

2025 ANNUAL
report



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OUR
mission

... is to bring spaces to life with compassion and intention, engagement and empowerment, where commerce is a celebration of shared values. We build our community by caring about the impact our actions have.



2025 Board of Directors

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

John Mackell, *Chair, Laurel's on Whyte*

Dr. Amber McKinnon, *ND, Vice Chair, Naturally Inclined Health*

Jeff Nordstrom, *Treasurer, ATB Financial (January-June)*

Yvan Chartrand, *Treasurer, Bonjour Bakery (July-December)*

DIRECTORS

Anastasia Arabia, *Director, Trend Research (January-March)*

Corinne Lillo, *Director, Lillo's Music*

Duncan Ross, *Interim Director, The Pint Whyte (August-December)*

Henning Witt, *Interim Director, Blues on Whyte (August-December)*

Jennifer Keith, *Director, EPIC Market*

John Radostits, *Interim Director, Hudsons Canada's Pub (August-December)*

Parker Ortlieb, *Director, Sid's Selfie World*

Rahim Jaffer, *Director, The Rooster Kitchen (January-July)*

Sheila Nash, *Interim Director, The Woodrack Café (August-December)*

Terry Brodeur, *Interim Director, Boston Pizza Whyte Ave (August-December)*

Yannick Vienne, *Director, Red Pony Consignment (January-April)*

HONORARY DIRECTORS

Megan Dart, *Fringe Theatre Adventures*

Ryan Eidick, *Eins Consulting*

OSBA Staff

FULL TIME

Cherie Klassen, *Executive Director (January-October)*

Andrea Donini, *Interim Executive Director (July-December)*

Annie Winters, *Marketing & Public Relations Manager*

Ruby Benson, *Member Communications & Public Space Activations Manager (January-October)*

Quinton Hylton, *Communications & Projects Coordinator*

TEMPORARY

Jack Dumont, *Summer Ambassador (May-August)*

Zoe Kwok, *Summer Ambassador (May-August)*



Board Chair's Message

Over the past year, OSBA experienced significant transition. We said goodbye to several long-serving board members whose leadership and dedication helped shape the direction of the Old Strathcona Business Association. We also faced the unexpected departure of our Executive Director and a full-time staff member.

These changes required us to shift gears. Rather than launching new initiatives, we focused on smoothing the transition and advancing projects that had already been approved by the board. While this meant operating differently than originally planned, it showcased our collective strength, resilience and commitment to serving our members.

This past year saw the development and implementation of our patrol team, Old Strathcona On-Call (OSOC). This program fills a critical need in our community. It provides direct support to local businesses while also serving as the “eyes and ears” of the BIA at a street level. Through relationship-building with houseless and vulnerable individuals in our district, OSOC has helped identify emerging and systemic challenges within our business community.

By reporting back to the Association and connecting individuals to appropriate supports, this team plays an integral role in improving communication, awareness, and responsiveness. Importantly, the presence of dedicated patrol staff provides our business members with better access to assistance in non-emergency situations—reducing strain on emergency services while

creating more proactive solutions on our streets. In a year defined by transition, this program stands as a strong example of practical, compassionate, and business-focused leadership.

As intended, our work was guided by the strategic plan previously developed. That plan centres on uplifting and supporting businesses—and the people who own, operate, and patronize them. Even amidst change, our projects and programs infused the district's spaces with energy, activity, inclusivity, and community spirit. We remained focused on strengthening relationships, supporting member needs, and ensuring that Old Strathcona remains a vibrant and welcoming destination for all.

As Board Chair, I recognize both the weight and the opportunity of this moment. Transition brings uncertainty, but it also brings renewal. With refreshed board leadership and a continued commitment to our strategic priorities, we are positioned to reinitiate growth. I am grateful to our board members—past and present—for their service, to our staff and outreach partners for their adaptability, and to our business community for their resilience and trust.

While 2025 tested us, it also reinforced the strength of our organization and the importance of steady, thoughtful leadership. Together, we will continue advancing the work that supports, uplifts, and strengthens Old Strathcona.

John Mackell, OSBA Board Chair



Interim Executive Director's Message

In 2025, the Old Strathcona Business Association continued advancing the 2024–2029 Strategic Plan with focus and resilience. Amid leadership transition and shifting economic conditions, our Board and staff remained committed to strengthening relationships, enhancing place management, cultivating experiences, and rallying the collective around shared priorities.

We are incredibly proud of the launch of the Old Strathcona On-Call (OSOC) team. What began as advocacy several years ago has moved into active service. Early feedback from members has been overwhelmingly positive, highlighting rapid response times, thoughtful de-escalation, and meaningful on-the-ground support. OSOC reflects our collective belief that safety, economic vitality, and inclusive and welcoming environments are all interconnected.

Through the purchase and placement of flowers and winter greenery, cleaning, pressure washing, and debris removal, we continued investing in a district that feels cared for and welcoming. Public art initiatives, including new mural collaborations and the activation of Spur Line Alley, reinforce Old

Strathcona's creative identity and our annual Winter Whyte Light Up remains a community favourite way to kick-off the holiday season.

Looking ahead, 2026 will include significant data collection and analysis projects, including market research, and an initiative to better understand our audiences and strengthen Old Strathcona's position as Edmonton's premier year-round destination. The project will also serve our ongoing advocacy efforts on behalf of our members.

Old Strathcona thrives because of its people. My commitment is to listen carefully, act strategically, and support the continued resilience and vibrancy of this remarkable community.

Andrea Donini, OSBA Interim Executive Director



2025 *priorities*

This year, OSBA focused on building on the foundations set in 2024. We focused on implementing the strategies created to advance the priorities of our strategic plan, as noted below.

1. Strengthen and build relationships with various stakeholders.
2. Improve perceptions and visitor experience through place management.
3. Cultivate experiences to create a vibrant and lively year-round district.
4. Empower BIA members to lead positive change by rallying the collective with responsible leadership.

RESOURCES TO SUPPORT INITIATIVES

The OSBA employed four full-time staff positions in 2025: Executive Director/Interim Executive Director, Member Communications & Public Space Activations Manager, Marketing & Public Relations Manager, and Communications & Projects Coordinator. To enhance capacity, two part-time/seasonal positions were filled from late-April to August to form our annual Summer Ambassador team. One of the two positions was funded, in part, through an employment grant from Venture for Canada.

We are proud to recognize the various community organizations, stakeholders, and funders who help

inform our work across all strategic and operational plans. We value our relationships with these groups and their committed efforts to continuously improve the Old Strathcona Business Improvement Area.

Community Organizations and Stakeholders:

- City of Edmonton
- Edmonton BIA Council
- Old Strathcona Area Community Council (OSACC)
- Edmonton Police Service (EPS)
- Neighbourhood Empowerment Team (NET)
- The Mustard Seed (Old Strathcona Clean Team)
- Hiregood (Old Strathcona On-Call)
- Neighbourhood Festivals
- Theatre and Arts Groups
- Community Leagues

Grant Funders:

- City of Edmonton (Capital City Clean Up, WinterCity Edmonton, Civic Events, and BIA Enhanced Services Grant)
- Venture for Canada (Internship program)



Welcome to District Whyte



MISSION
Our mission is to create a Whyte Ave where:
We bring spaces to life with compassion and inclusion, engagement and empowerment, where commerce is a celebration of shared values. We build our community by caring about the road our actions have.

CORE VALUES
Our values lead us to create a Whyte Ave where:
We bring people in with open arms and open eyes.
We create spaces to share and champion our stories.
We challenge the world with a sense of entrepreneurial punk.

VISION
Our vision is to create a Whyte Avenue that is:
Active and Vibrant Year-round
Welcoming and Inclusive
Innovative and Inspiring

COMMUNITY SKILLS CLASSES
@GRINDSTONE

STRATEGIC plan

Strengthen and build relationships with various stakeholders





RESPONDED
TO
144
CALLS FOR
SUPPORT BETWEEN
SEPT-DEC 2025



333
INCIDENTS
WERE FORMALLY
DOCUMENTED
BETWEEN
SEPT-DEC
2025

OPERATIONAL TARGET:

Development of street outreach team to support community safety

Member concerns about public safety and social disorder—identified as top issues in the annual member survey—prompted coordinated advocacy by OSBA and BIA Council in 2024 to the City of Edmonton for sustainable safety and cleanliness funding for BIAs outside the downtown catchment area. This advocacy led to the creation of the Enhanced Services Grant. Once funding was secured, OSBA engaged a consultant to research and develop an appropriate street-level care and patrol model tailored to Old Strathcona’s needs.

Based on this work, the program was designed to improve day-to-day safety and community well-being while strengthening relationships among businesses, residents, and vulnerable populations through a human-centred, trauma-informed approach. In addition to providing visible, on-the-ground support, Old Strathcona On-Call (OSOC) helps fill critical service gaps by addressing non-

emergency situations and alleviating pressure on emergency services, EPS, and outreach organizations.

In August, OSBA contracted Hiregood to staff and operate the program, leading to the launch of the OSOC patrol team in September 2025. The program began with limited-service hours and staffing, and over time, coverage was expanded in response to demonstrated demand. Looking ahead, OSBA plans to maintain the program into 2026 as community needs require, while continuing to pursue sustainable, long-term funding to ensure consistent and reliable service delivery and continued collection of place-based data to inform service delivery and future advocacy efforts.

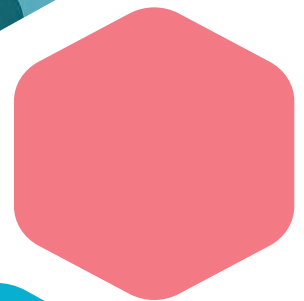
4.85/5
AVERAGE RATING
FOR MEMBER
SATISFACTION
WITH SERVICE USE



OPERATIONAL TARGET:

Explore BIA Boundary Expansion

Based on research collected by the prior year's Summer Ambassadors, the exploration of BIA expansion to include a portion of Happy Beer Street (75-81 Ave and 99-100 St), to better understand how the inclusion of that region would impact OSBA's budget and resources was earmarked as a priority in 2025. In Q1, a business audit was conducted to inform strategy for this project, outlining the lead, timeline, and process for relationship building. Due to a leave of absence taken by the Executive Director, the project was deferred. We are hopeful that OSBA can explore boundary expansion in the coming years as there is opportunity to support the local business community in that area.





Join us in Old Strathcona for a perfect blend of inc shopping, world-class dining, and lively entertainin Whether you're searching for that perfect stateme catching some live theatre, or indulging in our incr and drink scene, you can find it all on Whyte.

VISIT DISTRICT WHYTE



Welcome to Old Strathcona + Whyte Ave

Explore Edmonton's historic Old Strathcona district and experience unique local boutiques, diverse restaurants and cafes, frequent festivals, and theatres that add to the city's arts and cultural scene.

Scroll for more ▾

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO?

Find Services

Let's E

Get

158K

TOTAL WEBSITE PAGE VIEWS

129K

TOTAL WEBSITE VISITORS

SWEET TREATS & LATTE FESTIVAL

TOP 3 PAGES

HOMEPAGE

UPCOMING EVENTS

OPERATIONAL TARGET:

Increase public awareness of OSBA digital media brand

WEBSITE REFRESH

Over the past year, we completed a comprehensive website refresh project designed to modernize our digital presence and future-proof the platform. The project began with in-depth research and benchmarking of other business improvement area and destination marketing organization websites to inform structure, functionality, and user experience best practices. Working in partnership with Parados Communications, we implemented a full framework and site revamp focused on improving overall usability and performance. Over a three-month build period, the project delivered enhanced navigation, a redesigned homepage, and a more functional event calendar, while maintaining existing core content to ensure continuity and accuracy. The existing theme was also retrofitted to align with the new framework, enabling a faster, smoother redesign process following the upcoming brand refresh.

PUBLIC NEWSLETTER

Our email newsletter continues to be a core component of our marketing mix and a highly effective tool for building brand awareness and

community engagement. With a growing subscriber base, the newsletter provides a reliable, direct channel to share event promotions, campaign features, business highlights, and neighbourhood updates. Our content strategy focuses on ensuring audiences know what is happening in Old Strathcona at all times—from festivals and events to new business openings to community gatherings and theatre productions—positioning the district as active, welcoming, and culturally vibrant. Unlike algorithm-driven platforms, email allows us to consistently reach our audience with timely, targeted messaging that reinforces brand identity and drives traffic to our website and community initiatives. Its strong reach, measurable performance, and cost-effectiveness make the newsletter one of our most dependable communications tools and a key driver of awareness and participation across our programs and campaigns.

*Note: Decrease due to unsupported security changes

894

NEWSLETTER SUBSCRIBERS

26.2%
UNIQUE OPEN RATE 2025*

34.3%
UNIQUE OPEN RATE 2024*



INSTAGRAM
20.9K
 FOLLOWERS
+7%

INSTAGRAM
31.6K
 CONTENT
 INTERACTIONS
220.9K
 REACH



FACEBOOK
646.4K
 TOTAL
 CONTENT
 VIEWS

FACEBOOK
9.6K
 FOLLOWERS
+2%

SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media remains a central pillar of OSBA’s marketing strategy, providing dynamic, visual channels to engage our community, amplify our brand, and promote Old Strathcona as a vibrant destination. Platforms like Instagram, TikTok and Threads allow us to showcase the neighbourhood’s

unique character, highlight local businesses, and share real-time updates on events and initiatives. Our accounts reach both residents and visitors in ways that are interactive and visually compelling. By leveraging these platforms, we strengthen community connections, increase awareness of our programs, and drive traffic to our website, campaigns, and in-person experiences. This year, TikTok was added to our digital marketing efforts. Our Summer Ambassador team identified the platform as a growth opportunity for OSBA to reach a younger demographic (18-24 y/o) compared to Instagram and Facebook. Over the past year, new content series like *Mic’d Up Whyte*, *What’s on This Month*, and *Trivia Tuesday* have driven growth, increasing reach and engagement on Instagram through the implementation of a consistent content strategy.

Our social media content strategy is guided by three key pillars: Community, Promote, and Inspire. The *Community* pillar focuses on celebrating the people, organizations, and everyday life that make Old Strathcona special. The *Promote* pillar highlights events, businesses, and campaigns, ensuring followers are aware of everything happening in the district. Finally, the *Inspire* pillar engages audiences with creative, aspirational content that showcases the cultural, historic, and artistic vibrancy of the neighbourhood. Together, these pillars allow OSBA to maintain a consistent, purposeful social media presence that supports brand awareness, encourages engagement, and reinforces Old Strathcona’s identity as a dynamic urban hub.



OPERATIONAL TARGET:

Increase member engagement

GENERAL MEETINGS

We continue to host two opportunities for members to gather and connect annually. Our Spring General Meeting (SGM) was strategically pivoted to a social mixer, allowing BIA members to engage with each other and the OSBA Board of Directors and Staff in a casual setting. Hosted at EPIC Market in collaboration with DRTY Ice Cream, over 30 members attended the social event in August.

In October, the Annual General Meeting (AGM) was held at the Varscona Hotel with 48 voting members in attendance. This formal, member-only meeting consists of reports from OSBA, announcements of future projects, and an opportunity for members to vote on the proposed budget and elect the board of directors.

SGM
30+
MEMBERS IN
ATTENDANCE

AGM
48
VOTING MEMBERS
IN ATTENDANCE
INCLUDING
4
FIRST-TIMERS

Community
events,
festivals, and
content.
—
connect:
osba.ca



580
SUMMER
SURVIVAL GUIDES
DELIVERED

2025 SUMMER SURVIVAL GUIDE

SUMMER AMBASSADORS

Once again, we had two eager students join our team as the Summer Ambassadors from May through August. Zoe and Jack spent the summer connecting with members across the district, handing out Summer Survival Guides, attending festivals and events, submitting 311 reports, and creating content for Instagram and TikTok. Together, they visited 580 businesses, engaging with members and encouraging them to fill out the Annual Member Survey. Behind the scenes, the Summer Ambassadors used the data they collected during business visits to update the patio and pet-friendly business maps and conducted an observed vacancy audit.

Beyond member engagement, Zoe and Jack developed a TikTok strategy and content plan, setting OSBA up with a sustainable approach to expand its reach on social media with a consistent presence on the platform. Throughout the summer, the team crafted content for TikTok, creating videos with a personal approach to sharing the day-to-day life of an OSBA Summer Ambassador, behind-the-scenes at events and festivals, and business-focused content from a storytelling perspective. The most impactful new series they lead was Mic'd Up Whyte, a fun and playful interview format that



has business operators share about themselves, their business, and why they chose to set up shop in Old Strathcona.

All in all, the Summer Ambassadors continue to be a central part of OSBA's success in building and strengthening relationships with members and the public. We are fortunate to have access to grant funding, like Venture for Canada, allowing us to employ students, and expand our team during the summer months.



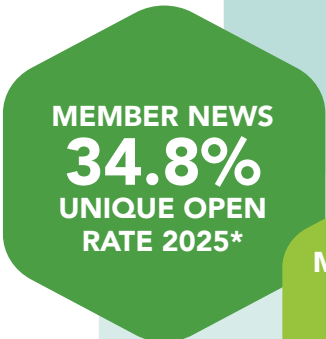
DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS

OSBA's biweekly Member Newsletter is a key communication tool designed to provide timely and direct updates to BIA members. With a subscriber base of 651 and a unique open rate of 34.8%, the newsletter effectively reaches our members with important information on OSBA-led projects, City of Edmonton updates — including patio permits, grant opportunities, and snow and ice control — as well as upcoming events and festivals in the Old Strathcona area.

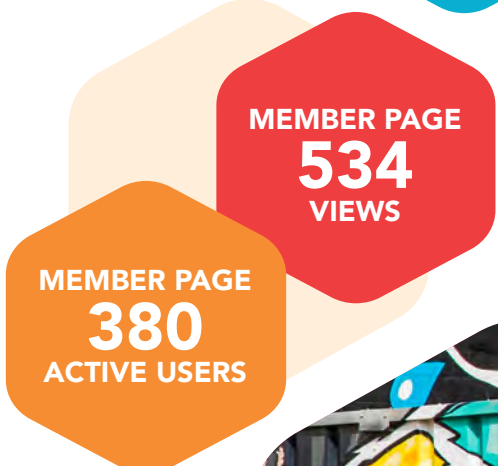
The newsletter also serves as a platform to highlight opportunities for member engagement, ensuring that businesses can actively participate in initiatives that support the vibrancy and success of the district. By delivering relevant, actionable content directly to inboxes, the Member Newsletter strengthens relationships with our members, supports informed decision-making, and reinforces OSBA's role as a central resource for business advocacy and community connection.

Alongside the newsletter, the Members page on our website serves as a central hub for BIA members, providing essential resources and support to help businesses thrive. It welcomes new members with a guide and newsletter sign-up, shares governance information including meeting details and key documents, and offers practical tools such as grants, programs, safety resources, and City services links. By consolidating these resources in one place, the Members page strengthens communication, fosters community engagement, and ensures members have timely access to the information and supports they need to succeed in Old Strathcona.

*Note: collective open rate was reported in past. Going forward, unique open rate will be reported due to changes in analytics from email platform.



*Note: Decrease due to unsupported security changes





STRATEGIC
plan

Improve perceptions and
visitor experience through
place management



OPERATIONAL TARGET:

Improve District Aesthetic Through Beautification & Placemaking

PUBLIC ART

Public art and placemaking initiatives in Old Strathcona expanded significantly this year, enhancing the district's vibrancy while supporting local artists and improving public spaces. A key project was the development of an outdoor art gallery in Spur Line Alley including the installation of a mural by local artist Lauren Hunter. This installation supports artist development, showcases local creative talent, and strengthens Spur Line Alley as a cultural destination and draw within the broader district.

Along with the mural installation in Spur Line Alley, OSBA partnered with Edmonton Mural Festival to deliver two new murals and painted jersey barriers, with the largest mural painted by Edmonton artist Josh Harnack at the GeoMetrix building at 10005 80 Ave, and another smaller mural painted by Emily Chu at the Fringe Theatre Arts Barns at 10330 84 Ave. In addition, we supported the painting of multiple jersey barriers, transforming concrete blocks into works of art! These mini murals took place at: the Old Strathcona Farmers' Market, along the north side of 83 Avenue; the Edmonton Streetcar platform, on the south side of 103 Street

and Whyte Ave; and at the open CP lands, between Dorinku and Station Park.

Additional placemaking improvements were completed through collaboration with the City of Edmonton using the Placemaking Partnership Fund, including repainting the Spur Line Alley surface and two Pride crosswalks. Together, these projects reinforce Old Strathcona's reputation as an arts-forward district and demonstrate the positive impact of strategic public art investments in driving visitation, community pride, and place-based identity.





LIGHTING AND GREENERY

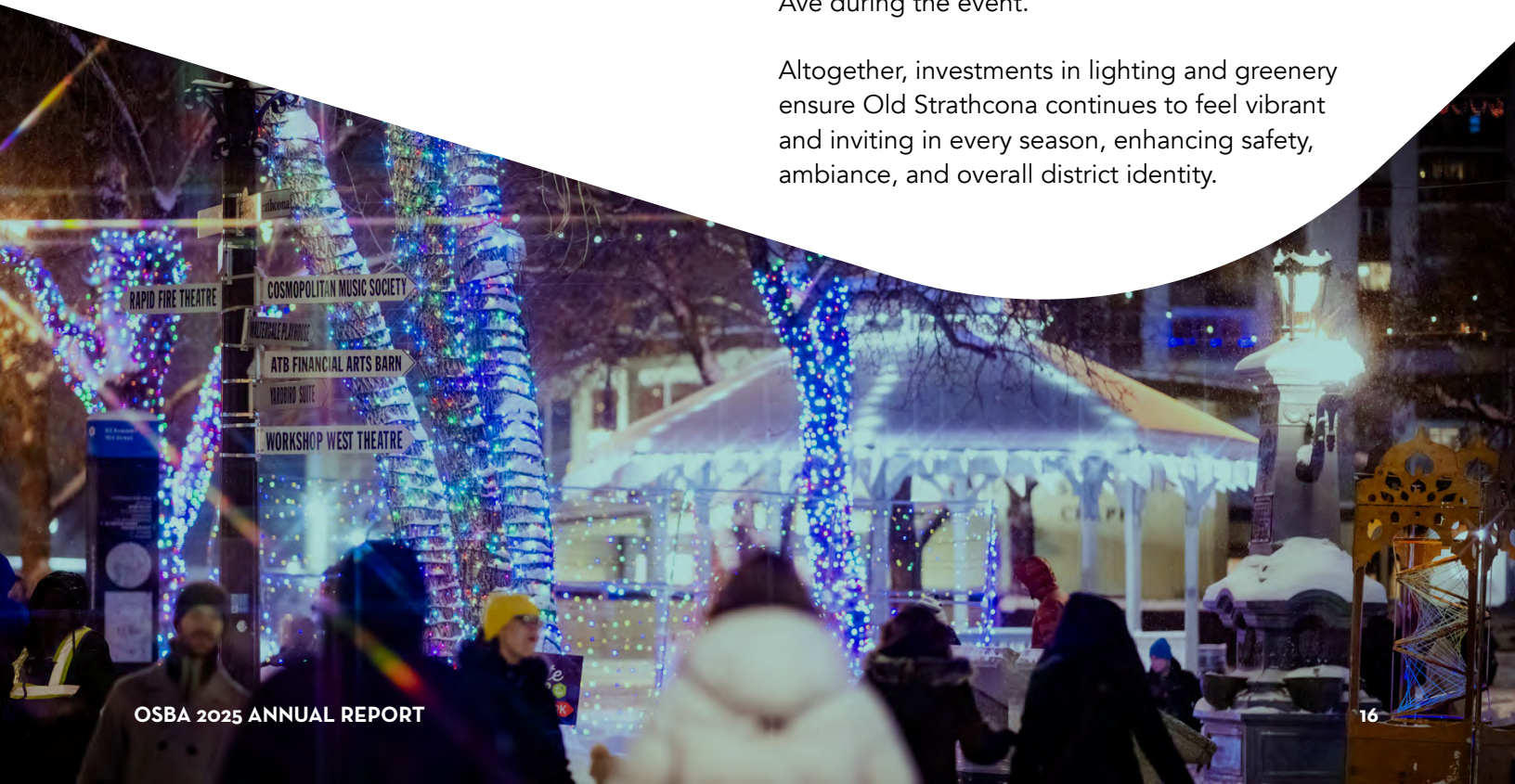
Lighting and greenery enhancements remained a key part of OSBA's placemaking efforts this year, contributing to a more welcoming, attractive, and seasonally vibrant streetscape. In response to increased program costs, a new Bloomin' Boulevards strategy was developed to sustain and adapt the program while maintaining visual impact across the district. Through this updated approach, 115 greenery and decorative pieces were installed in both the summer and winter seasons, consisting of hanging baskets, barrels and skyline planters, and light post swags.

Additional infrastructure improvements were delivered in partnership with the City of Edmonton through the Placemaking Partnership Fund. This included the installation of light post brackets for

hanging baskets, as well as upgrades to the district's tree lighting system, swapping strands with new multicolour, programmable lights.

Winter Whyte Light Up brought more lighting enhancements with the repair of the gazebo lights in McIntyre Park, and the addition of temporary light installations. In total, 7 artist-created light installations from Dylan Toymaker and Freebird Entertainment added a sense of whimsy to Winter Whyte Light Up in McIntyre Park and along 83rd Ave during the event.

Altogether, investments in lighting and greenery ensure Old Strathcona continues to feel vibrant and inviting in every season, enhancing safety, ambiance, and overall district identity.





OPERATIONAL TARGET:

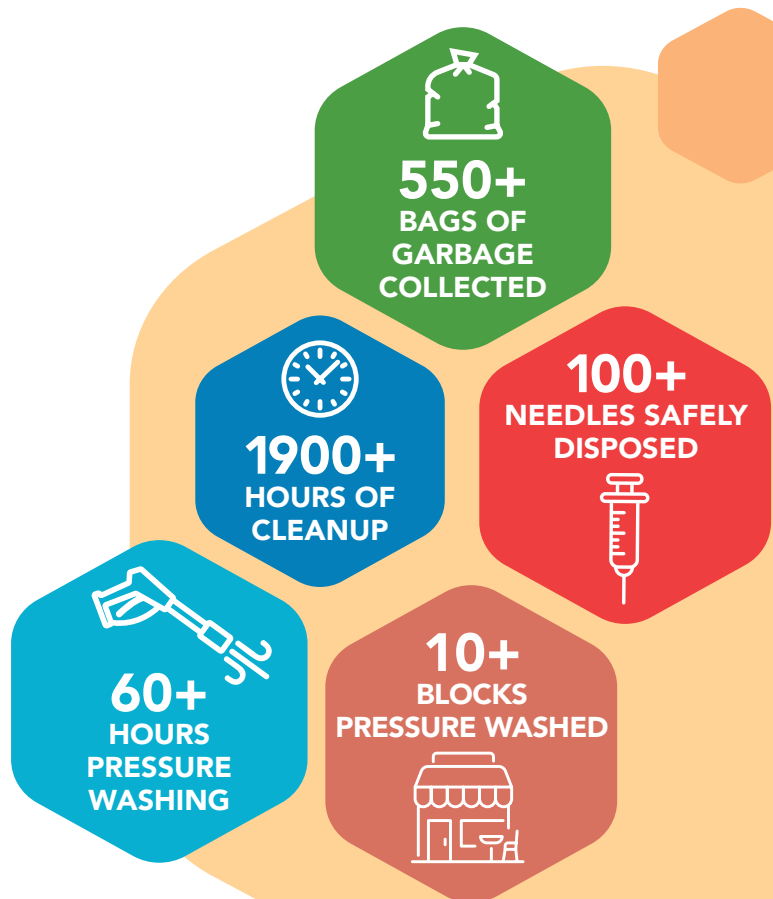
Improve District Cleaning Programs

OLD STRATHCONA CLEAN TEAM & PRESSURE WASHING

Maintaining a clean, welcoming streetscape in Old Strathcona continues to be a top priority to enhance the district’s appeal for businesses, residents, and visitors alike. Through our partnership with The Mustard Seed, the Old Strathcona Clean Team (OSCT) averaged more than 140 hours of dedicated monthly cleaning year-round, including litter collection, cigarette butt pick-up, safe disposal of needles, and reporting of maintenance issues.

In addition to these regular efforts, OSBA continued its focus on pressure washing to address built-up gum, grime, and grease on sidewalks throughout the BIA. This spring, we contracted Master Jet to deliver deep cleaning in high-traffic areas, supplemented by additional spot cleaning over the summer to ensure a consistently clean pedestrian environment. Transitioning to Master Jet has allowed us to implement a pressure washing strategy that results in a deeper, longer-lasting clean due to the hot, high intensity pressure washing service.

This work is funded in part by the Capital City Clean Up grant and is instrumental in keeping the BIA tidy and inviting year-round. These combined initiatives reflect our commitment to enhancing public realm cleanliness, improving the visitor experience, and supporting a vibrant commercial district that aligns with member priorities.





25+
PEOPLE
EMPLOYED
THROUGH
PROGRAM



95+
GRAFFITI
REMOVALS
(STREET FURNITURE)

STREET FURNITURE MAINTENANCE

Along with street cleaning, the Old Strathcona Clean Team's scope was expanded to include regular cleaning of the BIA's permanent street furniture. Throughout the year, OSCT removed litter, graffiti, and snow from the 50+ pieces of furniture, including the five parklets, ensuring the furniture was clean, functional, and welcoming.

Beyond regular cleaning, an annual audit process was established to evaluate the condition and location of each piece as the permanent street furniture has been in place for a full year. The annual audit is the first step in building a sustainable maintenance strategy and budget to ensure each piece is operational and safe – supporting the creation of accessible spaces for visitors to enjoy throughout the district.





OPERATIONAL TARGET:

Ensure factual representation of vacancy

LICENCES, VACANCY & RECRUITMENT

Business owners, developers, and investors continue to choose Old Strathcona despite increased economic pressures and changing consumer behaviour, reinforcing the districts reputation as a sought-after commercial area. This year, the observed vacancy rate for the full district decreased slightly, at a rate of 16.97%. Meanwhile, there was a total of 42 new business licenses issued in the first and second quarter of the year and 21 new business openings observed.

Despite improvements in vacancy rates, perceptions continue to be negatively impacted due to major main floor commercial units sitting vacant, like the Princess Theatre space, the historic post office (previously Squires Pub), and multiple bays in the Southpark on Whyte residential building. However, multiple major commercial and mixed-use developments are underway. The Hat, a CIDEX Development, is nearing completion and the Army & Navy building is undergoing permitting and zoning changes to allow the large space to be demised into multiple commercial units. Along with new developments, exciting local brands joined the Old Strathcona community, with Bodega by Sabor, Smokes Pouterie, and Meuwly's Edmonton (The Hub) opening new locations this year.

Our organization has identified an opportunity to combat negative vacancy perceptions by utilizing our business recruitment package to build relationships with property owners, leasing agents, and potential business owners. Our goal is to support property owners

and leasing agents in recruiting businesses that contribute to the district's culture and vibrancy to create a balanced business mix and improve the atmosphere of Old Strathcona by reducing vacancies long term.

BUSINESS OPENINGS: 2025 VS. 2024 JAN-JUNE & JULY-DEC

1ST & 2ND
QUARTER 2025:
42
NEW BUSINESS
LICENCES ISSUED

1ST & 2ND
QUARTER 2024:
41
NEW BUSINESS
LICENCES ISSUED

3RD & 4TH
QUARTER 2025:
59
NEW BUSINESS
LICENCES ISSUED

3RD & 4TH
QUARTER 2024:
53
NEW BUSINESS
LICENCES ISSUED

OBSERVED
VACANCY RATE
(FULL DISTRICT—
AVERAGE OF
389 GROUND FLOOR
STOREFRONTS)

2025: 16.97%

2024: 18.91%

2023: 19.84%

OBSERVED
VACANCY RATE
(WHYTE AVE ONLY—
AVERAGE OF
255 GROUND FLOOR
STOREFRONTS)

2025: 16.08%

2024: 20.69%

2023: 19.39%



STRATEGIC *plan*

Cultivate experiences
to create a vibrant and
lively year-round district

OPERATIONAL TARGET:

Support events that celebrate diversity and attract varied demographics to Old Strathcona

DEVELOP STRATEGY TO ATTRACT NEW TEMPORARY EVENTS + ACTIVATIONS TO DISTRICT

We continue to take an active, partnership-driven approach to bringing new and diverse activations and temporary events to Old Strathcona, recognizing that grassroots and community-led programming plays an important role in district vibrancy and visitor attraction. By working collaboratively with event organizers, cultural groups, and community partners, we help reduce barriers to participation through promotional support, sponsorship, and logistical coordination. This approach broadens the range of experiences available in the area, introduces new audiences to the district, and strengthens Old Strathcona's reputation as an inclusive, culturally rich destination.

In 2025, OSBA supported several new and emerging initiatives aligned with these goals, including working with the November Project on their community summit, supporting the Edmonton Queer History Project in launching the Old Strathcona Queer History Walking Tour Map, and sponsoring Feed the Soul's Ten Dolla Deals Dining Week to enable the participation of three BIPOC-owned and operated Old Strathcona businesses. These partnerships helped amplify diverse voices and stories, expand cultural experiences, and create meaningful opportunities for local businesses to connect with new customers through unique, time-limited activations.



Going forward, we will continue to look for opportunities to build relationships and attract new, culturally diverse festivals, events, pop-up markets, and campaigns to the district that complement existing BIA-led and community-led festivals and events.





OPERATIONAL TARGET:

Celebrate and support existing arts and culture in Old Strathcona

SPONSORSHIPS + PARTNERSHIPS

OSBA maintains a strategic approach to sponsoring festivals and events that take place within Old Strathcona, recognizing their critical role in driving foot traffic, strengthening destination awareness, and reinforcing the district's reputation as a vibrant arts and culture hub. Through financial sponsorship, promotional support, and on-the-ground collaboration, OSBA helps anchor and grow events that bring diverse audiences into the area and encourage exploration of local businesses. These festivals and celebrations generate significant impact by increasing visitation, extending dwell time, and creating memorable, place-based experiences that showcase Old Strathcona's creative and community spirit.

Major sponsored events include the Whyte Avenue Art Walk, the Edmonton International Fringe Festival, the Grindstone Comedy Festival, Fruit Loop's Pride Block Party, and SkirtsAfire Festival — each contributing unique artistic, cultural, and



community-focused programming to the district. Together, these events animate streets and public spaces, support local artists and producers, and position Old Strathcona as a year-round hub for arts, culture, and inclusive celebration. Through continued sponsorship of signature and emerging festivals alike, OSBA advances district vibrancy while delivering tangible value to members through increased exposure and customer traffic.

2025 Sponsorships:

- SkirtsAfire Festival
- Pride Block Party (Fruit Loop)
- Old Strathcona Has Always Been Queer – Walking Tour Map (Edmonton Queer History Project)



- The November Project Summit
- Whyte Avenue Art Walk (Activate Arts Alberta)
- Grindstone Comedy Festival
- Improvaganza (Rapid Fire Theatre)
- Jersey Barrier Mini Murals (Old Strathcona Farmers' Market)
- Edmonton International Fringe Festival
- Ten Dolla Deals (Feed the Soul)
- Varscona Theatre Gala
- Edmonton Radial Railway Society (Winter Whyte Light up streetcar activation)



A highlight of other 2025 Events in Old Strathcona:

- Edmonton Mural Festival Walking Tour
- Pop-up Markets (Oddbird Art & Craft Fair, Witchery Market, Alt After Dark)
- Goodwill Fashion Show
- Food Bike & Walk Tours





OPERATIONAL TARGET:

Year-round/monthly programming & age specific experiences

CAMPAIGNS, PROMOTIONS & ACTIVATIONS

OSBA-led campaigns, promotions, and activations play a central role in driving foot traffic, raising awareness of the district, and supporting local businesses across a wide range of sectors. By creating engaging, timely, and appealing initiatives, OSBA encourages visitors to explore Old Strathcona's shops, restaurants, and services, while highlighting the diversity and vibrancy of the business community. These campaigns are designed to attract new audiences and to deepen connections with existing customers, ensuring businesses across all sectors—from retail and hospitality to personal and professional services—are showcased.



In 2025, OSBA delivered several signature campaigns that exemplify this approach. Ten Days of Giveaways launched in January with a focus on health and wellbeing, giving away gift cards to businesses in the personal services sector. In February, the Sweet Treats & Latte Festival drew food lovers to the district with 30+ participating locations offering limited-time features, highlighting the food and beverage industry. While Pet Prowl, which took place in June, encouraged visitors to explore the district alongside their furry friends, spotlighting pet-friendly businesses and services. Complementing these events, OSBA also produced practical tools like the mural map, patio map, and pet-friendly business map, which guide visitors to unique experiences and encourage exploration throughout the district. Together, these campaigns and activations strengthen Old Strathcona's reputation as a lively, inclusive, and accessible destination while delivering measurable economic benefits to local businesses.





OPERATIONAL TARGET:

Enhance winter experience in the district

WINTER WHYTE LIGHT UP

This year's Winter Whyte Light Up Festival served as an important kick-off to the holiday season in Old Strathcona, setting the tone for winter activity and encouraging continued year-round visitation to the district. Despite the cold and snowy conditions, the festival drew approximately 2,500 attendees and featured expanded programming and community partnerships that strengthened its role as a signature winter activation. Highlights included an enhanced Winter Whyte Variety Show and immersive light installations that animated public spaces and encouraged exploration. New cultural programming added depth and learning opportunities, including a Tipi raising and storytelling sessions presented in partnership with Bent Arrow Traditional Healing Society.

Interactive, family-friendly experiences helped drive foot traffic across multiple sites, including free streetcar rides hosted by the Edmonton Radial Railway Society, story time and crafts at the Edmonton Public Library's Strathcona branch, and Bannock-making hosted by Chef Shane Chartrand at the Old Strathcona Farmers' Market. By

combining cultural education, live performances, light-based art installations, and family-friendly activities, the festival provides accessible and inclusive experiences during the early winter season and reinforces Old Strathcona's position as a vibrant, all-season destination.

A big thank you to our sponsors and community partners for Winter Whyte Light up:

- United Rentals
- Long & McQuade
- Leopold's Tavern
- Telus
- Boston Pizza
- Bird Creatives
- The Old Strathcona Farmers' Market
- Edmonton Radial Railway Society
- Edmonton Public Library Strathcona Branch
- Fringe Theatre Adventures



HOLIDAY CAMPAIGNS

The holiday season in Old Strathcona was marked by engaging, community-focused campaigns designed to drive foot traffic, support local businesses, and spread festive cheer throughout the district. The Holiday Decorating Contest invited businesses to showcase creative and spirited displays, encouraging patrons to explore the area, celebrate the season, and vote for their favourite display for a chance to win prizes. With 40 business participating and over 300 votes cast, this year's Holiday Decorating Contest was a huge success, and we look forward to continuing the campaign in 2026.

Complementing this, the Holiday Shopping Map served as a curated guide to local shops and gifting categories, making it easier for patrons to discover unique gifts and new shops while highlighting the diversity of our business community. Together, these holiday initiatives strengthened district awareness during a key retail period and reinforced Old Strathcona's identity as a diverse and welcoming destination throughout the winter months.





STRATEGIC
plan

Rallying the
collective with
responsible leadership



OPERATIONAL TARGET:

Empower members and stakeholders to take pride in community

ADVOCACY, RELATIONSHIP BUILDING & MEMBER EMPOWERMENT

Advocacy, relationship building, and member empowerment remained central to OSBA's work this year. Through a collaborative effort, Edmonton's BIA Council and OSBA, successfully advocated to the City of Edmonton for the creation of the Enhanced Services Grant, a funding program designed to support BIAs outside of the downtown catchment area in delivering programs that focus on improving cleaning, safety and the impact of social disorder. This milestone reflects sustained, coordinated advocacy grounded in member feedback allowing us to pilot the Old Strathcona On-Call patrol team this year. OSBA also worked directly with Edmonton Police Service Beats team to address member concerns regarding safety and coverage gaps. By identifying priority days and times based on business need, facilitating business visits, sharing member stories, and submitting formal letters, we successfully advocated for additional coverage, with an additional day of EPS Beats coverage added to better support safety in the district.

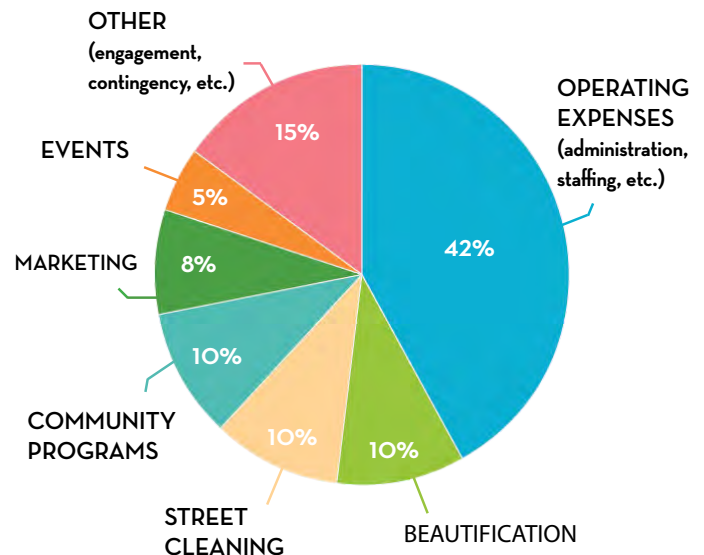
Beyond external advocacy, we continued to strengthen relationships and empower members through information sharing, direct outreach, and transparency initiatives. Educational resources from the City of Edmonton and the Neighbourhood Empowerment Team (NET) were shared regularly, and the Summer Ambassadors delivered materials directly to businesses while facilitating introductions to NET representatives where appropriate. To further build trust and demonstrate value, we developed a levy breakdown infographic to clearly communicate how member levy contributions are allocated and invested in the district. Ongoing communication pieces and consistent updates in

the Member Newsletter reinforced transparency around projects and initiatives, ensuring members remain informed, engaged, and confident in the value delivered through their BIA investment.

TAX LEVY BREAKDOWN

BIAs operate as non-profit corporations. Programs, services and operations of each BIA are financed by the BIA tax. BIAs submit operating budgets annually to the City for review and approval by Council.

Where Your Tax Dollars Go:* Understanding This Year's Tax Levy



*numbers based on 2025 approved budget and tax levy amounts



financial

STATEMENTS

To the Members of the Old Strathcona Business Association

OPINION

We have audited the financial statements of Old Strathcona Business Association (the “association”), which comprise the statement of financial position as at December 31, 2025, and the statements of revenues and expenditures, changes in net assets and cash flows for the year then ended, and notes 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 association as at December 31, 2025, and the results of its operations and cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations.

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with ASNPO, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

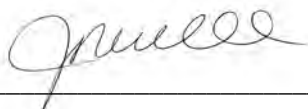
Excerpt from the Independent Auditor’s Report provided by Yates Whitaker LLP.

Statement of Financial Position

DECEMBER 31, 2025

	2025	2024
ASSETS		
CURRENT		
Cash	\$ 519,338	\$ 587,194
Accounts receivable	1,000	975
Goods and services tax recoverable	14,605	4,673
Prepaid expenses	4,053	2,284
Security deposits	1,686	1,640
	540,682	596,766
CAPITAL ASSETS	146,981	184,250
	\$ 687,663	\$ 781,016
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
CURRENT		
Accounts payable	\$ 28,298	\$ 44,701
Wages payable	7,030	4,605
Deferred income	178,500	281,500
Deferred capital contributions	105,026	131,283
	318,854	462,089
NET ASSETS		
General Fund	326,854	265,960
Net assets invested in capital assets	41,955	52,967
	368,809	318,927
	\$ 687,663	\$ 781,016

ON BEHALF OF THE BOARD



Director



Director

Statement of Revenues and Expenditures

YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2025

	BUDGET 2025	TOTAL 2025	TOTAL 2024
REVENUES			
Special business levy	\$ 700,000	\$ 700,000	\$ 575,000
Grant revenue	30,000	271,214	87,347
Amortization of capital contributions	-	26,257	31,770
Sponsorships	-	4,000	10,436
Interest income	-	2,041	2,691
Ticket sales	-	-	381
	730,000	1,003,512	707,625
EXPENDITURES			
Programs, Projects and Product Development	309,700	495,553	304,849
Employee salaries and support contracts	358,000	317,502	254,864
Professional fees	37,000	51,390	38,663
Amortization	-	37,269	32,726
Office	19,250	20,256	17,400
Rental	21,000	19,148	18,743
Telephone	5,400	3,758	4,293
Travel	3,000	3,100	4,786
Professional development	6,000	2,526	3,153
Insurance	2,200	2,191	1,849
Sub-contracts	2,500	500	-
Interest and bank charges	400	437	513
Contingency	8,550	-	-
	773,000	953,630	681,839
EXCESS OF REVENUES OVER EXPENDITURES	\$ (43,000)	49,882	\$ 25,786



Old Strathcona Business Association
#302, 10314 Whyte Avenue, Edmonton, AB T6E 1Z8

oldstrathcona.ca