

Quarterly Update (Jan - Mar 2023) London Downtown Business Association

To LDBA Members, City Council, City Staff, and Partners;

We are pleased to provide you with our first quarterly update of 2023. With over 1400 members and an ever-growing list of partners with whom we work, the purpose of these updates is to keep you apprised of the work and accomplishments we have achieved together, and to provide you with information for up-and-coming initiatives being planned. Below you will find some highlights of programs and projects that we are delivering and working hard for our members and downtown in 2023.

Downtown London 2022 Annual Report

Downtown London's 2022 Annual Report can be found [here](#). This report provides a highlight of the various programs and projects that your Downtown London Team helped deliver last year, and their respective outcomes and metrics.

Curling Canada's Brier Cup

As many of our members know, earlier this month Curling Canada's Brier Cup was held at Budweiser Gardens. Downtown London was pleased to be a Host Partner for this event which brought some of Canada's top curlers, along with more than 107,000 visitors from around the world, and a local economic boost estimated between \$10-15 million. Many downtown merchants saw a rise in foot traffic into their businesses and increased sales during this time.

Downtown for the Holidays

The inaugural 2022 *Downtown for the Holidays* saw more than 100,000 downtown visitors who participated in events over the month of December, through a successful collaboration with Covent Garden Market, City of London, Dundas Place, Victoria Park event organizers, and our members. Survey results were very positive with 84.2% visitors saying they came more than once to holiday events planned in the core and 80.9% saying they shopped or dined at a downtown business while they were here.

The Downtown London team has already begun their planning for this year's *Downtown for the Holidays* which will once again "take a village" to plan and deliver an even bigger event, providing many memorable holiday experiences for all ages.

2023 Ontario Business Improvement Area Association Conference

Downtown London has been selected to host this year's OBIAA Conference taking place from April 16-19 at RBC Place. Along with the Downtown London team, this conference is also being supported by the City of London, Tourism London, Argyle BIA, Hamilton Road BIA, Hyde Park BIA and Old East Village BIA. This industry conference will bring approximately 300 attendees. It

offers professional development, new innovative ideas and networking opportunities for Ontario BIA staff and their boards. Attendees will also have an opportunity to tour some of London BIAs' districts and learn about their best practices. Downtown London is hosting a street party event on Dundas Place on the evening of April 18, to showcase how flex streets animate and add vibrancy to downtown business areas.

Member Mixers

LDBA held its first Member Mixer of the year on March 14th at Joe Kool's on Richmond St. At this Mixer, City of London staff shared important information on current and upcoming construction projects taking place downtown and in the surrounding areas. More information about Downtown Area Construction can be found at the following links - [Central Ave Cycling Improvements](#), [Phases 2 and 3 of the Downtown Loop project](#) and [Phase 1 - Wellington Gateway](#). All other construction projects happening throughout the city in 2023 can be found [here](#).

We are planning at least three more Member Mixers for 2023. If there is a topic you would like to learn more about, or you would like to host a future Member Mixer, please contact info@downtownlondon.ca

Coming Soon - 2023 Construction Dollars

As the City of London gears up for their 2023 construction year, we are working closely with City staff on the 2023 Construction Dollar program. This year's program will be launched in late spring. When they arrive the Downtown London Team will be distributing these to businesses. Last year \$33,805 worth of Construction Dollars had been redeemed downtown.

Downtown London Gift Cards

We continue to see a great uptake in Downtown London Gift Cards. Last year more than 4700 gift cards were distributed, valued at approximately \$180,000, driven partially by a year-over-year increase in retail sales of 21%. We also give out these cards through sponsorships, contests, special events, and as visitor gifts. We have more than 130 members signed up to accept the cards. These cards are easy to use and can be processed through your payment processing system (which may include merchant fees similar to fees incurred when a customer uses their credit card). If you haven't signed up yet to use the Downtown London Gift Card and would like to take advantage of a captured clientele and "free money" for our merchants circulating in London's downtown economy, then please contact - info@downtownlondon.ca

2023 Event Sponsorship Program

Downtown London is excited to offer various levels of support to event organizers (members and non-members) whose goals include attracting visitors to our downtown to help increase foot traffic and vibrancy. Event sponsorship eligibility is based on criteria including the involvement of Downtown businesses and the economic impact the event will have on Downtown businesses.

Funding may come in various forms of financial and in-kind support. Applications open March 22, 2023 and information can be found [here](#).

Spring Planters and Baskets

This spring (approx. end of May) we will once again be providing planters that span throughout the district. This year we will be expanding planters downtown by providing 20 hanging baskets down Richmond Street to accompany the 72 planters boxes that are located throughout the district. With the arrival of spring plants, we will also be placing 32 locally designed mural planter box covers throughout the district.

Storefront Facade Power Washing

Downtown London is excited to provide businesses with enhanced cleaning and beautification support with our pressure washing program. Following the success and the high demand for service of this 2022 pilot, the pressure washing program is being expanded from 2 days of service to 3 days each week. This service will be available for all downtown business storefronts from approximately April to November (weather permitting). To enquire, please contact info@downtownlondon.ca

Downtown London's Property Damage Grant

Once again in 2023, DTL is offering a one-time grant of up to \$1250 per property to help members with costs incurred to maintain a business facade and building's safety and security features and repair damages that are a result of vandalism. These grants are limited and are offered on a first-come, first-serve basis. More information about this grant can be found [here](#).

Business Development and Core Area Vacancy Reduction

In 2022, through a partnership with London Economic Development Corporation, London's Small Business Centre, City of London, Old East Village and Main Street London and London Downtown Business Association 54 new businesses were attracted downtown and filled core area vacancies. In addition, our team assisted 3 existing downtown businesses expand.

Since the beginning of 2023, 11 businesses have opened and Downtown London staff have assisted many of these new businesses with their grand opening events.

Business Grand Opening and Special Milestone Events

Is your business looking to celebrate a special milestone or anniversary? Please feel free to reach out to our Downtown London Team to let us know how we can help you plan a memorable celebration for your business. Just send us a note to info@downtownlondon.ca.

Health and Homelessness

The challenges our members face each day as substance abuse, homelessness and mental health issues are on the rise and continue to play out in our downtown at unprecedented levels. We know in many instances of members trying to do the right thing as they navigate a complex list of

community resources for help, only to be told they have contacted the wrong department or agency or learn that timely responses are not guaranteed due to a lack of resources.

With so many innovative and leading edge resources available right here in our city, now more than ever is time to stop the established ways of how things have always been done and to begin to find divergent approaches for action. That said, Downtown London has urgently called upon City Hall staff and politicians, higher levels of government and many other community organizations to work towards a collaborative “No Wrong Door” approach.

Starting in late 2022, Downtown London’s leadership team and some of our BIA members participated in a three-part Health and Homeless Summit series led by the City of London, London’s hospital and health agencies, EMS and London Police Services, to help influence and recommend solution driven approaches to this crisis. We worked with other community sector groups including business support and economic development agencies, social services, hospitals/healthcare, post secondary institutes, policing, emergency services, building and property developers and senior-level staff at the City of London.

Coincident to this initiative, a \$25 million donation from an anonymous local donor was announced at this year’s Mayor’s State of the City address. This donation will help kick start the implementation and governance planning of this new “whole of community systems” approach.

Downtown London’s leadership team remains committed to this process, determined to break-down silos and help drive action and results for improved quality of service delivery for at-risk individuals in our community and resources to better support residents and businesses.

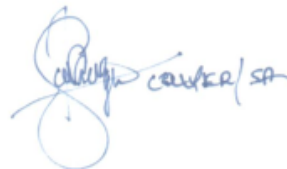
Keeping You Informed In 2023

Throughout the year we will continue to keep you apprised of many Downtown London initiatives we have in store and look forward to continuing our collaborative work with you. If there is anything that you would like to learn more about or offer feedback on, feel free to contact us, stop by the office, or let us know when you see us on the street.... we are always open to having those conversations with you!

Sincerely,



Barbara Maly
Downtown London Executive Director



Scott Collyer
LDBA Board Chair