

**Subject: 2021 Business Improvement Area and Sparks Street Mall Authority –  
Annual Reports and Audited Financial Statements**

**File Number: ACS2023-PRE-EDP-0001**

**Report to Finance and Corporate Services Committee on 7 March 2023  
and Council 22 March 2023**

**Submitted on January 25, 2023 by, David Wise, Acting Director, Planning, Real  
Estate and Economic Development Department**

**Contact Person: Mike Bureau, Economic Development Officer,  
613-580-2424 ext. 22441, [Mike.Bureau5@ottawa.ca](mailto:Mike.Bureau5@ottawa.ca)**

**Ward: Citywide**

**Objet : Zone d'amélioration commerciale et Administration du mail de la  
rue Sparks – Rapports annuels et états financiers vérifiés de 2021**

**Dossier : ACS2023-PRE-EDP-0001**

**Rapport au Comité des finances et des services organisationnels  
le 7 mars 2023**

**et au Conseil le 22 mars 2023**

**Soumis le 25 janvier 2023 par par David Wise, Directeur par intérim,  
Développement économique et Planification à long terme, Direction générale de  
la planification, de l'immobilier et du développement économique**

**Personne ressource : Mike Bureau, Agent du développement économique,  
613-580-2424 ext. 22441, [Mike.Bureau5@ottawa.ca](mailto:Mike.Bureau5@ottawa.ca)**

**Quartier : À l'échelle de la ville**

## **REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS**

**That the Finance and Corporate Services Committee recommend Council receive  
the 2021 Business Improvement Area and Sparks Street Mall Authority Annual  
Reports and Audited Financial Statements.**

## **RECOMMANDATIONS DU RAPPORT**

**Que le Comité des finances et des services organisationnels recommande au Conseil de prendre connaissance des rapports annuels et des états financiers vérifiés de 2021 de la Zone d'amélioration commerciale et de l'Administration du mail de la rue Sparks.**

## **BACKGROUND**

A Business Improvement Area (BIA) is an association of commercially assessed property owners and their tenants within a specified geographic area who join together, with approval of the municipality under [Section 204 of the \*Municipal Act, 2001\*](#), in a self-funded program paid through a levy collected with their property taxes. BIAs undertake a variety of beautification, clean and safe, and marketing programs to attract shoppers and tourists to the area and support their member businesses. The City of Ottawa currently has [nineteen \(19\) BIAs](#).

BIAs are required to submit annual reports to Council, in accordance with [Subsection 207\(1\) of the \*Municipal Act, 2001\*](#), which states, "A board of management shall submit its annual report of the preceding year to Council by the date and in the form required by the municipality and the report shall include audited financial statements."

Following Council's approval of the [2014-2018 Mid-term Governance Review](#) report ([ACS2016-CCS-GEN-0024](#)) on November 9, 2016, annual reports of BIAs and other local boards of the City are to be submitted to Council in the form of a written electronic document and include the mandate of the BIA (or other local board), its strategic directions, annual highlights and audited financial statements.

The purpose of this report is to bring forward to Council the 2021 annual reports of the City's BIAs and the Sparks Street Mall Authority for information, consistent with the requirements set out under Subsection 207(1) of the *Municipal Act, 2001*, and in keeping with the format approved by Council.

## **DISCUSSION**

A BIA is a local board of the municipality that oversees the improvement, beautification and maintenance of public land, buildings, and structures of a specified [geographic area](#). Its efforts extend beyond those provided at the expense of the municipality while also promoting the area as a business or shopping area.

Ottawa's nineteen (19) BIAs include several vibrant commercial districts and main streets and encompass more than 6,400 businesses and 128,000 employees. Although

BIAs serve the individual districts they represent, they contribute to the health and vitality of the city through community and stakeholder engagement, promotion, and member advocacy. In 2021, BIA members contributed approximately \$7.2 million towards beautification, promotion, cleanliness, and safety within their respective districts to improve the visitor and resident experience and enhance business growth.

In 2021, Ottawa's BIAs, supported by the advocacy efforts of the Ottawa Coalition of BIAs (OCOBIA), continued supporting their small business members through the COVID-19 pandemic. Economic initiatives such as advertising and promotion, hosting community festivals and events, street enhancements and beautification projects, strategic plans, and other initiatives were delivered by BIAs in support of their respective districts.

The 2021 BIA Annual Report highlights the activities and achievements of Ottawa's BIAs (see documents 1 to 20). Below are brief highlights from each BIA:

1. Bank Street BIA executed the "open for all" project which saw Bank Street between Queen Street and Flora Street become a pedestrian area closed to motor vehicles, every Saturday throughout the summer. These Saturdays were a chance for residents to get out of their homes and safely shop, dine, and explore Bank Street. Bank Street installed a new mural at Bank Street and Lisgar Street. In collaboration with EXAR Studios, Bank Street BIA presented Beyond The Art - an augmented digital experience. Users downloaded the Engage Art app which enabled an audio-guided mural tour featuring sixteen of Bank Street's most iconic murals.
2. Barrhaven BIA continued its focus on COVID response in 2021. The BIA supported businesses through pandemic restrictions and closures while building consumer confidence to ensure that business activity was strong when it was safe for customers to visit. Membership engagement was a key focus with regular weekly virtual meetings and email updates. Key marketing initiatives included street beautification through a redesign of banners and signs down major corridors, the development of a new business directory, large scale social media campaigns and giveaways, and an increase in video content creation. Advocacy has always been a part of the BIA's role within the community, but the COVID-19 pandemic presented a new set of challenges for members. The BIA was able to successfully advocate, along with partners such as the Ottawa Coalition of BIAs (OCOBIA), the Ontario BIA Association (OBIAA) and other stakeholder organizations, to ultimately affect change at all levels of

government, specifically in terms of support being provided to businesses during the crisis.

3. Bells Corners BIA initiated a spring / summer banner program, which featured a stylized print design with the Bells Corners logo produced by a local company. The winter banner program again showed off brilliantly designed Christmas season banners in festive colours with snowflakes. Due to the pandemic, the BIA cancelled the planned summer concert in the parking lot at Robertson Center and held a brief virtual Christmas tree lighting ceremony instead. All BIA Board meetings in 2021 were held virtually through Zoom for everyone's safety due to the pandemic.
4. ByWard Market BIA funded street closures throughout the ByWard Market, allowing patios to expand, while creating a lively, safe, outdoor atmosphere for all. In 2021, the BIA improved on the previous year's closures by developing new strategies which allowed both sides of York Street to remain open for the summer. In September 2021, the ever-popular ByWard Bark-et was back for its seventh edition. Thousands of people and their four-legged friends came out to enjoy the event, dog-friendly patios, and businesses. The BIA executed programming throughout the Market, including the NCC Courtyards. As always, the fashion show was a huge hit!
5. Carp Road Corridor BIA worked to support members operating under COVID related work mandates. The BIA undertook a research study to identify opportunities to promote or facilitate eco-industrial business practices. The BIA promoted member companies, employment needs and vacant land base through articles in the Eastern Ontario Business Journal and the Stuff Made in Eastern Ontario magazine. The BIA Board of Management extends thanks to members, City staff and area Councillors for their support.
6. Carp Village BIA continued partnership with the West Carleton Online, featuring monthly business profiles of members and ongoing, nonpartisan active engagement with government at all levels. For the second year, the 'Light up the Village' campaign was executed, to encourage all residents and businesses to decorate for the holidays and boost morale. The BIA was a successful recipient of the City's Winter City Grant Program, which saw Village of Carp signs installed at main entrances into the village.
7. Downtown Rideau BIA witnessed serious economic and operational challenges on businesses because of COVID-19 in 2021, particularly those in key sectors

that were heavily impacted by rolling restrictions and lockdowns. The pandemic also presented BIAs with the challenge to reimagine how to best provide value and support to members. Expenditures in key areas were directed to ensure that ongoing programs and initiatives were maintained during a period of transition while advocating for relief for businesses impacted by the pandemic. An ongoing social media presence continued to profile businesses, promote the area, inform audiences, and highlight BIA members across all available channels. Information sharing was a priority as well as maintaining and enhancing the streetscape and pedestrian experience.

8. Glebe BIA worked hard to deliver value and adapt to an ever-changing environment. The BIA continued to ensure the Glebe is one of Ottawa's best-kept neighbourhoods with banners, flower baskets, winter lighting and public art that welcomes people and encourages them to come back. A new south-end Glebe gateway sign was added with funding assistance from the City's Winter City Grant Program and a series of COVID adapted events continued to draw people to the area: the Glebe Spree, Contact, Winterlude, and Glebe Eats. The BIA installed two new murals – *Create a Spark* and *Nature Entwined*, which brings the Glebe to over 20 mural installations since 2015. The BIA supported action at the local and national levels through their advocacy partners, OCOBIA and the International Downtown Association (IDA) Canada. They also worked closely with local representatives to voice members' concerns and advance their Block By Block recovery strategy.
9. Heart of Orléans BIA continued to realize their mandate of promoting the area as a district by creating a birds-eye [drone view](#) of the BIA, publishing their quarterly magazine, [The Beat](#) and through various marketing campaigns such as *BIA Picture Perfect* which encouraged the community's budding photographers to take pictures of their favorite things in the BIA. The Heart of Orléans also created numerous member videos through a partnership with Digital Main Street and continued with the *BIA Faces of Business* initiative which told the stories behind the bricks and mortar buildings. A dozen new businesses were welcomed to the Heart of Orléans despite the ongoing pandemic in 2021 and the BIA continued to advocate on behalf of members by regularly working and meeting with all three levels of government to provide information and obtain pandemic relief help. There was also a substantial effort made to beautify and/or make improvements to the streetscape by installing new banners, bike racks, a historical plaque and seasonal decor such as LED snowflakes, large year-round planters and five new

perennial beds. Lastly, the BIA continued to engage the community through safe business visits, virtual events such as Town Halls and *BIA Happy Hour* and one live outdoor music event featuring local artists.

10. Kanata Central BIA continued to support member businesses and stakeholders throughout the year. Continuing strong relationships, the BIA engaged members and the community through in-person business visits, member packages, weekly updates, and events such as Taste Ottawa, Lunch & Learn, Fraud Seminars, Collecting for the Kanata Food Cupboard, Arts & Craft Markets, Farmers Market, and many more initiatives. The BIA added colour to the streets and covered 160 hectares that would otherwise go unnoticed, which is a treat for both locals and visitors. The Wayfinding project attracted new local businesses, helped bring customers to existing businesses, and boosted the economy of the area. These enhancements gave new meaning to DINE LOCAL, LOVE LOCAL, PLAY LOCAL, STAY LOCAL, AND SHOP LOCAL. The BIA launched a redesigned website, exceeded social media goals and incorporated hashtags #kanatacentralbia #lovekanata #kanata and gave a consistent look and feel to content to match the brand.
11. Kanata North BIA continued to nurture collaboration with leaders across the technology park. They partnered with Invest Ottawa and the City of Ottawa to launch the Connected Autonomous Vehicles Last Mile Shuttle Feasibility study, identifying next generation solutions to current transit and mobility issues. Collaboratively, the BIA worked with other partners to secure federal government commitments of \$10 million to fund the pilot of a connected and autonomous last mile shuttle in partnership with Invest Ottawa. The BIA celebrated the arrival of Carleton University to Kanata North alongside the expansion of the UOttawa Kanata North campus with their new Connected Autonomous Vehicles Research Facility. They also launched the Discover Technata 2.0 job board and now have 240+ companies participating with over 36,000 jobs available with tech park companies, 1000 of which are located within Kanata North today. The BIA was thrilled to have the Kanata North Special Economic District Designation approved within the City of Ottawa's new Official Plan. With a solid commitment from the City of Ottawa to engage with the BIA, stakeholders in the forthcoming transportation master plan, the BIA knows this is just the beginning of an exciting and much desired transformation of this important technology hub.
12. Manotick BIA continued in 2021 as a very event driven BIA. The BIA's events are created to encourage local and regional consumers to come and experience

Manotick. The thought process is to give visitors a reason to come to the Village and the BIA has been successful in doing this. Event attendance has been growing substantially over the past several years and the following are just some of the events the BIA successfully executed in 2021; Dickinson Days (June), A Taste of Manotick (August), Women's Day (November), and Christmas in the Village (December).

13. Preston Street BIA levy remained at 50% in 2021 to help members recover from lost revenues due to the pandemic. BIA staff worked to secure grants to help fund marketing initiatives including the Digital MainStreet Technology Pilot Grant of \$25,000, a \$10,000 Parking Marketing Grant and a \$20,000 FedDev (Federal Economic Development Agency) grant to be used for video production and marketing. Marketing efforts in 2021 were focused largely on sharing food service member information regarding takeout and service provider updates, along with generating engagement with the community.
14. Quartier Vanier BIA continued to support members through pandemic challenges by reducing its levy by 25% and increasing online promotions and campaigns. The creation of the Vanier HUB brought thousands of new visitors to Vanier and provided quality programming to the community. The BIA added a new mural to Beechwood and worked on several important development files. They also proudly celebrated Mark Kaluski who received the Order of Ottawa for his work as Chair of the BIA for 13 years and as Founding Chair of OCOBIA.
15. Somerset Street Chinatown BIA continued efforts to provide leadership and support to members and maintain a good level of service while the BIA levy rate was reduced by 50%. The BIA was among the few recipients of grants from both streams of the My Main Street Program and was able to complete more streetscape beautification projects including murals, LED lighting installations, and a city-wide youth artwork collection event.
16. Somerset Village BIA once again worked with member restaurants and businesses to mobilize an outdoor summer patio street closure from May through September 2021, which was very successful. Most restaurants had an outdoor patio with a maximized but safe seating capacity. The closing of the street over the weekends was instrumental to businesses survival. Customers seemed very pleased with the layout claiming it had a very European feel, and the BIA was told by the City that they are affectionately called the "Somerset Model".

17. Sparks Street BIA/Sparks Street Mall Authority saw several streetscape improvements along Sparks Street in 2021. Trees returned to Sparks Street with the construction of the new Green Zone. This space has been well received by the public and a second one will be constructed in 2022. In partnership with the City, the BIA replaced over five thousand square feet of interlock at three locations along the street. Going forward, the goal is to rehabilitate the surface with appropriate materials whenever possible to improve the aesthetic and enhance the visitor experience. In addition, the BIA installed three bottle filling stations along the street and added seven large Christmas displays turning Sparks Street into a downtown winter wonderland.
18. Wellington West BIA opened their new office in Hintonburg and Wellington Village, ran seasonal marketing programs, launched a new member data system, and saw strong and effective social media results. Infrastructure projects included wayfinding kiosks and new gateway signs, which are great additions to the overall streetscape. The BIA also saw an improvement in controlling and limiting graffiti and introduced new murals and art projects.
19. Westboro Village BIA implemented a promotion exclusive to staff and businesses who work and reside in the area. The BIA has a growing list of 34 Westboro businesses who are providing discounts and offers. Twelve businesses participated in *Behind the Business*, a special blog series put out by the BIA. This is an insider's look at Westboro businesses and their owners, and you can find this feature on the Westboro Village website. Twenty-eight patio promotions were developed over the year, and the BIA did a fantastic job of promoting local patios. The BIA continued their relationship with the local community paper - The Kitchissippi Times. The BIA advertised services and member businesses within the BIA.

## **RURAL IMPLICATIONS**

This report provides the annual reports and audited financial statements of the Carp Road Corridor, Carp Village and Manotick BIAs.

## **CONSULTATION**

No consultations were conducted for this report.

## **COMMENTS BY THE WARD COUNCILLOR(S)**

This is a city-wide report – not applicable.



**ADVISORY COMMITTEE(S) COMMENTS**

Not applicable.

**LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no legal impediments to approving the recommendations in this report.

**RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

There are no risk implications.

**ASSET MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

There are no asset management implications associated with the recommendations of this report.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

**ACCESSIBILITY IMPACTS**

Businesses within the City's BIAs are responsible for adhering to the requirements of the [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005](#), which includes but is not limited to providing accessible customer service, training for staff, and access for people with service animals. The City has supported many initiatives that impact accessibility within the BIAs, such as reviewing patio approvals, road closures and other projects using an accessibility lens. This results in a more accessible, inclusive, and welcoming city for all residents and visitors.

**ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS**

The city's nineteen (19) Business Improvement Areas and the Ottawa Coalition of BIAs (OCOBIA) are a critical part of Ottawa's economic development ecosystem representing the interests of small businesses and highlighting the significance of vibrant main streets and commercial districts to economic growth and prosperity. Vibrant neighbourhoods and main streets contribute to quality of life and the attractiveness of Ottawa as a place to live, work, play, invest, visit and learn.

**SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

Document 1 Bank Street BIA 2021 Annual Report

- Document 2 Barrhaven BIA 2021 Annual Report
- Document 3 Bells Corners BIA 2021 Annual Report
- Document 4 ByWard Market BIA 2021 Annual Report
- Document 5 Carp Road Corridor BIA 2021 Annual Report
- Document 6 Carp Village BIA 2021 Annual Report
- Document 7 Downtown Rideau BIA 2021 Annual Report
- Document 8 Glebe BIA 2021 Annual Report
- Document 9 Heart of Orléans BIA 2021 Annual Report
- Document 10 Kanata Central BIA 2021 Annual Report
- Document 11 Kanata North BIA 2021 Annual Report
- Document 12 Manotick BIA 2021 Annual Report
- Document 13 Preston Street BIA 2021 Annual Report
- Document 14 Quartier Vanier BIA 2021 Annual Report
- Document 15 Somerset Street Chinatown BIA 2021 Annual Report
- Document 16 Somerset Village BIA 2021 Annual Report
- Document 17 Sparks Street BIA 2021 Annual Report
- Document 18 Sparks Street Mall Authority 2021 Annual Report
- Document 19 Wellington West BIA 2021 Annual Report
- Document 20 Westboro Village BIA 2021 Annual Report
- Document 21 Bank Street BIA 2021 Audited Financial Statements
- Document 22 Barrhaven BIA 2021 Audited Financial Statements
- Document 23 Bells Corners BIA 2021 Audited Financial Statements
- Document 24 ByWard Market BIA 2021 Audited Financial Statements
- Document 25 Carp Road Corridor BIA 2021 Audited Financial Statements

- Document 26 Carp Village BIA 2021 Audited Financial Statements
- Document 27 Downtown Rideau BIA 2021 Audited Financial Statements
- Document 28 Glebe BIA 2021 Audited Financial Statements
- Document 29 Heart of Orléans BIA 2021 Audited Financial Statements
- Document 30 Kanata Central BIA 2021 Audited Financial Statements
- Document 31 Kanata North BIA 2021 Audited Financial Statements
- Document 32 Manotick BIA 2021 Audited Financial Statements
- Document 33 Preston Street BIA 2021 Audited Financial Statements
- Document 34 Quartier Vanier BIA 2021 Audited Financial Statements
- Document 35 Somerset Street Chinatown BIA 2021 Audited Financial Statements
- Document 36 Somerset Village BIA 2021 Audited Financial Statements
- Document 37 Sparks Street BIA 2021 Audited Financial Statements
- Document 38 Sparks Street Mall Authority 2021 Audited Financial Statements
- Document 39 Wellington West BIA 2021 Audited Financial Statements
- Document 40 Westboro Village BIA 2021 Audited Financial Statements

## **DISPOSITION**

Economic Development Services will action any direction received from Council with respect to this report. Consistent with previous years, Council will be requested to consider this item in the same calendar year as the report to the Finance and Corporate Services Committee.