

CREW RICHMOND

30TH ANNIVERSARY

CREW Richmond June Virtual Lunch Meeting - Steps to Re-Opening by Laura Anderson

We had an amazing panel for the June Virtual Lunch Meeting on Steps to Re-Opening. The panel included:

- Loretta L. Cataldi, Principal, Managing Broker, Divaris Real Estate, Inc.
- Dante Fratarcangelo, Director of Real Estate – Southeast, Burlington Stores
- Kristie H. Inge, CCIM, Director of Leasing, Highwoods Properties, Inc.
- Debbie Lennick, Owner/Chief Sales Officer, Creative
- Diane Tidwell, Director of Property Management, Virginia Gumenick Properties
- Michelle Williams, Owner/Chef, Richmond Restaurant Group

Each panel member was able to speak on their commercial real estate area of expertise from restaurants, retail, multi-family, manufacturing, leasing, and many more. Across the board, there were many similarities and consistencies within all areas. Some of these included enhanced daily cleaning measures and resources for employees, routine communications and guidelines for employees to remain informed and up to date, being innovative and flexible with technology, contactless pay options, and emphasis on understanding and providing resources for employee comfort levels, productivity, and mental health.

In addition to the trends, there are some unique and exciting changes taking place within the specific industries. For example, in the restaurant industry we have seen how space is being modified to utilize the outdoors. But the interiors of restaurants have been rearranged to space tables farther apart, lighting has been adjusted, and even changing faucets and door handles has taken place to reduce physical contact. In the retail industry, we have seen that you can no longer try on clothing or other apparel in stores. This has created new quarantine return policies. Merchandise has also been spread out within stores to encourage more social distancing. For the multi-family industry, amenity spaces have been a hot topic for residents. Not having that pool in the summer, or the courtyard grills, or fitness gyms has been difficult for many tenants. With Phase 1 just beginning to take shape, some of amenities have become available but at a reduced capacity. For new potential tenants, there has been a significant increase in virtual apartment tours, as well as self-guided tours.

The world continues to change and adapt as we navigate through the COVID pandemic. Hearing about how the commercial real estate industry is pivoting is inspiring and motivating to see that we can persevere through the adversity.

