DOWNTOWN BARRIE BUSINESS ASSOCIATION (BIA)

2023 ANNUAL REPORT

AWARD WINNING!

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Hello fellow Downtown Barrie business owners! My name is Heather Kennedy and I am the owner of Shop Blueberry Moon on Dunlop St East and I am proud to represent the Downtown Barrie BIA Board of Management as the Chair with the support of a fantastic Board of Directors. 2023 was a really exciting year for downtown Barrie as we continue to welcome our community back to Downtown Barrie. We are continuing to see more people coming back downtown to enjoy festivals, events and activities. Whether that is our continued Open Air Dunlop utilizing our new flexible streetscape or taking in a summer evening movie in Meridian Place as part of Lawnchair Luminata. We are looking forward to building on the momentum of 2023 and bringing more people together in the Downtown to support our local businesses - our friends, our families, our neighbors.

Heather Kennedy

A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

2023 marked another year of moving forward from our past challenges and reframing what our future will become - the opportunities and the challenges. We have been continuing to build on our operating model to fully leverage our four pillars as event facilitators, area marketers, public realm investors and policy & partner influencers to ensure we are moving as an organization. We see that our community has a deep desire to reconnect and as a result we are focused on utilizing our award winning Meridian Place as a key event venue, we are building out our Downtown beautification program through a world class, artist driven mural program. Further, with the implementation of a brand new Downtown Barrie Gift Card program we are supporting our businesses and at the same time making it easier for our community to support our businesses.

Craig Stevens

Board Members

Heather Kennedy, Chair
Steve Ricalis, Vice Chair
Jaclyn Stergiadis , Secretary Treasurer
Chris Gerrard
Chantal Laurin
Allison Oakes
Christina Mancuso
Craig Nixon, Councillor
Janet Kemp, Ex Officio Past Chair

Bia Staff

Craig Stevens
Executive Director

Stacey Zubczyk
Operations Manager

Sarah Jensen
Public Realm & Communications Coordinator

Cam Stamper
Creative Development Coordinator

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Event Facilitator

Why are events important?

New visits to the Downtown have the opportunity to bring new business to the Downtown. Promoting the Downtown area through visitor experience is a key priority for BIAs and hosting events is a way for Downtowns to really show off all they have to offer. Events have the power to make visitors realize that the Downtown area is a place they want to be.

As an event facilitator, it is the BIA's responsibility to bring these Downtown events to life. With creative flair, BIAs identify target audiences, implement events for these audiences, support event brands, help devise event concepts and can organize technical aspects. Additionally, BIAs help spread the word through social media, strategic marketing and by reaching out to local media outlets. Event attendance is a good way to measure the ability of the BIA to draw visitors to the Downtown area.

Core to visitor experience is the ability to generate a sense of strong cultural community building; facilitating events to draw people to the area creates a sense that a Downtown is worth visiting.

The return on investment (ROI) of the events portfolio is the total number of visitors to the Downtown.

~$152,255 INVESTMENT

Festivals, Events & Activities

Return on Investment

110,000+ total annual visits

We are continuing to re-introduce, reframe and explore new event opportunities with the focus of bringing our community Downtown to support our businesses. Acting as an event facilitator, the Downtown Barrie (BIA) brings together over 100,000 people to the downtown and we are looking to build upon this number.

Our core events include the Hot Cocoa Trail in partnership with the City of Barrie Winterfest, Open Air Dunlop that converts our new Main Street into a pedestrian friendly streetscape full of activities and entertainment, Lawnchair Luminata in partnership with the Barrie Film Festival that brings film to the outdoors, Noella Tree Lighting in partnership with the Barrie Chamber of Commerce Santa Claus Parade and the Barrie Rotary Club Festival of Trees that kicks off Barrie's festive season.

These events focus on bringing many visitors to the downtown area with the intent of exploring the area in a family focused, friendly and safe environment.

OPEN AIR DUNLOP

Lawn Chair Luminata

NOËLLA

HOT COCOA TRAIL
EVERY WEEKEND IN FEBRUARY + MARCH

A Look Forward

Meridian Place & Memorial Square

Lawn Chair **Luminata**

Weekly Outdoor Movies

Utilize the opportunity to build audience activities prior to the movie

Live Music Series

Reintroduce live music on Friday nights prior to Open Air Dunlop

OPEN AIR DUNLOP

Build Audience Attendance and Business Participation

Utilize Meridian Place as a vendor building more entertainment, attractions and activities to continue to grow the audience attendance

NOËLLA

Build upon the new two-day program format and continue partnerships with Chamber of Commerse, Barrie Rotary Club and City of Barrie

Partnerships

Creating partnerships to integrate & schedule more events

Celebrating local arts, culture and diversity through Downtown events and activities

Area Marketer

Why is marketing the Downtown area important?

A BIA that promotes the Downtown area also promotes its businesses. This includes generating well thought out marketing campaigns utilizing all forms of media while remaining ‘on brand.’ The aim is to draw attention not only to the Downtown area, but all the businesses within it. The BIA uses a model that focuses on 3 key brand building categories:

- ‘**Brand Product Development**’ - focusing on small but significant physical attributes.
- **‘Brand Marketing**’ - developing creative campaigns to reach the public.
- **‘Brand Presentation**’ - a direct communication program that connects to local influential networks, partners and organizations.

Using this model results in the BIA marketing the Downtown area as a vibrant space that people will want to visit, strengthening the sense of community and establishing the Downtown and its businesses as places people want to be.

The Return on Investment (ROI) takes into consideration social engagement & population reach in combination with event facilitation and business interaction.

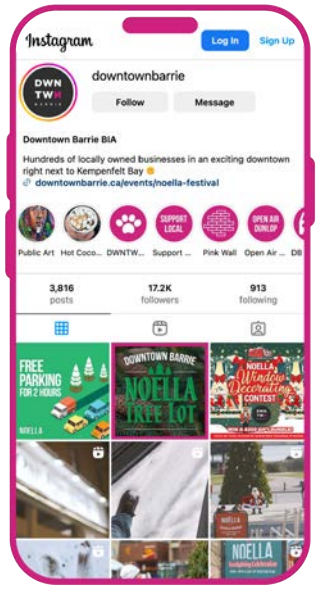
~$70,950 INVESTMENT

A Look Forward

We are continuing to build out our social media presence and traditional marketing plan. We are investing on producing high quality content that positions Downtown Barrie in a positive light and is inclusive of the entire downtown community.

The BIA marketing strategy focuses on the ‘downtown area’ that includes 300+ businesses but does not promote each individual business. However, it is structured for downtown businesses to be able to utilize the BIAs followers and corresponding exposure and audience reach.

DIGITAL MARKETING 2023 STATS



Facebook

Followers	Impressions	Posts
6.7K	5K	1712

Instagram

Followers	Impressions	Posts
17.2K	44K	3818

Utilizing our marketing model we will be further refining and focusing our marketing dollars, activities, and direction to get the best return on investment.

20 PRESS RELEASES
> $100K IN EARNED MEDIA

COMMUNITY

Public Realm Investor

Why is investing in the public realm important?

At its inception in 1970, the BIA concept was based on the importance of investing in ‘the space between and surrounding the buildings and the businesses’ - the public realm. Investing in the public realm creates a vibrant and enjoyable sense of place that attracts visitors to the Downtown. A BIA aims to generate a personal connection for visitors (by way of beautification investments as simple as flower planters and banners or as complex as large public buildings, venues & parks) to public spaces strengthening a visitor’s connection to your business.

BIAs that are invested in the public realm recognize that the backbone to a successful Downtown begins with drawing visitors to it by making it a sociable, exciting and vibrant environment.

The Return on Investment (ROI) is the creation, enhancement, and beautification of the public realm within the Downtown area.

~$178,500 INVESTMENT

Downtown Barrie Mural Program

2023

The nooks and crannies of the Downtown present an opportunity for creativity and artistic expression, additionally this creates a safer and more inviting atmosphere. The new Downtown Barrie BIA Mural Project now has over 6 world class murals and we will be continuing to build upon.

- Pink Wall (Chase McEachern) - Alanah Jewel
- Strawberry Wall (Maple St) - Bareket Kezwer & Monica Loney
- Lakeshore Mews Alleyway (Dunlop St East) - Clandestinos
- Windows Into the Past (Dunlop St West) - Maple Convenience
- Shak's World (Maple St) - Clandestinos
- P_zza Alleyway (Dunlop St East) - Fab Tray - 16 local artists.
- Hot Air Balloons (Dunlop St East) - Clandestinos

FedDev Community Revitalization Grant supporting Meridian Place

2023

The FedDev Community Revitalization Grant was applied for in 2022 with the focus on enhancing Meridian Place as a public venue with the purpose of bringing the community to the Downtown. We have now received the majority of the items which include:

- Water Bottle Filler with a Pet Drink Basin
- Enhanced seating toppers along the concrete tiers
- 35 ft Winter Tree for Noella and winter season (expandable)
- 18 Winter Themed Light Standard LED Displays
- 6 LED Large Format Swings and Inflatable 18 hole Mini Golf Game
- 60 Outdoor Chairs and 40 Outdoor Tables (supplements the current inventory)

Dunlop Streetscape Beautification Program Reinstated

2023

2023 opened up the Dunlop Streetscape to reinstate the beautification program with hanging flower planters, banners and on-surface garden beds. This program complements and softens the hardscape surface and creates a serene and comfortable environment.

Policy & Partner Influencer

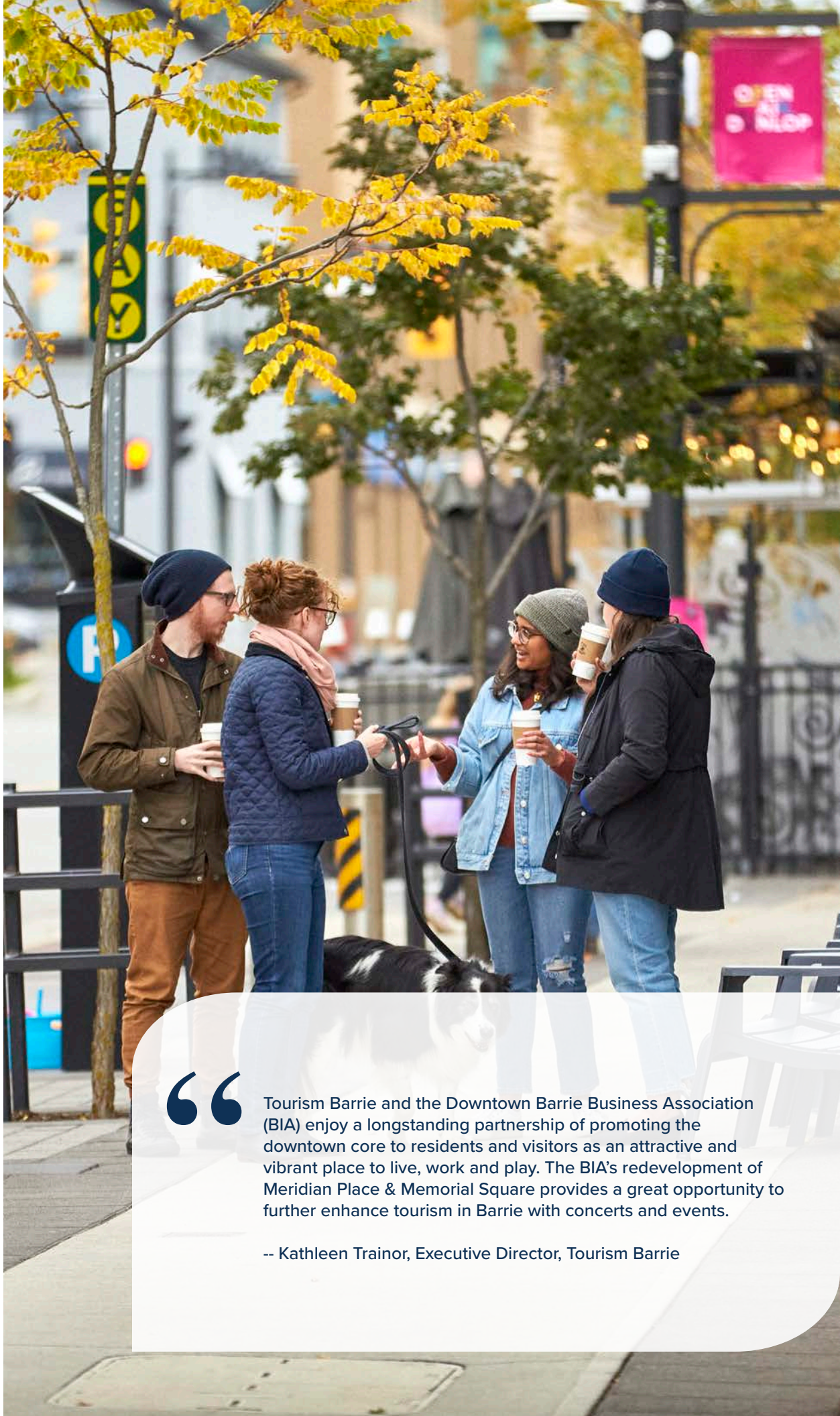
Why is a Policy & Partner Influencer important?

With strong Strategic Plans (Brand Action Plans), BIAs become integral vehicles for communicating localized business opportunities and challenges to policy makers, government partners, local community agencies and commercial organizations. By embracing a cooperative relationship with these partners, BIAs are able to advocate and influence positive change on behalf of the Downtown area, its businesses and the local community.

The ability to share captured data and effectively address policies & investment helps establish the right environment to contribute to building our local businesses and community. Creative problem solving and a strong working relationship with all key partners keeps the BIA on your side for creating a vibrant and exciting Downtown area.

The Return on Investment (ROI) is strong relationships and a collaborative working approach to local challenges and opportunities.

~$282,262 INVESTMENT



> Tourism Barrie and the Downtown Barrie Business Association (BIA) enjoy a longstanding partnership of promoting the downtown core to residents and visitors as an attractive and vibrant place to live, work and play. The BIA's redevelopment of Meridian Place & Memorial Square provides a great opportunity to further enhance tourism in Barrie with concerts and events.
>
> -- Kathleen Trainor, Executive Director, Tourism Barrie

WHAT IF OUR BIA MEMBERS WERE 1 BUSINESS?

WE WOULD CONSISTS OF OVER

1,875 EMPLOYEES

IN THAT CASE WE WOULD BE RANKED LOCALLY AS THE

#1 PRIVATE EMPLOYER & **#4 PUBLIC EMPLOYER**

OUR COLLECTIVE GROSS DOWNTOWN PRODUCT

GENERATED
$130,500,000
IN TOTAL SALES

RESULTING IN
$16,950,000
OF HST REMITTANCE

4X TAX REVENUE/ACRE

3X ASSESSED VALUE/ACRE

COMMERCIAL ASSESSMENT
$174,935,900

COMMERCIAL + RESIDENTIAL ASSESSMENT
~$500,000,000

Gross Downtown Product

'The Gross Downtown Product (GPD)' - is a term coined by the Downtown Barrie Business Association (BIA) and is a riff on Gross Domestic Product, the measurement of a nation's overall economic activity. It's a terminology that has now been adopted by BIAs across the country. This Key Performance Indicator was designed to quantify the total economic impact, specifically the value of all goods sold and services produced in a downtown over a given year.

BRAND ACTION ITEMS

WHO WE ARE

- Event Facilitators
- Area Marketers
- Policy & Partner Influencers
- Public Realm Investors

BRAND LEADERSHIP TEAM

Focus Project : Meridian Place & Memorial Square

Best Practice Biz Dev

- Business recruitment
- Best practices trip
- Sea cadet building
- Redevelop zoning (Official Plan/ CIP)
- OBIAA ROI Project
- Free Wi-Fi
- Major hotel/ conference centre
- Business

Connect Waterfront & Downtown

- Meridian Place/ Memorial Square
- Free Wi-Fi
- Floating stage
- Develop proper zoning
- District naming

Community

- Façade lighting - street
- Relocating social services
- College/university downtown
- Sea Cadet building

OPERATIONAL

Brand Product Development

- Extend beautification program
- Entertainment
- Upgrade events
- New brand specific events
- Street speakers
- Public art program
- Business technical assist program
- Parking meters - credit cards
- Wayfinding system
- Off site parking
- Crosswalk redevelopment
- Transportation link

Brand Marketing

- Quick Response (QR) posts
- Bridge brand outreach
- Best of - marketing brochure
- Parking app
- Allandale marketing
- Barrie fun facts
- Downtown app
- Visitor info kiosks (9)
- Boat cruise info
- Marketing/graphic design
- Brand style guide
- Marketing budget
- Social media
- Marketing plan

COMPLETED

- 5 Points Theatre
- Barrie Police Security Cameras
- Strategic Plan — All

Symbol Guide
Deliverable Types

Complete — One Time Projects
Underway — Continuous Projects
Future

Budget

What is unique about our budget?

At the inception of BIAs as organizations, a fundamental decision that was decided upon was how it was going to be funded. Many options were analyzed including voluntary annual dues (much like a Chamber or Tourism organization). What was settled on was essentially a ‘self taxation’. This connects a BIA to its local municipality as it is administered & facilitated through the property tax roll as a special levy within the designated BIA geographic area.

The budget is determined & approved independently by the BIA Board, then it is approved through Council and collected for the BIA by the municipality. This is important as it permits the BIA organization an absolute opportunity to focus on investing the budget back into the BIA area without the distraction of collecting payments or selling memberships. The Downtown Barrie BIA allocates & adjusts its budget within the Four Pillars according to the list of action items within its Brand Action Plan. Comparative budgets of BIAs with a similar sized geographic boundary & business mix:boundary & business mix:

Guelph: ~$786,000

Collingwood: ~$500,000

Kitchener: ~$1.4 Million

Kingston: ~$5.5 Million

2023 Total Budget
$684,387

2024 Proposed Total Budget
$725,000

2023 BIA Levy
0.391222%

2024 BIA Proposed Levy
TBD

2023 Operational Budget
$579,387

2024 Proposed Operational Budget
$615,000

2023 Capital Budget
$105,000

2024 Proposed Capital Budget
$110,000

2023 Commercial Assessment
$174,935,900

2024 Proposed Commercial Assessment
TBD

DWN
TWN
BARRIE

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