



2023-2024 Annual Report Bixby Knolls Parking and Business Improvement Area

SUBMITTED BY BIXBY KNOLLS BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT
ASSOCIATION

OCTOBER 18, 2023

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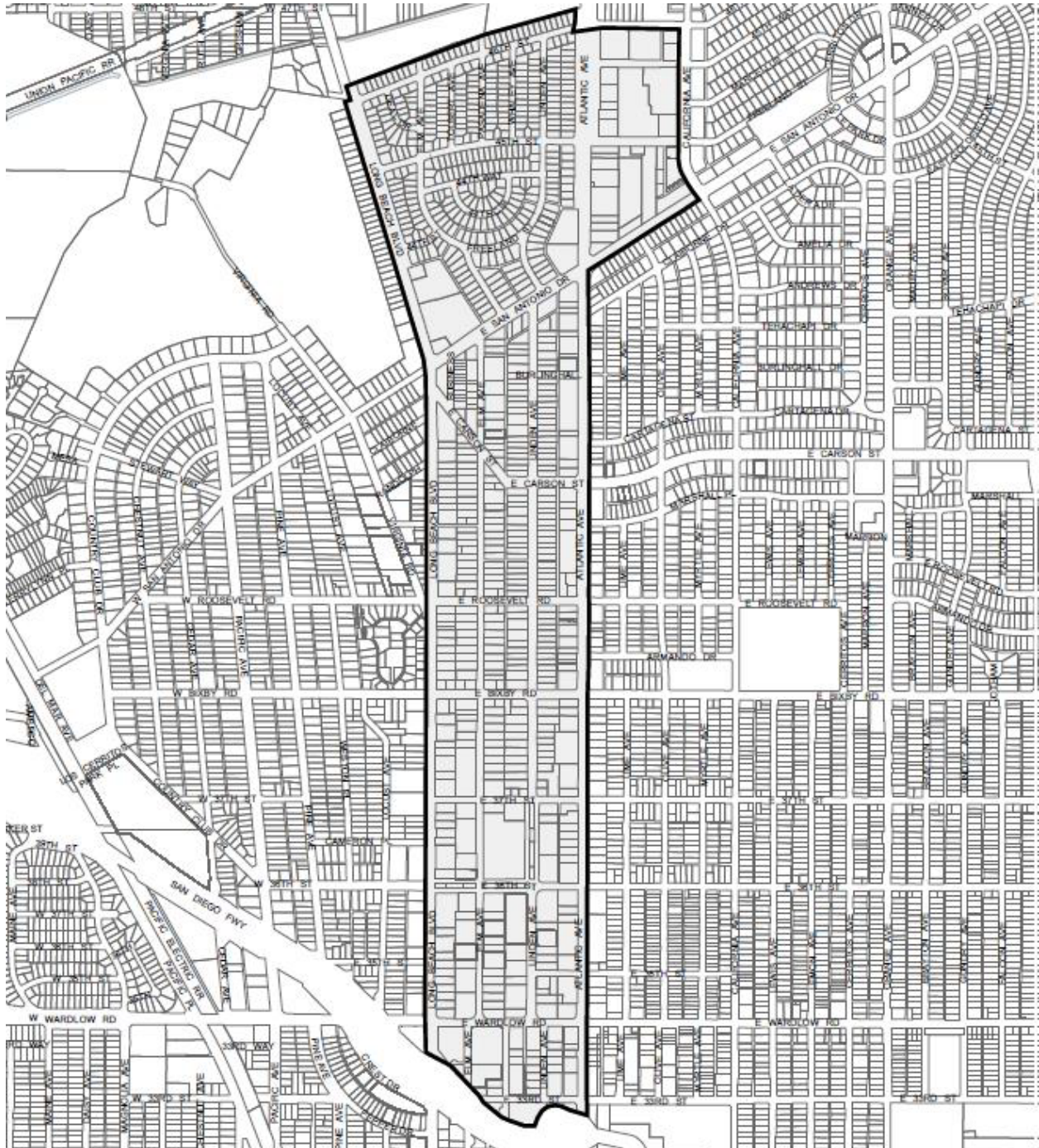
DISTRICT OVERVIEW

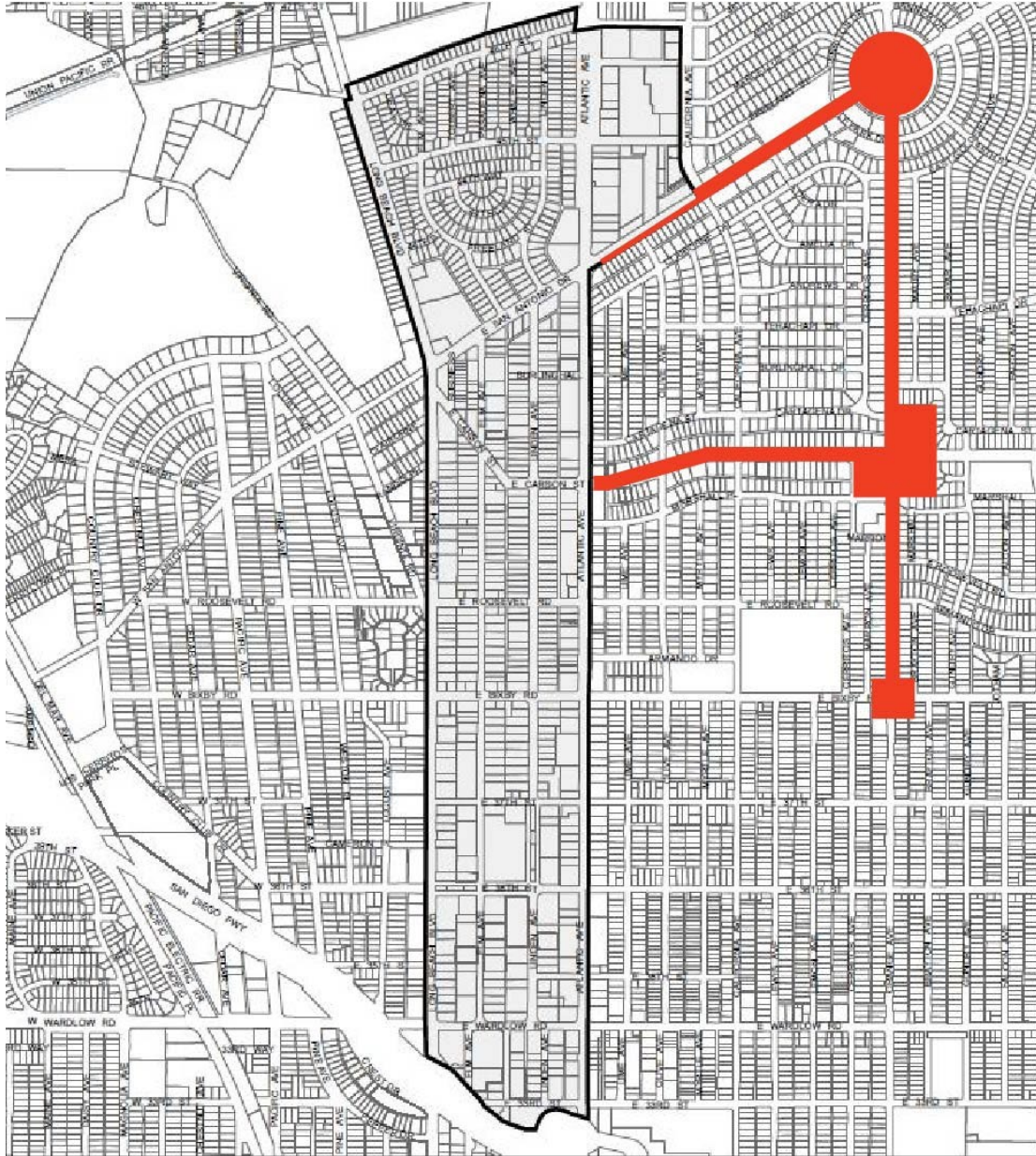
District Background

In 1989, the City Council of the City of Long Beach established the Bixby Knolls Parking and Business Improvement Area, providing for the levy an annual business license assessment to be paid by businesses in the Bixby Knolls commercial corridor. The organization overseeing the management of the Bixby Knolls Parking and Business Improvement Area is the Bixby Knolls Business Improvement Association, a nonprofit organization incorporated on September 20, 1993, under State law.

The purpose of the Bixby Knolls Business Improvement Association is to promote the interests of its professional, service, and retail members, to enhance the common areas within the BIA area, to facilitate the exchange of business information and ideas, and to promote the highest business and ethical standards. This statement reflects the focus for the Board's activities and its continuing commitment to the growth and enhancement of our business community.

Bixby Knolls Parking and Business Improvement Area Boundary Map





Proposed Changes

*The BKBIA has begun outreach to businesses along the Orange Avenue corridor to possibly expand our district boundaries, and will continue to do so. This may include businesses along San Antonio to Orange, Orange and Carson, Orange and Bixby Road. We had a consultant helping us with this effort who unfortunately got ill and had to cease his services. We will continue to pursue this all year as we continue on our core mission.

District Advisory Board

The Board of Directors of the Bixby Knolls BIA represents a cross-section of the diverse business community throughout the business district. Appointed in accordance with our Bylaws, each position represents a sector of the area as defined by the formation ordinance. As a nonprofit organization governed by a volunteer board of directors, the BIA's effectiveness is primarily determined by the dedication and commitment of the volunteers that serve on the Board of Directors and its committees. Currently there is one At-Large vacancy that shall soon be filled and add to the diversity of board representation.

| | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|
| Crystal Rogers, President, | Lucy's Boudoir | Long Beach Blvd. |
| Bjoern Risse, Vice President, | Rasselbock | Atlantic Avenue |
| Katie Barish, Treasurer, | The Better Half Boutique | Atlantic Avenue |
| Bill Larson, Secretary, | First Team | Long Beach Blvd. |
| Anthony Puente, | Digital Revolution | Long Beach Blvd. |
| David Ayala, | F&M Bank | B Shopping Center |
| Robin Daykin, | Pixie Toys | Atlantic Avenue |
| Jeff Beasley, | Bundts on Melrose | Long Beach Blvd. |
| Starr Bunch, | Five Starr Pilates | Long Beach Blvd. |
| Anthony Wingfield | UPS Store | Wardlow |
| Vacant | | At-Large |

Cheryl Jacobs – Community Liaison

Andrea Testa – Community Liaison

District Personnel

Blair Cohn, Executive Director

Leads the implementation and enhancement of the BIA's goals and strategic action plan; acts as liaison and advocate with municipal government, local media, and organizations on behalf of the BIA; Event Management: organize and manage all monthly events and programs; Recruit, train, and manage qualified staff; Oversee the publishing of newsletters, annual business directory, and BIA website; Manage the BIA's financial activities including payables, receivables, payroll, financial statements, and required municipal reporting; Administer the Board and Committee meetings including agendas, meeting minutes, and correspondence.

Myra Pimentel, Project Manager

Manage all special projects including website management, event planning, design, manage administrative duties within the BKBIA office; member outreach; manage the Expo Arts Center booking and coordinate event calendar, manages all social media accounts.

Ines Torres Content Manager

Assist on special projects including event planning, business directory, member outreach; directory updates. Oversees Bixby Knolls Community Foundation donations and outreach to donors. Assists Project Manager with social media, newsletters, and website edits as needed. Leads district boundary expansion efforts.

METHOD OF ASSESSMENT

The current annual base assessment for businesses is \$520. Nonprofits are assessed a base fee of \$260. This fee went into effect last year per city council approval and is a straight fee for each business member. CPI adjustments annually are at the discretion of the BKBIA Board.

Method of Assessment

| BUSINESS BASE RATE | TOTAL RATE | NONPROFIT BASE RATE | TOTAL RATE |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|
| \$520 | \$520 | \$260 | \$260 |

Consumer Price Index Adjustments

The Bixby Knolls Business Improvement Association Board of Directors is not requesting a Consumer Price Index Adjustment for the 2023-2024 contract year.

BUDGET

REVENUE

| | |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| Assessment | \$452,400.00 |
| Contributions | \$ |
| Grant Awards | \$ |
| Rental Income | \$ 98,000.00 |
| Bridge Funds | \$ 45,000.00 |
| Gross Revenue | \$ 596,200.00 |

EXPENDITURES

BIXBY KNOLLS BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION PROGRAM

2022 – 2023 Program and Year in Review and looking to 2024

Theme: Pick up the pieces and get back at it.

The focus of 2022-2023 was getting back to “normal” for our business members. We have seen the community returning to the corridors and to our events in pre-pandemic numbers, and the BKBIA spent the last year driving traffic to its businesses in a variety of ways while focusing on the health of the organization.

The biggest change for the BKBIA was the change in assessment fee which began to take effect in January 2023. It will take us to January 2024 to get a clear revenue figure for our budget, but the increase has already helped the BKBIA meet its obligations, support staff, and be consistent with the level of service we provide to our membership.

In addition to the assessment increase, the BKBIA hired a grant writer to pursue grant funds to help support or supplement our projects and events with some success. We held a sold-out fundraiser in August, “Breakfast with Bluey,” which netted a profit to help further our efforts. We also hosted an “Almost St. Patrick’s Day” fundraiser that was very successful.

Keeping our business membership front of mind to the community is critical. All year we promote our membership in a variety of ways including profiles/showcases/features, including: National Black Business Month, Hispanic Heritage Month, and Women’s History Month (showcasing our women-owned businesses). For new businesses or those needing extra promotional help, the BKBIA creates individual Business Profiles (“Know’ll” Your Businesses) and Small Business Saturday promotions for further support. The community becomes familiar with these businesses and our members get our help.

Communication with our membership remained a priority and we significantly increased our member outreach efforts even over the last year—both electronically (via email, text, social media messages) and letters mailed to all members. There were weeks when multiple emails were sent containing grant information, Business Breakfast invites, and business support information supplied by Economic Development, SBDC, as well as county and state resources.

We also plan larger promotions such the Concerts in the Park(ing Lot) series, Almost St. Patrick’s Day, Walktoberfest, and the Bixby Holiday Block Party. There are hopes to hold another Taste of Bixby Knolls event in 2024.

Over the last year, we have increased our Instagram followers to over 18,000, Facebook has over 6,000 followers, and the Bixby Knolls Community page where we do the majority of our posting has over 10,000 followers.

Milestones included: the Bixby Knolls Strollers continued to meet every Saturday (celebrating 15 years); Literary Society has now met monthly for 15 years; Knights of the Round (Turn)Table celebrated 5 years, and Kidical Mass celebrate 11 years. Consistency in programming has helped us to not only be connected to the community, but to better be able to create neighborhood pride and spread our message to “Support YOUR local businesses.”

We communicated with our board of directors constantly on all issues arising in the district. We moved our monthly meetings to the Expo Arts Center and share all issues throughout the month as well.

We suffered a tragedy this year with our personnel. Kevin Evans, who was a volunteer for Care Closet LBC and who worked with us each day as our Clean Team Captain, was killed while riding his bike. Kevin's death sent a shockwave through the organization and throughout the district as businesses saw Kevin working hard each day to keep the area tidy.

Tom Underhill joined us as a contractor to take over the Clean Team efforts. For more than 15 years, Tom led the Cal Heights Clean Streets volunteers and continues to do so while also helping the BKBIA with all street issues. We are also fortunate to have another contractor who lives near the Expo Arts Center making day and night patrols of the district to identify areas needing better lighting or repairs to lights in parking lots or storefronts. He assists in removing graffiti, and reports a number of issues to GoLongBeach to be addressed. Finally, we are very fortunate to work closely with Care Closet on street cleanups and removal of any dumped items.

In addition to the business support, the Clean and Safe programs, and managing our monthly programs, our focus remained on the pursuit new revenue streams for the BKBIA. As previously mentioned, the assessment fee was increased and we begun efforts on the potential expansion of the BKBIA borders to the east with the addition of businesses along San Antonio, Orange Avenue, to Bixby Road. We have spent \$110K of the approved \$200K "bridge funding" that provides us the resources and time to pursue additional revenue streams through various options; We also increased the rent for all tenants of the Expo Arts Center and started to book more events in the building again at a higher rental fee.

We spent our allotment of the American Recovery Act Grant Funds, a total of \$135,000 which included: Business Assistance, Marketing & Promotion, Clean and Safe program support, and Admin/staff management costs

The Bixby Knolls Community Foundation 501c3 received donations all year from local community members who want to support the ongoing efforts of the BKBIA, especially our core services. We will continue to solicit grants and donations to our non-profit. "Anonymous donors" in the neighborhood have now given \$150,000 to fund a Food Insecurity Program that provides hot meals to the food pantries at LBCC and CSULB each week. The donors pay the BKBIA an admin fee for handling this project.

The majority of our district into the 5th District with just the northern part (north of San Antonio) remaining in the 8th district. Our communication with both CD5 and CD8 remained consistent and clear in addressing any/all issues.

Ongoing Monthly Events and Programs

All our events are designed to have a business connected with it and play host to build customer loyalty and repeat business. The BKBIA has continued to stress the importance and priority of connecting the residential customer base to the business corridors. For example, members of the Strollers remain loyal to our host, Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf. To bring the community and businesses together we continue to manage our low-cost monthly events and programs, many of which have celebrated longevity and milestones in the district.

As mentioned, our Strollers (15 years) continued to walk each Saturday without fail. The Literary Society (15 years) meets each month with an enthusiastic group hosted by A Dream Come True

Tea & Party Room. Kidical Mass (11 years) consistently draws large crowds; We recently hosted four “Concerts in the Park(ing Lot)” summer concerts; First Fridays is our monthly district showcase with businesses from outside of the pedestrian zone participating, too, to meet the community and make connections.

Our Knights of the Round (Turn)Table has now met for 5 years. We have moved the location of the monthly meetings to support different restaurants and breweries who get a boost in sales the night of our event.

We were able to host our Annual “State of the Business District” Meeting for our members in March at the Expo Arts Center. We had an enthusiastic turnout of 90+ businesses in attendance (and catered by Lola’s Mexican Cuisine Bixby Knolls).

We had a great turnout for our “Almost St. Patrick’s Day” ticketed event in March. This ticketed event was a fund raiser for the BKBIA through our Bixby Knolls Community Foundation 501c3 non-profit.

Co-op marketing – If a business is trying something on its own and needs a bit of a push, we will jump in to help. For example, Dutch’s Brewhouse hosts a weekly “Metal Mondays” theme and we will do a “takeover” from time to time to add to the theme and promotion to draw more of a crowd and give the business a financial boost. This is also true of karaoke nights and live music nights in the district and a “2nd Saturdays” event hosted by our businesses.

Member Outreach

- Member outreach is as important to us as our Clean and Safe programs. Communicating with our membership is critical. We email multiple times weekly, mailed quarterly letters, held Bixby Business Breakfasts, and contacted members one-on-one via social media and direct contacts. Communication picked up tenfold through the pandemic and continues today, especially with the business profiles we create and share. More specifics:
- **110** emails sent to members
- **5** letters mailed
- **426** Instagram posts
- Annual Meeting: March 2023
- Business Breakfasts: September 2022 and June 2023
- We are also always available via text message, Facebook messenger, and direct contacts.

The BKBIA continues to serve as mentoring, coaching, and cheerleading services while also providing important business resources, and being accessible and responsive by phone or even after business hours.

Business Retention/Business Recruitment

While the importance of meeting our mission is critical, this also includes our efforts for business retention and recruitment. Often this can be the most challenging area for us given the limited staff, resources, and time. Business retention remains a top priority during this post-COVID-19 era. Flash Events have been the best tool thus far as well as rent relief and assisting in the purchase of signage or other items to help the business. In addition, it’s our constant outreach

mentoring, coaching, and referring our members to best resources like the Small Business Development Center.

Our best efforts come as a direct result of all the energy we put into the events, marketing, and social media. Creating a buzz about the neighborhood, supporting our membership in a variety of ways, has, over time, produced greater investment into the district. The more buzz about the area, the more entrepreneurs have come seeking space or setting up shop in the district.

In reality it's the combined efforts of the social media, business profiles, business breakfasts, flash events, referrals, newsletters, VIP Grants LBRA grant (which was a great source to help retain any business who may have been struggling. The investment made a significant impact to businesses and the district as a whole), the SBDC, the Goldman-Sachs program that help keep businesses in Bixby Knolls rather than closing shop.

We are thankful to Economic Development for providing such quick response with information and links for city loans and grant programs. All this information is shared immediately with our members who are encouraged to take advantage of all opportunities.

Further, we have been fortunate to have received private funds from anonymous donors in the neighborhood. A community member made multiple donations to the BKBIA with the specific instructions to "help those businesses who need it the most."

New businesses this year included: There were **107** new business licenses from July 2022 – June 2023.

The following businesses below have either reached out for help, participated in FF, or done a business feature with us based on our outreach.

1. Employed Security Services
2. Arete Beaute
3. Ice Hookah Lounge
4. KUBO LB
5. The Waltman Institute
6. Mireya Hernandez (Chiropractor)
7. Philz Coffee
8. Enhanced by Vee
9. Feather and Leaf Acupuncture
10. Floor coverings international of Long Beach
11. Harbor Freight Tools
12. Pop'n Flavors

Marketing and Branding (and Co-Op Marketing)

We increased the frequency of social media posts, events (both virtual and recently in-person), and the many ways to keep the community engaged by promoting all businesses in the district. (Our business profiles; flash events; social media increased presence, Beer Trolley). We found ways through our "12 Days of Bixby" and "Holly Jolly Bixby" to incentivize participation from both the community and business owners to keep momentum, and hope, alive in the district. Our "street sign promotion program" was part of a national "placemaking" effort that gained us attention for our efforts AND was another way to draw the community out to the district, do some spending, and brag about neighborhood pride.

Additional marketing campaigns included: Brewery Knolls Beer Bus, “Think Small” campaign for Small Business Saturday in November, specific/direct marketing and promotion programs such as: Bixby Bear Claw and Bixby Rocks at “Donut Rock” aka Angel Food Donuts. We hosted a ‘Holiday Block Party,” hosted the “Almost St. Patrick’s Day” fundraiser, and have been consistent with new business promotional “teasers” and grand opening celebrations.

Doing “takeovers” of Metal Mondays hosted by the business owner (Dutch’s Brewhouse) and adding our promotional muscle is another way to promote the vibrancy of the district to the community. Same concept with promoting Karaoke Night, Live Music Series, and 2nd Saturdays, all created and hosted by a business owner at their location.

DISTRICT SECURITY

The ongoing top priority is our district-wide safety. CSI Patrol Service works closely with us for events, day and nighttime patrols and responds quickly to a business owners’ need when a situation arises. We meet monthly with LBPd and CSI Patrol Service to discuss any criminal incidents in the neighborhood as well as how and where to best shift our resources to make the most impact for district-wide safety. CSI Patrol Service is one of our greatest assets--a BKBIA member that provides the security patrols from all members. During the holiday season, we have security patrols seven days a week. We have recently changed up the schedule with a number of months having night patrols only and now back to daytime patrols to help address any type of negative activity. Meeting each month with LBPd North Division is critical for keeping the communication doors open to address any safety concern and learning about any particular hot spots or individuals that are negatively affecting the district.

Personnel Changes

No major changes this year other than Tom Underhill stepping in as our Clean Team Captain with the loss of Kevin Evans. Myra Pimentel and Ines Torres remain as Project Manager and Content Manager respectively. Additional contractors such as Kelly Bray, Duke Givens (Care Closet LBC), and Renew Landscape, create an all hands-on deck/all eyes open team to focus on the district.

Future Funding and New Revenue Streams:

On top of juggling our monthly programming, member outreach, clean and safe issues, and project management, we are daily working on the financial future of the BKBIA. As discussed, and promised to the city managers, the BKBIA will pursue many options for revenue streams to help the association. The first major effort was the assessment increase; and we pursue the grant funds; annual fundraisers (“Almost St. Patrick’s Day” and “Breakfast with Bluey”); district boundary expansion; rental revenue from the Expo Arts Center; private donations; potential PBID formation.

Management Services – Food Insecurity Program that we manage for private donors pay us to manage the weekly program.

As a thank you to all of our donors and sponsors, we created the “Wall of Gratitude” at the Expo Arts Center and mail special thank you “kits” in appreciation.

CONCLUSION

The best news over the last year is the continued forward progress of the district—new businesses continue to open or sign leases (services, retail, and eateries). It appears that coffee is the next big thing for Bixby Knolls with three new coffee shops opening. There are new food establishments drawing younger/new crowds, and the bridge funding to help sustain our staffing and operations. And more than ever before, we have more business members networking and collaborating with one another which makes for a stronger overall district.

In the meantime, the BKBIA continues to meet its mission, engage the community, and participate in other projects when asked.

The big question: Is there a big recession on the horizon? If so, we will have to, once again, prepare ourselves for the challenges this will present to the BKBIA and its members.

Staying the course and maintaining the status quo is just fine given the economy and other outside forces. The daily question, and challenge is, what to do next?

Goals

Our goals for 2023-24 are as follows:

- To keep the district clean and safe.
- While we will stay the course and support our membership, our goals are to pursue new revenue streams to make the BKBIA sustainable at the level (or beyond) in which we operated with our redevelopment funds. Efforts include: increase in assessment revenue; event revenue from booking the Expo Arts Center; organize an annual fundraiser for the BKBIA; expansion of our boundaries to the east along San Antonio to the Orange Avenue Corridor, and from San Antonio south to Bixby Road; annual fundraisers; “Community Membership” donation program; PBID formation.
- Continue our project management; manage our “donor” program for food insecurity at LBCC and CSULB; Clean & Safe, landscaping projects; create new events and programs; showcase the diversity of our businesses
- Be highly attentive to our members—directing the membership to all resources and funding while also mentoring and problem-solving.
- Create membership involvement and ensure effective communication with the membership, other community organizations and city entities.
- Pursue donations and grants 501c3 Bixby Knolls Community Foundation to further supplement our revenue as well as continue the progress of our Work Plan projects.
- Focus on safety for the business district and surrounding areas via continued private security patrols and continued partnership with the Long Beach Police Department North Division.
- Continue to connect the local communities (customer base) to the retail and businesses corridors through newsletters and other communications and effective events.
- Ensure that the surrounding communities know about Bixby Knolls' businesses, events and the BKBIA through effective use of existing media from print, social media, networking, and various e-newsletters and publications.
- Through cooperative efforts with the City of Long Beach and BKBIA members, work to retain and strengthen existing businesses and attract new businesses to Bixby Knolls.
- Continue the ongoing analysis to figure out “What’s the next big thing?” for Bixby Knolls. Always be innovative and innovating.
- Improve the Expo Arts Center for more use and increase its programming as a revenue source.
- Continue to engage the landlords and broker community as well as the property owners to help recruit tenants that best serve the Bixby Knolls area.

Budget

Bixby Knolls Business Improvement Association Projected Budget

Revenue

| | | |
|----------------------|-----------|-------------------|
| Assessment | \$ | 452,400.00 |
| Contributions | \$ | - |
| Grant Awards | \$ | - |
| Rental Income | \$ | 98,800.00 |
| Bridge Funds | \$ | 45,000.00 |
| Gross Revenue | \$ | 596,200.00 |

Expenditures

Administration

| | | |
|----------------------------------|----|-----------|
| Accounting & book keeping | \$ | 7,400.00 |
| Tax Return Prep | \$ | 2,800.00 |
| Bank Charges/Interest | \$ | 500.00 |
| Board Meeting Expenses | \$ | 1,500.00 |
| Dues & Subscriptions | \$ | 2,300.00 |
| Employee Meals | \$ | 1,200.00 |
| Petty Cash | \$ | 200.00 |
| Insurance | \$ | 4,790.00 |
| Licenses and Permits | \$ | 1,000.00 |
| Meals & Entertainment/Director | \$ | 300.00 |
| Miscellaneous incidentals | \$ | 500.00 |
| Office Equipment - copier rental | \$ | 1,200.00 |
| Office Maintenance | \$ | 750.00 |
| Office Supplies | \$ | 1,200.00 |
| Outside Services | \$ | 25,000.00 |
| Postage | \$ | 800.00 |
| Telecommunications | \$ | 4,000.00 |

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|-----------------------------|-----------|------------------|
| Total Administration | \$ | 55,440.00 |
|-----------------------------|-----------|------------------|

Salaries/Benefits

| | | |
|--------------------------------|----|------------|
| Executive Director | \$ | 110,000.00 |
| Phone reimbursement - E.D. | \$ | 1,800.00 |
| Project Manager | \$ | 65,000.00 |
| Content Manager | \$ | 50,000.00 |
| Payroll Preparation - ADP | \$ | 1,905.24 |
| Payroll Tax - Employer Contrib | \$ | 14,189.46 |
| Workers Comp Insurance | \$ | 2,538.88 |

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|--------------------------------|-----------|-------------------|
| Total Salaries/Benefits | \$ | 245,433.58 |
|--------------------------------|-----------|-------------------|

EXPO Building

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|---------------------------|--------------|
| Building Janitorial Svc | \$ 9,500.00 |
| Building Supplies | \$ 1,500.00 |
| Commercial Liability | \$ 2,925.00 |
| Equipment | \$ 500.00 |
| Repairs and Maintenance | \$ 4,000.00 |
| Fire Extinguisher Service | \$ 300.00 |
| Utilities/Trash | \$ 19,000.00 |

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| Total EXPO Building expense | \$ 37,725.00 |
|------------------------------------|---------------------|

On-Going Promotions

| | |
|---------------------------------|---------------|
| Banner Installation/Maintenance | \$ 2,400.00 |
| Website Update/Maintenance | \$ 100.00 |
| Annual Meeting | \$ 2,000.00 |
| Bixby Business Breakfast | \$ 3,900.00 |
| Brewery Knolls | \$ 4,200.00 |
| Clean & Safe - Clean Team | \$ 31,200.00 |
| Clean & Safe - Security Patrols | \$ 100,000.00 |
| Clean & Safe - Power Washing | \$ 1,200.00 |
| Clean & Safe: Landscaping | \$ 1,300.00 |
| New Events | \$ 5,000.00 |
| Small Business Saturday | \$ 1,000.00 |

| | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------|
| Total On-Going Promotions | \$ 152,300.00 |
|----------------------------------|----------------------|

Special Programs

| | |
|----------------------------------|--------------|
| 12 Days of Bixby | \$ 1,800.00 |
| Almost St Patrick's Day | \$ 5,000.00 |
| Business Breakfast | \$ 3,800.00 |
| Business Support | \$ 10,000.00 |
| Concerts in the Parking Lot | \$ 7,000.00 |
| Art & enhancement projects | \$ 1,000.00 |
| First Fridays | \$ 60,000.00 |
| Kidical Mass | \$ 3,040.00 |
| Knights of the Round(turn) Table | \$ 2,200.00 |
| Literary Society | \$ 1,500.00 |
| Sponsor Recognition | \$ 500.00 |
| Strollers | \$ 1,200.00 |

| | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------|
| Total Special Programs | \$ 97,040.00 |
|-------------------------------|---------------------|

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|---------------------------|----------------------|
| Total Expenditures | \$ 587,938.58 |
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|--------------------|--------------------|
| Net Revenue | \$ 8,261.42 |
|--------------------|--------------------|

Possible Contributions from Other Sources

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|-------------------|--------------|
| Private donations | \$ 15,000.00 |
| Sponsorships | \$ 15,000.00 |

| | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------|
| Grant Awards | \$ 15,000.00 |
| Bridge Funding Balance | \$ 45,000.00 |
| Total | \$ 90,000.00 |

In 2021 the city council approved \$200,000 "bridge funding to cover our last year of redevelopment funds that were used primarily to support and save out membership during the pandemic shutdowns. Use of funds includes: Outreach to membership, assessment increase notices , fundraising efforts , association boundary expansion, grant writing, potential PBID formation, BKBIA has a balance of \$90,000 and are billing against half (\$45,000) in this upcoming budget