

DOWNTOWN SURREY BIA



2024 ANNUAL REPORT

We respectfully acknowledge that the Downtown Surrey BIA, and Downtown Surrey is located on the unceded traditional and ancestral lands of the Kwantlen, Musqueam, Katzie, Semiahmoo, Tsawwassen, Qayqayt and Kwikwetlem peoples.



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Downtownsurreybia.com
Surreycitycentre.ca



CHAIR REPORT HARP KHELA

The Downtown Surrey Business Improvement Association (DSBIA) continues to foster important conversations and forge new opportunities to prepare our evolving city as BC's next economic hub.

2024 was a year where collaboration made all the difference. Through various events, local community initiatives, and impactful services, our organization came together to inspire, educate, and support people in our community. With plenty of new development and infrastructure plans on the horizon, I am optimistic that local businesses and citizens will continue to plant the seeds necessary to witness our city's roots grow into the foreseeable future.

In the boardroom, I was astonished to see fellow Board members fueled by excitement around our city's potential. Each leader's contribution to the business and development community played an integral role in our years' success. The time commitment and passion demonstrated by these leaders was evident during meetings and I thank them for their dedication to our city's growth and future development. The DSBIA is always keen on learning about new updates and keeping a pulse on our city by taking ownership and leading us with a collective-solutions based approach.

I would like to extend a sincere thank you to my esteemed colleagues, executive Board, and our CEO Elizabeth Model for a memorable year of partnership, advocacy, and learning. It is truly an honour to witness the collaboration and creativity of these dynamic leaders as they showcase their diverse perspectives, relentless efforts, and commitment to community. Lastly, but surely not least, I would like to spotlight and congratulate our operations manager, Bonnie Burnside on her much deserved retirement. This bittersweet news comes after 19 years of Bonnie's unwavering dedication and commitment to the organization, and we couldn't be more thankful for her efforts.



CEO REPORT

ELIZABETH MODEL

The Downtown Surrey Business Improvement Association continues to position our emerging City Centre as the premier place to invest, work, learn, live and play. We strive to continuously build our partnerships to create a dynamic and sustainable Metropolitan Centre as we quickly grow and transition to be the largest City in our great Province of British Columbia.

Downtowns matter, place matters and downtowns are often the first in a series of stepping stones that help a city achieve its goals and priorities. Without a strong urban centre, many cities fail to achieve their economic potential, Downtown is central to making the city an attractive place to live, grow a business, send youth to school, recreate or grow a career and even retire. Livability is the ultimate success indicator of a city's economic health strategy and it all starts with a strong downtown. As your CEO, many thanks are extended to the local businesses in Downtown Surrey and a dedicated Board of Director's for the combined efforts for continuous on-going focus, hard work, and commitment to and for the business community and the health of our City.

A special thank you is extended to the DSBIA Chair Harp Khela, for his first year as the Chair in a two year term. Harp's experience in the real estate and development market has added a great dimension for the DSBIA. His keen interest and commitment to the business and development in Surrey is noted by his support and involvement in all aspects of city building. To the Board of Directors, thank you for your time, efforts, commitment and involvement in making our Downtown a better place! The hard work and vision from everyone involved promotes growth process for a healthy, vibrant Downtown Surrey.

No achievements stand alone, and for the DSBIA, it's all about teamwork: My personal thank you for 2024 year is to Tracey. The challenges became opportunities and with her positive "can do" attitude, she took it all in stride and navigated everything with grace.

Finally, I wish to formally recognize and express our deepest gratitude to Bonnie. Her contributions to the DSBIA have been immeasurable, coupled with her dedication and professionalism have made a lasting impact on all of us. Bonnie has been a cherished member of our organization for the past 19 years, and as she transitions into retirement, we honour her countless contributions and helped us achieve many of our goals. Her work has left a legacy that will be remembered for years to come. Thank you.

Upon reviewing the 2024 AGM Reports, the Board and staff welcome your feedback and comments.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2024-2025



Brad Howard
PCI



Chris Gardner
ICBA



Daniella Leck
Nicola Institutional
Realty Advisors



Harp Khela
Allure Ventures



Hoday Rad
Aplin Martin



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Perminder Tung
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Randal Dhaliwal
Fasken Law



Soleman Hashmi
Hashmi Law



Sonia Parmar
David Pel &
Company



Sonny Janda
The Janda Group



Steve Dooley
SFU Surrey



Sunny Aujla
Farris Law



**Councillor Pardeep
Kooner (ex-officio)**
City of Surrey

LOOKING BACK AT 2024 ...

In our local community, businesses continue to face the challenges of persistent labour shortages, increased wages and supply-chain disruptions, while the shadow of COVID still lingers. Nevertheless, the memories of lockdowns and closures are gradually fading.

In February, we invited Andrew Ramlo of Rennie to speak at our AGM at Civic Hotel.

In 2024, our Click on Surrey Team operated from May to August, with an unwavering commitment to supporting small businesses. Their efforts to assist small businesses with marketing, social media, websites, graphic design, filming, photography, newsletters, and merchandizing.

Community and City events have surged back to, or even exceeded, pre-pandemic levels. Our active participation in numerous festivities, including Party for the Planet, Canada Day, Fusion Fest, and the Surrey Tree Lighting Festival highlights our collaborative efforts with the City of Surrey. Other notable events organized by the Downtown Surrey BIA included SurreyFest Downtown, the Long, Long Table, Surrey Voices and Movies Under the Stars.



Long, Long Table

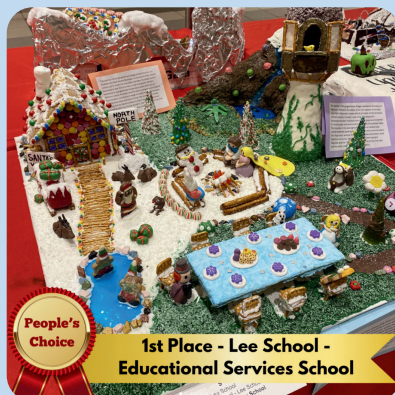
November was a bustling month for us.

As a member of IDA Canada (International Downtown Association), Elizabeth Model, our CEO, joined the group in Ottawa to address Members of Parliament on crucial issues affecting our area, such as crime and social issues, and transit funding. In November, we hosted a panel focused on the economic benefits that the new SFU Medical School will bring to the area moderated by our Chair, Harp Khela. The panel included Joanne Curry, past Vice-President External at SFU, Michael Heeney from SCDC and Chris Murray, previous City Manager in Hamilton and instrumental with the Medical School at McMaster University.

In late November, our Elf on the Shelf initiative returned to King George Hub and expanded to the Dell Shopping Centre, inviting participants to follow clues and discover hidden elves, offering a chance to win gift cards to local businesses. December brought our popular Gingerbread Contest outside Winners in Central City Shopping Centre.



Elf on the Shelf



Gingerbread Village



To stimulate local commerce, Laura Ballance Media Group (LBMG) led a PR campaign encouraging patrons to shop in Downtown Surrey. Additionally, we proudly sponsored Shop Local through LOCOBC from November 27 to December 4, further reinforcing our commitment to the local business community.

IN 2024, WE ALSO CONTINUED WITH ...

Economic Development:

Downtown Surrey has emerged as a premier destination for businesses and residents alike, offering unparalleled opportunities for investment, development, and community growth. The Downtown Surrey Business Improvement Association (DSBIA) is dedicated to fostering economic prosperity by implementing strategic initiatives that align with our core mission and the objectives of our standing committees.



Buildex Trade Show

Economic Development and Marketing Initiatives:

Throughout the past year, the DSBIA has undertaken a series of impactful events and campaigns to promote Downtown Surrey's growth:

Insightful Presentations: Andrew Ramlo from Rennie delivered an informative presentation on the growth trajectories of Canada B.C., Metro Vancouver and Surrey. Additionally, a panel discussion moderated by Chair Harp Khela explored the anticipated benefits of the upcoming SFU Medical School in Downtown Surrey, featuring insights from Joanne Curry of SFU, Chris Murray from McMaster University, and Michael Heeney of the Surrey City Development Corporation.

Media Engagement: In collaboration with the Laura Ballance Media Group (LBMG), we launched a comprehensive media campaign to highlight Downtown Surrey's developments. This included public relations efforts, advertising, and promotions throughout 2024, culminating in a seasonal Christmas campaign. Our media strategy encompassed interviews and features in prominent publications, emphasizing the Health & Technology District and developments south of the Fraser River.



Panel on Economic Benefits of SFU Medical School

Trade Shows and Conferences: The DSBIA actively participated in key industry events to showcase Downtown Surrey's potential:

- **ICSC Whistler:** We hosted a trade show booth to highlight ongoing developments and opportunities in business growth, retail, and education, fostering connections with developers and stakeholders invested in Surrey City Centre's expansion.
- **BUILDEX Vancouver:** As Western Canada's largest conference and trade show for property management, interior design, architecture, renovation, construction, and real estate, BUILDEX provided an excellent platform for us to sponsor, showcase, and promote Downtown Surrey. Our participation led to valuable connections and numerous leads for future collaborations.
- **Pacific West Real Estate Conference and Trade Show:** We highlighted the city's growth and development, engaging with real estate industry professionals to share insights and opportunities.

Digital Presence: Our website, www.surreycentre.ca, continues to offer monthly statistics and updates on Downtown Surrey's development, serving as a valuable resource for stakeholders and the community.

Industry Forums: We attended the Vancouver and Toronto Real Estate Forums, leveraging networking opportunities to promote Downtown Surrey's advantages. Notably, Tim Grant of PCI and Elizabeth Model (CEO) will co-chair the 2025 Vancouver Real Estate Conference, further positioning Surrey as a focal point in the real estate sector.

International Engagement: Participation in the International Downtown Association (IDA) Economic Summit allowed us to explore topics related to downtown development, project funding, and innovative future planning.

Community Presentations: We conducted presentations for commercial brokers, real estate investment trusts (REITs), local realtors, and the development community, focusing on the collaborative efforts driving Downtown Surrey's development. These sessions included panel discussions and solicited community input, fostering dialogue with organizations such as the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade (GVBOT), Urban Development Institute (UDI), NAIOP, and Building Owners and Managers Association (BOMA).

Sponsorships and Support: Our commitment to community and industry engagement is reflected in our sponsorships, including:

- NAIOP – Patron Sponsor
- BC Chamber Premier & Cabinet Meeting Sponsorship
- GVBOT – Transportation Forum (sponsored twice)
- UDI – Mayor's Forum
- Surrey Board of Trade (SBOT) – Ministers Ron Fleming & Dan Coulter
- Independent Contractors and Businesses Association (ICBA) – Gala Sponsor
- South Asian Film Festival
- SFU – Medical School
- SFU – Diwali Event
- City of Surrey – Joint partnership on City Centre digital map

Transportation Initiatives: Recognizing the importance of connectivity, we engaged with transportation stakeholders:

- Moving in a Livable Region (MLR): We participated in discussions supporting transit and transportation improvements in Metro Vancouver.
- TransLink: Meetings with CEO Kevin Quinn and staff facilitated discussions on SkyTrain updates and input on Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) initiatives.



City Centre digital map

Government Relations:

The DSBIA actively collaborates with all levels of government, crown corporations, businesses, and cultural leaders to advocate for Downtown Surrey's growth and development, ensuring a diverse and inclusive city.

Government Engagement: We conducted meetings and advocacy work with government representatives, including:

- Provincial All Candidates Forum (2024 Election): Facilitated discussions to understand candidates' positions on issues affecting Downtown Surrey.
- Mayor's Business Forum: Engaged with the city's leadership to discuss business-related concerns and opportunities.
- City Councillors: Held individual meetings to provide input and discuss issues pertinent to Downtown Surrey.
- Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs): Engaged in discussions on Downtown Surrey's challenges and opportunities.
- Greater Vancouver Board of Trade (GVBOT): Contributed to the Regional & Civic Affairs Committee, providing input on regional initiatives.

Federal Engagement: Our federal advocacy included:

- International Downtown Association (IDA) Canada: Participated in meetings with Members of Parliament (MPs) and staffers from various provinces, conducting 30 meetings with ministers and MPs.
- Direct Meetings: Held personal meetings with MPs Randeep Sarai, Ken Hardie, Don Davies, and Joyce Murray, with subsequent follow-up meetings with MP Tako Van Popta.



Elizabeth with MLA Begg, Shah, & Sunner

Presentations and Discussions: We continued to engage with city officials

Surrey City Council: Meetings for support, education & local engagement in relation to DT Surrey

City Staff and Departments:

- Meetings with City staff throughout the year; growth and development and issues impacting Downtown Surrey
- Transportation discussions & input
- Marketing City Centre



All Candidates forum at Civic Hotel in October

Safety:

Bike Patrol and Safety Initiatives Overview - 2024

In January 2020, the DSBIA Bike Patrol transitioned to Guardteck as their service provider. Throughout 2024, patrols operated Monday to Saturday, from 9 AM to 7 PM, with additional patrols scheduled five days per month from February to December. During the year, the Bike Patrol generated 3,999 incident reports. Of these incidents, 174 required assistances from the Surrey Police Service (SPS) or RCMP, 3 involved support from Surrey Fire Services, and 35 required medical assistance.

Beyond responding to calls from local businesses, the Bike Patrol proactively reported issues such as broken windows, graffiti, and illegal dumping.



The Bike Patrol

Community Engagement and Safety Advocacy

In January 2024, the DSBIA hosted an informational meeting about a new supportive housing project to be built on Bentley Road, across from the greenspace previously home to Grosvenor Road Elementary School. Representatives from BC Housing and the City of Surrey attended to provide details and answer questions.



The Safety Meeting

A safety-focused meeting addressing business concerns in the area was held at Whalley Legion during the summer.

DSBIA staff participated in monthly Whalley Integrated Service Team (WIST) meetings to collaborate on community safety and service delivery.

Additionally, the DSBIA supported a province-wide campaign through Business Improvement Areas of British Columbia (BIABC) to raise awareness about safety concerns affecting small businesses.

Shredathon

On July 13th, the DSBIA successfully hosted its annual Shredathon event in front of Sprite Multimedia Systems at 13597 King George Blvd. The event provided an excellent opportunity for both businesses and households to securely shred confidential documents, significantly aiding in the prevention of identity fraud. Additionally, the Surrey Food Bank was on site to collect both food and cash donations.



Shredathon



Area Enhancement & Placemaking:

In 2024, we began a new relationship with GDL Property Services to remove graffiti off exterior business walls within the area. Between January 1, 2024 and December 31, 2024, over 4100 tags were removed from business exteriors within Downtown Surrey.

The Clean Streets Program, provided by Phoenix Drug & Alcohol Education Centre, ran from January 1-December 31, 2024. They pick up litter along a variety of streets every day between 8am-11am. Starting in June 2024, we started a pilot program with SUMS to pick up litter along 108 Avenue and the area around the greenspace at Grosvenor Road. They continue to pick up litter two days per week.

The DSBIA has an ongoing program to identify Bylaw infractions and report to appropriate departments at the City of Surrey. Staff also forward complaints from the Bike Patrol and the community to the City.

We did a number of placemaking activities. Our most popular activity in 2024, proved to be our game nights including evenings at King George Hub, Civic Plaza and Central City Plaza.

In addition, we held Yoga nights and art nights at King George Hub and a variety of activities at the greenspace at Grosvenor Road.



Paint Night



Games Night



Yoga Night



Greenspace at Grosvenor Road

Additionally, in 2024 the Downtown Surrey BIA successfully hosted a community cleanup event, led by Danae, as part of its area enhancement and placemaking initiatives. Several local organizations also participated, contributing to the event's success and community engagement.



Community Cleanup

Events:

In 2024, most of our events returned.

DSBIA Signature Events:

Movies Under the Stars - August

- The Downtown Surrey BIA held the 19th Annual Movies Under the Stars at Holland Park on August 3, 10, 17. Special thank-you to presenting sponsor, PCI. Movies this year included “The Bad Guys”, “Wonka”, and “Barbie”.

Gingerbread Village - Christmas Season

- The Downtown Surrey BIA held the 8th Annual Gingerbread Village Contest at Central City Shopping Centre from December 6-15. The number of entries continues to increase since the height of the pandemic with 53 entrants registered in 2024. The People’s Choice Award raised over \$2230 for the Surrey Christmas Bureau.

The Long, Long Table

- The Long Long Table, first held in 2014 at the Civic Plaza, has grown into a cherished community tradition. With the Civic Hotel serving as both the caterer and presenting sponsor, this vibrant event brings people together year after year. Offering a delectable five-course meal, it provides a unique opportunity for community members to connect, share stories, and build relationships while enjoying an unforgettable dining experience.



Movies Under the Stars



Long, Long Table



Gingerbread Village

Community Events That We Sponsered and/or Participated In:

- Party for the Planet - April
- SurreyFest Downtown - June
- Surrey Pride - June
- Canada Day - July
- Fusion Fest - July
- Halloween at Central City - October
- Tree Lighting Festival - November



Party for the Planet



SurreyFest



Fusion Fest



Halloween at Central City



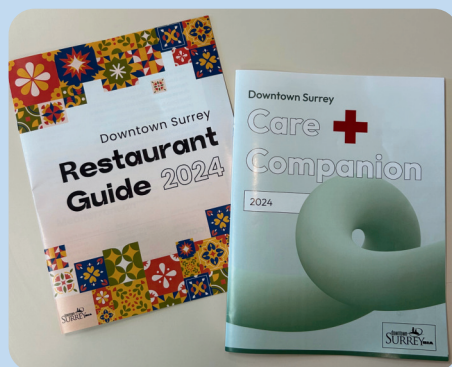
Tree Lighting Festival



Tree Lighting Festival

Marketing:

- In 2024, the DSBIA continued a comprehensive Public Relations campaign with Laura Ballance Media Group (LBMG) focused primarily on reminding the public that our businesses were open for business and the benefits of shopping local. In late 2024 the focus returned to the importance of supporting local businesses.
- In addition to updating the DSBIA Restaurant Guide and posting it on our website, we sent out over 3000 copies to highrises in the area.
- New this year, we introduced the Care Companion, our first-ever guide showcasing health practitioners and related businesses in Downtown Surrey. This inaugural edition aimed to connect the community with local health resources. A total of 1,500 copies were distributed alongside our popular restaurant guide as well as posting it on our website, broadening its reach and impact.
- The Click on Surrey Team assisted local businesses with websites, social media, marketing ideas and graphic design.
- Over \$1500 in gift cards to local businesses were distributed via social media contests.



2024 Restaurant & Care Companion Guides



One of Click on Surrey's team projects

Member Services & Communications:

- The New View – publication distributed six times per year via email as well as posted on our website - sharing positive stories about the community
- It's News Downtown – email newsletter to Members sent out 40 times per year (as warranted).
- What's Up Downtown – a newsletter distributed by unaddressed admail to businesses in the DSBIA area and sent out 5-6 times per year. This newsletter updates the members on specific projects in the area as well as the projects the staff are working on.
- Social Media – DSBIA has a presence on Twitter (@dtsurreybia), LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram (@dtsurrey) Blue Sky, and TikTok. Also, for the investment community, we have a Twitter account @downtownsurrey that is tied to our surreycitycentre.ca website.

THANK YOU

We appreciate the sponsorship of our activities.
We couldn't do it without your help.

SFU Academy to Community Award for Spring Intern Canada Summer Jobs grant for summer interns

Movies Under the Stars:

Presenting Sponsor:



Gold Sponsors:



DAWSON + SAWYER



Silver Sponsors:

Hamilton Duncan, ICBA, KPU, Wesgroup

Bronze Sponsor:

Guardteck

Prize Sponsors:

Central City Fun Park, Dell Lanes, Tim Hortons,
99 Nursery and Florist, Chopped Leaf

The Long, Long Table:

Presenting Sponsor:



Hosted by:



Entertainment Sponsor:

Century Group

Gold Sponsors:



DAWSON + SAWYER



Silver Sponsors:

Guardteck, Wesgroup, Fasken Law

Gingerbread Village:

Venue Sponsor:



SurreyFest Downtown Community Festival:

Venue Sponsor:



Music and Stage Sponsor:



Gold Sponsor:



DAWSON + SAWYER



Silver Sponsors:

Anthem, ICBA, Wesgroup, Bozzini's

Bronze Sponsors:

Dan the Man's, KPU, Guardteck

DOWNTOWN SURREY BIA



City Centre Plan

2025 LOOKING AHEAD

We respectfully acknowledge that the Downtown Surrey BIA, and Downtown Surrey is located on the unceded traditional and ancestral lands of the Kwantlen, Musqueam, Katzie, Semiahmoo, Tsawwassen, Qayqayt and Kwikwetlem peoples.

downtown
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LOOKING AHEAD TO 2025: A YEAR OF TRANSITION AND PROGRESS

The year 2025 will be a pivotal time for the Downtown Surrey Business Improvement Association as two valued, long-serving staff members prepare for retirement. Elizabeth will lead efforts to restructure staff roles, ensuring a smooth transition and setting the stage for the next CEO to guide the organization into its future.

The DSBIA team will continue to prioritize advocacy and economic development, actively participating in key meetings and events. This means that staff will continue to meet with politicians, attend trade shows, and sponsor economic development events to promote Downtown Surrey. Staff will continue to work closely with the City of Surrey on a range of issues, including economic development, area enhancement, and social challenges. Core programs such as the Bike Patrol, Graffiti Removal, and Clean Streets will remain integral to supporting the community.

Given the current economic challenges in Canada, the DSBIA has reduced its request for interns in 2025. As a result, the Click on Surrey Team program will be suspended for the year.

Events and Community Engagement

After a thoughtful review, Movies Under the Stars will feature two screenings in summer 2025. Meanwhile, much-loved events like Gingerbread Village and the Long Long Table will continue to bring the community together as usual.

One exciting returning event is a Block Party, which will spotlight the work of the Surrey Police Service (SPS). While a date is yet to be confirmed, the event is expected to take place in the greenspace behind Sprite Computers. It will feature community groups, engaging activities, and live music, creating a lively celebration for all attendees.

Marketing and Promotions

The DSBIA will maintain its commitment to promoting the area. The Restaurant Guide will be updated and distributed to new residents, while the Care Companion Guide will be refreshed and expanded. Laura Ballance of LBMG will continue to champion Downtown Surrey as a vibrant place to live, shop, and learn coupled with featuring good news stories..

Placemaking and Support

Placemaking will remain a top priority, with plans to activate public spaces and implement enhancements to enrich the area's streetscape. Most importantly, the DSBIA will continue to support businesses and property owners by answering questions, addressing concerns, and fostering strong community connections.

DOWNTOWN SURREY BIA DRAFT BUDGET 2025 (TO BE APPROVED AT THE 2025 AGM)

REVENUE

	Budget 2025
Levy	\$ 1,445,175
Sponsorship - Events	\$ 55,000
Other Income	
added from reserves	\$ -
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 1,500,175

EXPENSES

	Budget 2025
Board of Directors	\$ 24,600
Finance & Audit	\$ 17,700
Government Relations	\$ 19,650
Marketing	\$ 110,800
Events	\$ 123,800
Safety	\$ 269,200
Member Services	\$ 38,000
Economic Development	\$ 55,725
Area Enhancement (& Sustainability)	\$ 133,700
Facilities/Office	\$ 204,000
Salaries/Wages/Benefits	\$ 503,000
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 1,500,175

Snap Shot of Surrey City Centre

Based on 2021 Canada Census Data

Population in 2021: 35,661
 Population growth (2016-2021): +7,327
 Population density growth: +1,221

Family size
 Families with Children: 39.1% (smallest proportion in Surrey)
 Lone-Parent Families: 18.7%
 Average Family Size: 2.4

Age Distribution
 Less than 19 years: 16.1%
 20-44 years: 48.7% (highest proportion in Surrey)
 45-64 years: 23.2%
 65 plus years: 12.0%

Average Household Income: \$89,381 (lowest among Surrey neighbourhoods)

Owners: 45.1% Renters: 54.9% (highest renter percentage in Surrey)

Type of Residence: Apartments dominate, making up 80.2% of the housing stock, including both high-rise and low-rise units.

