

UP TOWN WATERLOO



2020 ANNUAL REPORT

MESSAGE FROM OUR BOARD CHAIR AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



To say 2020 has been a challenging year for our Uptown family, is an understatement. Covid-19 has had a devastating effect on many of our businesses – from which some won't return. But, if we know one thing, Uptown is resilient.

We saw this adaptability during the past five years of LRT and streetscape construction before the pandemic. Businesses evolved to serve and engage their customers in new ways.

The same can be said about this past year. Our Uptown businesses are navigating a winding path out of this Covid-19 maze and the BIA has been with them every step of the way – providing advice, coaching, funding, advocacy and, importantly, an ear to listen.

Over the past year, we welcomed 20 new businesses to our fold, and we still have more on the way. For these reasons and more, we can and should celebrate. However, we ought to also remember, for various reasons, we lost 24 businesses and most, if not all that are left are in a state of flux and uncertainty.

Events looked very different in 2020. While we weren't able to host our flagship festivals, we were able to introduce a summer and fall open air market, kick off a new art walk on Hughes Lane and initiate several innovative media and advertising campaigns in an effort to bring people to Uptown in a safe manner.

We took on a larger advocacy role – writing letters, emails and meeting with many government and elected officials, to share how the pandemic was affecting our Uptown businesses. We also adapted our budget to create the new Come Back Up fund – providing almost \$130,000 in financial assistance to Uptown businesses – something we couldn't have done without support from the City of Waterloo.

Moving forward, we will work with you to rebuild our Uptown while staying true to what's important – thriving businesses and economy, healthy lifestyle options, beautiful and useful outdoor spaces, innovative learning opportunities, caring neighbourhoods, impactful arts and civic engagement and sustainable development.

As always, remember that our Board and staff are here for you and honoured to serve the heart of Waterloo.

Sincerely,

Nancy Fox
Board Chair

Tracy Van Kalsbeek
Executive Director

2019 - 2022 BOARD OF DIRECTORS



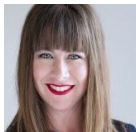
NANCY FOX
Investor's Group
Chair



TENILLE BONOQUORE
City Councillor, Ward 7



KRISTIN SAINSBURY
City of Waterloo,
Economic
Development Officer



MELISSA DURRELL
Durrell Communications
Vice Chair



RYAN GOOD
Cabri Management
Director



DANA SHORTT
Dana Shortt Gourmet &
Gifts
Director



KRISTEN HAMMOND
Treasurer



LAWRENCE GREAVES
Oldfield, Greaves, D'Agostino
& Scriven
Director



KIRK VINES
Beertown
Director



TRACY VAN KALSBECK
Uptown Waterloo BIA
Secretary



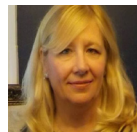
ANDREA HARDING
Centre for International
Governance Innovation (CIGI)
Director



MARK WHALEY
Waterloo MedTech
Director



GABRIELLE ARVANITIS
Score Pizza
Director



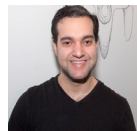
KATHY KING
Primus Property Management
Director



JANET WELDON
Sun Life Financial
Director



NICK BENNINGER
Fat Sparrow Group
Director



RAMI SAID
Revive Game Bar
Director

BIA STAFF



TRACY VAN KALSBECK
Executive Director



NATALIE GALLO
Marketing &
Communications
Manager



TAHNEE HIPEL
Office & Program
Coordinator



**DAWNE TAYLOR-
GILDERS**
Events & Outreach
Manager



2020 HIGHLIGHTS



COME BACK UP FUND



When directions from Federal and Provincial government forced the closure of small businesses across the country in response to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, the BIA created a post COVID-19 funding program – similar to the Hand in Hand program.

Businesses could apply for up to \$2,500 in funding for help covering costs such as:

- Costs associated to increased cleaning and sanitation procedures e.g. hand washing stations, hand sanitizer, PPE, cleaning supplies etc. related to Government and Public Health recommendations;
- Costs associated with creating and managing online sales e.g. e-commerce platform – related to changes made because of the pandemic;
- Marketing and advertising costs to promote/share changes made to their business because of the pandemic;
- Capital expenditures related to air quality improvements or social distancing requirements;
- Training for staff related to changes made to their business because of the pandemic;
- Other expenditures related to changes made because of the pandemic as approved by the BIA

Since the pandemic hit in March 2020 and right up until the end of the year, the BIA was proud to have helped a total of 70 businesses with almost \$130,000.



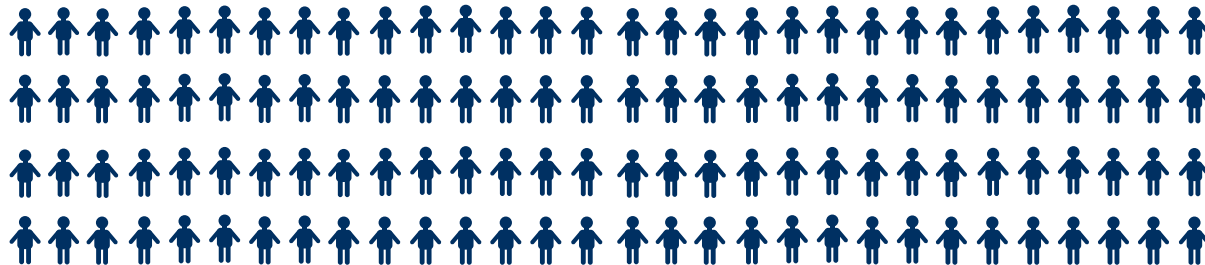
\$130,000 GIVEN TO **70** BUSINESSES

UPTOWN OPEN AIR MARKET



In the summer, some of the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions lifted and the City of Waterloo closed Willis Way to vehicular traffic in order to encourage active transportation. To add vibrancy to the core while giving our community a safe way to interact during the pandemic, Uptown Waterloo held its first-ever Summer Open Air Market series. We worked closely with Public Health to ensure proper health regulations were in place.

In total, we had seven markets between June and September (two were rained out) that brought almost 2,600 people to Uptown. Vendors included local makers and businesses, including some Uptown BIA members. Interest from vendors grew each week and we received countless positive comments from residents.



2,600
ATTENDEES

HUGHES LANE ART WALK

The Hughes Lane Art Walk was created in partnership with the Uptown Waterloo BIA, City of Waterloo and local artists with funding from RT04's Shareable Moment Challenge grants. Building upon the existing mural project located on the side of the Uptown Waterloo Parkade, the Hughes Lane Art Walk supports the goals of the Uptown Public Realm Strategy as well as the City of Waterloo Culture Plan.

Artists were invited to submit their proposals through an open call competition run by the City of Waterloo and submissions were juried based on the quality, aesthetic appeal and connection to participating businesses. The doors were completed in mid-August of 2020. and were extremely well-received by the community.

Businesses with painted doors (and their artist) are as follows:

- Marbles – door artist Lucy Bilson
- Hustl+Flow – door artist Jackie Levitt
- Zero Waste Bulk – door artist Nikolina Kupcevic
- 21 Fir – door artist Luke Swinson
- McCabe's – door artist Kat Hernden
- King Street Trio – door artist Andi + Co
- Bud & Sally Cannabis Co. – door artist Tara Cooper
- Patent Social – door artist Jason Panda

A video tour of the Art Walk can be found on the BIA website:
<https://uptownwaterloobia.com/hughes-lane-art-walk/>.



Bud & Sally



McCabe's



Patent Social



hustl+flow

WINDOW WALKERS ART WALK

Buidling on the successful reception of the Hughes Lane Art Walk, the BIA implemented other public art initiatives in order to continue creating opportunities for the community to explore the core safely during the pandemic. A highlight of these initiatives was the Window Walkers Art Walk during the fall, leading up to Halloween. Thirteen business windows were painted by local artists in a Halloween or autumn theme.

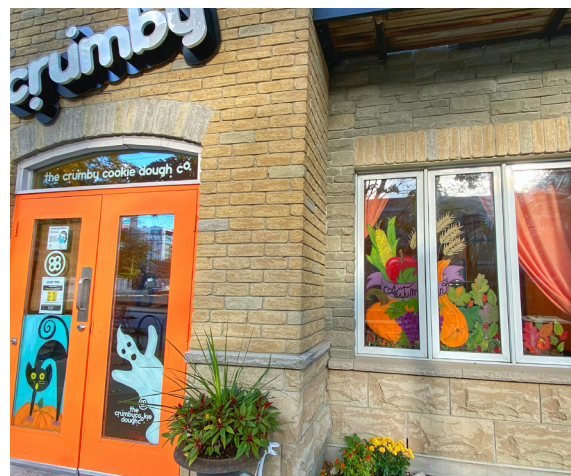
In order to encourage the community to view the windows and visited the businesses, we promoted a social media contest asking people to send in photos of themselves at each window for a chance to win Uptown dollars.

Businesses with painted windows (and their artist) were as follows:

- Dana Shortt Gourmet - by Andrea Lorentz
- Crumby Cookie Dough Co. - by Laura Wagner
- The Sock Factory - by Sonia Nadeau
- Just Love Pie - by Tara Nix
- Score Pizza - by Dawne Taylor-Gilders
- Zero Waste Bulk - by Bari Parsch
- House of Bamboo - by Jason Panda
- July Nail Bar - by Julie Dring
- Jinzakaya - by Jason Piper
- Copper Branch - by Lucy Lan
- hustl+flow - by Angela Grasse
- Four-All Ice Cream - by Lupita G
- Modo Yoga by Emily McDougall



House of Bamboo



Crumby Cookie Dough Co.



Just Love Pie

 **72**
MEDIA MENTIONS
41 INTERVIEWS


4 MIL.
SOCIAL MEDIA
IMPRESSIONS

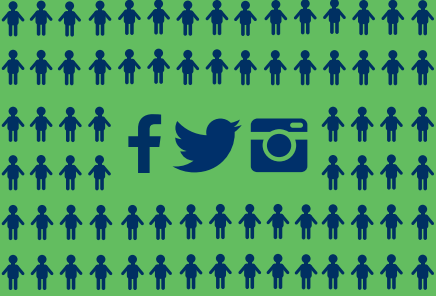

 **16**
SURVEYS
SENT TO MEMBERS
400
RESPONSES

130K
COME BACK UP
FUNDS GIVEN
TO **70** BUSINESSES


2020
IN REVIEW



\$32K
SOLD IN
UPTOWN
DOLLARS



48K SOCIAL MEDIA
FOLLOWERS


20 NEW BUSINESSES
OPENED


24K
HAND IN HAND
FUNDS GIVEN

 **2.6K**
ATTENDEES
OF FIRST-EVER
OPEN AIR MARKET