RIDEAU

DOWNTOWN RIDEAU BIA 2024 ANNUAL REPORT

RIDEAU
OTTAWA'S ORIGINAL DOWNTOWN

BEAUTIFUL **PLACE.**

SPECTACULAR **DESTINATION.**

INCREDIBLE **EXPERIENCE.**

RIDEAU RIDEAU

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DEAR MEMBERS,

It is with great pride and optimism that we present the 2024 Annual Report for the Downtown Rideau Business Improvement Area. This report serves as an overview of some of our collective accomplishments and strategic initiatives throughout the year. It highlights the continuous progress we have made together in promoting our destination, fostering a robust business environment, promoting economic growth within our community and enhancing the on-street experience.

Since 1970, property and business owners in communities worldwide have adopted the Business Improvement Area (BIA) model. BIAs are based on an understanding that revitalizing and sustaining vibrant destinations require special attention that go beyond the services that municipalities can provide alone. Thanks to property and business owners, BIAs can augment the work of cities and deliver an enhanced level of value for the benefit of everyone.

BIAs serve both as a voice for the business communities they represent, and as place management organizations that are responsible for driving change in planning, leadership, communications and marketing, economic development, policy and advocacy.

They develop the tools and strategies necessary to address a broad range of issues impacting how people interactwith a place as residents, employees, entrepreneurs and visitors.

BIAs are inspired to improve an environment and the experiences of being there, to enhance the attractiveness, safety, and overall appeal of a specific area, benefiting both businesses and the community.

The Downtown Rideau BIA, above all else, is committed to serving its members, and creating conditions that will allow the business community to thrive. Despite the challenges we face, we remain optimistic, are focused on the potential of our environment, and are excited about the opportunities that lie ahead. Our allegiance to providing value, building lasting relationships, and fostering growth remains unwavering, and we look forward to strengthening our partnerships with our members, the wider community and our many stakeholders in the years to come.

Thank you once again for your ongoing support. We are grateful for your trust in us, and we remain dedicated to achieving new heights. Together, we will continue to lead, innovate, and build a future that benefits all within our community and celebrates Rideau and Ottawa's Original Downtown.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS & STAFF

Alexandra Badzak
Ottawa Art Gallery

Cyril Bulvestre
AC Marriott

Donna Holtom
Holtz Spa

Jitesh Karamchandani
CF Rideau Centre

Kevin Jackson
Giant Tiger

Sarah Chown
Métropolitain Brasserie

Sean Rutherford
Clocktower Brew Pub

Councillor
Stéphanie Plante
(non-voting)

Andrew Peck
Executive Director

Annie Doane
Communications & Digital
Marketing Coordinator

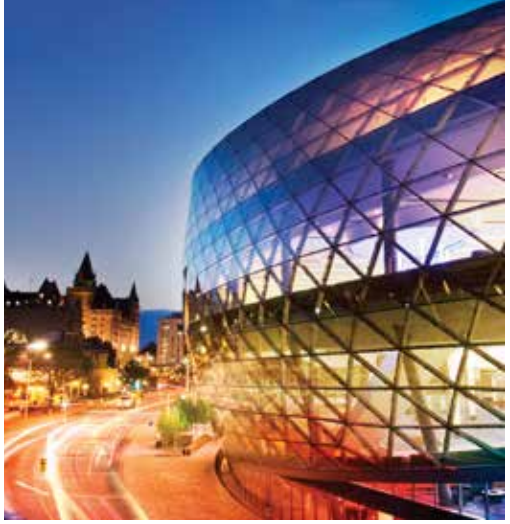
Ash Proulx
Administration &
Operations Coordinator

Colleen Gyori
Operations Director

Ritik Chhokra
Finance Coordinator

Zara Valenzuela
Graphic Designer

RIDEAU HAS SO MUCH TO OFFER!



Rideau Centre
Simons

MARKETING

In 2023, the Downtown Rideau BIA underwent a repositioning and rebranding exercise aimed at establishing the Rideau area as the top-of-mind shopping, dining, arts, culture, entertainment, and leisure destination in the National Capital. The work was comprehensive and extended to the development of a new, strategic marketing program that was applied to all consumer facing tools and channels. Key objectives of the initiative were to create a new awareness for the Rideau area, build pride of place, and attract increased visitation to support businesses and the local economy.

The Downtown Rideau BIA's marketing approach is strategic, consumer-focused, data driven, and business minded. Marketing is a major focus with the intended purpose of supporting the local economy, amplifying the efforts of businesses, and placemaking. The program strives to ensure the destination is relevant, competitive in a changing market, maintains a strong image, appeals to and connects with audiences, addresses shifts in consumer preferences, responds to and offsets negative perceptions, and improves market position.

Increasing visitation to the area is vital to ensuring Rideau's success, sustainability, and economic growth. The Rideau marketing program aims to do just that by telling the story of the area, speaking to audiences, and highlighting value propositions. By curating and showcasing the diversity of experiences on offer, we seek further reputation, create a greater awareness of what's here, and motivate audiences to visit.

In 2024, two additional campaigns were launched to build on the momentum from 2023. Content development became a key strategic priority, and a detailed metrics dashboard was introduced to measure all aspects of the marketing program's success.

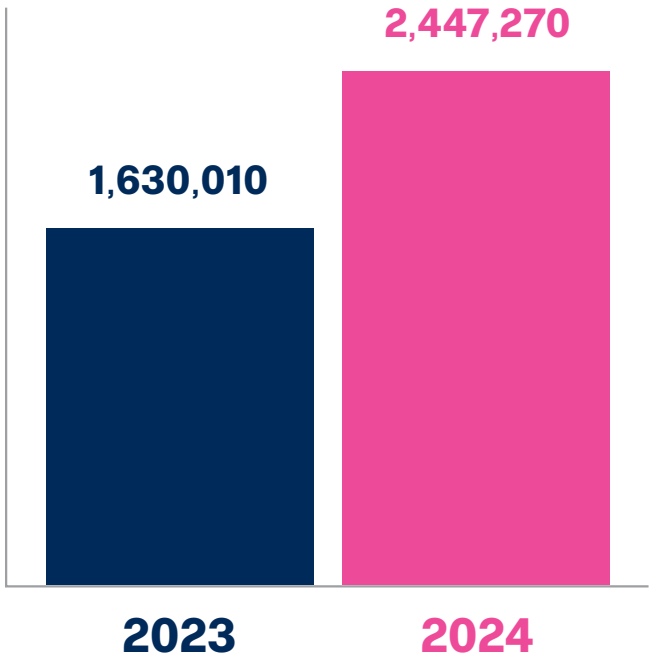
The 2024 program saw increases across the board over 2023. For the summer awareness campaign impressions were up 81% with clicks up 206%. For the holiday campaign, impressions were up 24% with an 185% increase in clicks. Total reach for the two campaigns grew by 48%. Website visits, new users and returning users saw increases of 144%, 139% and 126% respectively. The reach for our social media channels also grew with Facebook seeing a 310% increase and Instagram growing by 50%.

With respect to foot traffic, in 2024, there were 48,066,415 visits to Rideau. This represented a 42% increase over 2023. For the first time since the pandemic, visits to the area surpassed the pre-pandemic levels for the months of June, October, November and December. In 2023, when the program began, annual visits to Rideau amounted to approximately 64% of 2019 levels, in 2024 this increased to 91%.

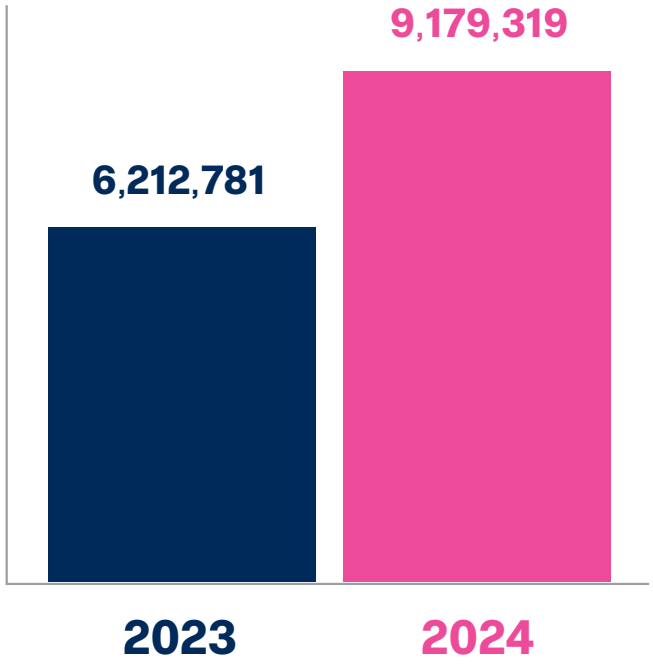
Feedback from BIA members and community stakeholders has been universally positive. The marketing program is resonating with audiences, achieving objectives and results, and continues to build momentum and is improved upon through experience and lessons learned.

2024 COMBINED MARKETING CAMPAIGN RESULTS

TOTAL REACH IN 2024
2,447,270



TOTAL IMPRESSIONS IN 2024
9,179,319



CHANGE OVER 2023
↑ 48%

CHANGE OVER 2023
↑ 50%

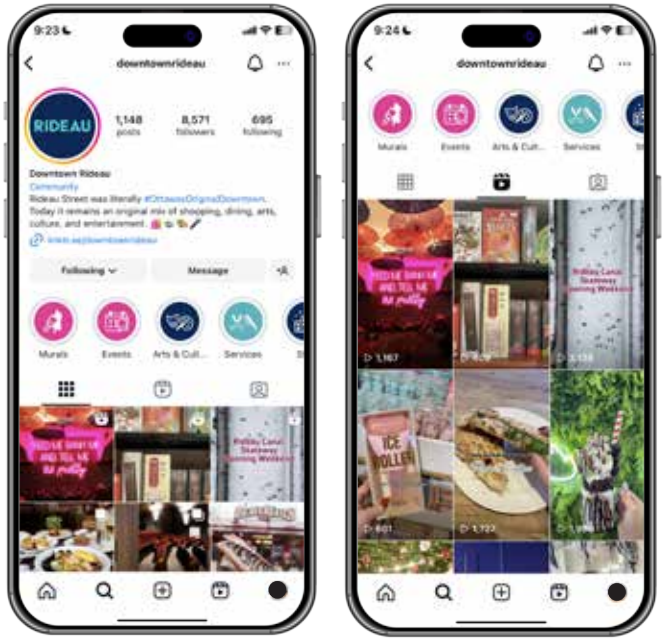
2024 COMBINED SOCIAL MEDIA RESULTS

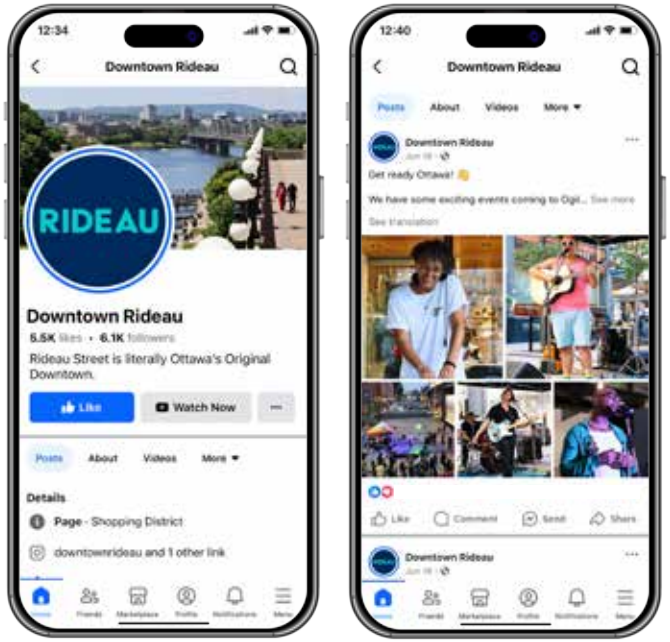
Organic social media efforts on Facebook and Instagram were used to amplify the destination's key value propositions and complement paid campaign initiatives. Combined, the two platforms reached 881,773 accounts and generated 679,319 impressions. The total following for Rideau on Facebook and Instagram stands at 14,664 accounts.

IMPRESSIONS
679,319

REACH
881,773

FOLLOWERS
14,664





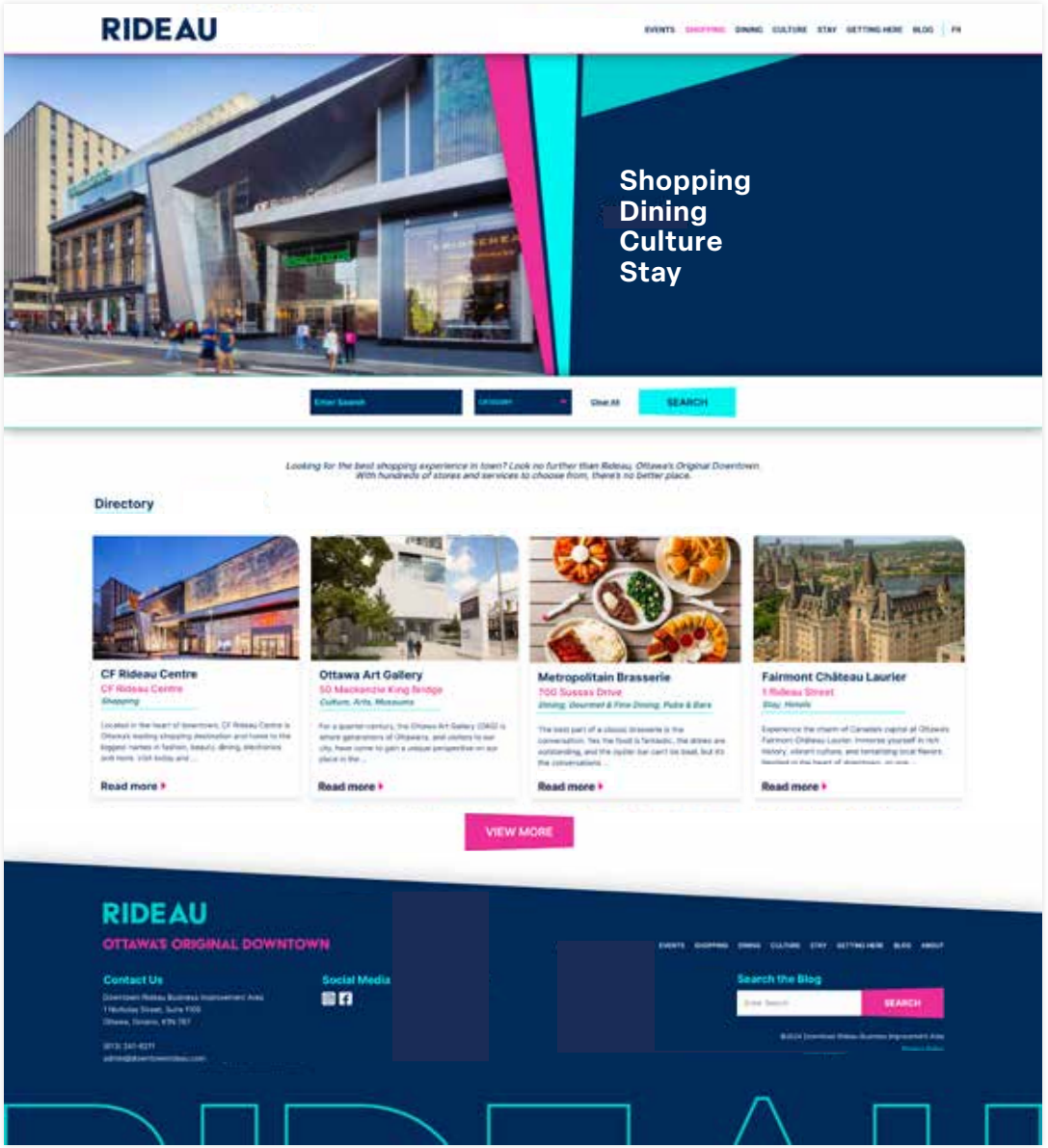
INSTAGRAM
@DOWNTOWNRIDEAU

FACEBOOK
@DOWNTOWNRIDEAU

DOWNTOWNRIDEAU.COM

A new website was developed to better position and showcase the Rideau destination. Key features include:

- A comprehensive Business Directory providing members with profiles to showcase local businesses.
- A Nearby Neighbourhoods page that positions Rideau as a hub and connector to the greater downtown Ottawa experience.
- A blog section highlighting member stories, upcoming events, and visitor experiences in the area. In 2024, 101 blogs were published.
- An events calendar that highlights a diverse offering of upcoming programming and festivals in the area. In 2024, 288 events were promoted.



114,670 TOTAL VISITS IN 2024

WEBSITE VISITS

↑ 144%

RIDEAU MARKETING RESULTS 2024 VS. 2023

FACEBOOK IMPRESSIONS
↑ 600%

FACEBOOK REACH
↑ 310%

INSTAGRAM REACH
↑ 50%

WEBSITE VISITS
↑ 144%

WEBSITE NEW USERS
↑ 139%

WEBSITE RETURNING USERS
↑ 126%

SUMMER CAMPAIGN CLICKS
↑ 206%

SUMMER CAMPAIGN IMPRESSIONS
↑ 82%

SUMMER CAMPAIGN VIDEO VIEWS
↑ 76%

HOLIDAY CAMPAIGN CLICKS
↑ 185%

HOLIDAY CAMPAIGN IMPRESSIONS
↑ 24%

VISITS TO RIDEAU IN 2024
↑ 42%

COMBINED CAMPAIGN IMPRESSIONS
↑ 50%

COMBINED ORGANIC & PAID IMPRESSIONS
↑ 50%

COMBINED CAMPAIGN REACH
↑ 48%

2023 AND 2024 TOTAL IMPRESSIONS GENERATED
15,392,100

2023 AND 2024 TOTAL ACCOUNTS REACHED
4,077,280

2024 VISITS TO RIDEAU
48,066,415

FOOD SCENE

It's a well-established fact that Ottawa is an incredible food city. The culinary experiences that can be discovered and explored in our nation's capital are second to none. And nowhere is this more true than right in the heart of Ottawa's Original Downtown. Rideau and the wider area are havens for some of the tastiest dishes available anywhere, infused with unique flavours and cuisines ready to be savoured.

Food Scene is an exciting new initiative that aims to share the stories and recipes of Rideau and the surrounding area. Profiles of top-notch restaurants and the people who put their passion on a plate each and every day for all to enjoy are the centrepiece for the initiative. Food Scene showcases the area's thriving and diverse culinary destinations and must-taste fare. From high-end delicacies to cheap eats, Ottawa's Original Downtown has it all.

Throughout the past year, the Downtown Rideau BIA has highlighted restaurants through their social media channels and on downtownrideau.com. Recipes and other assets have also been collected from businesses and are being used to create a stunning new cookbook that promotes the restaurants. Restaurants interested in participating in Food Scene are encouraged to email **foodscene@downtownrideau.com**

26 BLOGS

FOOD SCENE: Café Tehran
July 12, 2024

It's been called one of the earliest 'cradles of civilization' by anthropologists, with archaeological discoveries that span over six thousand years of human history. In that time, the region and ...

Read more

FOOD SCENE: Métropolitain Brasserie
July 27, 2024

The brasserie is a longstanding staple of the French lifestyle, with many such establishments finding themselves at the forefront of many of the greatest cultural leaps and bounds in France's ...

Read more

FOOD SCENE: Bar Ocelli
October 17, 2024

Culinary innovation is constantly evolving with new ideas and concepts being introduced in restaurants across the globe. Recently, we have seen a meteoric rise in more complex cocktail concepts as ...

Read more

26 REELS

RESEARCH

In 2024, the Downtown Rideau BIA gained valuable insights into the Rideau area through comprehensive research including a Primary Trade Area and Resident Analysis Report, Parking Perceptions Focus Group Report, ongoing foot traffic counts, and membership pulse surveys designed to better understand economic and community well-being. These findings compliment that of the BIA's research efforts in 2022 and 2023 and are used to help shape strategic priorities, inform decision-making, and better understand audiences.

PRIMARY TRADE AREA AND RESIDENTS

74,288 Residents Live Within A 2km Radius From Rideau & Sussex

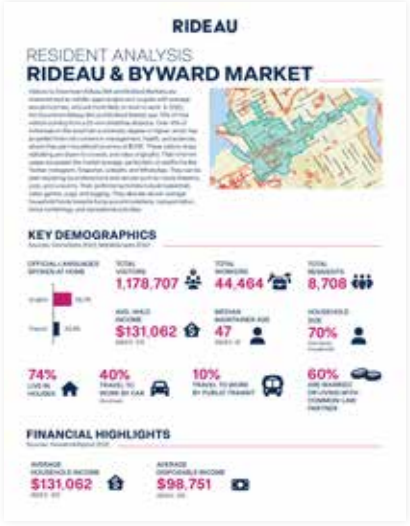
$102,979 Is The Average Household Income Of Residents

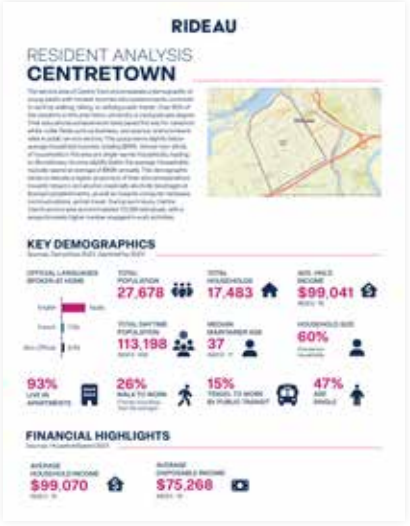
47% Of Residents Are Single

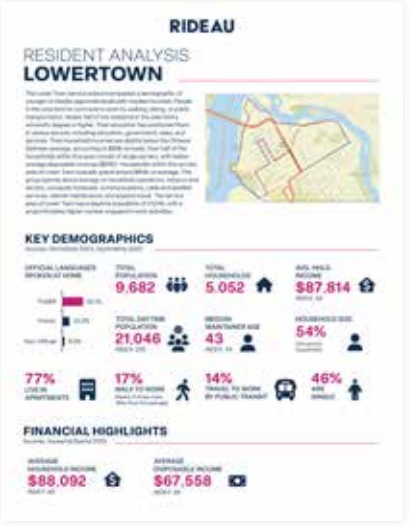
85% Of Residents Live In Apartments Or Condos

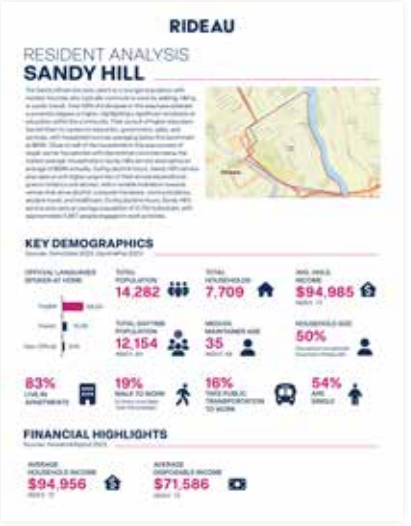
30% Of Residents Are Ages 25-34

72% Of Residents Rent









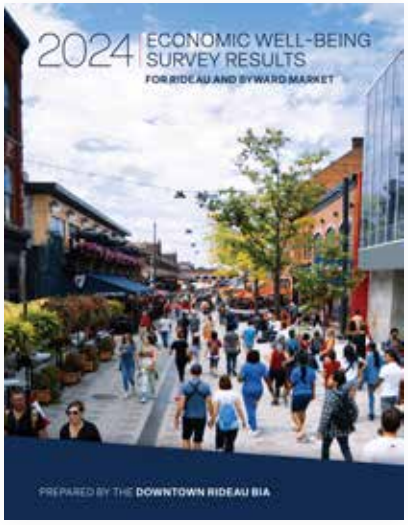
MEMBERSHIP PULSE SURVEYS

In 2024, the Downtown Rideau BIA conducted two membership pulse surveys to evaluate and better understand the environment and its impact on the business community. Results informed the Downtown Rideau BIA's efforts to seek and advocate for improvements.

ECONOMIC WELL-BEING SURVEY

This survey asked businesses questions related to performance, profitability, confidence, and impediments.

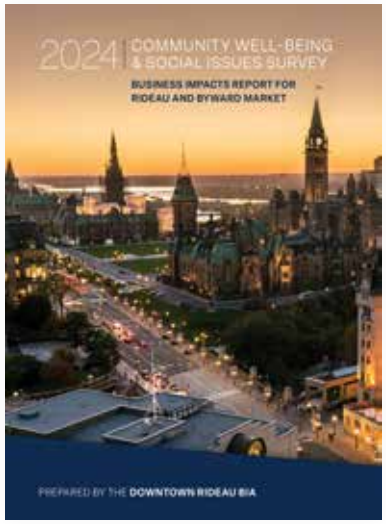
201 respondents, or 26% of businesses from the Rideau and the ByWard Market area participated in the survey.



COMMUNITY WELL-BEING & SOCIAL ISSUES SURVEY

This survey asked businesses questions related to cleanliness of public property, vandalism, theft, safety, and social issues.

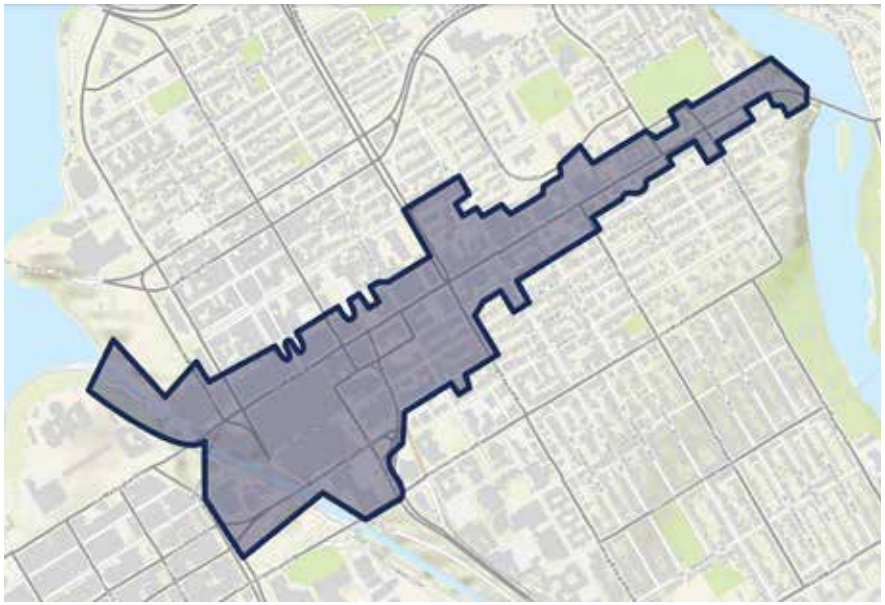
515 respondents, or 67% of businesses from the Rideau and the ByWard Market area participated in the survey representing two thirds of businesses in the area.



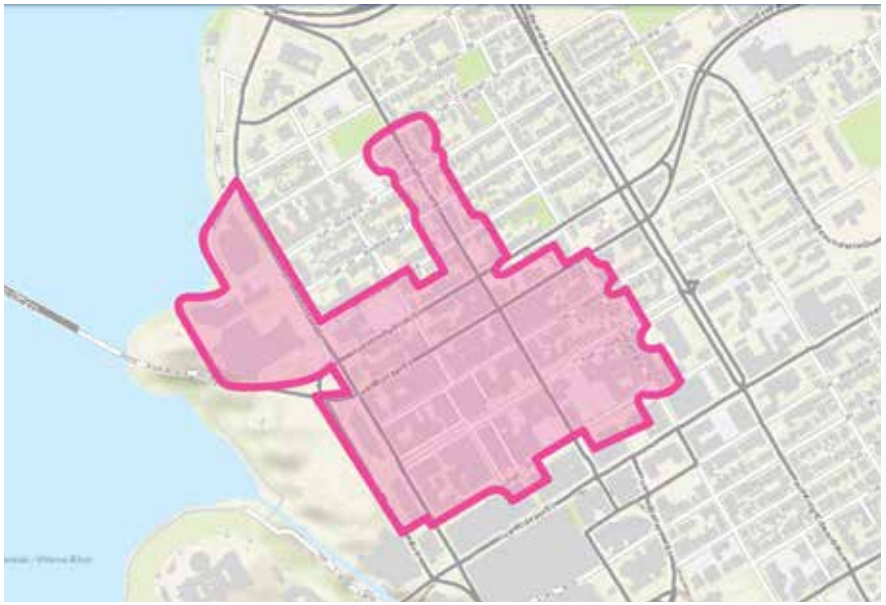
FOOT TRAFFIC

Data presented in visitation counts is provided through a subscription-based platform called Footfall by Environics Analytics. Footfall uses permission-based and de-identified mobile movement data collected from location-enabled mobile devices combined with Environics Analytics proprietary geofence library to calcuate visits. It is important to note that this data reflects the number of visits to the geofenced area, not the number of unique visitors. The below maps outline the boundaries Rideau and the ByWard Market for the purpose of this report

RIDEAU



BYWARD MARKET

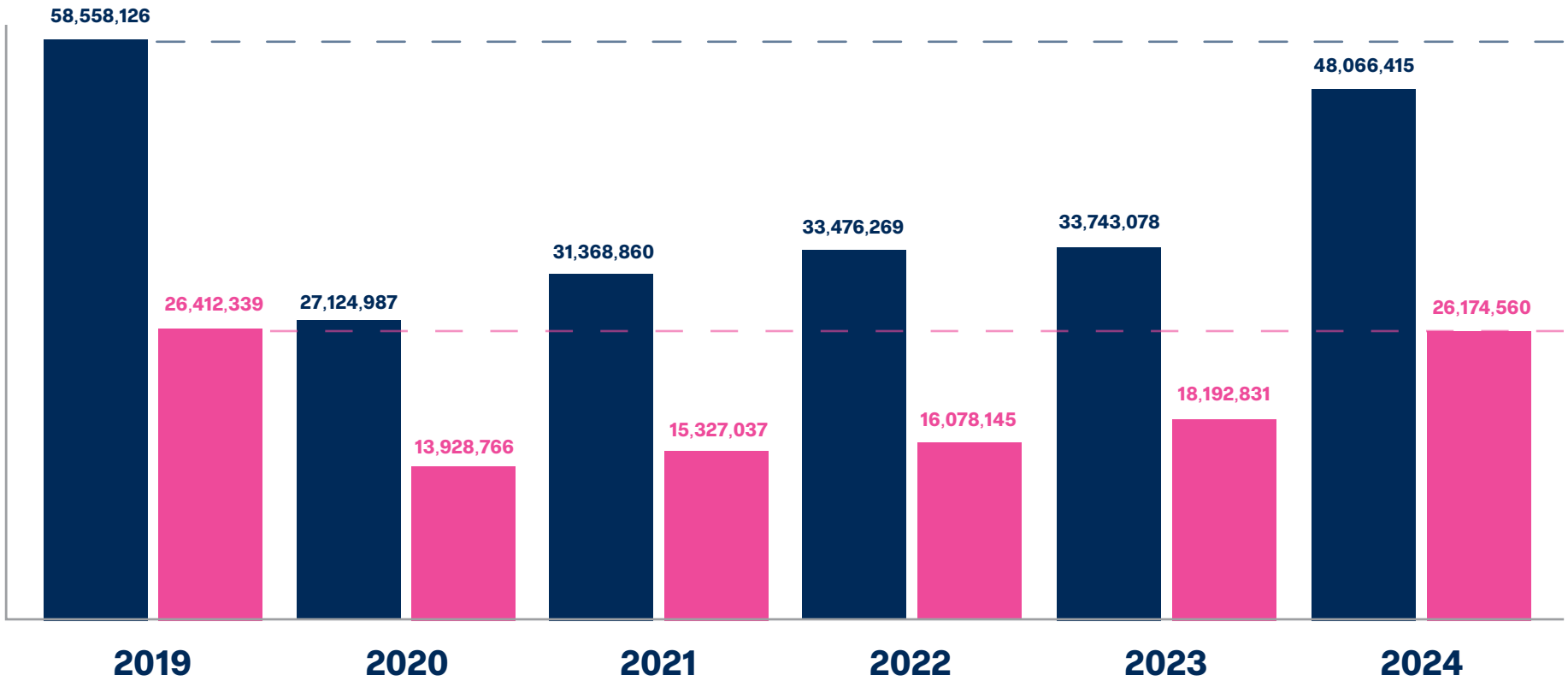


ANNUAL TOTAL VISITS

LEGEND

RIDEAU

BYWARD MARKET



PROGRAMMING

In 2024, the Downtown Rideau BIA hosted seven events in Ogilvy Square in partnership with the Ottawa Music Industry Coalition, CRANIUM Festival, and House of Paint. These events attracted a diverse range of audiences and brought life and vibrancy to this key corridor. Moving forward, the BIA will be seeking further opportunities to work with event organizers and festivals to host their programming in Ogilvy Square.

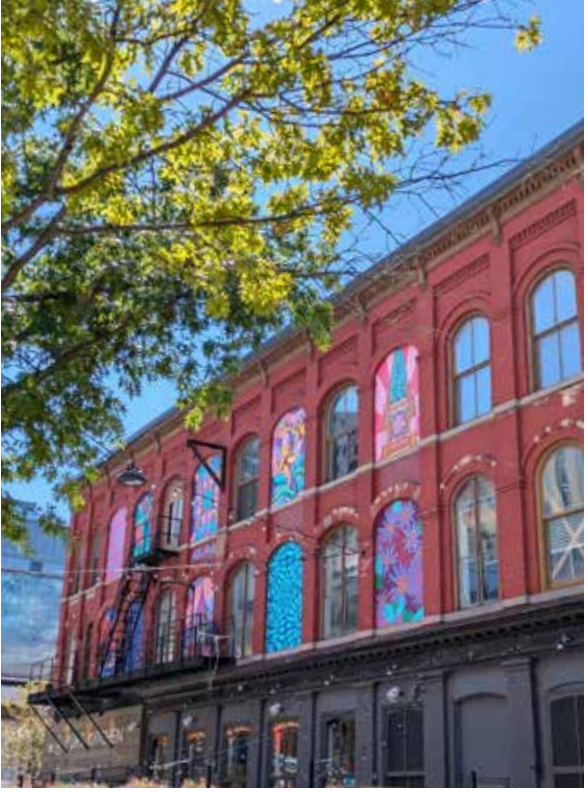
ZARA
HUGO

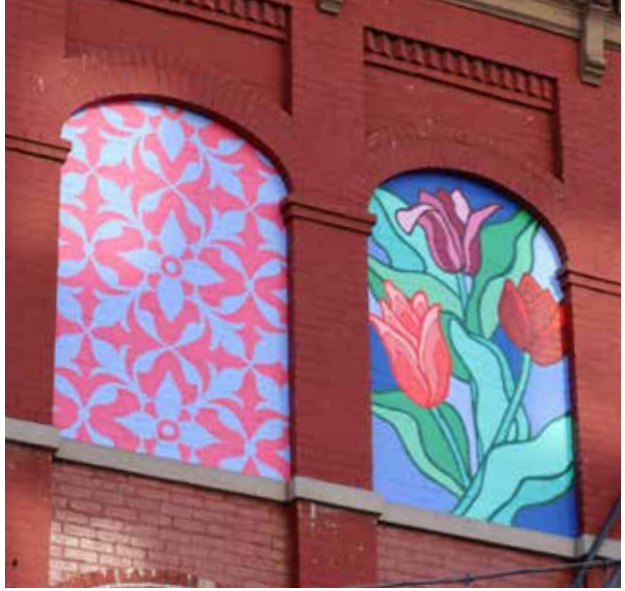
115 RIDEAU STREET MURAL PROJECT

Despite everything that Rideau has to offer, its inventory of public art is limited. And, given that the area is known for its diverse mix of arts and cultural experiences, we identified that the lack of public art is a missed opportunity. As a result, the Downtown Rideau BIA sought proposals to commission a new mural situated in a highly visible pedestrian space in the heart of Rideau.

The building on which this mural was commissioned overlooks William Street Mall, a pedestrian plaza that is a vibrant community space and busy corridor for pedestrians, cyclists, shoppers, and patio-goers. This space also features string lighting elements, patios, storefront businesses, and is a major transit hub. It is also a key connector between the CF Rideau Centre, which attracts millions of visitors annually, and the ByWard Market, a major tourist destination in the nation's capital. Working with the property owner, the Downtown Rideau BIA established a Call for Submissions which was then circulated to a list of mural artists across North America and beyond. Artists were invited to submit a proposal detailing their concept.

The selected design was presented by Julia Prajza, a Toronto-based artist. Her concept celebrated the unique landmarks, nature, and patterns of Ottawa through an intricate stained-glass style – a perfect fit for a historical building. The artwork represented the pattern of the nearby Plaza Bridge, the intricate ceiling of the National Gallery of Canada, the Central Chambers building, the Peace Tower on Parliament Hill, the iconic Tulip Festival, and various plants native to the area.



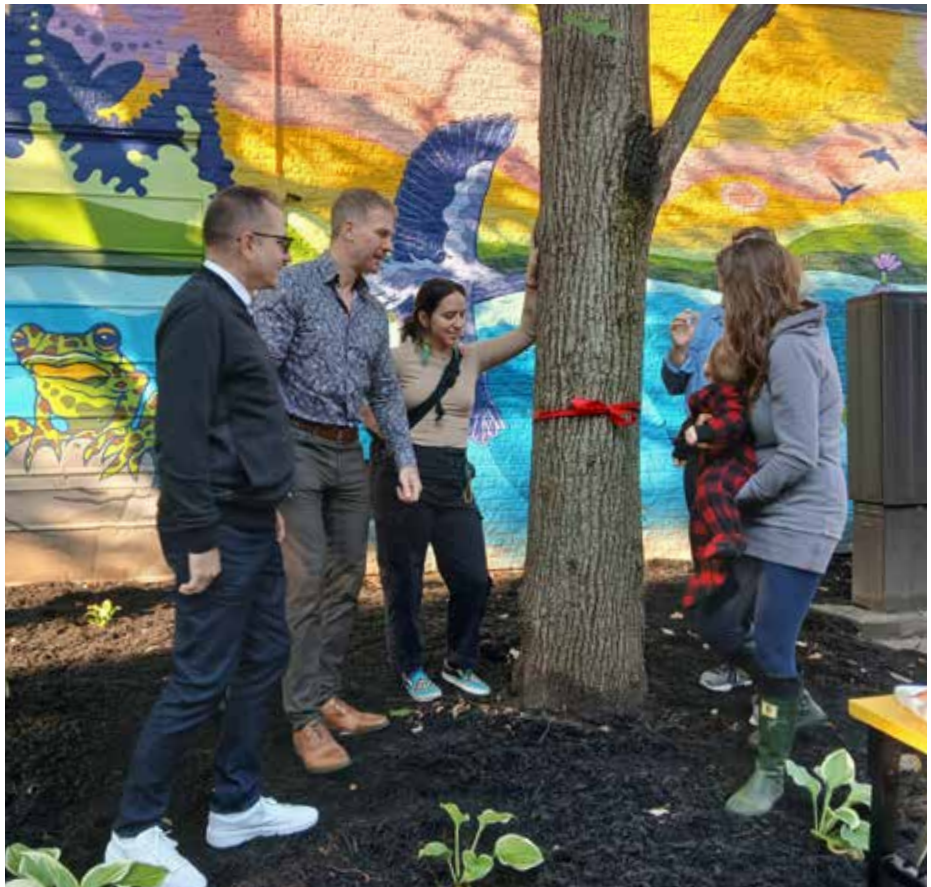


KITCHEN

610 RIDEAU STREET MURAL PROJECT

In spring of 2024, the Downtown Rideau BIA was approached by a group of residents that were working together to commission a mural at the corner of Rideau and Wurtenburg Streets with the support of local artist Stephanie Babij. Their goal was to beautify the area and work to mitigate graffiti tagging while providing an opportunity for the community to get involved and lend a hand in painting. The Downtown Rideau BIA helped to facilitate this project by providing funding.

COMMUNITY
MURAL
IN
PROGRESS
FOLLOW @creations.bysteph
FOR DETAILS!



FINANCE

The Downtown Rideau BIA aims to serve the needs of the area as a whole, and resources are directed towards building brand and reputation for Rideau and the surrounding area as a top-of-mind destination in the city of Ottawa. Investments in 2024 were leveraged to further develop a comprehensive marketing program, deepen our understanding of the environment through research projects, create new programming and activations, and advance beautification initiatives to enhance the on-street experience.

Over the past year, the Downtown Rideau BIA has further expanded its capacity to deliver value to its members and to promote the many value propositions and experiences the area has to offer. The organization remains in a good financial position and is well situated to strengthen the local economy, enhance the destination and support the business community.

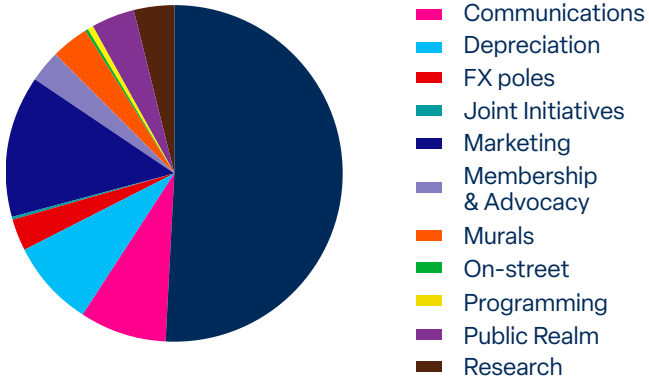
SURPLUS

At the end of 2023, the audited financial statements assessed the Downtown Rideau BIA accumulated surplus at $1,377,702 with tangible capital assets valued at $602,283 and net financial assets at $760,306. The Downtown Rideau BIA met its budget goals for 2024. The organization remains well-positioned to invest in future strategic programs and to manage any potential impacts.

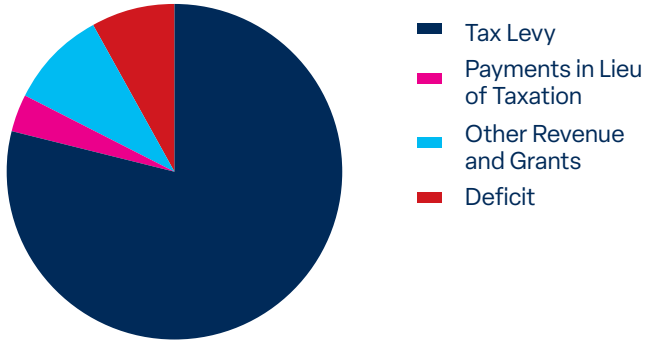
2025 BUDGET

In 2025, the membership levy will be $1,089,416 and the total operating budget is set at $1,015,302. This budget allocation will allow the organization to continue fulfilling its mandate of adding value and creating positive change for the local business community, strengthening the Rideau brand, furthering the growth, development and momentum of important strategic initiatives, and protecting, preserving, and promoting the wider area's reputation as the top-of-mind leisure destination in Ottawa.

2024 EXPENSES & ALLOCATIONS



2024 REVENUE



FINANCE

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Board Members, Members of Council, Inhabitants and Ratepayers of the Rideau Business Improvement Area,

OPINION

We have audited the financial statements of The Rideau Business Improvement Area (the Entity), which comprise: the statement of financial position as at December 31, 2023, the statement of operations for the year then ended, the statement of changes in net financial assets for the year then ended, the statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and notes and schedules to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Entity as at December 31, 2023, and its results of operations, its changes in net financial assets and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards.

BASIS FOR OPINION

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the "Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements" section of our auditor's report. We are independent of the Entity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in Canada, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Chartered Professional Accountants
Ottawa, Canada

THE RIDEAU BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT AREA STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

As at December 31st 2023, with comparative information for 2022

Table 1 - Statement of Financial Position - Financial Assets

Revenue	2023	2022
Cash on deposit with the Corporation of the City of Ottawa	**$946,673**	$725,529
Total financial assets	**$946,673**	$725,529

Table 2 - Statement of Financial Position - Liabilities

Liabilities	2023	2022
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	**$186,367**	$30,618
Total liabilities	**$186,367**	$30,618
Net financial assets	**$760,306**	$694,911

Table 3 - Statement of Financial Position - Non-Financial Assets and Accumulated Surplus

Non-financial assets	2023	2022
Prepaid expenses	**$15,113**	$18,244
Tangible capital assets [note 3]	**$602,283**	$684,700
Total non-financial assets	**$617,396**	$702,944
Accumulated surplus	**$1,377,702**	$1,397,855

FINANCE

THE RIDEAU BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT AREA STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

As at December 31st 2023, with comparative information for 2022

Table 4 - Statement of Operations - Revenue

Revenue	Budget 2023	Actual 2023	Actual 2022
Tax Revenue	$824,087	**$822,282**	$906,640
Other revenue	$44,000	**$61,993**	$125,025
Payments in lieu of taxation	$25,634	**$25,537**	$24,990
Interest earned on reserves	$1,200	**$1,200**	$720
Total Revenue	$894,921	**$911,012**	$1,057,375

Table 5 - Statement of Operations - Expenses

Expenses	Budget 2023	Actual 2023	Actual 2022
Salary	$369,247	**$392,513**	$312,018
Advertising and Promotion	$211,000	**$195,691**	$111,538
Office	$112,174	**$105,628**	$108,940
Ground Services	$103,000	**$88,606**	$61,887
Depreciation	$60,000	**$82,417**	$82,417
Rent	$50,000	**$41,471**	$49,084
Other	$16,500	**$12,794**	$20,049
Insurance	$5,000	**$6,196**	$5,585
Audit fees	$3,000	**$5,849**	$3,277
Security Services	$15,000	-	$9,681
Total Expenses	$944,921	**$931,165**	$764,476
Annual (deficit) Surplus	($50,000)	**($20,153)**	$292,899
Accumulated surplus, beginning of the year	$1,397,855	**$1,397,855**	$1,104,956
Accumulated surplus, end of year	$1,347,855	**$1,377,702**	$1,397,855

FINANCE

THE RIDEAU BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT AREA STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

As at December 31st 2022, with comparative information for 2021

Table 6 - Statement of Changes in Net Financial Assets

	Budget 2022	Actual 2022	Actual 2021
Annual Surplus (deficit)	($50,000)	**$292,899**	$328,311
Acquisition of tangible capital assets	-	-	($392,357)
(Increase) decrease in prepaid expenses	-	**($10,486)**	$2,981
Depreciation of tangible capital assets	-	**$82,417**	$20,087
Increase (decrease) in net financial assets	($50,000)	**$364,830**	($40,978)
Net financial assets, beginning of the year	$330,081	**$330,081**	$371,059
Net financial assets, end of year	$280,081	**$694,911**	$330,081

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN NET FINANCIAL ASSETS

For the year ended December 31, 2023, with comparative information for 2022

	Actual 2023	Actual 2022
Annual (deficit) Surplus	($20,153)	**$292,899**
Decrease (increase) in prepaid expenses	$3,131	**($10,486)**
Depreciation of tangible capital assets	$82,417	**$82,417**
Increase in net financial assets	$65,395	**$364,830**
Net financial assets, beginning of the year	$694,911	**$330,081**
Net financial assets, end of year	$760,306	**$694,911**

“The Downtown Rideau BIA is committed to adding value and creating positive change in our local business community by strengthening the Rideau brand and protecting, preserving and promoting the wider area’s reputation as the top-of-mind leisure destination in Ottawa. The vision embodied by our marketing program is rooted in a desire to create a true sense of place – one that is real and authentic, where people feel a sense of pride, ownership and belonging, one that compels them to experience it for themselves.”

RIDEAU
OTTAWA'S ORIGINAL DOWNTOWN

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