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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Downtown Improvement District Works Collaboratively This Summer on Crime Prevention Practices

MINNEAPOLIS (August 8, 2014) — Did you know the Minneapolis Downtown Improvement District (DID) works in collaboration with various agencies on safety initiatives?

In connection with Tuesday's 31st annual National Night Out event, this week the DID is outlining some of its partnerships and initiatives that contribute to a safe environment through prevention, engagement and enforcement.

Education Campaigns

Two on-the-street campaigns are leading the charge helping educate workers, residents and visitors about protecting personal belongings:

- The "Put Your Junk In Your Trunk" campaign is a collaborative effort that focuses on reducing theft in motor vehicles. The initiative targets protection from break-ins by keeping items in car trunks. It also covers the steps of how to act in the event of a break-in: Immediately call 911, file a police report, call 311 or complete an online police report for documentation.
- A DID "Be Smart with your Phone" education program aims toward reducing phone theft downtown. Smart Phones are targeted for theft nationwide, and the DID's collaboration with the Minneapolis Police Department aims to help educate the public about how they can prevent those thefts. The program focuses on advocating being alert while on your phone, store it in a purse or pocket when not in use, avoid hanging purses or bags on chair backs and not lending phones to strangers.

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“It’s important to continue helping the members of our Downtown community learn how to keep themselves safe in any situation,” said Steve Cramer, President and CEO of the Minneapolis Downtown Council and Downtown Improvement District. “While our streets have continued to become safer, one of the most important pieces of crime prevention is being prepared. Our DID collaborative efforts with the Minneapolis Police Department are helping make that goal a reality for our Downtown employees and residents.”

Reshaping Downtown at a Low Cost

In addition, the DID continues to focus on learning more about how to make public spaces safer and more enjoyable for everyone who spends time downtown by making small changes in those public spaces. Through Tactical Urbanism, the DID and its partners are evaluating select sites and implementing quick, experimental, low-cost environmental changes in order to positively influence behavior, perception and economic outcomes.

Focus areas for Tactical Urbanism projects include places along Nicollet Mall and in the Warehouse District. Through enhanced lighting, adding or reconfiguring street furniture or creating new green space, the DID and its collaborating partners investigate how spaces are being used and how they can be improved.

Projects like the [Nicollet Mall Public Seating Project, Alcove Activation and Kiosk Project](#) all include a teamwork between local designers, stakeholders, adjacent property owners and members of the community.

The ongoing partnership between the DID and the University of Minnesota College of Design on Tactical Urbanism projects throughout downtown was enhanced this summer by two innovative programs: The creation of the street furniture design course and a pop-up downtown workshop for students. With support from Shorenstein Properties, the Streetscape Lab occupied in a portion of City Center this summer and allowed students with classroom space for wood- and metal-working, lectures, class discussions and prototype development. The students in the two design workshops learned about challenges relating to public space downtown and worked with the DID and its partners to produce greening projects, innovative street furniture and more. The Peavey Plaza Wiffle ball park and the sidewalk dining station at 8th Street South and Marquette Avenue South are projects that came from the Streetscape Lab this summer.

Complimentary Personal Safety Workshops Available

The DID is also partnering with area businesses to help expand the reach of preventative safety, including complimentary Personal Safety Workshops provided through the Minneapolis Police Department’s 1st Precinct. The workshops focus on the following safety initiatives:

- **Intro to Personal Safety**
- **Advanced Personal Safety Training**
- **Personal Safety & Transportation**
- **Self Defense for Cyclists**

About the Minneapolis Downtown Council:

Founded in 1955, and one of the oldest central business districts in the nation, the Minneapolis Downtown Council (MDC) is a membership based entity that works to create an extraordinary downtown. The MDC's collaborative development of *Intersections: The Downtown 2025 Plan* was designed to help downtown businesses, community leaders, and citizens build on downtown's assets and implement future goals. For more information, please visit www.downtownmpls.com.

About the Downtown Improvement District:

Founded in early 2009, after more than five years of formative planning and advocacy by the downtown business community, the Minneapolis DID delivers higher levels of service to make downtown cleaner, greener, safer and more vibrant throughout a 120-block area, as is the case with most Business Improvement Districts. For more information, visit www.minneapolisdid.com.

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