



# ANNUAL REPORT 2015

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## MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Dear members of the French Quarter Business Association,

In 2015, the French Quarter Business Association was involved in many different projects. These vary from pursuing the work towards having banners flying proudly along Whyte Avenue (our work will manifest itself in 2016), tree lighting to come with the greater neighbourhood, business information workshops for our members, marketing of our member's events via Tweeter, Facebook and the events section of our web site, to name but a few.

We have just completed year three for our Business Association and I am extremely proud of the work we have been able to do in just three short years.

When we started only 4% of our members were either French business owners or bilingual; and this year we have grown to 17%. Further to this, 50% of our merchants have recognized the significant presence of French speaking clients and have accepted to use a 'name tag' for bilingual employees on which it indicates that this employee speaks French – 'Je parle français'. We are truly making serious head way in promoting our business district with a French flavour.

In 2017, as a special way to celebrate our great country's 150th anniversary, we will unveil an absolutely wonderful and spectacular feature unique in Edmonton and I just can't wait for the summer of 2017.

In terms of street beautification we accepted to join the City in promoting the FIFA games held in Edmonton by choosing the FIFA colours for the flowers and we also tried out larger flower barrels. We hoisted the flags of the 8 countries competing in Edmonton along the Millcreek Bridge.

The flower barrel program, the banners and tree lighting are three priorities we are working on for next year. Based on last years' experience, we have decided that the larger barrels have a much greater impact and as such we hope to utilize only larger barrels for 2016 and beyond. The banners will be installed in 2016 after the upgrade of the light standards along 82 Avenue. As for the tree lighting, these will be incorporated in the greater neighbourhood redevelopment happening in the Bonnie Doon district.

I invite our members to contact me directly for all questions or comments with the view of improving our services and how we are promoting our unique district.

Martin Van Keimpema



# A N N U A L R E P O R T 2 0 1 5





## STREET BEAUTIFICATION COMMITTEE

This committee is made up of Board members Rosalia Yuen, Adam Ziel, members David Murray and Kathy Sharp. The following are initiatives that this committee recommended to our Board.

The flower barrel program was modified this year because the City of Edmonton offered an incentive if we used the FIFA colours in honour of the games being held in part in Edmonton. As a result we had a chance to see the impact that larger flower barrels could have versus the smaller barrels we have used in the past. Also as a complement to this initiative, we asked the City to install the flags of the 8 countries who were competing in the FIFA games in Edmonton. This was a unique opportunity to try something that will lead us to a larger and more exciting idea for Millcreek Bridge. Stay tuned for 2017 – a year of celebration of the 150th anniversary of the Canadian Confederation.

In 2015, we also approved a banner design for testing. Two of these were installed on light standards located along Whyte near 91 Street. We will need to bring changes to the colour schemes and also consider alternative ways or an alternate banner bracket because we lost both banners to tempestuous and consistent winds.

The stops signs emerging onto major arteries within the district were changed and replaced with a bilingual sign (STOP ARRÊT). We received multiple positive comments about this project and we are proud to say that we did not receive one negative comment.

We have also worked closely with the City's Transportation department to help our businesses by repairing sidewalks and creating detours so the merchants would not be affected by construction. With the help of a Municipal Enforcement Officer, we have managed to clean multiples back alleys, abandoned cars and buildings.







## FACADE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM & STREET CLEAN UP

### Façade Improvement program

2015 has been a very busy year in promoting this exciting and important grant program for our businesses. We have 6 businesses in varying planning stages for their façade improvements. This grant will do a matching investment for façade improvements to up to a maximum of \$30,000. If this could be of interest to you please contact our office at 587-524-9399 at your earliest convenience.

### Street Clean Up

We participated in the major Mill Creek Spring Clean Up and we sponsored the BBQ with M & M Meats. We also did a June Street Clean Up with volunteers and cleaned much of Whyte Avenue.

As part of our Street clean up initiatives we also worked with our members by assisting them in removing unwanted graffiti on the exterior of their place of business. We have obtained from the Capital City Clean Up team, tools and products to assist. We invite our members to contact us to see if we might be able to help with graffiti removal. It is important to note that we are limited on some of this work but if we have something that can help we will be pleased to pass this on to you.



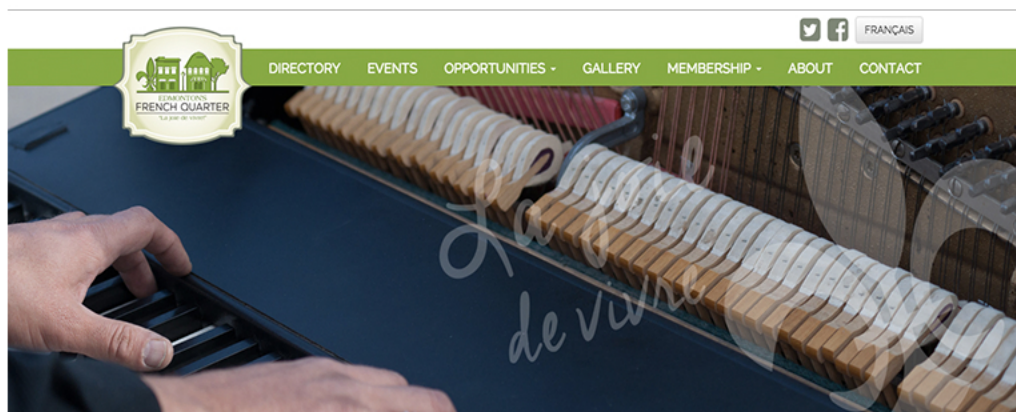




## WEBSITE & MEMBERSHIPS

### Website

Other projects last year include the complete revamp of our website. This was done so that we could manage our own site without the help of a web designer, which can become costly in the long run. The site now provides more interactivity with our members as you can now add your events or promotions on our site.



WELCOME TO THE FRENCH QUARTER



### Memberships

Also new last year is the creation of 2 new membership categories. One is an associate membership, which allows businesses who are not in our BRZ but who do business in the area to take an Associate membership thus allowing us to add them to the list of our members. They do not have a right to vote but can be promoted and participate to iRedeem program for a nominal fee of \$250 a year, an amount greater than the minimum membership levy fee. The other membership is a Supporting Membership for \$100 a year and the intent is simply to allow non-profits or anyone to show support with a modest contribution.





## WORKSHOPS & iREDEEM

### Workshops

We also organized several free workshops for our members. The purpose of these workshops was to provide our members with focused and specialized information. These included resource specialists Andrew Fisher on Social Media; Johanne Johnson on Human Resource management; Lara Pinchbeck on Façade Improvement program and Pierre Bergeron on Stakeholder agreements. These workshops were greatly appreciated by the participants and we invite our members to contact us with ideas of topics they would want to address.

### iRedeem

We launched the French Quarter Membership Card via iRedeem to encourage people working and studying in the area to shop locally. It is also a loyalty program for our businesses and merchants.

Over 30 members are now offering discounts to thousands of cardholders. The program is relatively new and we will continue to promote this exciting initiative.





In 2015 we organized a Mardi Gras fundraiser for YESS. Our motivation was to connect our business district with a needy and important non-profit entity. It was an ambitious and exciting project however we failed to attract a sufficient number of participants and as such had to cancel the event.

Travelling between our BRZ venues and Old Strathcona during the Fringe has been a challenge but also an opportunity. This year we partnered with Old Strathcona to create a free shuttle service for people going from one district to the other during the Fringe Festival. We are planning on making some modifications to this service and continue the shuttle service for 2016.







## GRANTS, BIA BC CONFERENCE & WINTER FUN FEST

### Grant Applications

We have submitted two applications for funding focusing on promoting our district. Some of the key elements are focused on street beautification through banners, street lighting, stop signs, flower barrels and sponsorships of events. Both the Community Initiatives Program (CIP) and Western Economic Diversification have turned down our proposals. CIP informed us that as an entity created under the Municipalities Government Act (MGA) we no longer qualify to apply. We have not received an explanation from Western Economic Diversification as to why we were not accepted under their programs.

### BIA BC Conference

Employees attended the BIA BC Conference in Edmonton. There were many great workshops offered but the key element was the opportunity to discuss our challenges with long term established BIA's (Business Improvement Areas).

### Winter Fun Fest

For the second year, the French Quarter Business Association sponsored the 'Tire sur la neige' or maple toffee on snow for the Winter Fun Fest. This year the event was held at the Ottewell Community League and had a huge contingency of people drop by for a little sweetening with maple toffee. The popularity of this fun winter event has us convinced that our participation be a 'must' for future years.



## **French Quarter Business Association**

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