



**City of Kingston
Report to Council
Report Number 25-166**

To: Mayor and Members of Council
From: Lanie Hurdle, Chief Administrative Officer
Resource Staff: None
Date of Meeting: June 17, 2025
Subject: Kingston DBIA Annual Report 2024

Council Strategic Plan Alignment:

Theme: Corporate business

Goal: See above

Executive Summary:

This report includes the Kingston DBIA 2024 annual report. This report was presented to the Kingston DBIA membership at the Annual General Meeting on May 21, 2025.

Recommendation:

This report is for information only.

June 17, 2025

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Authorizing Signatures:

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY CHIEF

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

**Lanie Hurdle, Chief
Administrative Officer**

Consultation with the following Members of the Corporate Management Team:

Paige Agnew, Commissioner, Growth & Development Services	Not required
Jennifer Campbell, Commissioner, Community Services	Not required
Neil Carbone, Commissioner, Corporate & Emergency Services	Not required
David Fell, President & CEO, Utilities Kingston	Not required
Ian Semple, Acting Commissioner, Transportation & Infrastructure Services	Not required
Desirée Kennedy, Chief Financial Officer & City Treasurer	Not required

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Options/Discussion:

Kingston DBIA endorsed its strategic plan in 2023. This report has the 2024 annual plan which includes information on strategic plan progress as well as other community initiatives.

Existing Policy/By-Law

Not applicable

Notice Provisions

Not applicable

Financial Considerations

Not applicable

Contacts:

Lanie Hurdle, Chief Administrative Officer, 613-546-4291 extension 1231

Other City of Kingston Staff Consulted:

None

Exhibits Attached:

Exhibit A - Downtown Kingston Annual Report 2024

Downtown Kingston Annual Report 2024

Prepared by Marijo Cuerrier and the Downtown Kingston BIA Team

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Message from the Chair.

Christine Ray-Bratt | *Chair of the Board of Management 2023-2026*



This past year, advocacy has remained a major focus for our organization. From the LaSalle Causeway closure to downtown cleanliness, plantings, beautification, and increased police presence, your BIA has been actively engaged in working with community partners on sustainable solutions to some of our greatest challenges.

We've also seen strong economic activity downtown. In 2024, the Downtown Kingston Gift Card program sold over \$273,000 in cards, with more than \$219,000 redeemed in local businesses—real dollars reinvested directly into our community.

We welcomed 31 new businesses to the downtown core — 17 in industries other than food & beverage, fostering a balanced diversification of offerings the district. That's a strong signal that confidence in our downtown is high.

On the safety front, we saw a reduction in overall crime, and thanks to strong partnerships with Kingston Police, the City, and local advocates, we now have a dedicated officer in the BIA zone 40 hours a week, with additional enforcement resources to come. The Welcoming Streets program has also expanded, with Josh and Kim now covering seven days a week from 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. And we're thrilled to welcome Christos, Street Maintenance Coordinator, who leads a small Street Crew and continues the important work of keeping downtown clean and welcoming.

Collaboration remains at the heart of what we do. We've worked closely with partners including the City of Kingston, Tourism Kingston, KAP, KEDCO, AMHS, Kingston Police, St. Lawrence College, and Queen's University - to name a few — building a stronger, more connected community.

And if you've felt like there's always something happening downtown—you're not wrong! In 2024, we hosted a whopping 92 in-house events, including 7 major blockbusters like the Santa Parade, 4 Promenades, and Horizon. On top of that, we supported 15 partner events, such as KCFF, the Skeleton Park Arts Festival, and the Humane Society's Tunes 4 Tails benefit concert.

It was a big year—and it wouldn't be possible without our committed Board, our dedicated committee members, the incredible BIA staff, our supportive community partners, and of course, all of you—our downtown businesses and the superstars that make them shine. Please take a moment to acknowledge and thank those whose tireless dedication and unwavering support continue to keep our downtown strong, resilient, and united.

Thank you for your energy, your ideas, and your ongoing commitment to making Downtown Kingston a place where people want to be. Together, we're building a downtown that reflects the best of Kingston—vibrant, inclusive, and full of life for everyone who calls it home, does business here, or simply comes to enjoy it.

Christine

Message from the Executive Director.



I would like to extend my personal gratitude to the Downtown Kingston Board of Management and members for entrusting me with the leadership of the Downtown Kingston BIA for the past four years. It has been a genuine honour and a pleasure to serve in this capacity.

As the Executive Director, I am responsible for the day-to-day operations of the organization, which include management of staff, setting strategic direction, fostering strong relationships with members, partners, and stakeholders, and ensuring the effective implementation of our initiatives to drive the overall success and growth of Downtown Kingston. Under the guidance of the Board of Management and informed by the strategic plan, activities at the office concentrate on elevating and enriching the downtown experience. By cultivating a community of shared joy, pride, optimism and prosperity in the downtown core local businesses can not only thrive but can play a crucial role in bolstering the economic vitality of the region and creating attractive destinations that draw in visitors from near and far.

There is a lot that happens in a year in a downtown of this size. The team at the BIA have been chosen for their passion to see downtown thrive and their professional excellence in their chosen field. In 2024 eight core staff were employed at the BIA. In addition, working in collaboration with AMHS/KFL&A and the municipality, two Welcoming Streets Stewards worked under my direction. 6 summer students joined us for a busy summer events season, as well as an intern who spent time in the marketing department learning the trade. The BIA collaborates with St. Lawrence College and Queen's University to expand our staff's capabilities and extend the organization's reach, leveraging these partnerships to enhance our capacity and impact within the community. These collaborations also enable us to serve as a mentor and leader within the community.

Long-time employee, Michele Langlois, retired in January of 2024. Michele was a key player in the success of downtown Kingston for the past number of decades. We miss her every day and wish her well in her future endeavours.

As part of our commitment to transparency and communication with our key stakeholders and investors in the downtown experience, the 2024 Annual Report provides an overview of our activities throughout the year. The report highlights our accomplishments, challenges, and primary areas of focus. In adherence to the Municipal Act, the Annual Report is also provided to Council annually.

As always, my door is open, my contact information, including my cell number, is communicated on my signature below. Please don't hesitate to reach out.

Marijo Cuerrier | Executive Director Downtown Kingston BIA

Marijo@downtownkingston.ca | office: 613-542-8677 | cell/text: 613-661-4661

Downtown Kingston BIA Overview.

Downtown Kingston is beautifully situated at the confluence of the majestic St. Lawrence River, Cataraqui River, and Lake Ontario, a stone's throw away from the US border. With three distinguished academic institutions and a proud connection to the Canadian Military, Kingston is a city that thrives on diversity and fosters a sense of possibility and opportunity.

Established in 1973, the Downtown Kingston BIA works to maintain, improve, beautify, and maintain the area, as well as promote local businesses and organize and produce events. The BIA is managed by an elected volunteer Board of Management, which ensures that the organization's activities reflect the interests of its members.

Purpose.

Together we are cultivating a community of shared joy, pride, optimism and prosperity in downtown Kingston.

Mission.

To cultivate and enhance downtown Kingston's position as the region's leading culinary, entertainment and commercial destination, while attracting more people to experience and contribute to our vibrant downtown community.

Corporate Governance.

Governance within an Ontario Business Improvement Area (BIA) is essential for ensuring effective management and. BIAs in Ontario are established under the Municipal Act, 2001, which outlines the legislative framework for their creation, operation, and dissolution.

BIAs are typically governed by a Board of Management, which is responsible for governance and oversight of the actions and decisions made on behalf of the BIA and its members. Board members are elected for a 4-year term from among the BIA's membership, and their roles and responsibilities are defined in the BIA's by-laws. The Board works collaboratively to develop strategic plans, set priorities, and oversee the implementation of various programs and initiatives aimed at promoting and enhancing the BIA's business district.

To ensure transparency and accountability, BIAs are required to hold Annual General Meetings, where members can review the organization's activities, financial statements, and plans for the future.

Strategic Goals and Objectives.

In 2023 the Downtown Kingston BIA Board of Management, staff, partners and select members engaged in a 2-day strategic priority workshop with the goal of producing a 4-year strategic plan that would resonate with our greater membership, that was aligned with our partners and that gave the staff a roadmap forward. The Board approved 2024-27 Strategic Plan can be viewed here: member.downtownkingston.ca/downtownkingstonbia

Board of Management

Christine Ray-Bratt | Chair

Owner
Chris James

A.J. Keilty

Owner
Keilty Realty Corporation

Gord Dalton | Vice-Chair

General Manager
Confederation Place Hotel

Nicole Kemp

Director of Sales & Marketing
Kingston Marriott

Ed Smith | Past Chair

President WCL Holdings Inc.

Yasmine Nassereddine

Owner/Operator
Sabaya Spa

Nick Waterfield - Treasurer

General Manager
Chez Piggy, Pan Chancho

Stephanie Quick

General Manager
Delta Hotels

Melissa Bell | Executive Committee

Owner/Operator
Improbable Escapes

Alex Splinter

Director of Residential Real Estate
Braebury Properties

Steve Wallace | Executive Committee

Realtor
EXP Real Estate

Tina Yan

Owner
Midori Gifts

Gennaro DiSanto

Chief Executive Officer
CaraCo

Gregory Ridge

City of Kingston Councillor

Cyndy Gibson

Owner/Operator
Agent 99/WHIT

Vincent Cinanni

City of Kingston Councillor

Committees & Advisory Working Groups.

Downtown Kingston BIA Committees and Advisory Working Groups actively shape and influence the growth of our vibrant downtown community. Comprised of dedicated professionals, business owners, and stakeholders, each committee and working group plays a vital role in ensuring our district remains an attractive, engaging, and economically thriving hub. Our members bring a wealth of knowledge, expertise, and passion to the table, helping to steer the BIA's efforts toward achieving collective goals and shaping the direction of our community's future.

Committee and Advisory Working Group terms shall be for a duration of 2 years, with the option for renewal at the discretion of the Downtown Kingston BIA Board of Directors. For more information about committees and advisory working groups refer to: member.downtownkingston.ca/committees-and-awg

Membership Benefits.

If you own a property or business within the Downtown Kingston BIA geographic boundaries, you automatically become part of a vibrant community committed to creating a lively and thriving downtown core. Visit member.downtownkingston.ca/boundary-map for a detailed map. The BIA's activities and initiatives are made possible through an annual levy based on commercial or industrial property taxes. As a member of the Downtown Kingston BIA, your business enjoys access to a diverse array of resources and benefits designed to promote growth, enrich the downtown atmosphere, and enhance the overall experience for both businesses and visitors alike.

Features of owning a business in a BIA.

- Targeted, far-reaching marketing initiatives highlighting the downtown Kingston experience
- Street maintenance and cleanliness
- Dedicated mental health and outreach
- Dedicated bylaw and police enforcement
- Year-round events and programming
- Strategic public space enhancement and management
- Advocacy on behalf of the downtown business community

Downtown Kingston's priority is to ensure a vibrant and attractive environment for your business while contributing to the overall well-being, vitality, and success of our downtown community.

Our Partners.

Downtown Kingston BIA values strong working relationships with the City of Kingston, Tourism Kingston, Kingston Economic Development Corporation, Kingston Accommodation Partners, Addictions, Mental Health Services KFLA, Kingston Police and the Kingston branch of the Chamber of Commerce. These partnerships facilitate the sharing of resources, expertise, and ideas, which contribute to a more vibrant and prosperous downtown community.

Overview of January-December 2024.

Challenges.

This past year presented a mix of challenges and opportunities for Downtown Kingston. The CEBA loan repayment deadline was extended multiple times. Initially, the deadline for repayment and loan forgiveness was December 31, 2023. This was later extended to January 18, 2024, for businesses that met CEBA eligibility criteria. Businesses that applied for refinancing had a final deadline of March 28, 2024, to repay the loan and qualify for forgiveness. For those who couldn't repay by January 18, 2024, the loan converted to a 5% interest loan with a repayment deadline of December 31, 2026. However, even with this additional flexibility, some businesses still struggled to meet their repayment obligations, causing significant financial strain and stress for many in our community.

Exhibit A to Report Number 25-166

The shutdown and subsequent demolition of the LaSalle Causeway bridge from April to early October had a significant impact on pedestrian traffic and revenue for many businesses in the downtown core. The importance of this connection for residents, visitors, and local businesses was demonstrated clearly in the marked loss of foot traffic. The resulting experience of traveling to the downtown core became a challenge, leading some to avoid it altogether.

In the summer of 2024, the tourism sector experienced a decline in domestic travel, as Canadians shifted their focus towards global travel and reduced exploration within their own country. This change in travel preferences led to lower-than-expected tourism numbers, affecting various industries and local economies that rely on domestic visitors.

Accomplishments.

Despite the challenges, a new season of business owners and managers, many of them millennials, began to emerge, creating a strong, loyal community, bringing new life to the area and attracting more locals and visitors to support their businesses.

The "Hub" on Princess Street between Division and Barrie remained popular with college and university students. With new housing targeting the student population further west on Princess Street, many young students began exploring more of downtown, bringing their friends and family along. This mix of people and energy helped maintain the vibrant and lively atmosphere downtown Kingston is known for.

One of the most significant accomplishments on the streets of downtown Kingston has been the addition of dedicated Bylaw and Police Officers working closely with Welcoming Streets outreach professionals. The team effort and 'boots on the ground' approach between bylaw enforcement and social service providers has allowed for a more holistic approach to addressing these complex issues. By offering support and resources to those in need while maintaining public safety, downtown Kingston has made significant progress in creating a more compassionate and inclusive community while ensuring businesses have the support they need.

Increased resources for mental health and addiction support have allowed individuals in need to access the appropriate help, reducing the strain on police officers and enabling them to concentrate their efforts on public safety and addressing unlawful behaviour. Welcoming Streets has also been able to respond to incidents involving people experiencing mental health and addictions challenges and develop positive relationships with community members that live on the street. This shift has contributed to an overall safer and more supportive environment in the community.

Although the BIA played a key role in advocating for these resources and support, and is responsible for managing two Welcoming Streets Stewards, private funding from select members, the municipality and police department have been instrumental in providing the necessary financial backing to ensure the success of the program, as well as support from AMHS leadership and other social service agencies.

Despite the challenges faced, downtown Kingston remains a thriving and dynamic community, bustling with activity both day and night. **High commercial occupancy rates, with 95% of commercial space** in the downtown core occupied, are a testament to the resilience and adaptability of our city.

In the broader context of downtown areas across North America, downtown Kingston stands out as a prime example of urban vitality. Our collective achievements in maintaining a vibrant downtown are envied by other communities and have positioned us as a leader in the field.

Events and Programming.



Downtown Kingston BIA is known for the production of successful blockbuster events like the Princess Street Promenade, Buskers Rendezvous and Limestone City Blues Festival (retired in 2023). In addition to these annual events, the BIA events team produces several smaller events like Movies in the Square, Art After Dark, Chef Demos, Live 365 music throughout the summer, weeknight music and dancing in Springer Market Square, and supports many third-party events like Kingston Canadian Film Festival, Homegrown Live, Spring Reverb, Vintage Market and the list goes on. There are over 120 event days in downtown Kingston every year.

The events team, with support and assistance from our enthusiastic summer students, focused on enhancing and animating existing events with the aim of encouraging more attendance and visits downtown. A great example is the introduction of the ‘Star Lounge’, the colourful inflatable reservable seating offered for each Movies in the Square occasion (and sold out for almost everyone!) Our Live 365 music programming was also upgraded with new evenings for both country and big band, with dancing added into both series. Kingston Buskers Rendezvous, now over 30 years running, added a new and exciting element on Saturday evening, Buskers After Dark. Attendance saw over 75,600 individual visits over the 4-day July weekend with a total of 172,800 person visits.

[2024 list of events: 2024 Downtown Kingston Events Calendar.xlsx](#)

[2025 list of events: member.downtownkingston.ca/event-calendar](https://member.downtownkingston.ca/event-calendar)

Unseasonably warm winter, while enjoyable for many, had a detrimental effect on the ice rink in Springer Market Square in early 2024 causing the cancellation of weekly programming centered around the rink. In contrast, “Horizon” the interactive light and sound installation for three weeks in February proved to be a resounding success among both visitors and residents. Its unique integration of light and sound, combined with its prime location and resilience to weather conditions, made it an exceptional addition to the downtown winter experience.

In 2024, the BIA collaborated with the City of Kingston and other stakeholders to improve and beautify public spaces in the downtown area. Two significant initiatives included the enhancement of Springer Market Square and the transformation of Sydenham Street into a summer playground and bistro area. These collaborative efforts provided safe and engaging public spaces for the community to enjoy. Additionally, the BIA produced a number of community events in these spaces, further contributing to the vibrancy and appeal of downtown Kingston.

Marketing and Promotions.

Downtown Kingston continues to be one of the loudest voices in the region, consistently delivering high-quality content to an ever-expanding audience. The BIA’s social media following reflects that presence with rapid growth. Our Facebook following has reached 25K, and our Instagram following has grown by 120% over the last 3.5 years, soon to reach 32K. Our social media content connected with over 2M different individuals over the last 12 months—amazing results for a community of 130K.

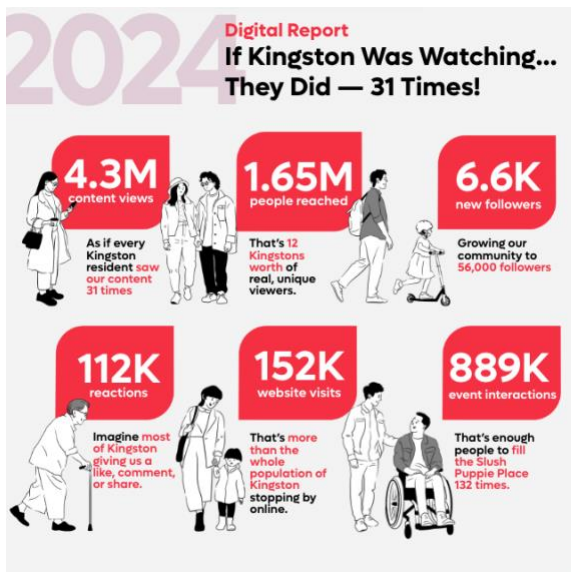
Ongoing photo and video capture efforts have built a library with over 39,000 shared media assets. This collection will continue to serve as a valuable resource for our marketing output, as well as that of our community partners, 3rd party event producers and members. We will continue our planned evolution toward video production. This will be highlighted by our upcoming expansion into Tik Tok, YouTube and other video-focused initiatives in 2025.

Marketing reach has continued to grow with distribution of 70 thousand Shopping Guides and Restaurant Guides, as well as 10s of thousands of event calendars, and various rack card pieces. Other traditional methods of messaging projection have taken the form of distribution of posters, A-frame signs, and window clings, installation of street banners, as well as paid radio campaigns, outdoor display, digital display and digital audio campaigns.

In 2024, we refined the production of The Downtown Dish, a fully populated online media channel with articles from local influencers, journalists, and BIA members. This style of coverage informed the development of our recently launched “Find It Here” campaign, an impactful series showcasing the personalities and expertise of our membership, and their vital connection to our community. Aside from social media, this content is also shared via our visitor-focused e-newsletter, which now enjoys an audience of almost 7,000 highly invested locals. This newsletter has an average open rate over 51%, with 10,700 click-throughs in 2024.

We are excited to welcome Jeremiah Pilapil as our new Marketing and Communications Production Manager, while Faith enjoys her parental leave. JP’s experience and strategic nature will further boost our already exceptional marketing and communications team.

Our plans for 2025 focus on refining our content gathering processes, applying newly sourced feedback to adjust our platforms, expanding our social media production, and executing comprehensive, targeted marketing campaigns responding to the specific pressures challenging our members.



Street Beautification.

One of the foundational [reasons BIAs exist](#) is to oversee the improvement, beautification and maintenance of municipally owned land, buildings and structures in the area beyond that provided at the expense of the municipality*. Priorities in this area for 2024 were daily garbage management, poster removal, florals, seating and seasonal decorations.

Florals and Greenery.

Eighty hanging baskets were hung on the side street historic poles from May to October and were replaced with faux baskets for the winter.

Thirty-two flowerbeds on Princess Street were planted with perennials, bushes and evergreens as a part of Blooms Flowerbed Project. The BIA raised private funds from businesses and initiated a multi-year project focused on improvement of florals in the downtown core. Over 40 volunteers assisted over several days to dig up and plant the flowerbeds. The Horticultural Society worked collaboratively to install 4 native plant gardens at the corner of King and Princess as a part of this project.

Garbage Management.

As a part of our ongoing partnership with the City of Kingston, a small but mighty street crew helped to manage loose garbage, empty overflowing garbage containers and remove posters from poles as a part of their daily tasks. In winter, the crew focused on keeping snow cleared from the intersections, seating areas and garbage containers, as well as daily garbage picking.

Secure Bike Racks.

A pilot project in 2023 became a permanent asset in 2024. In partnership with Tourism Kingston and the City of Kingston 3 bike docks were installed in downtown Kingston housing 18 secure bike racks. They can be found at the following locations:

- Confederation Park across from City Hall
- Chown Parking Garage, across from Hotel Dieu
- Northwest corner of Princess and Barrie

Seating.

The implementation of sidewalk seating and bench planters in the fall of 2023 by Tourism Kingston and the city contributed to a vibrant, welcoming, and enjoyable environment for residents, visitors, and businesses alike, while showcasing the unique charm and character of Downtown Kingston. The City of Kingston provided beautiful florals in the bench planters in 2024 that lasted well into the fall.

Holiday Decor.

During the holiday season, the main streets were decorated with garland wrapped poles and hundreds of thousands of lights from top to bottom, making a picture-perfect winter wonderland, albeit there was little snow. The main floor businesses added to the seasonal spirit, participating in a collaborative window decor project with Queen's University students.

Once again, the city generously provided a live tree, which the BIA team adorned with tens of thousands of twinkle lights, adding to the magical atmosphere of the season. They also added touch of Canadiana winter installing evergreen boughs in the bench planters.

Safety.

Downtowns across North America are facing significant challenges due to the ongoing opioid crisis, housing insecurity, and limited police resources, which contribute to a range of challenging situations in our urban centres. In downtown Kingston, although we have not eradicated crime or solved incidents that involve mental health and addictions challenges, we have been proactively addressing these concerns and enhancing the overall safety of our dynamic community through innovative solutions and collaborative efforts, helping to create a lively and engaging experience for residents, business owners, and visitors.

Thanks to an unlikely collaboration between Welcoming Streets, a team of experienced professionals in mental health and addiction, Kingston Police Services and City of Kingston By Law, this past year the downtown core has seen a notable improvement in the day-to-day management of mental health and addiction-related challenges on our streets and significant reduction in dangerous crime as compared to the year prior.

Welcoming Streets plays a crucial role in supporting businesses and connecting individuals on the street to support services and are often the first point of contact for mental health and addictions related incidents. As a result, there is a more efficient allocation of City of Kingston Bylaw officers' and Kingston Police's efforts towards addressing bylaw infractions and criminal activity. Consequently, our streets have become safer and more welcoming for everyone, and we have the data to prove it.

As a result of the success of Welcoming Streets and Foot Patrol pilot programs in 2024, we have successfully secured a foot patrol police officer dedicated exclusively to downtown with additional police support on it's way. Additionally, an extension of Welcoming Streets funding for another two years has been granted, serving to reinforce the importance of these collaborative partnerships in ensuring the continued safety and well-being of our community.

This crime dashboard, while primarily concentrating on criminal activity, effectively demonstrates the tangible outcomes of our collaborative efforts to address safety concerns in our community.

[2024 Welcoming Streets Statistics](#)

[2024 Crime Statistics](#)

Development and Intensification.

Over the last number of years downtown Kingston and surrounding area have experienced significant residential growth. Visit downtownkingston.ca/pages/development-in-downtown-kingston to see some of the new developments that are on their way to or already are a part of the silhouette of the city - creating over 2000 new units within the next 1 to 5 years.

Business Development & Member Services.

Membership information management, engagement and community building is the focus of member services. Management of the gift card program and one-on-one support to address specific challenges faced by businesses are ongoing priorities for this department. Networking opportunities, advisory working groups, roundtables and regular email communication are just some of the many ways member services keep members informed and engaged. Improving member-focused communications has been a priority for 2024/25. Greater planning, resource focus, and increased frequency have been met with improved engagement. Our member-focused bi-weekly bulletin boasts an average unique open rate of 49.7%, which is well above industry standard (17-28%). Our click-through rate is also high, averaging at 99.8%. Growth in member engagement was especially evident in soliciting membership for the BIA's various Advisory Working Groups and Committees, when we received 73 signups from members, an excellent indication of connectivity and engagement. Event sign-ups have also risen. For example, in 2024 we had 27, and 30 host galleries participate in our two Art After Dark events, events that regularly had 12-14 per occasion a few short years ago. Promenades now feature 100-120 booths, a record number of participants. We recently conducted roundtable events seeking feedback from our Retail, Food/Bev and Sydenham groups, and were excited by the level of interest, and attendance at those events.

Outside of BIA-produced events and programming, a major focus of our office is supporting member-led events, as well as identifying and nurturing 3rd party-produced events that align with our goals. Over the course of 2024, relationships with key partners were developed and expanded, including but not limited to partnerships with the Kingston Frontenacs and Slush Puppie Place, KCFF, HomeGrown Live, Spring Reverb, Fort Henry/SLPC, Thousand Islands Cruises, Kingston Trolley Tours, the Skeleton Park Arts Festival, Kingston Pride, Kingston Food Tours, the Humane Society, the United Way, Kingston WritersFest, Queen's University, St Lawrence College, and various other community/cultural groups.

Partnerships create opportunities for the BIA to amplify the work of 3rd parties to the benefit of our membership while managing investments. These partnerships can lower costs or develop into income opportunities. Our broad partnerships with local media organizations have led to massive savings in paid media. In 2024, the success of an initial \$10,000 partnership focused on Princess Street Promenades, with AMEX | Shop Small, evolved into a 3-year \$60,000 sponsorship agreement.

Our partnership with Tourism Kingston has also continued to grow, with key collaborations including events and promotions like 2024's Solar Eclipse and Kingstonlicious. Not only has this relationship improved our out-of-market reach, but it has also made it easier for the BIA to connect visitors with the Downtown business community. Improved partnership has made every visiting event, or conference another opportunity to promote downtown and its business community, and to encourage visitors to return. Tourism Kingston and KAP staff alert our office whenever they're coordinating with event organizers. Whether it's a visiting sports event like 2024's Little League National Championship, a visiting walking group, the next assembly of Rotarians, or a bass fishing tournament, we are informed, and collaborating with organizers to ensure our marketing materials are in the attendees hands, that they are connected with local businesses, and have a great visit in Downtown Kingston.

Pedestrian Counts.

We utilize two primary methods to measure traffic in downtown Kingston. The first involves leveraging Environics Analytics, which collects data through mobile devices and other sources. The second method employs four Eco-Counter laser counters installed on sidewalks in the downtown core to monitor pedestrian traffic. Key findings from the Environics reports are summarized below:

Environics.

There were 15,600,000 visits to the Downtown Kingston BIA area in 2024, with the average visit per visitor being 35+. Friday being the busiest day of the week, with Thursday and Saturday close seconds. 9 am to 6 pm we see 60% of our visitors, 73% during the weekday. 35% of visits are from within 4km, 70% are from within 22 km.

MobileScapes | Visitor Summary

MASTER BIA 2024 | Time Period: January 01, 2024 - December 28, 2024



Visitation Summary



Top PRIZM® Segments by Volume of Visits

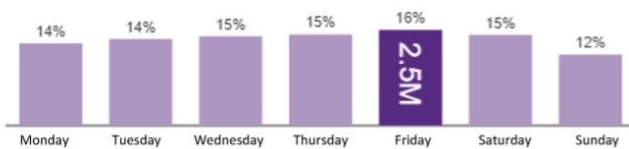


Top PRIZM® Segments Represent:



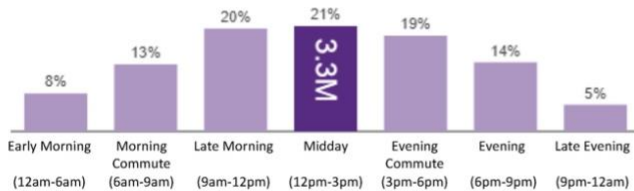
Visit Summary by Day of Week

% of Visits by Unique Visitors



Visit Summary by Daypart

% of Visits by Unique Visitors



Demographic Summary of Unique Visitors

\$128K Average Household Income	Under 35 Maintainer Age	42% Households with Children
4+ People Household Size	University Education	Average Cultural Diversity

Demographics determined from customer weighted summary of unique visitors. Displayed metrics based on highest index and represent the highest likelihood of being held among visitors compared to the Canadian population

Benchmark: Canada Unique visitors and visits represent visits and visits to the selected location(s) during the time period, excluding workers and residents and those without valid geocoding. Top PRIZM® segment(s) exclude those visits without a valid postal code

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To review full pedestrian count reports, click on the links below:

[2024 Environics Ped Counts.pdf](#)

[2024 Pedestrian Counts.pdf](#)

Perception Survey.

This past spring, Downtown Kingston collaborated with [Informanos](#), a local company specializing in AI-driven Leadership Performance Management & Analytics, to gather insights from members, employees, residents, and visitors about their experiences and perspectives on Downtown Kingston. The survey campaign successfully gathered over 1,000 responses, marking a significant milestone in understanding and enhancing the Downtown Kingston experience.

What were the results?

The survey results are comprehensive, and I encourage you to take time to review it by scanning the QR code below, but you can see below the overall experience is overwhelmingly positive, which is good to hear.

To gauge the overall experience, participants were asked three key questions:

1. When I am in downtown Kingston, I enjoy my overall experience.
2. I would recommend visiting downtown Kingston to others.
3. Downtown Kingston successfully cultivates pride, optimism, and prosperity within the community

• **Strongly agree – 38%**

• **Agree – 47%**

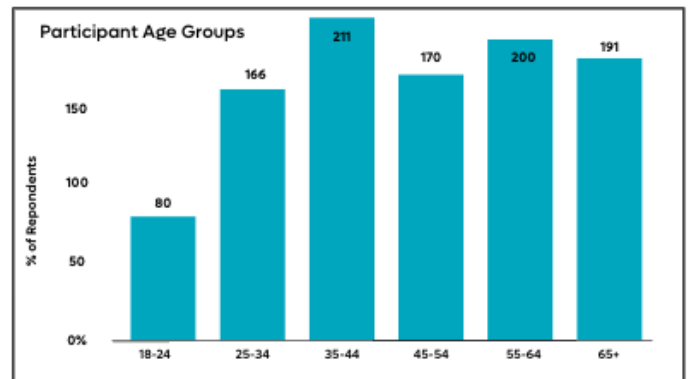
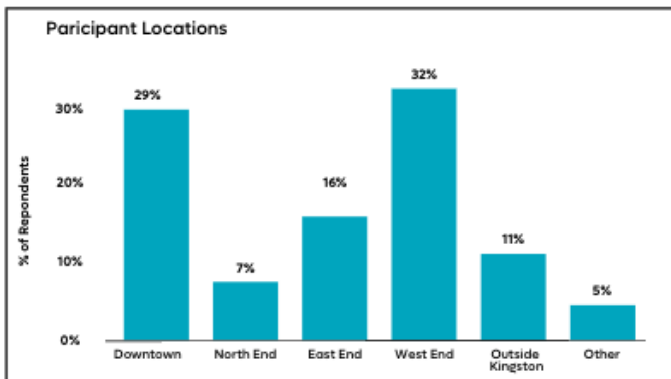
• **Neutral – 12%**

• **Disagree – 3%**

• **Strongly Disagree – 1%**

Who participated in the survey?

Residents - 42%. Employees 16% Business Owners - 6%. Visitors - 29%. Students - 7%



Overall Sentiment Analysis

The analysis also captures sentiment trends, commonly discussed topics, and potential areas of improvement based on the comments provided in the survey. A list of all the comments can be found in Appendix B of the document. Few of the comments are positive, focusing on aspects of downtown life that people enjoy, such as local businesses, events, and the community atmosphere. However, most of the comments received raise significant concerns about safety, parking, and social issues, including homelessness.

The concerns raised are not unfamiliar to us. We work closely with our partners to address every one of these challenging issues and will continue to do so. This survey serves as a baseline of unfiltered public perception and

will help us to be able to measure progress as we continue to tackle these complex issues. If you want to dive a bit deeper, more detail is included in the report.

Respondent's suggestions.

- Increasing community safety initiatives and support services for unhoused individuals.
- Enhancing parking infrastructure and revising parking policies.
- Organizing more events and public activities to engage the community.
- Improving maintenance of public restrooms, parks, and streets.



Scan to access full survey

Member Services.

With the passage of 365 days, it's normal to see change in the landscape of a downtown of this size. We are fortunate in that we enjoy a high commercial occupancy rate. When one business leaves, there is usually one waiting to make downtown Kingston their home. Listed below are our new members followed by those that have moved on to a different season in their lives.

Members welcomed in 2024.

23 & Co (small batch cookies) - 306 Bagot St

Axon Property Management - 83 Princess St

Bobbi Pecorino's - 326 King St. E

Booster Juice - 293 Princess St

BrokerLink Insurance - 22 Princess St

Brynn's Fresh Market - 168 Division St

Chicago Wings - 167 Brock St

Chit Chat Café - 172 Ontario St

Columbus Cafe - 297 Princess St

Daal Roti - 340 Barrie St

El Gringo - Pickup Window in Alleyway Behind 265 Ontario St

Fat Panda - 338 Princess St

Kingston Synergy Centre - 8 Clarence St

La Bella Beauty Bar - 271 Queen St

Lazy Daisies - 227 Princess St

Loaded Pierogi - 349 Princess St

Mercury Bar & Lounge - 125 Brock St

Modern Bliss Collective - 253 Ontario St

Morro Pilates - 27 Princess St

Poke 1 Bowl - 268 Princess St

Popeyes Louisiana Kitchen - 397 Princess St

QDOBA - 169 Princess St

Queen's Health Sciences - 385 Princess St

Rapidito Latin Market - 157 Wellington St

Raven Moon Gift Store - 82 Brock St

Skandiflow Health & Wellness - 80 Princess St

Sol Spa - 119 Princess St

Studio Queen - 188 Sydenham St

Tahini's - 320 Princess St

Tay's Beauty Bar - 2-73 Queen St

The Barber's Philosophy - 190 Sydenham St

Members we said goodbye to in 2024:

4Cats Art Studio - 181 Sydenham St
 BluMartini Bar and Grill - 178 Ontario St
 Churn Small Batch Ice Cream - 320A King St. E
 Copper Branch - 268 Princess St
 Cosmetic Injectx - 7 Princess St
 Curate.Social - 340 King St E
 Fresh Healthy Café - 33 Brock St
 Golden Viet Thai Restaurant - 304 Bagot St
 Halley's Fashion for Men - 157 Wellington St
 Hip Kids - 233 Princess St

Kingston Frameworks - 198 Princess St
 Luce Hair Studio - 170 Princess St
 Maverick's Donut Company - 320 Princess St
 Raven Moon Gift Store - 82 Brock St
 Salti Yoga - 80 Princess St
 Sherlock's Escapes - 298 Bagot St
 The Annex Spa - 119 Princess St
 The Grocery Basket - 260 Princess St
 Union Market - 19 Montreal St
 Verde - 123 Princess St

Downtown Kingston Commercial Industry Breakdown.



Category Breakdown		
Accommodations	7	(1.37%)
Arts-Culture	30	(5.86%)
Food and Drink	150	(29.3%)
Beauty & Wellness	45	(8.79%)
Professional Services	126	(24.61%)
Other	24	(4.69%)
Retail	122	(23.83%)
Religious Services	8	(1.56%)

Gift Card Stats.

In November 2023, the Downtown Kingston Gift Card program was launched, replacing the coveted Downtown Dollars program. 2024 saw its first full year of gift cards in effect. Statistics from 2024 are included below:

- \$273,486.00 loaded onto gift cards
- \$219,482.22 redeemed at participating downtown businesses
- 80% redemption rate

Exhibit A to Report Number 25-166

Interesting stats on Gift Card Redemption in Canada:

- Approximately 70% of gift cards in Canada are redeemed within the first six months of purchase.
- The overall average redemption rate for gift cards in Canada is around 57% since the pandemic
- Some studies indicate that over 60% of consumers spend more than the gift card's value when redeeming, for an average of \$31.75 more than the card's value.

Gift Card Spending Industry Breakdown 2024

The following chart highlights the total spend (gift cards redeemed) per industry:

Industry	Sales	# of Transactions
Food and Beverage	\$158,005.09	3,873
Retail	\$51,931.66	1,227
Services	\$3,840.91	75
Accommodations	\$775.82	10

Top Sellers of 2024

The following chart highlights the top 3 businesses for the restaurant, retail and service industries for gift card dollars redeemed:

Industry	First Place	Second Place	Third Place
Food and Beverage	\$18,600.76	\$16,996.83	\$13,027.09
Retail	\$6,178.39	\$4,059.51	\$3,856.96
Services	\$1,138.36	\$617.69	\$453.32

Awards and Recognition:

Downtown Kingston 2024 Awards.

In 2024, the Downtown Kingston BIA's hard work and innovation were recognized with two prestigious Awards of Excellence at the OBIAA Conference. These awards positioned downtown Kingston as a leader in Ontario for event production and visitor engagement and showcased the BIA's dedication to creating innovative and immersive public spaces that enhance the vibrancy of downtown Kingston.

Ontario BIA Association Award of Excellence 2024 – Waawaateg: Northern Lights Interactive Light and Sound Experience: a partnership with the local Indigenous community, captivated audiences through Indigenous story, art, and language and contributed to the cultural vibrancy of the downtown core.

Ontario BIA Association Award of Excellence 2024 - Downtown Kingston Advent Calendar: a partnership with local member businesses, fostered a sense of community and enhanced visitor experiences during the holiday season.

Gary Poupore - Exceptional Dedication Award.

John Wright, local business owner and entrepreneur, was honoured at last evening's Downtown Kingston General Meeting with the **Gary Poupore - Exceptional Dedication Award**. Wright's contributions to the Kingston

Exhibit A to Report Number 25-166

community have left an indelible mark on this vibrant city. Tim Pater, owner of Blackdog Hospitality and long-time family friend presented the award.

2024 Sponsors and Supporters.

Government Grants and support:

- Heritage Canada - Celebrate Canada Grant for Canada Day celebrations
- Employment and Social Development Canada - Canada Summer Jobs
- The City of Kingston - Welcoming Streets, Winter Event support, Santa Claus Parade, Summer on Sydenham playground, in-kind services

Corporate Sponsorships

- Amex, VIA Rail, TD, Musicians' Performance Trust Fund, Empire Life, Mobile Kitchens Canada

Dedicated Police Officer Foot Patrol Pilot Project (May 2024-May 2025):

Braebury Properties, CaraCo, Confed Place Hotel, Homestead, KAP, Keilty Realty, Keystone Properties, Kingston Police Services, McDonald's, Phil Brown, Richard Kizell, Rolade Realties, Tri-art, Kostas Doulas.

Blooms Flowerbed Project Sponsors:

Agent 99/Whit, Axon Property Management, Braebury Properties, Britt Smith, City of Kingston, Chinese Canadian Association of Kingston & District, Cunningham Swan, Downtown Kingston BIA, Downtown Kingston Board of Management, Erin Porter, Fancy That, Gilmore Printing, Investment Planning Counsel, Keystone Property Management, KEYS, Laylow Cafe, Pan Chancho, RBC Royal Bank, Rogers Trainor, Rocking Horse, Scotia Bank, TD Bank, Todd Shea, Tourism Kingston, Tri-Art, Tara Natural Foods.

Tourism Statistics.

We are fortunate to have a highly capable and effective tourism organization, Tourism Kingston, dedicated to attracting visitors to our city. Our strong partnership with Tourism Kingston and Kingston Accommodation Partners has enabled us to work collaboratively on various initiatives, such as advocating for key projects like VIA Rail, the LaSalle Causeway, the airport and enhancing the appeal of our downtown core for tourists. In 2024, Tourism Kingston developed tourism dashboard designed to track vital indicators in Kingston's tourism sector, providing valuable insights into the city's progress and potential areas for improvement. I highly recommend reviewing this report to gain a comprehensive understanding of Kingston's tourism landscape. A direct link is here: [Tourism Stats 2024 + Q1 2025](#). It is also included in the appendices of the Annual Report.

Annual Report 2024.

The 2024 audit was prepared by KPMG, our designated auditors, and has been approved by the Board of Management on May 14, 2025. It was presented to the membership at the Downtown Kingston BIA 2025 Annual General Meeting by KPMG. To assist in understanding the audit, additional information is outlined below. To view the full Audit, click on the link provided in the appendices.

Exhibit A to Report Number 25-166

1. CRA Ruling and 2024 Rebates:

Since moving bookkeeping from the city to a private company in April 2024 we have been working with the CRA to be recognized as a municipal/paramunicipal entity. Once this ruling is approved, approximately \$100K in 2024 rebates will be filed, which is why accounts receivable are unusually high. As of the last communication with the CRA, the file is under review by the director responsible for approving the ruling and should be released shortly

2. Downtown Dollars Liability:

The auditor has expressed concern regarding the liability of Downtown Dollars. However, as long as people continue to use them, they will be listed as a liability on the annual audit. The introduction of gift cards in 2023 has removed financial liability from the organization to a third party responsible for the gift card program.

3. City of Kingston Owing:

The amount owed by the City of Kingston resulted from an overpayment made last year for the levy, which has been deducted from our 2025 levy to rectify the situation.

4. Deferred Revenue and Prepaid Expenses:

Specific to Spirit of Winter, partial payments from a \$200K federal grant were received in 2024 as the BIA began preparation for the February event. These payments and expenses are deferred to 2025 in the audit, as it was a 2025 event.

5. Salaries in 2024 vs. 2023:

Salaries are higher in 2024 compared to 2023 for two reasons:

- a. Expected funding from the Canada Summer Jobs grant was not granted. For future the budget has been adjusted to account for potential fluctuations in grant funding.
- b. Wages for Street Crew exceeded the amount of the subsidy received from the city by \$15,000.

6. Year over year and budget vs. actual variances in expenses:

In April 2024, there was a transition from the city managing finances to private bookkeepers. During this change, the chart of accounts was adjusted to better reflect BIA operations, which resulted in discrepancies between the year over year and budget vs. actual figures in the audit. Next year, the process should be smoother due to these updates.

7. Unexpected Expenses in 2024:

- a. Pedestrian Boat (LaSalle Causeway fallout): \$5,000
- b. Partial payment for Police, Santa Claus parade: \$5,000 (historically covered by the city; we have resolved this for future events)
- c. Additional student wages: \$44,000
- d. Street Crew wage overage: \$15,000

Appendices:

- [BIA Boundary Map](#)
- [Municipal Act as it relates to BIAs](#)
- [Bylaw 2021-121](#)
- [2024-2027 Strategic Plan DKBIA](#)
- [DK BIA RoapMap 2025 LR](#)
- [2024 Environics Ped Counts.pdf](#)
- [2024 Pedestrian Counts.pdf](#)
- [Tourism Stats 2024 + Q1 2025](#)
- [2024 Audit Approved.pdf](#)

*Municipal Act: Designation of an Improvement Area:

- 204 (1) A local municipality may designate an area as an improvement area and may establish a board of management,
- (a) to oversee the improvement, beautification and maintenance of municipally owned land, buildings and structures in the area beyond that provided at the expense of the municipality