Downtown Nashville is on a rapid growth trajectory—which requires more of everything! A recent market analysis from MDHA says that downtown can easily absorb at least 3,500 new residential units by 2017 as well as significant new office space. More connectivity and complete streets, more transportation options, more green space, more parking inventory, more employee and residential density, and more infrastructure improvements—all are part of preparing for future growth.

Several high-priority recommendations from the South of Broadway Strategic Master Plan released in January are already being implemented. For example, a 4.5-acre park on the east bank will provide a riverfront landing for boats as well as green space. And a 12-acre west bank park will include a flood wall and a pedestrian promenade, an event lawn, an amphitheater, and a mile of new greenway.

Another key project is adding a pedestrian bridge from SoBro to The Gulch, which brings much needed connectivity between these two downtown neighborhoods. Also important is the extension of Division Street and reconfiguring several intersections.

A Downtown Mobility Study will be completed in March, 2014. Led by Metro Public Works, the study includes pedestrian, vehicular and bicycle mobility and will determine how projected growth over the next 10 years will impact downtown transportation patterns.

The growing numbers of downtown employees, visitors and residents need improved pedestrian, vehicular and bicycle mobility. Additional transportation options include the proposed bus rapid transit system, The Amp. Enterprise Carshare and Nashville B-cycle bike-share are now available.

As we saw in The Gulch and Rolling Mill Hill, major public investments in infrastructure come first—and private investments follow. After a decade of planning and preparing, these two areas are steadily gaining density and mixed-use development.

The Korean Veterans Boulevard Extension (from 4th to 8th Avenue South) completed in April is an example of infrastructure investment in SoBro. What a difference a half-mile makes! The four-lane, median-divided roadway features sidewalks, bike lanes, on-street parking spaces, green features including landscaping and LED lighting. The 2-lane modern roundabout at 8th Avenue South, Lafayette Street and the KVB Extension includes a center island where a major public art installation will be. This investment not only improves access to the area, it also increases the potential for private investment.

Now is the time for action as we build for the future of downtown Nashville.

Thomas D. Turner
President and CEO
• The downtown residential picture includes a strong sellers’ market with increasing prices per square foot, and a continuing 98% record rental occupancy.

• Downtown is a sellers’ market with 130 downtown closings during the first two quarters of 2013, 228 closings in 2012 and an average of 190 per year 2009 through 2011. No developer-owned condos remain on the market, and only 65 re-sale units (a 3-month supply). With a 36-month minimum required to plan and complete a project, the downtown for-sale inventory will not expand any sooner than late 2016.

• A recent market analysis indicates that downtown can absorb an additional 700 residential units per year for the next 5 years. To meet Urban Land Institute’s recommendation for 2% of a city’s population living within its urban core, Nashville would need an additional 18,000 units.

• The current downtown housing mix is 51% purchase (2,095 condos and 209 single family homes) and 49% rental (2,250 apartment units). Three developments now under construction will add 475 rental units in 2014, and another five planned projects would add 1,124 more apartments. If all are built, the new downtown housing mix would shift to 63% rental, 37% purchase units.

• Research shows that 75% of Generation Y (age 32 and under) prefer an active urban lifestyle, with its walkability and convenience, and the majority of them are single and renters. Demand is also increasing for high-end renter households for Baby Boomers as they become empty nesters and/or retire. Trends show that 82% of household growth will be singles and couples without children at home. By 2030, it is projected that the predominant household size will be one person.
• A total of 49 new retail businesses opened or announced between January 1 and August 31, 2013, which is 16 more than during the same period last year. Of these, 32 are food establishments, 16 shopping options and 1 is a nightlife venue. The total number of downtown retail openings in 2012 was 52 (44% more than in 2011).

• Fashion designer Manuel has a new retail space at 800 Broadway, as well as a design and manufacturing studio for his New Vision collection of apparel and accessories. Bettie Page Clothing at 400 Broadway adds vintage fashion designs for women to the current mix of downtown shopping options.

• After an extensive renovation including new sidewalks and streetlights from Church to Union, the major arts corridor along 5th Avenue offers popular sidewalk dining at Puckett’s Gro. & Restaurant. A new coffee and dining option on the busy block this fall is local favorite Frothy Monkey.

• New retail opening onto 5th Avenue South include Bob’s Steak and Chop House, Bongo Java Coffee and Barlines (all with Omni Nashville Hotel) and the relocated Hatch Show Print (with the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum).

• The Nashville food scene is getting favorable press regionally and nationally. The Partnership’s retail strategy recommends unique, eclectic restaurants with appeal to an urban population. In SoBro, The Southern Steak & Oyster and Etch are thriving new dining options and Husk brings Charleston-style local food to Rutledge Hill. Rumours Wine Bar in The Gulch and Pub 5 are other new offerings enhancing the local market.

• Downtown Nashville now has over 115 shopping options, 190 dining options, 88 nightlife venues and 23 galleries—with more to come!
• The Partnership’s Downtown Business Census identified 1,586 businesses, organizations and governmental entities, with a total of 50,335 employees as of December, 2012. The Accommodations and Food Services industry sector ranked #2, with almost 6,000 employees. Additional growth is expected in this sector as new hotels and restaurants come online.

• The mid-year 2013 downtown Class A office vacancy was 7.7% and all 21st century office buildings have limited vacancy. Recent studies indicate that downtown could absorb another 500,000 SF of office space over the next 10 years.

• UBS Nashville Business Solutions Center will bring over 1,200 new jobs downtown beginning in 2014. The global banking and financial services company is leasing about 98,000 SF at 315 Deaderick Street, which will be extensively renovated and renamed UBS Tower. Sony/ATV Music Publishing will bring 200 new jobs downtown in December with their move to Fifth Third Plaza. TransCore relocated its headquarters operation from Pennsylvania to One Nashville Place. Asurion brought 500 new jobs to the Ragland Building in fourth quarter, 2012.

• Recent relocations and expansions enhance the synergy of the central business district. ServiceSource continues its growth track, and tied for 9th largest employer in the 2012 Downtown Business Census. Regions Bank named Nashville as its Mid-America headquarters and moved its local and regional headquarters and branch bank to One Nashville Place. U.S. Bank relocated its Tennessee headquarters and downtown branch to 333 Commerce Street.

• At Rolling Mill Hill, the renovated Trolley Barns now house a variety of tenants including several entrepreneurial and nonprofits such as the e-mail marketing firm EMMA, the Nashville Entrepreneur Center, Hands on Nashville and the Center for Nonprofit Management.

• The Partnership’s 4th annual Downtown Employee Appreciation Week in early September featured popular events including Downtown’s Next Superstar and the highly competitive Corporate Tug of War. Promoting physical fitness were the Walk with the Mayor and a Nashville B-cycle event.
• During the Grand Opening of Music City Center in May, outdoor concerts were staged on 5th Avenue South next to Music City Center. Plaza areas linking Omni Nashville Hotel, the expanded Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum and Music City Center are a much needed addition for downtown.

• Prime new event spaces at the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum come online in October—including a 10,000 SF Event Hall with impressive skyline views from 40-foot glass windows as well as an outdoor terrace and the 800-seat state-of-the-art CMA Theater. Connected seamlessly on three levels with the Omni Nashville Hotel, the greatly expanded facility is set to open in early 2014.

• The popular First Saturday Art Crawl attracts over 1,500 people each month to stroll through downtown galleries. Major street renovations on 5th Avenue North between Church and Union Streets add sidewalk dining, new streetlights and landscaping, accented by eight light curtains across 5th Avenue to enhance this area’s identity as Nashville’s arts district.

• The 42nd annual CMA Music Festival in June, 2013, had a record-breaking daily attendance of 80,000, with all LP Field concerts sold out 6 weeks in advance and many featured events were held inside the spectacular new Music City Center.

• In June, over 14,000 people came downtown for the Nashville International Puppet Festival. String City, a new production combining puppetry, animations and music to celebrate Nashville’s country music and puppetry tradition, debuted during the festival.

• Bridgestone Arena ranks 7th in the United States for concert attendance this year and had a record-setting March attendance of over 329,000. In 2014 Nashville hosts the NCAA Women’s Final Four at Bridgestone Arena.

• The iconic Ryman Auditorium is Pollstar’s Theatre of the Year for the third consecutive year and is also ACM Venue of the Year, and SRO Venue of the Year.
• A successful LP Field park and ride program managed by the Nashville Downtown Partnership offers registered downtown employees free weekday parking in designated LP Field lots. The Partnership provides optional cost-effective shuttle service to downtown office buildings.

• From 2010 through 2012, an average of 14,221 monthly shuttle passes was purchased each year. Currently the Partnership utilizes 13 shuttles on three routes for employees. During the first 8 months of 2013, 9,220 monthly passes were sold. With monthly shuttle passes still only $25, employees can save at least $100 per month on parking expenses.

• The Nashville Downtown Partnership teams works with prospective downtown tenants to secure adequate parking options for their employees. The park and ride initiative frees up about 1,300 downtown spaces per month—more than one full parking garage.

• Downtown parking capacity increased by 1,800 spaces when the Music City Center Garage opened in May, and by another 640 spaces when Omni Nashville Hotels opened September 30. Construction is underway on a 475-space underground parking garage adjacent to Nashville City Center which is scheduled to open in 2014.

• BEEP (Best Ever Event Parking) is a park and ride option for Bridgestone Arena events operated by the Partnership since March, 2010. BEEP provides free parking at LP Field Lot R with optional round trip shuttle service for only $3 per person. Almost 45,000 vehicles have used this free parking for 332 events, with 60% of the 83,750 passengers choosing the shuttle option.

• BEEP also operates a separate route for Nashville Symphony patrons, utilizing the Lot R park and ride option for their 88 scheduled events during the 2013-2014 season.

• For the past three years, the Partnership has made another downtown transportation option available, with four vehicles from Enterprise CarShare strategically located for short-term use. Over 100 members (including businesses, employees and residents) participate in this cost-effective program.
In December, 2012, a local fee-based bike-share system, Nashville B-cycle, was launched by Metro Health Department and the Nashville Downtown Partnership. Start-up costs were funded through a Communities Putting Prevention to Work grant from the Centers for Disease Control.

Nashville B-cycle, managed by the Nashville Downtown Partnership, currently has 21 automated kiosks and 195 bikes available in urban neighborhoods. Designed for short trips under one hour, the bikes are available with the purchase of memberships (24-hour, annual, monthly or weekly).

As of August 31st, 18,810 total Nashville B-cycle memberships have been purchased, including 17,872 daily and 716 annual memberships. During the first 8 months, there have been a total of 29,166 trips or bike checkouts, 6,547,760 calories have been burned and 155,509 pounds of carbon offset.

The YMCA of Middle Tennessee stepped up in May to sponsor the 21st Nashville B-cycle kiosk near their downtown facility. Sponsor logos are prominently displayed on the bikes and/or kiosks, with an average of 11,500 drivers and 1,400 pedestrians passing each station daily. To discuss station sponsorships, contact Partnership President and CEO Tom Turner.

The Amp, a proposed 7.1-mile bus rapid transit line from Five Points in East Nashville to White Bridge Road is expected to run along the Broadway-West End Avenue corridor. In June, Metro Council approved $7.5 million for final engineering and design of the Amp and in August, the Federal Transit Administration indicated the project is approved to advance to the next phase of their funding application process.

As recommended in the South of Broadway Strategic Master Plan completed in January, 2013, Metro Public Works began a Downtown Mobility Study in July, 2013. When completed in March, 2014, this plan will provide an efficient and sustainable approach for access to and movement around downtown Nashville for workers, visitors and residents for the next 10 years. The study includes a parking demand and supply analysis, and proposes optimum street designs and a parking development strategy. Recommendations will also be made to improve vehicular, pedestrian and bicycle mobility in the downtown area.
The downtown clean and safe teams provide a wide range of services to two Business Improvement Districts—one in the central urban area (CBID) and one in The Gulch (GBID). This combined service area covers approximately 463 acres.

During the first eight months of 2013, the cleaning staff removed over 70,850 pounds of trash, 11,106 square feet of graffiti and power washed 636 block faces and 882 alleys in the urban core district. The incidence of graffiti has increased 125% since the same period last year, and the cleaning team responds quickly to assist property owners affected. This prompt removal of graffiti helps prevent recurrences.

The cleaning team works throughout the CBID and GBID from 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. seven days a week. Safety Ambassadors patrol the CBID from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. seven days a week and are in the GBID four nights weekly from 5 p.m. to 11 p.m. Three evenings each week from 4 p.m. to midnight an ambassador focuses on pressure washing in areas not easily accessed during business hours.

Safety Ambassadors also rotate through assignments as Hospitality Ambassadors. Wearing shirts marked with the universal symbol for information, they are especially busy during major downtown events and conventions. As they interact with visitors, the Hospitality Ambassadors distribute guidebooks and maps and print out requested directions and coupons to enhance their downtown experience. Their hand-held Eponics devices include a searchable database of downtown businesses and printable walking directions. Already this year, they have distributed over 12,000 visitor information printouts, more than 3,000 of which were coupons from downtown restaurants and shops.

An ongoing special project for the clean teams involves litter and weed removal along major downtown access points at highway interchanges. They also enhance downtown’s overall appearance with their periodic cleaning and repainting of junction boxes, light poles, trash receptacles and tree grates.
• Safety Ambassadors (including those assigned as Hospitality Ambassadors) monitor downtown streets and sidewalks. From January through August, they logged 2,038 miles on Segways.

• A successful program initiated in June, 2008, Homeward Bound offers bus tickets to eligible individuals without other resources. Eligibility is based on confirmation of favorable job prospects, benefits or proximity to family. As of September 1, 2013, a total of 555 individuals have received this relocation assistance. While in Nashville, the 555 individuals accounted for 4,690 arrests.

• Since July, 2011, a fulltime Social Services Outreach Coordinator has focused on connecting individuals with high numbers of downtown arrests to needed services (e.g., drug and alcohol treatment programs, mental health services). This housing first model used has proved very successful, with 23 clients placed in transitional housing with supportive services. Of these, 8 have already moved into permanent housing with wraparound services and outside sources of support, 7 others are currently in transitional housing with services, 2 died while in housing and 4 returned to the street. Based on prior activity, 720 arrests have been avoided utilizing this housing first model.

• The Metro Homelessness Commission’s *How’s Nashville* initiative (which is part of the national 100,000 Homes campaign) is collaborating with the Partnership’s Outreach Coordinator to place additional clients in Section 8 apartments.
• Social media options reach an immediate audience with interesting and timely downtown news. The Nashville Downtown Partnership currently has 31,000 fans on Facebook, a 55% increase since August, 2012. The Partnership’s multiple Twitter accounts reach 28,791 followers, an 80% increase since August, 2012.

• The Nashville Downtown Partnership’s social media statistics consistently outpace those of comparable organizations in other cities such as Orlando, Denver, Memphis, Atlanta, Austin, Charlotte and Indianapolis. The Partnership’s Facebook numbers also exceed those of the top local print and radio media outlets.

• The Nashville B-cycle website (nashville.bcycle.com) came online in November, 2012. Nashville B-cycle has 952 Facebook fans and 573 Twitter followers.

• Working with Geocentric software systems since 2010, the Partnership launched its two redesigned websites in late September. Both nashvilledowntown.com and parkitdowntown.com are now responsive. The website being viewed automatically fits onto the screen of your phone, tablet or computer. This new functionality allows users to access all of the information on both websites.

• At nashvilledowntown.com, an events calendar features over 700 downtown happenings each month. The website’s point-location mapping feature provides users with detailed information about downtown destinations, including 190 dining options and 116 places to shop.

• A primary resource for downtown parking information, parkitdowntown.com includes interactive maps, photos of garage entrances, current rates, LP Field park and ride options and special discount offers.

• Published twice each year, about 70,000 copies of The Guidebook are distributed to hotels, restaurants, business and residential locations. This comprehensive listing of downtown options in 39 categories is also maintained online at nashvilledowntown.com.
• Each year, Board members and the broader business community partner with us in downtown economic development. Since 2006, 80 corporate investors have committed over $1,200,000 to implement a variety of key initiatives of the Nashville Downtown Partnership.

• This number of investors grows each year, with six new groups added in 2013.

• Most investors continue participating annually because they believe having a strong downtown economy is critically important to the economic health of the entire region and they value the Partnership’s advocacy for downtown businesses and residents. Also, 58% of the 2013 investors are represented on the Partnership’s Board of Directors, investing their time and talents for the good of downtown Nashville.

• Annual corporate investments have supported a comprehensive downtown retail strategy, downtown street beautification and landscaping projects, upgrades to the Downtown Development Center, the enhancement of user-friendly interactive websites and the expansion of a successful street outreach initiative.

• Other Partnership investment opportunities include annual membership dues, downtown home tour sponsorships, annual meeting sponsorships and guidebook advertising. From this menu of options, investors choose one or more categories that best complement their business goals.
• Local and out-of-state investors are adding downtown office buildings to their portfolios. Recent sales include Bank of America Plaza, 330 Commerce, and 315 Deaderick (to be renamed UBS Tower after major renovations). The Pinnacle at Symphony Place set a new $153 million sales price record. The sales price for Nashville City Center is also over $100 million.

• Office investment sales, combined with long-term leases and a diversified mix of tenants with younger workforces, adds stability to the downtown market.

• With the opening of Music City Center, increased downtown hotel capacity is needed. The new Omni Nashville Hotel expands the downtown hotel inventory by 25%. Hyatt Place, Hilton Garden Inn and Fairfield Inn & Suites are under construction, and at least four other hotels have been proposed. Metro incentives have been committed for a Hyatt Regency on Broadway at Third Avenue and a Marriott on Demonbreun between 7th and 8th. Existing downtown hotels are also making significant investments in facility upgrades to strengthen the expanding market.

• Residential developers continue to add new downtown rental inventory in response to the strong rental market. A recent market study indicated that downtown needs an additional 3,535 residential units over the next five years.

• On the east bank of the Cumberland, construction begins this fall on a new 4.5-acre park that will provide public access to the river for boating and add green space. As part of the West Riverfront Master Plan, a new 12-acre park on the former Thermal site is now in the design phase. The west bank park will include a flood wall, a pedestrian promenade, new greenway, a 1.5-acre event lawn and a 2,500-seat amphitheater, with grass seating for an additional 4,000 people.
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