
2021 Annual Report

124 Street and Area Business Association

The logo for 124 Street is enclosed in a black rectangular border. It features the number '124' in a large, bold, black sans-serif font. To the right of the number, the word 'Street' is written in a smaller, black sans-serif font. Two horizontal gold bars are positioned above and below the word 'Street', partially overlapping it.

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 and is home to the city's finest local independent restaurants, art galleries, boutiques, and premium services. It 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 and Area 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 Executive Committee

Garner Beggs, Chair, Duchess Bake Shop

Kris Cromwell, Vice-Chair, Community Member

Glendon Tan, Treasurer, CSIC Services & Holding Ltd. and Meuwly's

Seble Isaac, Secretary, Tiramisu Bistro

2.2 Board of Directors

Behnam Arbabi, Lotus Art Gallery/Lotus Café

David Boroditsky, Community Member

Chris Kourouniotis, CKDESIGN Licensed Interior Design Inc.

Sandy Muldrew, The Prints & The Paper

Sarah Proudlock, Community Member

Terry Synyshyn, mudHoney Salon

2.3 Streetscape & Beautification Committee

Garner Beggs, Chair

Glendon Tan

Sarah Proudlock

Seble Isaac

2.4 Marketing and Events Committee

Terry Synyshyn, Chair

David Boroditsky

Glendon Tan

Kris Cromwell

Hossein Zahiri, Bairro 124 Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu

2.5 Office Staff

Luwam Kiflemariam, Executive Director

Jodi Berezowski, Office Administrator

Kyzle Tabanay, Marketing Coordinator



3 MEMBER RELATIONS

3.1 Communication with Members

The 124 Street and Area Business Improvement Area (BIA) (Business Association) engages and maintains constant communication with its membership through a variety of means including monthly newsletters, email, Facebook, Twitter, phone calls, meetings, and in-person visits. Due to COVID-19 and the government restrictions communications to members was centered around disseminating information that was sent out by the City of Edmonton, Government of Alberta, and Government of

Canada. Where grants and assistance of any kind became available for businesses, the BIA made sure the membership was informed.

3.2 Budget/Annual General Meeting

Due to COVID-19, the 2021 Annual General Meeting (AGM) was held virtually on October 20, 2021. The proposed 2022 Budget and 2022 Board of Directors nominations were approved by the 124 Street BIA membership. Approximately 18 members attended the virtual AGM, and 6 proxies were submitted.

The 2021 budget was reduced from pre-Covid years. In addition to reducing the budget, the decision was made to access the BIA's savings of \$50,000 to reduce the amount of BIA levy businesses had to pay. In mid March 2021, Edmonton Council approved a one-time funding to cover 100 per cent of the BIA levies for 2021, in recognition of the impacts of COVID-19 on the business community. Businesses appreciated Council's support and recognition of the impacts of COVID-19.

While the BIA budgeted for \$50,000 deficit, we were able to reduce the amount of planned deficit to under \$10,000 due to the BIA accessing grants from various organizations and sponsorships from businesses.

4 STREETScape & BEAUTIFICATION PROGRAM

In 2021, the 124 Street BIA undertook several streetscape and beautification initiatives to improve the overall aesthetics, functionality, cleanliness, safety, and pedestrian-friendliness of 124 Street to attract and enhance the overall experience of patrons in the area. Numerous studies support the premise that clean business districts that are aesthetically pleasing, have good lighting, accessible public gathering places, have trees/landscaping, and viewable public art attract more patrons and tourism. The result is higher pedestrian traffic and overall sales.

4.1 Summer Beautification Program

The 124 Street BIA continued to partake in the very successful City of Edmonton "Bloomin' Boulevards" Program by installing 54 hanging flower baskets along 124 Street along the entire BIA (Jasper Avenue to 111 Avenue). An additional two flower planters were installed in Helen Nolan Park (12327 108 Avenue). Additionally, the 124 Street BIA businesses purchased 25 flower barrels to make a total of 81 flower barrels and hanging baskets purchased by both the BIA and its business members to beautify the 124 Street BIA.



4.2 Winter Beautification Program

As part of the 124 Street BIA’s continuing winter beautification program, 10 illuminated pots (white pots that illuminate at night), planted with evergreens and decorated with lights, were installed within Helen Nolan Park. In addition to the illuminated pots, the 124 Street BIA purchased and had installed red bows along 124 Street to bring a festive decoration for the holidays.



4.3 Decorative Lighting Program

LED Globes

In conjunction with All is Bright on 124, the 124 Street BIA repaired and replaced decorative LED multi-coloured light globes (16 inches) in the trees along the 124 Street corridor from Jasper Avenue to 102 Avenue including the High Street area and Helen Nolan Park.

Tree Lighting

The 124 Street corridor from Jasper Avenue to 111 Avenue has 230 trees and Helen Nolan Park has 15 trees with electrical outlets for decorative tree lighting (note: there are no electrical outlets for the

trees between 107 and 109 Avenues). Programmable coloured string lights were installed within all the trees in Helen Nolan Park and within the 124 Steet BIA in the fall. This allowed us to change the colors to illuminate the street for the All is Bright Festival and for the holiday season.



4.4 Cleaning and Maintenance

A private contractor was once again retained for the months of April to October 2021 to maintain cleanliness in the BIA by picking up litter, sweeping sidewalks, and reporting any graffiti. Clean-up activities were conducted twice a week within the BIA which resulted in a comprehensive clean-up of the entire BIA each week. Furthermore, the 124 Street BIA funded a local community group (26th St. Peters Scouts) to clean up litter in a two-block radius on 124 Street once a week for 16 weeks from May to September. The Scouts and the private contractor collected and removed a total of 45 bags of garbage from 124 Street over the duration of 16 weeks.

5 MARKETING PROGRAM

In 2021, the 124 Street BIA continued its marketing strategy of employing primarily a social media and web-based marketing strategy over traditional forms of marketing such as radio and print. Ongoing research and consultation have supported these platforms as the preferred choice to receive and

access information regarding 124 Street businesses, promotions, events, activities, and programs. Further metrics analysis over the years indicate that this marketing strategy is a successful and relatively cost-effective strategy of reaching the 124 Street BIA target markets. One notable addition to the marketing program for 2021 is the hiring of a permanent, full-time marketing coordinator to the 124 Street BIA team with the help of the Canada Summer Jobs Grant.

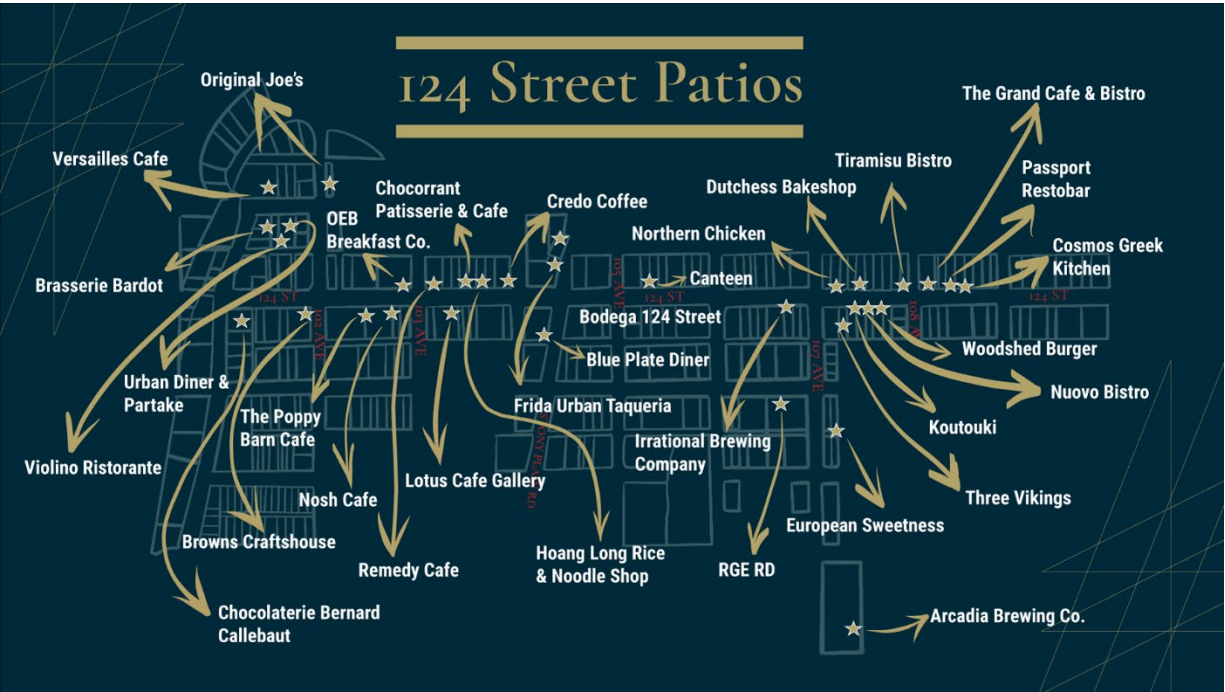
5.1 Social Media

The 124 Street BIA manages the following social media platforms of Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and a digital Newsletter to market and promote the 124 Street BIA to the respective target audiences. With our new in-house marketing coordinator, we were able to see an immediate increase in followers and engagement with our audiences over previous years.

One notable strategy taken in 2021 was to connect our audience to the businesses in our area. This strategy allowed us to make the connection between the phrases of “shopping local” and “supporting local” and the actual local businesses operated in the BIA.

In addition to highlighting businesses in the area, we also created creative graphics to share on social media. This created high engagement, which resulted in people talking about the area and led to free advertisement in print magazines and on social media blogging websites.

Below is an example of an image and graphic design that saw high engagement and interest in 124 Street BIA. The BIA worked with eateries and restaurants to encourage participation in the City of Edmonton’s Patio Program. The image was shared on social media and illustrated all available options for patios located in the 124 Street BIA.



To reinforce the 124 Street brand, the BIA continued to maintain a modest print marketing presence in the publications of the Info Edmonton City Guide and in The Tomato magazine. Ads were also placed in 4 issues each of the surrounding community newsletters/magazines of the Westmount Window and The Yards.



DISCOVER NEW ART AT 124 STREET'S ART DISTRICT

Come visit our local art galleries. Take a stroll at our walkable neighbourhood and explore diverse collections of art pieces. Immerse yourself in a place of inspiration, imagination, and creativity.

Experience creative at 124STREET.CA



6 EVENTS PROGRAM

The 124 Street BIA looked for opportunities and strategies to host key community events within the BIA that accommodated COVID-19 restrictions. 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 Edmonton Orchestra Symphony on 124 Street

The 124 Street BIA hosted two “bring your own chair” events where the Edmonton Orchestra Symphony (EOS) performed for free. The first location was on 108 Ave between 123 and 124 Streets. The 124 Street BIA worked with the Civics and Events team at the City of Edmonton to close half a block on 108 Ave and have the EOS play for over 300 people. The second location for the ESO event was in a private parking lot on 103 Ave and 124 Street. This event drew close to 400 people. Both drew people from all over Edmonton to the area and was very well received by the community and the businesses in the BIA.



6.2 All Is Bright on 124

The 124 Street BIA hosted its ninth annual All is Bright on 124 on November 20, 2021, on 124 Street between 107 and 109 Avenues. 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 6:00 pm which kicked off an evening fete featuring a variety of local musical artists and programming.

To be COVID-19 safe we expanded the footprint of the festival to include space on the south side of 124 Street to include 103 Ave and 124 Street. It is estimated that 12,000 people attended the event over its duration.

The 124 Street BIA funded \$15,000 of the event, with the rest of the support for the ~\$67,000 coming from corporate sponsorship, the Edmonton Art Council, and the City of Edmonton.



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, 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 and new Councillor for O-day'min Anne Stevenson to advocate for the BIA on various issues including City construction projects, streetscape maintenance, parking, zoning, planning, and permitting.

8 EXTERNAL COMMITTEES AND MEETINGS

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

8.1 BIA Council

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

8.2 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. The purpose of these groups is to facilitate engagement between community stakeholders and the City of Edmonton including information-sharing and dialogue, supporting the identification of issues, opportunities, and concerns, and seeking opportunities to minimize and mitigate impacts related to detailed design and construction.