



DOWNTOWN NEWSLETTER

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ANNUAL REPORT

February 2016

NEW BOARD DEVELOPS STRATEGIC PLAN

One of the first items on the agenda for the new Board of Directors in 2015 was to review the Mission and Vision of 'Downtown Sudbury' BIA ...

- **Mission** ... To maximize the long term interests of our members.
- **Vision** ... Downtown Sudbury will be the cultural and economic hub of Northern Ontario.

The next step was then to develop a **Strategic Plan** – one that would build upon successful programs, projects and partnerships to meet that Vision. With the help of a facilitator (Gerry Labelle), the Board had countless meetings to discuss strategies, objectives, actions, finally establishing a Plan that was presented to the General Membership for discussion and feedback. This presentation took place in November 2015, with approximately 70 attending and participating in round table discussions. The result was very positive, with member feedback supporting the Strategic Directions and Objectives outlined by the Board for their term.

7 Strategies were identified that reflect the key work areas of 'Downtown Sudbury' BIA:

1. **Special Events** ... Organize, promote and manage events that will help highlight the benefits of and attract more people and customers to the Downtown.
2. **Marketing** ... Develop, implement, promote and manage customer driven programs to effectively market Downtown Sudbury.
3. **Municipal Liaison** ... Continuously and efficiently liaise with municipal government and its representatives in order to promote and foster cooperation.
4. **Downtown Environment** ... Continuously improve the downtown environment and ensure it is physically and environmentally attractive.
5. **Economic Development** ... Promote, encourage and support Economic Development initiatives that benefit Downtown Sudbury.
6. **Member Advocacy** ... Advocate, lobby, represent our members at all levels of government and be the voice of downtown business.
7. **Organizational** ... To operate a credible and active membership driven association that considers the desires of its membership by involving them in the decision-making process.

EXPRESSING VIBRANCY

Expressing Vibrancy is a research project that looks at neighbourhoods through the lens of culture. It was developed by leading Arts Service Organization **Cobalt Connects**, in partnership with McMaster University's Live Lab, and non-profit urban planning team Civic Plan. The purpose of the project is to determine the factors in an urban environment that add to or detract from a

sense of vibrancy. The results of this project will be used to reinforce the importance of various projects and programs (either underway, proposed, yet to come) and will indicate those areas in need of attention – and why ... from beautification and streetscape to safety and security to parking and transportation. The data collected from this project will indicate the WHAT it is that supports 'feet on the street' that in turn activates new business development, downtown living, etc.

The first stage of the project uses a form of cultural mapping combined with urban cartography to map the assets within an area. Everything from potted plants and trees in medians, to public art are counted and evaluated on a common scale, giving the project its quantitative baseline about the neighbourhood.

Secondly, an in-depth study is conducted using local residents where they are shown content (video, still, audio) from the neighbourhood. During this process their biometric responses are measured through various sensors monitoring their brainwave activity.

These layers of data are then combined to discover unique response patterns to the built environment. How do youth in Sudbury feel about the architecture? Do seniors feel safer on tree-lined streets? Does curbside parking in Sudbury elicit the same response as it does in Hamilton?

The data and findings are all visualized in a way that makes them easy to understand, fun to engage with and compelling for decision makers. The Cobalt Connects team writes a custom report about the findings and recommendations that will help improve the built environment to match the vibrancy of residents.



This project will be conducted over 2016 and is a partnership between 'Downtown Sudbury' BIA and the GSDC (Greater Sudbury Development Corporation).

DOWNTOWN EVENTS ATTRACT THOUSANDS



In 2015, 'Downtown Sudbury' continued to host/organize a number of successful community events that have become 'traditions' to many, including ... **Largest Yard & Sidewalk Sale (May)** – **Downtown Rotary Blues For Food (June)** – **Downtown Sudbury Ribfest (Labour Day Weekend)**. We were also pleased to develop our partnership with Launchpad and grow our '**Downtown Movie Night Under the Stars**' into a

monthly program. These, with others like the Annual Santa Claus Parade, Farmers' Market events, Blueberry Festival – to name a few – continue to attract thousands to our core. Independent activities/events also continued to grow and develop over 2015 ... **Paint the Downtown Yellow** ... **Up Fest** ... **Craft Beer Fest** (hosted by The Townhouse) ... **Art Crawl** ... **Makers' Market**. In May, we were also part of '**The Tale of a Town**' ... a national theatre and media initiative touring the country, gathering and sharing main street stories, leading up to Canada's 150th anniversary in 2017! This captured the collective community memory of our 'main street' – one story at a time!! To listen to our stories visit <https://soundcloud.com/thetaleofatown/awdms-sudbury>

Downtown Sudbury continues to experience some very positive changes and the growth of a diversity of activities supports that. In 2016, in addition to the events previously noted, we can expect a number of new ones that will continue to strengthen our core as the home to many of the city's best and unique experiences, including **Graphic-Con** (which started in 2015 at Science North and due to the very positive response, will be held downtown in June). Also moving downtown will be **Earth Day** celebrations (which will be held in June).

And ... 'Downtown Sudbury' continues to offer the many years of event planning experience to groups to assist them in holding an event in our downtown. The more activities and events that are held, together with the existing activities already hosted by our Members (art exhibits, live entertainment, sports activities), only continue to strengthen our downtown as the heart of the community and as the place to be!

BITS & BITES FROM 2015

New Businesses/Changes ... *School of Architecture* began Phase 3 of construction and welcomed a new year of students ... *over 13 new businesses* opened ... *CBC Radio* opened in their new bigger and brighter location in the TD Canada Trust building ... *Respect Is Burning Supperclub* reopened in 2015 and is once again a downtown destination ... *Imagine Cinemas* announced they will be opening in the Rainbow Centre in 2016.

- **'Full Sidewalk Patio Program'** - Following a 'Pilot Project', approval was received from the City to make this a permanent program
- **Elm St. parking** - Following a two year 'Pilot Project', approval was received from the City to make this (Elgin – Lisgar) permanent
- New 'Downtown Sudbury' **website** was completed
- **Portrait of Downtown Sudbury** video was launched
... <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wo7gZZtU0vA>
- **Facebook** followers reached 5,000
- **Stompin Tom Connors** statue was installed on Elgin St., just outside of the Arena

'DOWNTOWN SUDBURY' SWAG AVAILABLE



Don't forget ... we have '**Downtown Sudbury**' swag available ... if you are interested in having some items for sale at your store, restaurant/café, or for your staff .. let us know.

At this moment, we have t-shirts, buttons, posters, bags pens. Interested? Call or email Maggie for more info .. maggie@downtownsudbury.com

ABOUT THE BIA

Downtown Sudbury (BIA – Business Improvement Area) is a private sector driven, not-for-profit organization, representing Downtown Businesses & Property Owners.

It is the largest concentration of small business, financial and medical services, government and entertainment for the City of Greater Sudbury and Northern Ontario, representing approximately 90 Property Owners, 400+ Businesses & Services, over 8,000 Employees, funded exclusively by its members – the Downtown Property Owners and Businesses.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jeff MacIntyre (Fuel Multimedia), Chair

Brian McCullagh (Vianet), Vice-Chair

Shirley Vincent (El Mercado), Treasurer

Deb Brouse (Sentia Hair Design), Director-at-Large

Jan Browning (Jan Browning Boutique)

Angela Gilmore (Cambrian College – ‘Open Studio’)

Rob Gregorini (Respect Is Burning Supperclub)

Kendra Maclsaac (YMCA)

Al Vardy (Raintree Financial Solutions)

Fern Cormier & Deb McIntosh (City Council Representatives)

STAFF

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