The Junction BIA - JULY Board Meeting
Thursday, July 18, 2024, at 9:30 am
Meeting virtually by phone: 778-728-7221 PIN: 301 855 466#

9:30 am **CALL TO ORDER** - Kiyo Elliott-Armstrong, Board Chairperson
Declaration of Conflict of Interest/Attendance/Quorum (3)
Regrets: **Absent:** ***Guests: Rafiq Dosani, Auditor****

MAY Minutes (JUNE meeting postponed) - Kiyo, Chair
MTA: Jyhling Seconded: Dan Unanimous.

JUNE Financials - Dan, Board Treasurer
MTA: Maryan Seconded: Dan Unanimous.

2023 AUDIT - Draft Financial Statements *- presented by Rafiq Dosani, Auditor* (2023 Operating Budget City doc)*
MTA: Maryan Seconded: Dan Unanimous.

9:40 am OPERATIONS/ADMIN - KIYO AND CAROL

New Businesses Welcomed by Staff
T's Topnotch Events Planning & Decors - 3052 Dundas St W

Streetscaping/Maintenance
You may view the June Maintenance Report here. There were 21 instances of tagging and nine cases of vertical littering (posters/stickers).

Unfortunately, the city tree outside of 3042 Dundas St W has been struck again by a vehicle. This marks the third accident in this area within one year. The tree guard also sustained significant damage and cannot be repaired. PGT believes that this tree will need to be replaced. The damaged tree has been reported to 311/Urban Forestry for replacement. The accident was reported on a Saturday, and the tree guard was removed and replaced the following Thursday. We proudly announce that it only took four business days to address this issue. Cost: $787.50 to move another tree guard from a side street. We have also sent a letter to Gord Perks' office and the Transportation Department requesting they revisit their decision to add a traffic light at Quebec Ave. Some members believe this is the cause of the accidents—ongoing *follow-up.*

Plantings
We are continuing to ensure that our Butterfly Gardens are vibrant and full. Recently, a tree by 341 High Park Ave was partially removed due to excessive storm damage. When the city cut the tree, they damaged and removed most of the perennials in the location. PGT will be supplementing that garden with other perennials. Due to excessive backlogs, the tree is expected to be replaced in roughly two years. Other Butterfly Gardens that are looking sparse will also receive additional plantings.

Graffiti Removal
Graffiti continues to be a city-wide problem. Sadly, two of our AR murals, Patterns of the Junction (rear Benjamin Moore on Pacific) and Toronto's Favourite Meeting Place (east side of Arts Market on Pacific), have been severely tagged. The property owners were responsible for applying an anti-graffiti coating on both. Unfortunately, the cost to repair the murals (~$8,000 each) is too high for the property owners. We recommended priming over the murals to remove the graffiti and applying this preferred anti-graffiti coating (3 coats) until we can apply for a new mural in either location next year under the city's Outdoor Mural and Street Art Program. The Patterns of the Junction Mural will be primed over on July 18. Per the board's approval, we hired Goodbye Graffiti (GG) to remove over 200 tags from public and private main street-facing buildings this month. An extensive list of Before & After photos can be seen here. We will ask Goodbye Graffiti to revisit the Junction in the late summer to provide new biweekly or monthly cleaning quotes for 2025. The fewer tags on buildings, the lower the monthly cost! We will rely on our members to keep their properties clean and tag-free until then. Ongoing.

Benches
SURE General Contractors returned to the Junction on June 3rd to sand down and apply three anti-graffiti coating layers to our benches. We instructed them to allow proper curing time between coats. The work was completed on Monday, June 17, at no additional cost to the BIA.

Grants 2024 - *Legend* *- (M) Municipal, (P) Provincial and (F) Federal -* ***click on the links to review our grant applications!***

Grant name	Closes	Request	Status
MainStreet Innovation (M) AR Laneway	2023/24	$50,000	Awarded $50,000

Canada Summer Jobs Grant (F)	Jan 10	up to $7,440	Awarded $5,163 on April 18
Experience Ontario (P)	Jan 11	up to $20,000	$20,000 - *declined, low tourism numbers**
Tourism Growth Program (F)	**Feb 29**	**up to $250K**	**Applied Feb 21 - Declined****
Outdoor Mural + Street Art Program (M)	Mar 28	up to $7,500	Awarded $7,500 on May 3
My Main Street Activator Program (F)	**Mar 31**	**up to $250K**	**Applied Mar 26 - Declined**
stART Partnership Program (M)	Spring	up to $70,000	Awaiting the City's renewal of the program
CaféTO Dining District Grant (M)	**May 3**	**up to $5,000**	**Awarded $5,000 on May 7**
Cultural Festivals Funding Program (M)	Fall	up to $25,000	To be announced in the fall of 2024

Total 2024 Grants Received To-Date: $17,663. (All City grants) vs $5,000 Budgeted.
NOTE: 2023 Grants $96,388, 2022 Grants $158,755.

**To qualify for Experience Ontario (P), we need 5,000 tourism (from 40+ km) attendees. Currently, there are just under 2,000.*

***The Tourism Growth Program panel advised that our application was not successful. Funding was allocated to projects best aligned with the program criteria and priorities. Unfortunately, our project did not align as strongly, but we were encouraged to consider submitting a new application in the future that better matches the program's objectives and priorities.*

Mural Projects
Artist Lula Lumaj will create a mural entitled **Flora and Fauna** on Bruce's Gifts and Variety, and Animator Sima Naseem will bring the artwork to life! We have requested that the mural be installed by July 31, and the animation will be accessible via the Artivive app by mid-August, giving us a new mural to promote in the late summer.

CaféTO
We have **14 curb lane** patios open for business! We lobbied to relocate a city garbage bin at NODO to allow them a more tasteful entrance to their patio.

Traffic Safety
Due to an alarming trend of accidents near 3040 Dundas St W, we've asked Councillor Gord Perks' office to investigate the traffic light at Quebec Ave and Dundas St W, installed in 2021. Recent incidents include significant damage to a tree guard and likely the loss of the tree on June 14, 2024; a car striking the same tree guard on August 21, 2023; and a tragic accident on July 5, 2023, resulting in the death of a 6-year-old girl. We are awaiting an update from City Staff. Meanwhile, we requested a "Watch Your Speed Program" sign installed outside 3040 Dundas St W to encourage drivers to slow down and be more attentive. Ongoing.

Virtual Town Hall - for membership
We hosted our Virtual Town Hall on Monday, June 10. The meeting allowed our members to learn more about our upcoming events and ongoing initiatives. **Fourteen members RSVP'd, and ten attended**, including **three board members**. Those who attended were invited to voice their questions and concerns. Healthy Moms Market and Caribou Gifts requested that we develop a Member Survey to understand better how member businesses are doing. Economic Development vetted the draft survey, including these two members, staff, and the Board Executive, before issuing it starting July 8. Distribution will continue until we receive a 30% return: 53 responses. We will share the analytics in a lobby letter to Gord Perks' office. Ongoing.

10:15 am MARKETING/EVENTS - KIYO AND CAROL

Social Media Update
As of July 8, we have 17,990 Instagram followers, 8,089 Facebook page likes, 5,629 X (formerly known as Twitter) followers, 2,567 Threads followers and 3,569 Mailchimp subscribers. Our total digital following is now **37,844**. We will update this monthly.

Butterfly Gardens Walking Tour
22 Junction Butterfly Gardens are in their third year outside BMO, along Dundas St W. These gardens enhance our community's image and provide essential food and shelter for local pollinators. We have redesigned and installed our new signage to 46-inch wide x 11-in high to be more visible to the public. We have also designed a new Astral TSA poster, installed on July 1. Partnering with Parkdale Green Thumb Enterprises, we will offer a FREE educational Butterfly Garden Walking Tour led by PGT staff on Sunday, August 11, from 10:30 a.m. to noon. We announced the soft launch on July 12 via social media, followed by a Mailchimp email to our subscribers.

Junction Journey: Architecture, History, and Photography Walking Tours
Our walking tour was a success! Within a week of soft-launching the first tour (4-6 PM), it sold out at 60 RSVPs, so we created a second 'twilight hour' tour (6-8 PM), which also sold out within a day. Unfortunately, less than 50% attended, but it was an engaged group. There was some interest in a future *paid* tour, but TDot Shots is changing its offerings, so this project is on hold. We have completed extensive research on our heritage buildings and would like to put them to good use. We are meeting with **Driftscape** w/o July 15 to explore similar partnerships using an app.

Junction Gift Card Program - member survey
For 2025, we are considering a private-label gift card program to enhance the year-round promotion of the Junction through targeted marketing efforts. This program could serve as a robust tool to drive sales and encourage customer loyalty.

We surveyed our 144 members to assess member interest, aiming for a 30% response rate, or 43 responses. We received 46 responses, with 29 members (63% of respondents) supporting the initiative. While this majority among respondents is notable, it only represents about 20% of the total membership. Given this and considering the broader context and resource allocation, staff *do not* recommend implementing the gift card program now.

The AR Laneway Project - Saturday, September 7 - MainStreet Innovation Fund (MIF) Grant $50,000
The Laneway Project organization (we met three years ago) has agreed to cover the costs of plant materials for greening a portion of the Jackson Place Laneway: **$1,145**. Of the **24 tents available**, we have opened up four spots for retailers to sign up as vendors. We currently have 19 confirmed vendors: Bevi Birra, Caribou Gifts, Carmelitas Restaurant, Carnival, Chiang Mai Junction, Clandestina Mexican Grill, Dirty Food Eatery, Epic Cycles, Gabby's Junction, Indie Alehouse, Metrolinx, MY HOUSE Lounge & Events, NeuLokal, Pretty Clean Shop, Ren's Pets, Kanto by Tita Flips, Taste Seduction, The Alpine, and The Sweet Potato. Our restaurant vendors were contacted to complete a questionnaire for Toronto Public Health's Dine Safe Program. So far, we have received our Noise Permit and AGCO, which allows our Vendors to sell alcohol at the event. Our EAP was submitted on June 13. There is a two-week minimum waiting period before it will be approved. We submitted written notices of the event to the City Clerk, Fire, Police, and Public Health on July 8. All marketing collateral is complete, and we will soft launch on July 15th. See here for our completed **Astral TSA poster** and **member poster.** We've also invited *Mayor Olivia Chow, MP Arif Virani, and Councillor Gord Perks* to join us in inaugurating The AR Laneway Project. See the letter here**.** We are working with Epic Cycles on a grand prize contest for an Electric Bike **valued at $3,400**. Attendees of the event will have the opportunity to sign up for our contest, and the draw will take place following the event. We are currently working on the artwork and logistics with them. Ongoing.

Window Wonderland
Confirmed sponsorships include Presenting Sponsor Isaan Der Thai Kitchen at **$12,000**, Social Media Sponsor Taylor Hazell Architects at **$2,500**, Social Media Sponsor MEDS Junction Pharmacy at **$2,500,** and Sureel.AI Custom Sponsorship at **$2,500**. Total received to date: **$19,500** vs Budget **$25,000**. We're **short $5,500 in Revenue** and will continue pursuing sponsorships until *Oct. 1*, the deadline to begin printing marketing collateral. We have tweaked our Mural Sponsorship position with added benefits and posted a social media call for sponsors. We have completed our Call for Window Partners with **20 confirmed**: AT the dentist, A&W, BOOM Breakfast, BMO, Bhutila Karpoche, Caribou Gifts, Carmelitas, Carnival, Coolearth Architecture, Dance Together Project, Epic Cycles, Grand Bargain, Haveli Home, Isaan Der Thai Kitchen (complimentary with sponsorship - donated to Healthy Moms), Latitude 44, Maker's Market, MEDS Junction Pharmacy, Pinot's Palette, Taylor Hazell Architects, and Zula Burger & Pizza. We have also completed our artist selection and have started the Window Partner/Artist meetings. We are currently working through updating our Window Wonderland marketing collateral. Ongoing.

H.R. - New Marketing Coordinator
We have finalized our Marketing Coordinator **job posting** to cover Taylor's maternity leave until October 2025. As a cost-saving measure, we have reduced the hourly rate from $26.25 to $20 per hour and the total hours from 30 to 15 per week. This change means Jenna and Carol will pick up additional duties during Taylor's absence. The job has been posted to Indeed and shared on social media, as well as with OBIAA and TABIA. The first interviews begin on July 16, with the hiring set for September 5 and training until Taylor leaves on October 4. **7/15: 234 Applicants, 7 Active Candidates.** The new hire will attend and photograph the Taste/AR Laneway Project. This 4-week initiation period will be focused on creating digital content for socials that feature the Junction as a destination, including new videography.

* * *