

**Subject: 2023 Business Improvement Area and Sparks Street Mall Authority –
Annual Reports and Audited Financial Statements**

File Number: ACS2024-SI-ED-0008

**Report to Finance and Corporate Services Committee on 6 November 2024
and Council 13 November 2024**

**Submitted on October 8, 2024 by Sheilagh Doherty, Director, Economic
Development, Strategic Initiatives Department**

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Ward: Citywide

**Objet : Zone d'amélioration commerciale et Administration du mail de la rue
Sparks – Rapports annuels et états financiers vérifiés de 2023**

Numéro de dossier : ACS2024-SI-ED-0008

Rapport présenté au Comité des finances et des services organisationnels

Rapport soumis le 6 novembre 2024

et au Conseil le 13 novembre 2024

**Soumis le 2024-10-08 par Sheilagh Doherty, directrice, Développement
économique**

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Quartier : À l'échelle de la ville

REPORT RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Finance and Corporate Services Committee recommend Council receive the 2023 Business Improvement Area and Sparks Street Mall Authority Annual Reports and Audited Financial Statements.

RECOMMANDATION(S) 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 2023 relatifs à la Zone d'amélioration commerciale et à 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 annual municipal property taxes. BIAs undertake a variety of beautification, cleanliness and safety, and marketing programs to attract customers and visitors to the area and support their member businesses. The City of Ottawa currently has [eighteen \(18\) BIAs](#). Of note, the ByWard Market BIA began the process to wind down its business operations in November 2022, and the BIA by-laws ([2023-393](#)) were officially repealed at the City Council meeting of September 13, 2023. The dissolution of the ByWard Market BIA was in support of the expanded mandate provided to the Municipal Services Corporation known as the ByWard Market District Authority (formerly Marche d'Ottawa Markets).

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 2023 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 services provided at the expense of the municipality while also promoting the area as a business or shopping area.

Ottawa's eighteen (18) BIAs include 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 2023, BIA and Sparks Street Mall Authority members contributed approximately \$7.6 million towards beautification, promotion, cleanliness, and safety within their respective districts to improve the visitor and resident experience and support business growth.

In 2023, Ottawa's BIAs, supported by the advocacy efforts of the [Ottawa Coalition of BIAs \(OCOBIA\)](#), continued supporting their small business members. Economic initiatives such as advertising and promotion, hosting community festivals and events, street enhancements and beautification projects, strategic plans, and other activities were delivered by BIAs in support of their respective districts.

Should the [Sparks Street BIA Boundary Adjustment](#) (Expansion) be successful in the Notice of Intention (objection) period ending on December 23, 2024, the Sparks Street BIA will now be referred to as the Downtown BIA, as requested by the BIA Board of Management through their motion approved at their Board meeting on October 21, 2024. Subject to Council's approval, the new BIA name will be in effect on January 1, 2025, when the boundary adjustment (expansion) takes effect in accordance with the [Boards of Management for Business Improvement Areas \(By-law No. 2021-255\)](#), and staff will subsequently place any required amending by-laws on the agenda of Council for enactment, to reflect the new BIA name.

Below are brief highlights from each BIA:

Barrhaven BIA

In 2023, the Barrhaven BIA made many investments in community assets and new programming including large-scale placemaking features and the official launch of the I  BARRHAVEN destination marketing campaign which has become the primary

focus of all marketing campaigns and branding. The BBIA continued to see high levels of membership engagement through signature networking events, print newsletters, and weekly email updates. Working closely with local elected representatives, the Barrhaven BIA advocated for Barrhaven's Downtown and Civic Complex, the Greenbank realignment project, improved transit within Barrhaven, and the Barnsdale interchange on Highway 416.

Bells Corners BIA

In 2023, the Bells Corners BIA organized several local community events, including a Summer Bash, which was held for the third consecutive year, and a Holiday Tree Lighting Ceremony. The BIA continued its engagement with all three levels of government on behalf of its members and produced surveys, research, strategic and placemaking events with the goal of contributing to the continued growth of the community.

ByWard Market BIA

On June 14, 2023, City Council approved the [ByWard Market Strategic Alignment Initiative and Public Realm Plan Update](#), and a single district governance and operating model was selected as the preferred approach to revitalize the area. The ByWard Market District Authority will use the existing Municipal Services Corporation legal structure, with an expanded operating mandate and new branding. The BIA by-laws ([2023-393](#)) were officially repealed at the City Council meeting of September 13, 2023.

Carp Road Corridor BIA

In 2023, the CRCBIA continued to advocate for extension of municipal water service into business areas to improve the attractiveness of vacant land and provide new economic opportunity to existing businesses. The BIA also advocated for improvement to local traffic capacity to ease growing congestion at the 417 interchange. The City has responded with a study of water extension to the Village of Carp, which may include providing water service in the Corridor, and is moving forward with expansion to 4 lanes on Carp Road south of Highway 417. Both initiatives will help stimulate business and job growth in the area. Looking ahead, CRCBIA intends to take a more active role in defining how the CRCBIA, together with economic development partners and the City of Ottawa, can work to grow Ottawa's light industry and manufacturing sectors in the Carp area.

Carp Village BIA

In 2023, the Carp Village BIA profiled several local businesses in The Carp Villager magazine, which was distributed throughout the village. The BIA continued its partnership with West Carleton Online, featuring monthly member business profiles, and maintaining a strong social media presence via The Village of Carp BIA Facebook page. The BIA organized and hosted the Village of Carp Harvest Supper which raised \$10K for the West Carleton Food Bank. As part of a restoration project, new exterior paint was applied to Memorial Hall and a mural was commissioned on the side of the building to showcase the fabric of the community. The BIA also successfully secured a City of Ottawa grant for a third Carp sign – to be placed near the Diefenbunker/Carp Road going to Kinburn.

Centretown BIA

In January 2023, the Centretown BIA launched the Turn Up Bank Giveaway, collaborating with two Ottawa influencers to support member businesses. In March, the BIA hosted the Fire and Ice Winter Festival, transforming Bank Street into a magical display of unique light, an interactive LED video wall, and performances from local drag artists, Indigenous hoop dancers, and throat singers. The Centretown BIA also organized two Taste Ottawa events, partnering with the Tulip Festival and CityFolk, which saw participation from restaurants across the city. During the summer, a unique window mural was added at 160 Bank Street, adding color and creativity to the area.

In August 2023, the BIA underwent a rebrand from Bank Street BIA to Centretown BIA, embracing the community's identity as the heart of downtown Ottawa. This rebrand came with new street banners, including a Pride flag, Village Legacy design, and the Centretown banners with the slogan "Uncommon to the Core." That same month, the BIA partnered with Capital Pride for their annual Pride weekend, featuring street activations and a social media campaign highlighting Centretown's vibrant events during the celebration. The year concluded with festive Christmas displays within Snider Plaza.

Downtown Rideau BIA

The Downtown Rideau BIA is dedicated to creating a more thriving, competitive, and safe area that attracts people while celebrating the authentic nature and character of the destination. Marketing and promotional efforts have been designed to help build the reputation, and the connect and engage with audiences. Through ongoing communication, members are kept informed and connected on relevant matters that can impact their operations. Placemaking and beautification initiatives are intended to

find new ways to reimagine the public space and enhance the on-street experience. Maintenance and revitalization programs are designed to ensure that the area continues to evoke the energy and vitality required to build pride of place. And through advocacy efforts, decision makers at all levels are informed about the very real challenges that impact the business community and limit its full potential.

Glebe BIA

The Glebe BIA coordinated the installation of new Glebe banners in the spring of 2023, which added colour and brand awareness to the neighbourhood. The BIA received partial funding from the City of Ottawa Mural & Architectural Feature Funding Program towards the installation of a new mural at the corner of Bank Street and Patterson Avenue. The BIA worked with the Glebe Community Association and a local resident to install a Right of Way patio on the corner of Bank Street and Third Avenue. Christmas lights were installed in the large and small trees along Bank Street throughout the winter months. The BIA hosted two cleanup days in the Glebe as part of the City of Ottawa led Cleaning the Capital initiative. In the fall, the Glebe BIA hired an experienced web designer to revamp their website and launched it in early 2024.

Heart of Orléans BIA

2023 was a remarkable year for The Heart of Orléans BIA, marked by significant milestones. The BIA embarked on a yearlong project to prepare for the BIA boundary expansion in 2024, aligning it with the City's Orléans Corridor Secondary Plan Study, which covers the four Orléans LRT stations and the Youville, Jean D'Arc, and Taylor Creek business communities. Beyond hosting numerous networking events, the BIA developed a member booklet and visited hundreds of businesses to highlight the benefits of joining the BIA. While this was the most substantial project of the year, the BIA also designed and installed new banners and acquired a giant Adirondack chair and had it artistically painted by local talent. The BIA also added a bike repair station, continued publishing the e-Magazine, and collaborated with influencers to showcase the BIA. The beloved "Behind the Business" campaign, which shares the stories of local businesses, also continued to thrive. Throughout the year, the BIA also supported a variety of events, concluding 2023 with Santa's Parade of Lights, which draws tens of thousands of joyful spectators to the Heart of Orléans.

Kanata Central BIA

In the first quarter of 2023, the Kanata Central BIA carried out a research study to explore the viability, benefits, and business dynamics involved with a possible boundary

expansion. As a result of this study, the BIA proposed an expansion to its existing boundaries to include and welcome businesses to the North, East and South of its current area. Also in 2023, the BIA assisted members directly with marketing and outreach (social media, photography, website optimization) while engaging in a variety of activities related to the maintenance of BIA signage, traffic boxes, Bell boxes, Christmas holiday lighting, and graffiti removal and litter clean up.

Kanata North BIA

In 2023, the KNBA celebrated its 10th anniversary, and undertook an extensive strategic planning and consultation process with partners and members, including an environmental scan exercise and a modernization of the website to include local news, member directories, and blogs highlighting the community from tech to retail, entertainment and more. The City of Ottawa's recognition of Kanata North as a Special Economic District in the Official Plan supports the unique future of this innovation ecosystem, bolstered further by announcements of new mixed-use residential and commercial towers coming into the park.

The Hub350 space, including the newly launched Digital Media Lab powered by Ross Video, attracted over 10,300 visitors, and supported over 100 events. Successful events such as the two-day Discover Technata Job Fair supported tech sector talent attraction with over 4,000 registrants and 30 exhibitors. The district was marketed to the world with increased videography, a stronger digital presence to a rapidly growing audience, and attention from The Globe and Mail with articles detailing the storied history of Canada's largest technology park, and its incredibly bright future.

Manotick BIA

The Manotick Village BIA kicked off 2023 with a New Year social media campaign which included the promotion of health care practices, financial services, sports, and leisure arts. A series of promotions were undertaken around various winter activities in the village. In June, seasonal planting, hanging baskets and planters were installed. In September, the BIA hosted the Taste of Manotick event. In October, to celebrate Small Business Month in Ontario, the Manotick BIA partnered with OCOBIA and the Barrhaven BIA for the first annual Ottawa South Small Business Networking Breakfast. In November, new Christmas decorations and seasonal planters were installed. The BIA finished 2023 with Christmas in the Village that included various events and promotions.

Preston Street BIA

In 2023, the Preston Street BIA installed two new community murals and Italian-flag tapered banners to the street. The popular “People on Preston” video series was continued, and record traffic was reported for the Ottawa Italian Festival in June. Year-round graffiti remediation and replacement of the portal archway LED lighting system took place, as well as a full retrofit of the Queensway “Little Italy” neon signs. The BIA also coordinated the removal and storage of the heritage mural project and overpass facets, formation of a new archway sub-committee, and a new historical website feature.

Somerset Street Chinatown BIA

In 2023, the Chinatown BIA focused on enhancing the area's cultural appeal and safety. Highlights included the installation of a mural, selfie stations, marble sculptures, and improved street decoration. Events like the Chinatown Night Market, Bazaar, and Chinatown Vibes Concerts reinforced its vibrant identity. Beautification efforts were also supported by maintaining flower planters and tackling graffiti. However, challenges such as the post-pandemic economic slowdown, rising costs, labor shortages, and increased street safety concerns remained significant obstacles.

Sommerset Village BIA

In 2023, the Somerset Village BIA coordinated its annual outdoor patio street closure from May to October. Most restaurants had an outdoor patio with a maximized but safe seating capacity. The closing of the street over the weekends was instrumental to business survival. The BIA was able to secure the ongoing engagement of a part-time BIA manager and mobilize funds for the annual renewal and upgrading of the streetscape lighting.

Sparks Street BIA / Sparks Street Mall Authority

2023 saw the expansion of the Sparks Street BIA's main events and partnerships with new partners. Ottawa Ribfest welcomed two additional vendors to the street. Ottawa Buskerfest welcomed performers from around the world to Sparks Street for the first time in four years. The SSBIA partnered with the Ottawa Music Industry Coalition to produce Songs from the Shed, with a diversity of acts providing entertainment during the summer and fall. The BIA screened three films in 2023 with Pop Up Cinema movies and added more lights to the street with the Winter Wander experiential holiday walk.

Vanier BIA

In 2023, the ZAC Vanier BIA rebranded and changed its name. The BIA continued to

develop its three main streets and conducted a fulsome public realm audit and reimagination. The BIA also received the very prestigious International Downtown Association Excellence in Placemaking Award for the transformation of the Vanier HUB. The HUB saw over 10,000 visits in 2023. The BIA also held its successful annual Partage Beechwood dinner in the National Cemetery where \$55,000 was raised for the Partage Vanier Foodbank. SummerSun events on McArthur and Beechwood, and Beechfest saw 4,500 visitors. In addition, the BIA completely revamped its office and systems and put in place stringent financial policies to ensure future successes.

Wellington West BIA

2023 has been a year of transition for the Wellington West BIA with a focus on determining how the BIA can best reach and support all members. There has been extensive discussion, consultation, planning and policy work. The BIA has drastically increased its ability to support members who want help with marketing, organization or the operation of events and other initiatives. With these new skills and tools, the BIA has reached out more often and worked alongside more members to see their vision realized. A new approach to social media has been adopted with the help of professionals in the field with a focus on representing members brands, shops, and stories.

Westboro Village BIA

In 2023, the Westboro Village BIA relaunched Shop the Village in partnership with the Amex Shop Small Campaign. Capital Popup Cinema hosted approximately 300 people per evening for three nights allowing local businesses to advertise or participate as vendors. The Wickedly Westboro Halloween event significantly increased member engagement and was popular with children as well as businesses. Music in the Village and Vintage Popup 613 drew people into the area and were enjoyed by area residents as well. For the Light up the Village Holiday Ceremony, the BIA partnered with three local charities, the Carlington Community Health Centre, Cornerstone Housing for Women, and the Westboro Food Bank.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal impediments to receiving the information in this report.

COMMENTS BY THE WARD COUNCILLOR(S)

This is a city-wide report – not applicable.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE(S) COMMENTS

N/A

CONSULTATION

No consultations were conducted for 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.

ASSET MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

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

CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

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

DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY IMPLICATIONS

The General Manager of the Strategic Initiatives Department has delegated authority ([Schedule L / Section 4](#)), on behalf of City Council, to appoint to a Business Improvement Area Board of Management those directors who have been selected by a vote of the membership of the improvement area in accordance with Subsection 204(3)(b) of the Municipal Act, 2001.

ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

Business Improvement Areas (BIAs) 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.

BIAs, through OCOBIA, were an important participant on the external partners Sponsor Group which supported the development of the City's [Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan](#), which was approved by City Council on April 3, 2024.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

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

INDIGENOUS, GENDER AND EQUITY IMPLICATIONS

There are no Indigenous, gender and equity implications associated with the recommendations of this report.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

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

RURAL IMPLICATIONS

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

TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS

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

TERM OF COUNCIL PRIORITIES

The recommendations in this report support the following 2023-2026 Term of Council priorities and [2023-2026 City Strategic Plan](#):

A city with a diversified and prosperous economy.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Document 1 Barrhaven BIA 2023 Annual Report

Document 2 Bells Corners BIA 2023 Annual Report

Document 3	Carp Road Corridor BIA 2023 Annual Report
Document 4	Carp Village BIA 2023 Annual Report
Document 5	Centretown BIA 2023 Annual Report
Document 6	Downtown Rideau BIA 2023 Annual Report
Document 7	Glebe BIA 2023 Annual Report
Document 8	Heart of Orléans BIA 2023 Annual Report
Document 9	Kanata Central BIA 2023 Annual Report
Document 10	Kanata North BIA 2023 Annual Report
Document 11	Manotick BIA 2023 Annual Report
Document 12	Preston Street BIA 2023 Annual Report
Document 13	Somerset Street Chinatown BIA 2023 Annual Report
Document 14	Somerset Village BIA 2023 Annual Report
Document 15	Sparks Street BIA 2023 Annual Report
Document 16	Sparks Street Mall Authority 2023 Annual Report
Document 17	Vanier BIA 2023 Annual Report
Document 18	Wellington West BIA 2023 Annual Report
Document 19	Westboro Village BIA 2023 Annual Report
Document 20	Barrhaven BIA 2023 Audited Financial Statements
Document 21	Bells Corners BIA 2023 Audited Financial Statements
Document 22	ByWard Market BIA 2023 Audited Financial Statements
Document 23	Carp Road Corridor BIA 2023 Audited Financial Statements
Document 24	Carp Village BIA 2023 Audited Financial Statements
Document 25	Centretown BIA 2023 Audited Financial Statements
Document 26	Downtown Rideau BIA 2023 Audited Financial Statements

Document 27	Glebe BIA 2023 Audited Financial Statements
Document 28	Heart of Orléans BIA 2023 Audited Financial Statements
Document 29	Kanata Central BIA 2023 Audited Financial Statements
Document 30	Kanata North BIA 2023 Audited Financial Statements
Document 31	Manotick BIA 2023 Audited Financial Statements
Document 32	Preston Street BIA 2023 Audited Financial Statements
Document 33	Somerset Street Chinatown BIA 2023 Audited Financial Statements
Document 34	Somerset Village BIA 2023 Audited Financial Statements
Document 35	Sparks Street BIA 2023 Audited Financial Statements
Document 36	Sparks Street Mall Authority 2023 Audited Financial Statements
Document 37	Vanier BIA 2023 Audited Financial Statements
Document 38	Wellington West BIA 2023 Audited Financial Statements
Document 39	Westboro Village BIA 2023 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. The Director of Economic Development in consultation with Legal Services will finalize the required amending by-laws and place such by-laws on the agenda of Council for enactment.