



Honorable Mayor Dyer, Members of the Virginia Beach City Council, and City Manager Patrick Duhaney:

Public safety at the Virginia Beach Oceanfront is a top priority for our residents, resort stakeholders, and workforce. The recent surge in violence and gunfire cannot be dismissed as something that simply “happens after 10 p.m.” or as an unfortunate but acceptable norm. Now more than ever, with a deep sense of urgency, the Board of Directors of the Atlantic Avenue Association calls for immediate and decisive action.

There is growing fear among those who live, work, and visit the Oceanfront. Employees feel unsafe. Residents avoid the area. One North End Civic League member told us, “I wouldn’t be caught dead down there.”

Week 17 was a wake-up call. Dozens of arrests and weapons seizures, while commendable, were widely publicized and only amplified public concern and harm to trade. Families visiting Virginia Beach are afraid to stroll along Atlantic Avenue or the Boardwalk at night. Local parents refuse to let their children visit — or work — at the Oceanfront. The result is a troubling “no-go zone” that has only worsened. Our residents and city deserve better, and it begins with consistent, visible law enforcement.

Busy evenings, large groups gather with little regard for rules or safety. Unpermitted sidewalk vendors and illegal street performers routinely set up shop, openly breaking the law. As one young man was overheard saying, “The man don’t bother you at the beach.” That cannot be the message we send. Criminals should never feel more welcome than paying guests. If Virginia Beach wants to maintain its reputation as a safe, family-friendly destination, we must act now to restore order and safety.

We respectfully request that City Council resolve the following:

1. **Increase Visible Police Presence through a proven, layered strategy that is data-supported that has proven effective in past years.**

**WE DO NOT SUPPORT ANY CURFEW-BASED APPROACH**, as it would unfairly penalize families, guests, and the many law-abiding citizens who enjoy our restaurants, retail, and hotels into the evening hours.

- a. Reinstate partnerships with the Virginia State Police (VSP) and the Sheriff’s Department to support large-scale efforts, including “lock-up crews” for efficient arrest processing without removing officers from the field.
- b. Deploy a mobile critical response team to secure and de-escalate high-risk incidents in real time.
- c. Explore the feasibility of Special Event Zones.

2. **Empower Consistent Enforcement:** Direct the city manager and city attorney to coordinate a firm, unified enforcement strategy of existing laws, including those addressing trespassing, public intoxication, DUI enforcement, drug use, unlawful assembly, unpermitted performances and sales, noise violations, and obstruction of public spaces. Let our officers do their jobs — and let them know they are supported in doing so.
3. **Focus on Family-Friendly Programming:** Only permit wholesome, family-oriented entertainment, amateur sporting events, and community gatherings. Events that are profane or potentially inciteful should not be supported. We should actively attract respectful, law-abiding visitors — not individuals looking to exploit a lack of oversight.
4. **Elevate Marketing Efforts:** Allocate advertising dollars toward targeting families with higher household incomes. Current data suggests our average visitor household income is \$65,000 — and that figure may be overstated. We should strive to attract more affluent families who contribute positively to our local economy.
5. **Support Business-Led Safety Measures:** Encourage local hotels and businesses to post “No Trespassing” signs, install security cameras, and report illegal activity. Partner with them to build a network of accountability.

The goal is deterrence through overwhelming visibility and preparedness that disincentivizes disruptive behavior before it starts. This strategy has worked before and, with coordinated execution across departments, can restore the peace and prosperity the Oceanfront deserves without harming law abiding, legitimate small business. In the previous years this was implemented, Virginia Beach saw reduced incidents and improved perception.

Continuing down the current path risks further deterioration and, potentially, tragic consequences. The time for incremental change has passed. We need bold, proactive leadership now.

Thank you for your continued service and thoughtful consideration of these urgent concerns and requests.

Sincerely,

D. Nachnani

On behalf of the Board of Directors, Atlantic Avenue Association

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