
2017 Annual Report

124 Street Business Association

124 Street

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1 VISION, MISSION & PRIORITY AREAS

1.1 Vision

124 Street is Edmonton's premier destination main street shopping district, home to the city's finest local independent restaurants, art galleries, boutiques, and premium services that is characterized by a pedestrian-friendly, low to mid-rise urban form.

1.2 Mission

To create a vibrant and prosperous business community for the 124 Street Business Improvement Area (BIA) members through ongoing business recruitment and retention, streetscape and beautification, advocacy, community partnerships, member support, marketing and promotions, event facilitation, and multimodal transportation strategies and initiatives.

1.3 Priority Areas

- Business Recruitment and Sustainability
- Streetscape and Beautification
- Urban Design and Architecture
- Multimodal Transportation Accessibility
- Parking
- Member Relations
- Marketing and Events

2 BOARD OF DIRECTORS, COMMITTEES & STAFF

2.1 Board of Directors

Andy Akle, Investors Group

Garner Beggs, Duchess Bake Shop

Seble Isaac, Café Tiramisu

Sarah Foster, Blue Rose Baking Co.

Kim Kostiuk, Fine Line Jewellers

Allison MacLean, Carbon Environmental Boutique

Sarah Proudlock, The Tea Girl

Linda Ritter, Salgado Fenwick

Terry Synyshyn, mudHoney Salon

Glendon Tan, CSIC Services & Holding Ltd.

2.2 Executive Committee

Terry Synyshyn, Chair

Garner Beggs, Vice-Chair

Sarah Proudlock, Treasurer

Kim Kostiuk, Secretary

2.3 Streetscape & Beautification Committee

Sarah Proudlock, Chair

Garner Beggs

Seble Isaac

Linda Ritter

Glendon Tan

2.4 Marketing and Events Committee

Allison MacLean, Chair

Andy Akle

Dave Cleary, Wild Birds Unlimited

Sarah Foster

Marie Olah, Lando Gallery

Glendon Tan

2.5 Office Staff

Jeff McLaren, Executive Director

Colleen Shaw, Marketing, Communications, and Events Coordinator

Judy Smith, Office Administrator



3 MEMBER RELATIONS

3.1 Communication with Members

The 124 Street Business Improvement Area (BIA) (Business Association) engages and maintains constant communication with its membership through a variety of means including monthly newsletters, email, website members area, Facebook, Twitter, Annual Open House, Annual General Meeting, business mixers, phone calls, meetings, and in-person visits.

3.2 Annual Open House (June 14)

On June 14, 2017, the 124 Street BIA hosted its Annual Open House at Northern Chicken (10704 124 Street) for 124 Street business members, property owners, community members, City officials, and local dignitaries. The Open House is an opportunity for the 124 Street BIA to thank its many partners and supporters and to provide an opportunity for socializing and networking. Approximately 52 persons attended the Open House.



3.3 Annual General Meeting (October 16)

The 2017 Annual General Meeting was held on October 16, 2017 at the Commissioners (10633 124 Street) where the proposed 2018 Budget and the 2018 Board of Directors nominations were approved by the 124 Street BIA membership. Following the event, a reception was held for business members to socialize and network. Approximately 24 persons attended the Annual General Meeting.

4 STREETScape & BEAUTIFICATION PROJECTS

In 2017, the 124 Street BIA undertook a number of streetscape and beautification initiatives to improve the aesthetics and functionality of 124 Street to subsequently enhance the overall experience of patrons in the area.

4.1 Decorative Light Pole Replacement

The 124 Street BIA has been working on a project with the City of Edmonton over the last few years to replace the existing decorative light poles (green) that were first installed on 124 Street in 1990. In 2017, the first phase of this project began in which the existing green decorative light poles were replaced by the City with new black decorative light poles from Jasper Avenue to 107 Avenue. The next phase will begin in the fall of 2018 in which all the existing green decorative light poles will be replaced with new black decorative light poles from 107 Avenue to 111 Avenue.



4.2 Mural Program

The 124 Street BIA assisted in the coordination, grant procurement, and partial funding (\$5,475) of four murals along 124 Street in 2017. The building locations of these murals are Tiramisu Bistro (10750 124 Street), Michael Anthony Jewellers (10809 124 Street), Atomic Zombie (10121 124 Street), and McElheran's Furniture + Design (10115 124 Street). The latter three murals were done in partnership with the Rust Magic Mural Festival. The 124 Street BIA is currently working again with the Rust Magic Mural Festival to complete three more murals in the 124 Street area in 2018.



4.3 Summer Beautification Program

The 124 Street BIA continued to partake in the very successful City of Edmonton “Bloomin’ Boulevards” Program by installing 106 hanging flower baskets (\$22,628) on each corner of 124 Street along the entire BIA (Jasper Avenue to 111 Avenue). An additional three flower planters (\$1,102) were installed in Helen Nolan Park by the 124 Street BIA. Also, the 124 Street BIA businesses purchased two hanging flower baskets and 62 flower barrels to make a total of 173 flower barrels and hanging baskets purchased by both the BIA and its business members to beautify the 124 Street area.

4.4 Winter Beautification Program

As part of the 124 Street BIA’s continuing winter beautification program, 34 illuminated pots (white pots that illuminate at night), planted with evergreens and decorated with lights, were installed on 124 Street within and adjacent to the All is Bright on 124 Festival area from Jasper Avenue to 103 Avenue (\$7,673).



4.5 Decorative Lighting Program

In conjunction with the All is Bright on 124 Festival, the 124 Street BIA installed an additional 109 decorative multi-coloured light globes (16 inches) in the trees along 124 Street from Jasper Avenue to 102 Avenue (\$20,580). These globes supplement the existing 60 globes installed in previous years in the High Street area and along 124 Street. Not only does this decorative lighting contribute to the experience of the All is Bright on 124 Festival, it also creates luminescence and warmth in the 124 Street area over the long dark winter months. There are currently plans in 2018 to continue this program and install additional decorative lighting within the 124 Street BIA.

The 124 Street corridor from Jasper Avenue to 111 Avenue has 230 trees with electrical outlets for decorative tree lighting (note: there are no electrical outlets for the trees between 107 and 109 Avenues). The 124 Street BIA has been working diligently with the City of Edmonton over recent years to identify power supply, electrical outlets, and materials issues and to make the appropriate repairs and installations as needed. This work is ongoing with the majority of trees on 124 Street now installed with working decorative tree lights.



4.6 Cleaning and Maintenance

A private contractor was once again retained for the months of April to October 2017 to maintain cleanliness in the BIA by picking up litter, sweeping sidewalks, maintaining landscaped areas, controlling weeds, and reporting any graffiti (\$2,765). Clean-up activities were conducted twice a week within the BIA which resulted in a comprehensive clean-up of the entire BIA each week. Also, the 124 Street BIA was again a proud participant in the Capital City Clean Up's Business Supporting Community Program. The BIA funded two local community groups to clean up litter on 124 Street once a week from May to August (\$1,280).

4.7 Façade Improvement Program

The City of Edmonton Façade improvement Program is a matching grant program where the City will cover up to 50% of facade renovation and storefront improvement costs, to a maximum of \$30,000 per building facade. Corner buildings may be eligible for up to \$60,000. *This program is eligible to only commercial buildings located within a Business Improvement Area.* In 2017, two Façade Improvement Program projects were funded that were the Commissionaires building (10633 124 Street) that received a grant of \$30,000 and YEG Cycle (12302 Stony Plain Road) that received a grant of \$60,000. Currently there are a couple of other facade improvement projects in various stages of the process.

4.8 Helen Nolan Park Naming

In August 2017, the new park on the corner of 124 Street and 108 Avenue was officially named the Helen Nolan Park by the City of Edmonton. A naming and grand opening ceremony was held in the park in September 2017 with local dignitaries, City staff, business members, friends, and family to honour Helen Nolan for her years of service to the 124 Street community. Helen Nolan was the Executive Director of the 124 Street BIA for 13 years and was instrumental in starting this park project and oversaw the beginning of the revitalization of 124 Street during her tenure.



5 MARKETING PROGRAM

In 2012, the 124 Street BIA shifted its marketing strategy from an emphasis on traditional forms of marketing such as radio and print to primarily a social media and web-based marketing strategy. Ongoing research and consultation has supported that these platforms are the preferred choice to receive and access information regarding 124 Street promotions, branding, events, activities, and programs. Further metrics analysis indicate that this marketing strategy is a successful and cost-effective strategy of reaching the 124 Street BIA target markets.

5.1 Logo and Visual Identity Guidelines

Over the course of 2017, the 124 Street BIA engaged in an extensive process to refresh the 124 Street brand with the design of a new logo and branding to more accurately reflect the vibrant and unique shopping district that 124 Street has become today. In addition to the new logo, the branding elements included a visual identity guidelines package, stationary package, and numerous auxiliary designs and templates including social media banners, website, print and digital ads, brochure, decals, and banners (\$11,619). The new logo and branding were revealed at the AGM in October 2017 with subsequent branding elements rolled out in January 2018 and continuing to be rolled out as necessary.



5.2 Website

The 124 Street website continues to be the primary marketing platform for the 124 Street BIA and a key portal to the respective social media platforms. In 2017, there were 44,889 total visits (sessions) to the website with 84.3% of those visits being first-time visits. This is a significant increase (33%) from 2016 where there was a total of 33,841 visits with 84.6% of those visits being first-time visits. In respective order, the All is Bright, Directory, and Food sub-pages were the three most visited pages in 2017. A new website is currently being developed that will be launched in the fall of 2018.

5.3 Social Media

The 124 Street BIA manages the following social media platforms of Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram and a monthly digital newsletter to market and promote the 124 Street BIA to the respective target audiences. These accounts are managed and monitored on a daily basis through ongoing engagement and promotional campaigns by social media marketing contractors (\$36,900) and the 124 Street BIA part-time Marketing, Communications, and Events Coordinator.

Overall, the BIA has continued to increase its followers and audience reach. However, with the exception of Instagram, these increases have not been as significant as recent years for a variety of reasons including social media fatigue and negativity due to a variety of sociopolitical factors and new algorithms implemented by these platforms restricting content and audience reach. Specifically, by the end of 2017, followers for Twitter increased to 14,335 from 13,251 in 2016 (8% increase), Facebook to 13,076 from 12,732 in 2016 (3% increase), Instagram to 3,585 from 2,519 in 2016 (42% increase), and digital Newsletter (\$480) to 1,244 from 1,163 in 2016 (7% increase).

5.4 Print

The 124 Street BIA continued to maintain a modest print marketing presence in the outlets of Vue Magazine (Golden Fork and Best of Edmonton issues) (\$1,560) and the surrounding community newsletters (Westmount, Oliver, Glenora, North Glenora) (\$3,099).

6 EVENTS

The 124 Street BIA continued its strategy of sponsoring and hosting a few key community events within the BIA. Overall, these events were very successful in that they brought awareness and people to the BIA, facilitated cross-promotional marketing and branding opportunities, enhanced community relations and partnerships, and strengthened the 124 Street brand as a vibrant destination and shopping district.

6.1 Oliver Community Festival (June 3)

For the sixth year, the 124 Street BIA provided \$1,000 in sponsorship to the Oliver Community Festival. The festival is a community event that features local vendors and food trucks, live entertainment, church tours, and children's play areas and entertainment. The Oliver Community Festival was a joint collaboration between Robertson-Wesley United Church, Oliver Community League, and the 124 Street BIA.

6.2 Make Music Edmonton (June 21)

Make Music Edmonton is part of a global live music celebration that started in 1981 and takes place every year on the summer solstice, June 21, in over 100 countries and over 450 cities worldwide. La Fete de la Musique made its way to Edmonton and 124 Street in 2014. The fourth event in 2017 saw

approximately 1,500 people converge on 124 Street to experience 45 musicians at 12 outdoor music venues. Make Music Edmonton is spearheaded by Alliance Francaise d'Edmonton in partnership with the 124 Street BIA (\$1,500).



6.3 All Is Bright on 124 (November 25)

The 124 Street BIA hosted its fifth annual All is Bright on 124 Festival on November 25, 2017 on 124 Street between Jasper Avenue and 102 Avenue. All is Bright on 124 is a free outdoor, culturally unique community event that celebrates the coming of the winter season in Edmonton through light installations, live entertainment, art, and family programming. The primary theme of the event is “light” where a variety of light installations (e.g., art installations, ice sculptures, illuminated pots, programmable string lighting, storefront decorations, tree lights) are utilized to facilitate the celebration of winter, community, and culture in Edmonton. The celebration of “light” culminated with a “Light Up the Night” event at 5:30 pm which kicked off an evening fete featuring a variety of local musical artists and programming.

Overall, by means of our own internal analysis and feedback, we are generally satisfied with the correlation between the planned goals of the event and the actual outcomes. It is estimated that 10,000 people attended the event over its duration which is a significant increase (approximately double) from 2016 in which the estimated attendance was 5,000. The total cost of the event was \$78,544 with revenue coming from sponsorship (\$36,965), Edmonton Art Council (\$10,000), festival income (\$13,478), and the 124 Street BIA (\$18,101).



7 ONGOING ACTIVITIES

7.1 Community Partnerships

Community relationships are integral to the success of the 124 Street BIA. As such, the 124 Street BIA is actively engaged with various community stakeholders such as the Westmount Community League, Oliver Community League, Groat Estates Residential Association, and the City of Edmonton on an ongoing basis.

7.2 Advocacy

The 124 Street BIA staff and Board members meet regularly with City of Edmonton staff and Ward 6 Councillor Scott McKeen to advocate for the BIA on various issues including City construction projects, streetscape maintenance, parking, infill developments, and permitting.

7.3 Business Recruitment and Retention

The 124 Street BIA is continuously engaged in the recruitment of businesses to locate to 124 Street. Specifically, the BIA maintains an updated vacant space and contact information inventory, responds to numerous inquiries about leasing and real estate opportunities, targets specifically identified businesses to locate to 124 Street, and facilitates communication between potential business proprietors and property owners/managers. Subsequently, this work has helped contribute to 23 new businesses opening within the 124 Street BIA in 2017.

8 EXTERNAL COMMITTEES AND MEETINGS

The 124 Street BIA Executive Director, Jeff McLaren, represented the BIA on a couple of external committees including the following:

8.1 BIA Council

The Executive Directors of the 13 BIA's within Edmonton meet approximately every six weeks to discuss mutual issues and concerns regarding BIA's. The members of the BIA Council work together to promote BIA's and to find solutions to continue to support the work of the various BIA's.

8.2 Imagine Jasper Avenue Project Community, Business and Resident Committee (CBRC)

The Community, Business and Residents Committee (CBRC) is a group of people invited to act as representatives of the community, businesses, residents and stakeholder groups who may have an interest in the streetscape revitalization of Jasper Avenue. The CBRC is intended to act in an advisory role, assisting the Project Team (made up of City staff and consultants) in the development and testing of the Project Vision and design options. The CBRC will be asked to provide background information and 'local knowledge' that the Project Team may not be aware of otherwise. The CBRC may also be asked to provide feedback on public engagement materials and approaches.

8.3 Valley Line West LRT Citizen Working Group

The Valley Line West LRT Citizen Working Groups consist of neighbourhood-based groups representing a cross-section of respective communities/stakeholders that are located along the Valley Line West LRT route. These groups will be a significant method for the City to maintain an ongoing relationship with communities along the alignment during procurement, detailed design, and construction of the Valley Line West LRT. The purpose of these groups is to facilitate engagement between community stakeholders and the City of Edmonton including information-sharing and dialogue; support the identification of issues, opportunities, and concerns; and seek opportunities to minimize and mitigate impacts related to detailed design and construction.

9 CURRENT INITIATIVES

Over the last few years, the 124 Street BIA has been spearheading and working on a number of different initiatives with the City of Edmonton and other partners that are currently underway.

9.1 124 Street Decorative Crosswalks Project

Initiated by the 124 Street BIA and in partnership with the City of Edmonton, the City is currently installing new decorative red brick crosswalks at the following intersections on 124 Street: 102 Avenue, 103 Avenue, 106 Avenue, 107 Avenue, 108 Avenue, 109 Avenue, 109A Avenue, and 110 Avenue. The goal of the project is to improve pedestrian safety with a new design that will be brighter, more colourful and easier to see, while at the same time adding to the character and placemaking of the 124 Street neighbourhood. The material is a durable thermoplastic that can last for up to five years and has a rough texture that prevents slipping when the surface is wet.

9.2 Light Pole Banners Project

The 124 Street BIA is currently exploring options to install custom 124 Street banners on light poles within the 124 Street area. A pilot-project will be conducted in 2018 to test different materials, locations, design options, and costs. After this pilot-project is evaluated with feedback from the community, a decision will be made in how to proceed with a more extensive build out of light pole banners within the 124 Street BIA in 2019.



9.3 124 Street Corridor Study

This project was initially slated to begin in the fall of 2017 but it has now been pushed back by the City of Edmonton to start in the fall of 2018. The City of Edmonton, in consultation with the local communities and stakeholders, will begin the process of developing a 124 Street Corridor Study to upgrade the existing outdated plans guiding development in the 124 Street corridor. The 124 Street Corridor Study process will examine city policy, land use, built form, community facilities, transportation, heritage, and urban design in order to develop a vision and policy to guide future development along the 124 Street corridor.

