks advocacy at the city level. Learn more about how to get involved at [portlandmaine.com](#).

**drive less. do more.** >



# PARTNERSHIPS

## COLLABORATING TO CREATE POSITIVE CHANGE

A clean, safe, and vibrant downtown is created through collaboration, creativity, and hard work. That's why **Portland Downtown** works hand-in-hand with a variety of community partners year-round - ranging from nonprofit organizations, social service agencies, retail businesses, municipal leaders, and many more. With gratitude, we'd like to recognize the many partners who supported our organization in FY 2019. These collaborations continue to grow and evolve each year - and we look forward to many more years of partnership!

## 2019 COMMUNITY PARTNERS AND SPONSORS

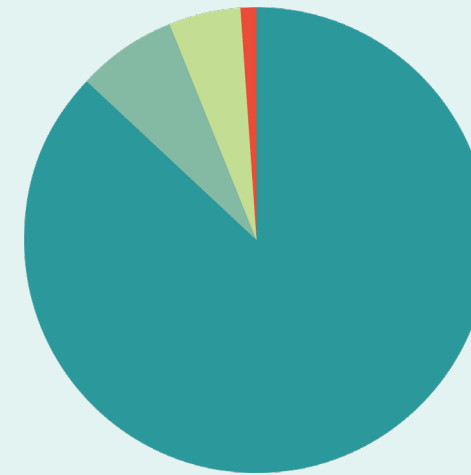
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|--|---|---------------------------------------|
| AARP Maine                               | Good Maine                              | New England Ocean Cluster             |
| Amistad                                  | Gorham Savings Bank                     | NNEPRA / Downeaster                   |
| Androscoggin Bank                        | Greater Portland Council of Governments | Pandora LaCasse                       |
| Bangor Savings Bank                      | Greater Portland METRO                  | People's United Bank                  |
| Bard Coffee                              | Harmon's Floral Company                 | Port City Bikes                       |
| Benchmark Real Estate                    | Hyatt Place Portland - Old Port         | Portland Buy Local                    |
| Bicycle Coalition of Maine               | International Downtown Association      | Portland Dine Around Club             |
| Biddeford Saco Old Orchard Beach Transit | J.B. Brown & Sons                       | Portland Police Department            |
| Boys & Girls Clubs of Southern Maine     | Junior Achievement of Maine             | Portland Press Herald                 |
| City of Portland                         | LearningWorks                           | Portland Regional Chamber of Commerce |
| Coffee By Design                         | Machias Savings Bank                    | Portland Trails                       |
| Creative Portland                        | Maine Magazine                          | SVN   The Urbanek Group               |
| Diversified Communications               | MaineHealth                             | UMaine Graduate School of Business    |
| East Brown Cow Management                | MEMIC                                   | Verrill                               |
| Friends of Congress Square Park          | MHR Management                          | Visit Portland                        |
| Go Maine                                 | Milestone Recovery                      | Warp + Weft                           |



# FINANCIALS

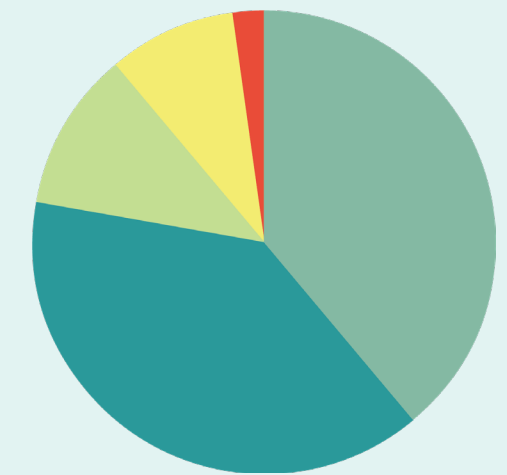
## FOR FISCAL YEAR 2019 (JULY 1, 2018 - JUNE 30, 2019)

**INCOME: \$1,080,470**



- **88%** Assessment Revenue  
\$956,120
- **7%** Event Revenue  
\$69,750
- **5%** Sponsorships  
\$49,500
- **<1%** Grants + Contributions  
\$5,100

**EXPENSES: \$1,041,944**



- **39%** Administrative  
\$409,674
- **39%** Supplemental Services  
\$403,800
- **11%** Programs + Partnerships  
\$112,870
- **9%** Events  
\$93,498
- **2%** Marketing  
\$22,102



**\$12,700**

Dollars raised for local nonprofits through Shop For A Cause Day



**160,000**

Portland Downtown Directories distributed locally and across the US



**34%**

Increase in Portland Downtown Instagram followers - we've hit 10,000!



**8,675**

Hours spent by Downtown Public Works crew cleaning streets & sidewalks



**98**

Portland's Walk Score, a factor out of 100 determining walkability



**10**

Hotels or inns in the downtown district



**17,920**

Portland Downtown e-newsletter subscribers



**527**

Ordinance violation warnings given by cadets



**200+**

Bars & restaurants in the downtown district



**100%**

Percentage of Portland Downtown staff members who own sloth socks



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### David Packard - Chair

P K Realty Management & Investments

### Doane Dorchester - Vice Chair

Portland Stage Company

### Dawn Homa - Treasurer

Portland Properties

### Sara Brown

David Wood

### Karen Coffin

Machias Savings Bank

### Krista Cole

Sur Lie

### David Davis

Portland Regency Hotel

### Michael Erickson

Holiday Inn by the Bay

### Kim Farrar

Avesta Housing

### Denine Leeman

East Brown Cow Management

### Bob Keegan

Dirigo Management Co.

### Sarah Martin

The Bar of Chocolate Café

### Sue-Ellen McClain

McClain Marketing & Interactive

### Dan Mirabile

City of Portland Public Works

### Neil Reiter

R&J Partners LLC

### Kim Volk

Maine Advisory Associates, Inc.

### Gillian West

J.B. Brown & Sons

## STAFF

### Casey Gilbert

Executive Director

### Amy Geren

Program Director

### Adam MacDonald

Marketing Director

### Taffy Eaton

Office Manager

