

Annual Report

2025



A message from the Chair & Executive Director of the Downtown Yonge BIA

In a year that was defined by talk of tariffs and shifting geopolitics, Downtown Yonge emerged as a neighbourhood with a great deal of positive change born from action: continued revitalization and development; new retail offerings and openings; and year-round events that are back in full swing.

Events and activations were plentiful, with 110+ events presented by the DYBIA including the 2nd Annual Illuminite Festival of Light in the winter months of February and March along with mainstays Play the Parks and College Park After Hours. We hope you were able to get out and enjoy some of our programming!

A partnership with the City of Toronto and surrounding property owners activated Trinity Square Park in the summer, providing a relaxing and engaging respite that energized this urban space. By the end of the summer, the park was seeing almost 500 people a week engaging with the park, playing games, enjoying coffee and meeting with colleagues or friends.

At the same time, some 250 new businesses have opened their doors in Downtown Yonge over the past three years, with over half of those new businesses in food service. This prompted us to pilot food tours throughout the year in 2025, delivering 25 food tours in four sets that showcased 17 new restaurants, and achieved a 91% attendance rate.

Community safety was enhanced by the launch of the CORE pilot, a partnership between Toronto Public Health and the Toronto Police Service providing proactive and compassionate, nurse-led interventions for community members living with poverty, mental health challenges or addictions.

Finally, the six largest downtown Toronto BIAs worked together to launch the Downtown Toronto BIA Alliance in 2025 in an effort to advocate collectively for the whole of downtown Toronto. Our first achievement is bringing the International Downtown Association's 72nd Annual Conference & Marketplace to downtown Toronto in 2026.

We thank you for a successful year and look forward to a busy, vibrant and prosperous 2026.



Martin Wray
Board Chair



Pauline Larsen
Executive Director and Chief Operating Officer

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Highlights from the year

Creating a safe, clean and welcoming environment for all

- Continued to develop the suite of safety-related trainings
- SafeTObia partnership with the City of Toronto continues to develop insights for BIAs around the city.

Championing diverse businesses, experiences and communities

- Launched a summer activation plan for Trinity Square Park, seeing 500 weekly users in the park by the end of the season.
- Presented the 2nd annual Illuminite Light Festival, with 5 locations throughout the neighbourhood, including Sankofa Square.

Prioritizing ease of access for businesses, visitors & residents

- Piloted 25 food tours across 4 sets, featuring 15+ different businesses.
- Advocacy related to congestion and transit at all three levels of government with the DTBIAA and the IDA Canada Chapter

Member Engagement

- First in-person AGM meeting held since 2019
- Member audit phase 2 implemented targeting newly-opened businesses
- Topic-specific member meetings continued with our Safety & Security Group and our Marketing Advisory Group

2026 Approved Budget

Expenses



● Administration	\$1,508,776	● Promotion & Communication	\$479,250
● Capital	\$375,000	● Festivals & Events	\$660,750
● Maintenance	\$700,000	● Provisions for Tax Appeals	\$284,734

Revenue



● BIA Levy	\$3,132,070	● Festival Revenue	\$85,000
● Grants	\$70,000	● Other Revenue	\$165,000

