



**Preston Street BIA
BOARD MEETING
AGENDA**

**January 13, 2026, 10:00am
Teams Video Call**

Attendees: Marcus Filoso, Sabrina Mtanos, Joey Frangione, Shauna Bradley, Claudio Lepore, Lauryn Santini, Lindsay Childerhose, Katie Hetherington, Tessa Franklin

Absent: Steve Moffatt, Tony Zacconi, Ariel Troster

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Marcus Filoso at 10:05am.

1.1 Approval of Agenda:

The agenda was approved by Sabrina Mtanos and Lauryn Santini.

1.2 Approval of December Minutes:

The December minutes were approved by Sabrina Mtanos and Claudio Lepore.

2. Executive Director's Report:

2.1 Ottawa Italian Festival – 2026 Dates

The Board discussed the dates for the 2026 Ottawa Italian Festival following updated information from the City regarding the availability of Father's Day weekend.

In August, the Board was advised that Escapade Music Festival intended to hold its event on June 19–21, 2026, and that Father's Day weekend would not be available. Based on that information, June 12–14, 2026 was identified as the alternative option. Escapade has since confirmed that it will return to its original dates on the last weekend in June, making Father's Day weekend available again.

The Board reviewed a letter submitted by FCA Ottawa, outlining their preference to retain the June 12–14 weekend and noting that preliminary commitments have been made for those dates.



Bike Race Ottawa has also indicated a preference for June 12–14 in 2026 due to a one-time scheduling conflict with an event in Gatineau on Father’s Day weekend. However, they confirmed that their long-term preference is to return to a consistent schedule on Father’s Day weekend as part of the Italian Festival.

The Board discussed the importance of establishing a consistent and permanent date for the Festival and agreed that remaining dependent on the scheduling decisions of other City events is not sustainable.

Marcus asked whether the BIA could also secure future dates with the City, noting that Formula One has confirmed May dates for the next ten years and should no longer impact the Festival.

The Board expressed a strong preference for returning the Ottawa Italian Festival to Father’s Day weekend, aligning with the expectations of Preston Street business owners and the Festival’s long-standing tradition.

While acknowledging that a date change for 2026 may create planning challenges for some partners this year, the Board agreed that securing the Festival’s long-term position is best achieved by returning to Father’s Day in 2026.

Motion: That the Board approve the dates of June 19–21, 2026 (Father’s Day Weekend) for the Ottawa Italian Festival.

Moved by: Lauryn Santini

Seconded by: Shauna Bradley

Unanimously accepted.

Action:

- Lindsay is to schedule a meeting with the City to confirm and secure Father’s Day weekend as the Festival date going forward.

2.2 Taste of Little Italy

2.2.1 Event Date

The Board agreed to hold Taste of Little Italy on Tuesday, March 24, as the date does not conflict with March Break or Easter weekend. The Board also agreed to position the event as



winter programming by moving it earlier in the season. In addition, the Board agreed to retain Preston Event Centre as the venue to support ease of planning, maintain consistency for returning attendees, and facilitate continued growth of the event.

2.3 Archway Committee Update

Lindsay updated the Board that she is still waiting to hear back from the City regarding any issues with the three designs. Once feedback is received and a plan is submitted for repairs to the existing archway, the public meeting can be scheduled.

2.4 Overpass Signs

The BIA is planning to install the neon Little Italy signs in 2026. A 50% deposit was paid to Graphix2k last year, with the remaining balance, permit fees, and road closure costs to be paid this year. The engineered stamped drawings requested by MTO are under review. Lindsay has initiated the MTO permit application, after which the sign company will manage the municipal sign permit, road closures, and city permits. A timeline is pending MTO feedback; however, the goal is to install the signs this year.

The Board agreed in 2025 to find a community use for the old Little Italy signs, currently stored at Bayview Yards. An inquiry has been started with the city planners for the 1010 Somerset Community Hub.

2.5 Boundary Expansion

The Board agreed to revise the proposed boundary expansion to include properties between Champagne Avenue and Sherwood Street. Lindsay reviewed the next steps in the boundary expansion process, noting that the BIA is required to host an open house to inform new businesses and provide an opportunity for questions. A virtual open house will be scheduled for March.

Action:

- Lindsay is to schedule an in-person meeting in February to brainstorm ideas for the 2027 budget.
- Lindsay is to plan a virtual open house in March for the businesses included in the boundary expansion.

2.6 2026 Partnerships



In December, the Board discussed a comment reported by a member business regarding Tuesday Club. An initial approach was discussed; however, prior to further action being taken, Board members requested that the matter be revisited at the next Board meeting.

The Board reaffirmed the importance of supporting member businesses. As a next step, Marcus is to meet with the business owners to further discuss the incident and the BIA's approach going forward.

Action:

- Marcus is to meet with Retro Gusto and report back to the Board.

3. Marketing Update:

3.1 Social Media Update

Katie provided a social media update. In December, the BIA achieved over 160,000 views across social media platforms. Katie also outlined plans for a new Instagram reel series launching in January, pairing two local businesses together as a “date” concept to help increase visibility and drive business to local establishments.

4. New Business:

- The Lambretta Club of Ottawa contacted the BIA with hopes to install a classic Italian scooter ice sculpture in Little Italy as part of Winterlude. They have asked about placing the sculpture at Preston Square and would like the BIA's help coordinating logistics. The Board discussed that this could be something to grow in future years for Winterlude.
- Lindsay informed the Board about the Ottawa Bicentennial Street Decor Grant offered by the City. It was proposed that the grant will be used to replace the tapered tri-colour banners currently installed on the street. This would not remove the Little Italy banners. This is not matched funding; it would be fully covered by the City and the banners would remain in place for the year.

5. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:29am.

Action Items

- **Lindsay:** Schedule a meeting with Event Central to secure Italian Festival dates



- **Lindsay:** Schedule an in-person meeting in February to brainstorm ideas for the 2027 budget
- **Lindsay:** Plan a virtual open house in March for the businesses included in the boundary expansion
- **Marcus:** Meet with owners/staff from Retro Gusto