

## WHAT IS A BIA?

A Business Improvement Area (BIA) is an association of businesses within a specified district who join together, with official approval of the City, in a self-help program aimed at stimulating local business.

BIAs help improve the commercial environment of a determined area. They are run by an elected board of directors, made up of volunteer member's which are a mix of property owners and commercial tenants within its boundary. BIAs are funded by the municipal property taxes (levy) from each commercial property within their boundary.

BIAs work with the municipal government, property owners and local organizations to help facilitate necessary changes and provide a collective voice in support of improving the area.

## THE PURPOSE OF THE BIA

- To promote the area and its members
- To encourage business recruitment
- To help improve & beautify commercial areas
- To be a positive, unified voice representing the area
- To work with partners to help improve the social well-being of the community

## WHAT DOES THE BIA DO? **Marketing | Street Beautification | Events | Advocacy**

- Act as a liaison between the business community and the local government.
- To advocate on behalf of the interests of the business improvement area
- Work closely with commercial property owners to help fill unoccupied space and to ensure an optimum business mix is achieved.
- Implement creative marketing campaigns to retain and expand the customer base
- Promote the area as a business or shopping area
- Provide streetscape improvements: lighting, signage, planters, banners, graffiti removal, and sidewalk treatments, as well as holiday decorations. Oversee the improvement, beautification and maintenance of municipally-owned land, buildings and structures in the area
- Organize special events highlighting the unique attributes of the area.
- Undertake strategic planning necessary to address business improvement area issues

## WESTBORO VILLAGE BIA

### Vision

The BIA is connected to the community and business owners they represent and is the voice of the business community. The BIA fully engages with its members, the community at large, community associations and other BIAs to support an active, vibrant and evolving Westboro Village.

### Mission

To lead the way in establishing the conditions for Westboro businesses to prosper. We do so by engaging with the community and businesses, staging promotional events and nurturing relationships with key partners and community associations. The work of the BIA is always carried out in manner that is consistent with the unique characteristics of the Westboro Village.

## Westboro Village BIA 2018 Work Plan

With a new team at the Westboro Village BIA, we have been researching the events, development, marketing and communications over the past year. While we are not able to report on the 2017 outcomes and results, we *can* provide a plan for moving forward that both address issues of past and build the momentum of the successes Westboro Village BIA can celebrate.

### 2018 Strategic Goals

To achieve our BIA's vision, mission and purpose for 2018 has the key goals/priorities defined:

- Build and foster a strong BIA membership
- Increase community involvement
- Attract traffic and business
- Improve efficiencies and maximize resources

### 2018 Workplan

#### **BUILD AND FOSTER A STRONG BIA MEMBERSHIP**

##### **Develop communications with BIA members on a regular basis.**

- Update our member database
  - Create an e-newsletter to circulate with members - sharing updates with the BIA, in the community and call for content to populate our public facing newsletter and social media
  - Marketing campaign calendar will be provided to members
- Create a private members' only Facebook group
  - A group to share content, update members on City planning and development, share community-based information that may help members
- Host workshops at the BIA office or other venues to assist businesses in common issues or educate in subject matter they are interested in (survey)

##### **Promote members to enhance their marketing initiatives**

- Using the marketing campaign calendar as a starting point, we will develop or share content about members relevant to the time of year/campaign - either images, video, text
- Share members content on our networks
- connect community events/groups with members based on interests and activities

##### **Advocate for BIA members**

- Property or city maintenance issues affecting BIA members and the experience of being in Westboro Village - streetscape benches, cleanliness, bins, flower baskets, banners, access and signage
  - We will be extending our beautification to McRae, and also focusing on the entry way from Island Park
- Apply for grants or funds for improvements to BIA – economic development, graffiti removal

- We are applying for the graffiti removal grant again, and will be applying to an economic development grant to be used toward the programming of Winston Square, and events/activities that will attract and build economy in Westboro Village
- Parking, planning and development updates will be shared with members as they progress
  - The Parking study for paid parking in Westboro continues, and will be updated over the course of the year through BIA communications to members

## **INCREASE COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

### **Create grassroots micro events (Winston Square) bringing community into BIA**

- create a calendar of possible events that may include BIA members, including: charity BBQ, yoga, story time, etc.
  - BIA members will be invited to host events at Winston Square – that will provide value to the community or showcase their connection to the community.

### **Connect events and communications with local charities**

- Support and promote businesses who organize fundraisers through BIA networks
  - Help facilitate and connect charities or groups with BIA with members who wish to fundraise or run/participate in fundraising events
- The BIA events that generate revenue will support local charity with proceeds

### **Advertise and promote events and promotions in community media**

- Post events in community news, Facebook, Twitter
- Post events with local groups, associations, clubs
- Create a “What’s On in Westboro” (name TBC) newsletter in community newspaper that will publish monthly or bi-monthly

### **Recruit community volunteers to participate/ run special programs.**

- Volunteers will help with the Fuse festival event, Winston square events, street beautification, creating content about BIA members, etc.

## **ATTRACT TRAFFIC AND BUSINESS (WESTBORO IS A DESTINATION)**

We are discovering that the Westboro Village BIA website is becoming a source for people looking to shop, eat, to business, or experience Westboro. Our focus this year is to build and continuously output content about the BIA members on a regular basis.

### **Hold events that will attract a greater audience**

- Fuse Street Festival will repeat this year on the weekend of August 18-19. Street closure is planned from Golden to McRae
- Fashion event in late fall will repeat this year. Date to be finalized.
- Winterland in Westboro will focus on Westboro Village as a shopping and eating destination from November to January

### **Develop networks and website to reach audiences outside community**

- Create and manage a LinkedIn account to post content relevant to Business attraction and community promotion
- Post relevant content on the website that will attract businesses to Westboro

### **Create a marketing mix – traditional and digital that will promote WVBIA**

- Create calendar of campaigns and content that will attract beyond community; publishing multiple promotions at one given time to create a “destination” experience.
- Post on a campaign basis on the WVBIA website, showcasing themes throughout the year and connection to our members
- Promote Westboro as a destination for shopping and eating experience, promote events, sales, seasonal content that will attract beyond direct community using radio, social network ads, and traditional ads where our budget allows.
- Further develop the website to act as a resource for people who are interested in Westboro Village as a place of business or as shopping/eating/experiential destination

### **IMPROVE EFFICIENCIES /MAXIMIZE RESOURCES**

With 3 full time staff, the use of external resources should be minimized. We will review all external services and sources used and assess if the WVBIA requires them. This would be in such areas as event coordination, volunteer coordination, marketing and communications, website and social media content management.

#### **Implement processes to improve efficiency**

- Implement expense and budget tracking software (wave or excel) to track spending (for all budget items)
- Implement BIA member process and forms for contact and member information updates

#### **Minimize external contractors where possible**

- Website updates, graphic design (to an extent) content development, project management – internal whenever possible
  - Event co-ordination
  - Public relations/publicity

#### **Implement a volunteer program**

- Recruit volunteers to help run events and programs, to help create content for members, to assist in street beautification, set up or supervision of Winston Square events
  - Our staff will coordinate the volunteers for various activities; Ideally, in the next year or two, there will be a member volunteer committee