

THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF GEORGINA

REPORT NO. SI-2024-0013

**FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF
COUNCIL**

June 19, 2024

**SUBJECT: PROPOSED DORMANCY OF THE UPTOWN KESWICK BUSINESS
IMPROVEMENT AREA (UKBIA) BOARD OF MANAGEMENT**

1. RECOMMENDATION:

1. That Council receive Report No. SI-2024-0013 prepared by the Strategic Initiatives Department, Economic Development and Tourism Division dated June 19, 2024, respecting the proposed dormancy of the Uptown Keswick Business Improvement Area (UKBIA) Board of Management.
2. That Council approve a dormant status of the Uptown Keswick Business Improvement Area Board of Management for the remainder of the term of Municipal Council (end of 2026).
3. That Town Staff direct the Board of Management to issue a cheque to the Town of Georgina for all monies that are currently held in the Uptown Keswick BIA bank account(s).
4. That Council direct the Treasurer to set up a reserve account that will hold the UKBIA funds until the end of the dormancy status.
5. That the Economic Development and Tourism Division be authorized to utilize the transferred BIA funds to schedule music programming in the Uptown Keswick Parkette for the term of dormancy (Summer 2024, Summer 2025, Summer 2026) in the amount of \$6,000, \$6,500 and \$7,000 respectively, pursuant to the direction of the outgoing board.

2. PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to request Council's approval to move the Uptown Keswick Business Improvement Area (UKBIA) Board of Management into a dormant status for the remainder of the term of Municipal Council (end of 2026) and provide for the oversight of existing BIA funds until such time as the Board is reconstituted.

3. BACKGROUND:

In 2014, Town Council passed Bylaw 2014-0017 (PL-3) to designate an area in Uptown Keswick as a "Business Improvement Area (BIA)" and to establish a Board of Management in accordance with the requirements of the Ontario Municipal Act.

In accordance with Section 205 (2) of the Ontario Municipal Act;

A board of management shall submit the budget to council by the date and in the form required by the municipality and the municipality may approve it in whole or in part but may not add expenditures to it.

At the 2023 Annual General Meeting a total of 4 (four) board members were elected to the Board of Management and were officially appointed by Council at a Council meeting held on April 26, 2023. No UKBIA board meetings were held during the 2023 year. Notwithstanding, the absence of board meetings and that the Board had not required a levy to support their operations since 2019, reserve funds supported a series of music events in the recently enhanced Keswick Parkette area last summer. These events were well received by the business owners, nearby residents, and visitors.

At a meeting held on February 20, 2024 with the Manager of Economic Development and Tourism and the Partnership and Downtown Coordinator, the Board of Management, many who have provided decades of volunteer hours to support activities and programs in the BIA, advised that they are no longer able to take an active role in the Board operations and discussed the difficulties in recruiting new volunteers to the board. The option of having the BIA dormant for a set term was discussed in hopes that in two to three years there would be renewed interest from additional local business owners. The option to go into dormancy was researched by Staff, having discussions with the Ontario Business Improvement Area Association and other Municipalities who have explored this process.

The Board of Management chose not to prepare a 2024 budget, and a letter was sent out on April 18, 2024 by the Partnership and Downtown Coordinator on behalf of the UKBIA to advise the membership of a General Membership Meeting being held, and the option to vote on a dormancy status.

4. ANALYSIS:

A General Membership Meeting for the UKBIA was held on Tuesday, May 14, 2024. During this meeting, no members came forward to express interest in joining the board and current board members advised of their resignations from the Uptown Keswick Board of Management. The Board approved the following motion:

Motion to move the Uptown Keswick Business Improvement Area into a set dormancy period starting at the time of Council approval, extending to the end of 2026, lining up with the term of Municipal Council.

As part of the dormancy process and in the absence of a Board and signing authority, funds held by the UKBIA must be transferred to the Municipality for oversight during the dormancy period. Given the success and positive feedback of the 2023 Music in

the Parkette Series, the board was advised that as part of the dormancy request they could pass a motion to direct Town Staff to utilize funds during the dormancy for this purpose.

With a desire to continue to encourage traffic to the Uptown Keswick area through entertainment, and in alignment with Downtown Revitalization being a key area of focus for Staff, the UKBIA requested that the Economic Development and Tourism Staff utilize BIA funding and schedule musical programming in the Uptown Keswick Parkette during the dormancy period (Attachment 1).

Motion to direct Town of Georgina Economic Development Staff to use the transferred BIA funds to support musical programming in the Uptown Keswick Parkette at a rate of \$6000 for Summer 2024, \$6500 for Summer 2025 and \$7000 for Summer 2026.

Notwithstanding the approval of a dormancy period, should any commercial properties within the UKBIA boundaries have an interest in reinstating a Board of Management during this time, they are able to do so by calling a General Meeting for the area, electing a board and having a proposed budget passed by the membership and Council.

If there is no desire from the membership to reinstate a Board after the set dormancy term, Town Staff will look at the next steps for the UKBIA and how best to continue to support the businesses.

5. RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC PLAN:

Delivering service excellence

Diversifying local economy

Creating a vibrant, healthy, and safe community for all

6. FINANCIAL AND BUDGETARY IMPACT:

There are no direct financial or budgetary impacts. Upon dormancy, funds held by the Uptown Keswick Business Improvement Area will be transferred to the Town to hold for the set duration of the dormancy (end of 2026). Outgoing board members have requested that the Economic Development and Tourism Staff spend \$6000 in 2024, \$6500 in 2025 and \$7000 in 2026 for music programming in the Uptown Keswick Parkette. The Finance Division will be requested to set up a dedicated account for the UKBIA funds and through the recommendations contained within this report, Town Staff will continue with programming music events based on the funding amounts approved by the UKBIA at their May 14, 2024 meeting.

7. PUBLIC CONSULTATION AND NOTICE REQUIREMENTS:

There is no requirement for public notification of this report. The required written notification advising of the May 14, 2024 Annual General Meeting, was sent by mail to all commercially assessed property owners and tenants within the Uptown Keswick Business Improvement Area.

8. CONCLUSION:

This report seeks Council's endorsement of a dormant status for the Uptown Keswick Business Improvement Area and approval to have Town Staff facilitate musical programming in the Uptown Keswick Parkette during the dormancy period, to be funded by the UKBIA reserves.

Staff note that despite the dormancy of the BIA Board of Management, Town Staff are committed to serving the businesses in the Uptown Keswick Business Improvement Area and continuing to investigate programs and grants that support downtown revitalization. The businesses within the UKBIA will also be able to continue to take advantage of the Community Improvement Plan Grant Programs offered by the Town to undertake, façade, accessibility and signage and landscaping enhancements to their commercial properties.

APPROVALS

Prepared By:	Julie Cain Partnership and Downtown Coordinator
Reviewed By:	Karyn Stone Manger of Economic Development and Tourism Division
Recommended By:	Shawn Nastke Director of Strategic Initiatives
Approved By:	Ryan Cronsberry Chief Administrative Officer

Attachments:

Attachment 1 – Uptown Keswick Business Improvement Area May 14, 2024 meeting minutes.