**TO:** Chair and Members  
Economic Development and Planning Committee  

**WARD(S) AFFECTED:** WARDS 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 13, and 15

**COMMITTEE DATE:** April 6, 2010

**SUBJECT/REPORT NO:**  
Commercial Market Assessment Updates for the Concession Street, Downtown Dundas, Ottawa Street, Waterdown and Westdale Village Business Improvement Areas (B.I.A.s) (PED10071)

**SUBMITTED BY:**  
Tim McCabe  
General Manager  
Planning and Economic Development Department

**PREPARED BY:**  
Eileen Maloney 905-546-2632

**SIGNATURE:**

**RECOMMENDATION:**

That the information contained within Report PED10071 respecting the preparation of Commercial Market Assessment Updates for the Concession Street, Downtown Dundas, Ottawa Street, Waterdown and Westdale Village Business Improvement Areas be received and that the said update reports be received for information.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The City, in consultation with the Concession Street, Downtown Dundas, Ottawa Street, Waterdown and Westdale Village Business Improvement Areas, retained Urban Marketing Collaborative to undertake a review of the original Commercial Market Assessments of the above referenced B.I.A.s that were completed in 2003. The
The purpose of the review was to update and revise, as necessary, the recommendations and associated Action Plans.

The Executive Summaries for each of the five (5) Commercial Market Assessment Updates are provided in Appendix ‘A’ to Report PED10071. Some key findings overall include a decrease in vacancy rates as measured in square footage in the B.I.A.s under study, including a rate of almost zero in Dundas and Westdale. The consultant has noted that this is remarkable given the current downturn in the global economy and is a marked contrast to other retail commercial strips in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). While some retailers had indicated that sales in 2009 were down during the key person interviews, they also indicated that 2008 was one of the best years ever. Many other retailers indicated that sales were up.

The consultant also found that the City’s Commercial Property Improvement Grant Program has been very effective towards improving properties and affecting retail sales. Excellent usage of the program has dramatically altered the look and experience of several BIAs, most notably the Ottawa Street B.I.A. One retailer indicated that “since completing the façade improvement program their sales have increased three fold.”

“Alternatives for Consideration – Not Applicable”

**FINANCIAL / STAFFING / LEGAL IMPLICATIONS (for Recommendation(s) only)**

The updated reports may identify some municipal measures such as streetscape improvements. If there are staffing or financial implications related to the implementation, they will be identified through future work programs and budget submissions. There are no immediate financial, staffing or legal implications as a result of the recommendations contained within Report PED10071.

**HISTORICAL BACKGROUND (Chronology of events)**

Commercial Market Assessments were completed in 2003 for five (5) of the City’s B.I.A.s (Concession Street, Downtown Dundas, Ottawa Street, Waterdown and Westdale Village), in 2005 for five (5) additional B.I.A.s (Barton Village, Downtown Hamilton, International Village, Main West Esplanade and Stoney Creek), and in 2008 for the Locke Street B.I.A. A Commercial Market Assessment is currently underway for the Ancaster B.I.A. which was designated in 2008. The King Street West B.I.A. chose not to participate.
The consulting firm of Urban Marketing Collaborative, a division of J. C. Williams Group, was selected by the City of Hamilton to undertake the original assessments. In 2009 they were retained by the City of Hamilton to review and update the first five (5) studies to reflect changes in market conditions and priorities that have occurred since they were prepared in 2002-2003. H.A.B.I.A. and the Concession Street, Downtown Dundas, Ottawa Street, Waterdown and Westdale Village B.I.A.'s were involved in the preparation of the terms of reference for the undertaking and the B.I.A.s worked closely with the consultant during the review.

Appendix ‘A’ to Report PED10071 contains the Executive Summaries for the five (5) Commercial Market Assessment Updates.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable.

RELEVANT CONSULTATION

The consultant organized several stakeholder meetings with representatives from the B.I.A.s and extensive consultation and feedback took place throughout the process to ensure that relevant issues were canvassed. The five (5) B.I.A.s reviewed their respective reports and provided comments relative to the material presented within their Commercial Market Assessment Updates. The consultant also met with relevant staff of the Planning and Economic Development, Public Works and Community Services departments.

ANALYSIS / RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

(include Performance Measurement/Benchmarking Data, if applicable)

Report PED10071 is for information purposes.

ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION:

(include Financial, Staffing, Legal and Policy Implications and pros and cons for each alternative)

Not applicable.
CORPORATE STRATEGIC PLAN  (Linkage to Desired End Results)


Growing Our Economy

• B.I.A. initiatives help retain and attract businesses

Healthy Community

• B.I.A. members are involved in developing and implementing local solutions

APPENDICES / SCHEDULES

Appendix ‘A’ to Report PED10071 – Executive Summaries from the Commercial Market Assessment Updates for the Concession Street, Downtown Dundas, Ottawa Street, Waterdown and Westdale Village Business Improvement Areas

EM:vk
Commercial Market Analysis

Concession Street BIA

February 2010
Executive Summary

The consulting firm Urban Marketing Collaborative (UMC) was retained by the City of Hamilton in 2002/2003 to undertake a commercial market study of five business districts in the City: Concession Street BIA, Westdale Village BIA, Downtown Dundas BIA, Ottawa Street BIA, and Downtown Waterdown BIA. As a benchmarking exercise and to provide future direction to these five BIAs, the City of Hamilton has invited UMC to return to update these commercial market studies. This report addresses issues specific to Concession Street BIA.

Key Evaluation Metrics

The following are key evaluation metrics used to assess the changes for Concession Street BIA. They include both quantitative and qualitative measures.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>2002/2003</th>
<th>2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Retail Mix</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail Merchandise</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convenience Goods</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Service</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacancy</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The largest category is services including both personal (e.g., hair salons, dry cleaners) and professional services (e.g., medical services, lawyers). Since 2002/2003, the proportion of services has increased. The convenience goods category has also increased significantly. New grocery stores, specialty food stores, and pharmacies have affected this change. In addition, there is a noticeable shift away from retail merchandise. While still accounting for 13% of the total square footage, the fact that the retail district is very large (approximately 270,000 sq. ft.) means that the retail merchandise still amounts to over 35,000 sq. ft.

Of note, the vacancy rate has decreased significantly from 2002/2003 to 2009. It now stands at slightly less than 10%. It is important to note that the study was conducted during a severe downturn in the global economy. Also of note, the quality of many of the businesses has improved dramatically. The comparison of previous businesses and 2009 businesses along Concession Street BIA illustrates this fact.
Concession Street BIA members have been one of the top users of the City’s Commercial Property Improvement Grant – CPIG (façade improvement program). A review of the commercial building permits for Concession Street BIA reveal that property owners have continued to invest significant amounts in their properties. The before and after images of the buildings reveal that property owners see value in updating their properties and the business sales and rents are commensurate with the renovations. Clearly, there is a strong return on investment for investing in their properties. Of note, approximately half of the building permit value is for the recent Shoppers Drug Mart.

As the renovations and redevelopment of the hospital along Concession Street continues, there will be opportunities for new businesses and redevelopment of properties as well. This will be an opportune time to improve the overall street conditions (infrastructure, streetscaping, and beautification). The new Official Plan and Zoning By-law establishes the core area of the BIA as a pedestrian predominant street that will help guide its future development.

The BIA has a renewed focus and determination to accomplish tasks. In the recent past, there have been organizational challenges that have pre-occupied some of the longer-term planning initiatives, but this stage is past and they are committed to setting strategic goals and developing the tactics to accomplish them.

**Vision**

Many of the key findings that guided the results of the initial market assessment in 2002/2003 remain true in 2009. The function will be a neighbourhood, main-street shopping district for local and regional residents combined with a specialty regional function focused on health care services, specialty food, and unique goods and services. The vision for Concession Street BIA includes:

- Neighbourhood or family of individually owned and operated businesses and organizations that provide personal value;
- Diversity – businesses, colours, regional visitation, multi-generational.

The overall theme is “Where Neighbours Meet.” It is debatable whether this is still relevant for Concession Street BIA. The BIA will work with these ideas to develop a new theme for the BIA that reflects the stronger identity.
Action Plan Items

A review of the action plan items from 2002/2003 indicated that many have been accomplished. The future direction for the BIA is to:

- Renew committee work by each one setting strategic goals, tactics to accomplish the goals, and reporting structure to the main board meetings;
- Continue excellent communication work and welcoming programs (e.g., brochure, interaction in the businesses, and wine and cheese events);
- Work towards improved partnerships with the hospital;
- Increase redevelopment opportunities through mixed-use developments and possible parking structures;
- Develop design guidelines, physical improvement programs, parking, and safety programs;
- Develop ways to continue façade improvement programs through increased coordination with both the City and the property owners;
- Use marketing messages to showcase the family of businesses on the street, their unique personalities, and the commitment to personal service;
- Continue to work with HABIA and the City on programs that are beneficial to the BIA.
Commercial Market Analysis

Downtown Dundas BIA

February 2010
Executive Summary

The consulting firm Urban Marketing Collaborative (UMC) was retained by the City of Hamilton in 2002/2003 to undertake a commercial market study of five business districts in the City: Downtown Dundas BIA, Concession Street, Westdale Village BIA, Ottawa Street BIA, and Downtown Waterdown BIA. As a benchmarking exercise and to provide future direction to these five BIAs, the City of Hamilton has invited UMC to return to update these commercial market studies. This report addresses issues specific to Downtown Dundas BIA.

Key Evaluation Metrics

The following are key evaluation metrics used to assess the changes for Downtown Dundas BIA. They include both quantitative and qualitative measures.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>2002/2003</th>
<th>2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Retail Mix</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail Merchandise</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convenience Goods</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Service</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacancy</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The retail mix of businesses within Downtown Dundas BIA is in classical proportion. The retail merchandise category is the strongest at 35%. This has been maintained since 2002/2003. This includes excellent apparel and specialty leisure retailers. Vacancy is very low and is virtually non-existent. While the food service category has remained the same, there have been dramatic changes. The number of businesses has increased along with the quality of the operations. The convenience goods category has the most notable change. Downtown Dundas has been strong in specialty food stores and health related stores. This has been enhanced in the recent six years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Time Period</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Value of building permits – commercial (excl. signage)</td>
<td>2001–2009 YTD</td>
<td>$648,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPIG – façade improvement – total investment</td>
<td>2002–2008 YTD</td>
<td>$38,261.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of participating buildings CPIG</td>
<td>2002–2008 YTD</td>
<td>3 buildings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking revenue</td>
<td>2004–2008</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There has been a significant investment in Downtown Dundas BIA through a review of commercial building permits, but this has not been with the assistance of the City CPIG program. Downtown Dundas BIA property owners have not made good use of the program, but the BIA and the City are working on the program to improve this situation. It is important to note that any redevelopments should carefully consider the historical nature of some of the buildings to ensure they are being restored in respect to their heritage.

Vision
The key findings that guided the results of the initial market assessment in 2002/2003 remain true in 2009 but are enhanced. Dundas is still a wonderfully small community that is very active. Despite the higher age profile, the overall attitude of the residents and shoppers is much younger. There is a strong independent nature predicated upon Dundas and Downtown Dundas. They embrace a one-of-a-kind mentality and even though there may be several similar merchants, they all regard themselves as having a unique offering. Terms such as slow-food, buy local, and locavore can all be used to describe the consumer and retailer in Downtown Dundas. There is an overall aim to keep/enhance the independence (despite being part of the City of Hamilton), the youthful energy, and the fierce loyalty associated with both Dundas and the Downtown.

Action Plan Items
A review of the action plan items from 2002/2003 indicated that many have been accomplished. The future direction for the BIA is to:

› Evaluate existing programs and resources and new initiatives and determine when it will be appropriate to increase the BIA budget and staffing to accomplish the goals and objectives;
› Ensure committees are setting strategic goals and tactics to accomplish them;
› Continue excellent communication programs and develop a needs assessment to ensure members are receiving information correctly (e.g., newsletter, email blasts, etc.);
› Expand the BIA boundaries to logical shopping points but not to dilute the overall look and feel of the current area;
› Continue to develop programs to encourage businesses to stay open late and 7 days a week;
› Develop a one page retail recruitment piece selling the benefits of locating a business in Downtown Dundas;
› Develop a series of ideas related to the types of businesses that may locate in key catalyst properties such as the former post office and the current Shoppers Drug Mart building;
› Evaluate loyalty programs and work towards increasing advocacy among the frequent visitors and shoppers;
› Participate in the future City initiative of the Dundas Community Node Secondary Plan process;
› Begin to develop a plan for redeveloping sidewalks and streetscaping;
› In coordination with the City, develop programs to better market the CPIG Façade Improvement Program to members;
› Ensure the existing historical buildings are redeveloped to preserve their historical attributes – revisit the pros and cons of a Historical Conservation District with the City;
› Review whether there is a need for re-evaluation of the design guidelines or if the current guidelines are sufficient;
› Ensure marketing and wayfinding elements include artistic elements;
› Concentrate marketing programs for the local market and use PR for longer distance visitation;
› Develop/review events that may include more arts and food related events (e.g., Slow Food) as well as shopping events that are multi-generation in appeal;
› Continue to work with HABIA and the City on programs that are beneficial to the BIA.
Commercial Market Analysis

Ottawa Street BIA

February 2010
Executive Summary

The consulting firm Urban Marketing Collaborative (UMC) was retained by the City of Hamilton in 2002/2003 to undertake a commercial market study of five business districts in the City: Ottawa Street BIA, Concession Street BIA, Westdale Village BIA, Downtown Dundas BIA, and Downtown Waterdown BIA. As a benchmarking exercise and to provide future direction to these five BIAs, the City of Hamilton has invited UMC to return to update these commercial market studies. This report addresses issues specific to Ottawa Street BIA.

Key Evaluation Metrics

The following are key evaluation metrics used to assess the changes for Ottawa Street BIA. They include both quantitative and qualitative measures.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>2002/2003</th>
<th>2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Retail Mix</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail Merchandise</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convenience Goods</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Service</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacancy</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ottawa Street BIA is still very dominant in retail merchandise and since 2002/2003 that has solidified. Vacancy has decreased by half and during the study program throughout 2009, there was continued movement and shifts in the occupancy of buildings. It is important to note that the study was conducted during a severe downturn in the global economy. Also of note, the quality of the businesses has improved dramatically. They are more professionally run businesses offering quality products.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Time Period</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Value of building permits – commercial (excl. signage)</td>
<td>2001–2009 YTD</td>
<td>$543,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of participating buildings CPIG</td>
<td>2002–2008 YTD</td>
<td>31 buildings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking revenue</td>
<td>2004–2008</td>
<td>17% increase</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ottawa Street BIA members are one of the top users of the City’s façade improvement program. The before and after images of the buildings reveal that property owners see value in updating their properties and the business sales and rents are commensurate with the renovations. Clearly, there is a strong return on investment for investing in their properties.
In addition, there is a marked improvement in the overall cleanliness of Ottawa Street BIA. The investment towards keeping the streets clean is noticeable. Other public realm improvements such as the parkette have transformed a former vacant lot into a place of pride.

The BIA has accomplished many of the goals it set including increased communication and commitment from the members. This very significant achievement has set the BIA up for continued improvements.

**Vision**

In comparison to some of the key findings that guided the results of the initial market assessment in 2002/2003, much remains true in 2009. Most importantly, the home décor niche is a very marketable angle that has helped to move Ottawa Street BIA towards success. This vision should continue to be the guide for the overall BIA and allow it to continue to evolve into a more experiential business district. This includes both consumer goods and services for the local neighbourhood while still drawing from a very broad trade area for unique goods and services that are geared to home décor (e.g., textiles, window treatments, antiques, paint, lighting, mirrors, upholstery, and home furnishings, among others). The regional draw is the primary focus for the businesses along Ottawa Street BIA.

**Action Plan Items**

A review of the action plan items from 2002/2003 indicated that many have been accomplished. The future direction for the BIA is to:

- Continue to work towards buy-in from the members;
- Prepare to increase responsibilities and staffing to move the BIA to the next goal level;
- Evolve the retail strategy away from being very dependent on price sensitivities to include a greater emphasis on experiential aspects (learning, experiential, fun, social, etc.);
- Begin to plan for further redevelopment on the south end of the BIA and select recruitment initiatives for missing businesses;
- Continue to work on transportation issues such as truck routes and improved turning lanes from Barton Street East;
- Develop plans for key catalyst property sites such as the Avon Theatre or the former Amity building;
- Develop marketing programs to move from awareness campaigns to loyalty and advocacy;
- Continue to work with HABIA and the City on programs that are beneficial to the BIA.
Commercial Market Analysis

Downtown Waterdown BIA

February 2010
Executive Summary

The consulting firm Urban Marketing Collaborative (UMC) was retained by the City of Hamilton in 2002/2003 to undertake a commercial market study of five business districts in the City: Downtown Waterdown BIA, Westdale Village BIA, Concession Street BIA, Downtown Dundas BIA, and Ottawa Street BIA. As a benchmarking exercise and to provide future direction to these five BIAs, the City of Hamilton has invited UMC to return to update these commercial market studies. This report addresses issues specific to Downtown Waterdown BIA.

Key Evaluation Metrics

The following are key evaluation metrics used to assess the changes for Downtown Waterdown BIA. They include both quantitative and qualitative measures.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>2002/2003</th>
<th>2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Retail Mix</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail Merchandise</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convenience Goods</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Service</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacancy</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For young families it is appropriate that approximately one-third of the total square footage in Downtown Waterdown is dedicated to convenience based retailing including grocery, specialty food, and health stores. The percent of Downtown that is convenience oriented has stayed relatively consistent. Vacancy had been relatively low and has continued to decrease. There has been a shift from retail merchandise stores to services. While the total square footage of retail merchandise in Downtown Waterdown is lower than expected, it still accounts for over 74,000 sq. ft.

During the project, the Walmart Superstore opened and the power centres to the west of the Downtown were furthering their position in the community. While it was acknowledged in the 2002/2003 report that there was significant sales leakage outside of Waterdown to neighbouring communities such as Burlington, there has been a very large increase in the total amount of retail in a very short time frame that Downtown retailers must adjust to quickly. In addition, it is UMC’s understanding that the new developments were not to include smaller retail formats but they are located there now. The small retail formats are more directly competitive with the Downtown.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Time Period</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Value of building permits – commercial (excl. signage)</td>
<td>2001–2009 YTD</td>
<td>$4,455,171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPIG – façade improvement – total investment</td>
<td>2002–2008 YTD</td>
<td>$64,599</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of participating buildings CPIG</td>
<td>2002–2008 YTD</td>
<td>4 buildings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There has been a significant investment in Downtown Waterdown. Since 2001 there has been approximately $4.5 million invested in retail commercial businesses. However, the Downtown Waterdown property owners have not used the CPIG Façade Improvement Program from the City very well. Only four properties have used the program from 2002 to 2008. The City, along with the BIA, acknowledges this issue and is developing new tactics and programs to address it.

**Vision**

The key findings that guided the results of the initial market assessment in 2002/2003 remain true in 2009, but are enhanced. Waterdown is still a wonderfully small community that is growing into a more complete community/town. Overall, Downtown Waterdown needs to enhance its role as the centre of the local community life. In addition to retail, there needs to be a public square for social gathering, a commitment to keep and enhance education and cultural facilities in the downtown including the library and a community centre, along with entertainment such as a movie theatre. Sports and recreational facilities can be enhanced including trail systems, skating, and other recreational activities (many of which are located in Memorial Park/Exhibition Grounds). The BIA’s role will be focused on family shopping. The goal for the BIA is to be the number one place at satisfying local family needs. There is a realization that local families are very busy and that Downtown Waterdown is the solution, for it provides good quality meals, quality supplies for pets, convenient drug stores and pharmacies, trusted home improvement products, and gifts for loved ones. In addition, it furnishes a break from the daily routine for a night out either at a restaurant or for entertainment (e.g., movie theatre).

The overall downtown vision is based on two ‘experiences.’ This includes an experiential Dundas Street in the historic core that has cafés and restaurants, and home, leisure, garden, and sporting goods stores. Alternatively, Hamilton Street will include more neighbourhood oriented goods and services – larger mass merchants in an attractive and easy to use setting.
There should be a review of vacant and under-utilized sites to develop a plan for creating a cohesive Downtown Waterdown. A more cohesive downtown would include residential and office developments along with mixed-use buildings that are close to the street. In addition, to keep within the Victorian theme of the downtown, the City may determine that enhanced urban design guidelines be required to achieve the vision. In addition, the City may deem it necessary to help protect the historic core by expanding the historic conversation district overlay across the entire old Downtown Waterdown area. These issues may be addressed through the future Secondary Plan for the Waterdown Community Node.

**Action Plan Items**

A review of the action plan items from 2002/2003 indicated that many have been accomplished. The future direction for the BIA is to:

- Increase the budget as per a strategic plan that will be of value to the members;
- Finish the database of members and support businesses and organizations;
- Increase partnership opportunities;
- Increase communication with members through more frequent email blasts;
- Prioritize catalyst sites for redevelopment;
- Develop a one page benefit sheet on why a business should want to locate in Downtown Waterdown and use it as a liaison service with property owners, brokers, and prospective new businesses;
- Give consideration to a proposal to require new businesses to consider Downtown Waterdown first before being allowed to locate elsewhere in Waterdown;
- Continue to work on bypass and transportation alternatives;
- Continue with street beautification programs;
- Ensure new buildings fit in with historic character of the Downtown;
- Develop marketing programs that partner with local charities and family oriented events;
- Use Downtown Waterdown as a stage for others to develop their events with minimal operating assistance from the BIA;
- Develop joint marketing programs such as a multi-business approach to a senior’s day program discount;
- Continue to work with HABIA and the City on programs that are beneficial to the BIA.
Commercial Market Analysis

Westdale Village BIA

February 2010
Executive Summary

The consulting firm Urban Marketing Collaborative (UMC) was retained by the City of Hamilton in 2002/2003 to undertake a commercial market study of five business districts in the City: Westdale Village BIA, Concession Street BIA, Downtown Dundas BIA, Ottawa Street BIA, and Downtown Waterdown BIA. As a benchmarking exercise and to provide future direction to these five BIAs, the City of Hamilton has invited UMC to return to update these commercial market studies. This report addresses issues specific to Westdale Village BIA.

Key Evaluation Metrics

The following are key evaluation metrics used to assess the changes for Westdale Village BIA. They include both quantitative and qualitative measures.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>2002/2003</th>
<th>2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Retail Mix</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail Merchandise</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convenience Goods</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Service</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacancy</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>&lt;1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The most noticeable shifts are the decrease in vacancy to virtually zero and the increase in food service operations from 15% to 19%. There has been a small decrease in the retail merchandise category, which is a slight concern given the overall small amount of total square footage in the BIA (approximately 114,000 sq. ft.). However, the increase in food service is part of a trend affecting many experiential-based business districts. The quality of the food service operations is very good and satisfies the two main target markets – university students and local mid-to-high income residents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Time Period</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Value of building permits – commercial (excl. signage)</td>
<td>2001–2009 YTD</td>
<td>$1,001,690</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of participating buildings CPIG</td>
<td>2002–2008 YTD</td>
<td>20 Buildings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking revenue</td>
<td>2004–2008</td>
<td>34% increase</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There has been a significant investment in Westdale Village BIA from the 2000s to YTD 2009. The property owners have made very good use of the façade improvement program, and from 2001 to 2009 YTD over $1 million has been invested as indicated by the building permit developments for commercial businesses.

In addition, parking revenues have increased by 34% from 2004 to 2008, illustrating that visitors do want to come to Westdale Village BIA to visit and shop.

**Vision**

The key findings that guided the results of the initial market assessment in 2002/2003 remain true in 2009. The smart, schooled, and cultured niche remains the primary marketable appeal for Westdale Village. Overall, the appeal for Westdale is an intellectual meeting place. This has cross-market appeal for students, educators, and local residents. Westdale Village will be thought provoking, interesting, smart, and beautiful. In addition, there is a need to be adaptable and flexible as the target markets change with the seasons. Retailers have to adjust from the students in the fall and spring to local residents and destination visitors in the summer.

What will be required are strict standards on the overall look, feel, and business operations so that Westdale can be the intellectual meeting place with an emphasis on entertainment (movies, cafés, restaurants), but not rowdy or out-of-control. Several recommendations in the Ainslie Wood Westdale Walkability Assessment Report (2008) should be followed.

**Action Plan Items**

A review of the action plan items from 2002/2003 indicated that many have been accomplished. The future direction for the BIA is to:

- Renew committee work by each one setting strategic goals, tactics to accomplish the goals, and reporting structure to the main board meetings;
- Work towards improved partnerships, especially with students and other McMaster organizations;
- Increase communications with members;
- Market the Westdale Village experience to both local and regional target markets that have similar common attributes;
- Make Westdale Village a venue for events and activities that are supported by the BIA but not necessarily run by the BIA;
- Continue improvements on beautification-type programs;
- Develop ways to continue façade improvement programs;
- Continue to work with HABIA and the City on programs that are beneficial to the BIA.