

THE DOWNTOWNERS

West Palm Beach business owners dish about why they're downtown – and why you should be, too!

Met **Vince Burkhardt**, president and founder of Burkhardt Construction, Inc., an industry leader specializing in urban revitalization. Here, the West Palm Beach native discusses his downtown roots and the vital role he has played in the evolution and development of Downtown West Palm Beach.

How I've seen downtown grow:

"I have been watching the evolution of Downtown West Palm Beach my entire life. I was born in West Palm Beach in 1950 and founded my company, Burkhardt Construction, Inc. (BCI), in 1975. We have been participating in the growth of downtown since 1977 when we renovated the 500 block of Clematis Street. In 1993, BCI renovated the 100 through 500 blocks of Clematis Street. In 1994, BCI built the beloved downtown fountain and amphitheater. BCI is currently renovating Clematis Street, once again, over a multiyear time frame."

What makes downtown unique:

"The variety of businesses and the diverse group of individuals living and working downtown is truly what makes it a unique and vibrant community. It's a real neighborhood."

What I love most about downtown:

"Downtown hosts a plethora of planned activities. I think it's great

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how these events attract people from all over Palm Beach County and beyond to the downtown area."

Where I eat downtown:

"Downtown has no shortage of good restaurants with delicious food. However, Lynora's and Duffy's are my go-to spots."

Where I shop downtown:

"The GreenMarket is always a nice way to spend a Saturday during season. It's also a great place to find local produce and products."

Where I play downtown:

"I enjoy spending time at the fountain and seeing local families having fun and utilizing everything downtown has to offer."

When I love downtown

"I like downtown best during the events, especially the Palm Beach International Boat Show and Clematis by Night."

Why I want to be downtown:

"I have always had a sense of belonging downtown, especially



Vince Burkhardt by the fountains on Clematis Street. His company is renovating the street one block at a time. PHOTO BY JIM BERIAU

since I've been so involved in the construction of multiple downtown streets and infrastructure projects. My great-grandfather and his brother had the first grocery store downtown at 207 Clematis Street in the early 1900s, "Pioneer Grocery." They bought the property on Clematis Street from Henry Flagler in 1894, and the Burkhardt family still owns it."

Why you should visit downtown:

"Once you stroll our beautiful waterfront and experience downtown for yourself, you are bound to return with your friends and family. I also think Brightline is an excellent addition to our community and is making West Palm Beach more accessible than ever."

– Analisa Castillo