

A photograph of a large, ornate gazebo with a dark roof and decorative railings, situated in a park-like setting with trees and flowers. The gazebo is the central focus of the background image.

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# SPRING GARDEN

## ACTIVITY REPORT

2021/2022

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PREPARED BY

The logo for Spring Garden Area Business Association, featuring a stylized green floral or leaf design above the text.  
**spring garden**  
AREA BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

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## BACKGROUND

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The Spring Garden Area Business Association is the “voice of the Spring Garden area”, representing member businesses to various levels of government and other key stakeholders in the community. They support business success through community partnerships and resources to create a vibrant and dynamic business district.



## MISSION

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To create a vibrant and dynamic business district, the SGABA will: **1. Build effective partnerships with businesses, institutions and property owners to maintain a clean and safe community.** 2. Attract, retain and promote quality businesses and retail segments to support local economy. **3. Promote Spring Garden Road as a renowned destination point with business, retail and commercial mix, offering u unique products, services and events.** 4. Coordinate events and programs designed to promote the Spring Garden Area as the preferred place to shop, work, l learn and live.

## VISION

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Preserve and enhance the essence and experience of the Spring Garden area for members, residents and visitors by supporting business success through community partnerships and resources.



# BOARD OF DIRECTORS

## 2021/2022

**Bill MacAvoy, Chair**

**Nicole Babineau, Vice Chair**

**Frank Yunace, Treasurer**

**Paul Feaver-McGowan**

**Nic Takushi**

**Kelly Chapman**

**Pino Pagnotella**

**Johanna Galipeau**

**Karen Gardiner**

**Ghada Gabour**

Cushman Wakefield Atlantic

Arrivals & Departures Agency

Pete's Fine Foods

Trattoria da Claudio

Charcoal Marketing

The Garden Halifax

Sterling Properties

Sweet Pea Boutique

McInness Cooper Law Firm

Shoppers Drug Mart

# STAFF

**Sue Uteck**

**Kjeld (KJ) Mizpah Conyer-Steede**

**Sandra Butler**

**Scott MacKendrick**

**Lynn McCallum**

**Eric Jonsson**

Executive Director

Policy Advocate & Operations Manager

Business Development and Office  
Manager

Communications & Events Coordinator

Administration Assistant

Program Coordinator, Navigator  
Street Outreach

# ADVOCACY

Advocating on the behalf of the area is at the forefront of the Association's mission

2021 has been an active year for the Association when it comes to advocacy. As the global pandemic has been impacting members for over two years, we have extended our government and stakeholder relations to ensure that the concerns and needs are heard. These initiatives include partnering with the nine business improvement districts within Halifax, to ensure when we advocate that we become allies for all downtowns and mainstreets. Our Executive Director and Policy Advocate have actively been involved with working groups that have advocated to all levels of government. These working groups have proven to be beneficial, and have laid the foundation for our collaborative efforts.

Since the unfortunate death of George Floyd, the world has rallied behind the Black Lives Matter movement and sparked conversations surrounding police brutality and systemic racism within our society. When looking at the Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM), the story of systemic racism is in our backyard. The Business Improvement Districts are creating a model to ensure that we are laying the foundation for our communities to address concerns and build community-centric solutions.

From a planning standpoint, we have adopted a human-centred design approach to the project. Human-Centred Design (HCD) main principle is deep empathy-building with the people you're designing for, generating ideas, and building prototypes we then share what you've made with the folks within your communities and eventually using their ideas as a framework for building inclusive communities within our districts.

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## JOURNEY MAPPING

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Another project undertaken in 2021 looks at the journey mapping of user experiences of the Spring Garden Area. This exercise uses research for the purpose of an inclusive and comprehensive view of how various residents and visitors routinely engage with the area. This project's purpose was to identify the goals of individuals visiting the district and to allow for a better understanding of pain points that are felt. Overall, this project focused on developing data that will help the association create advocacy stances that encourage community growth and improvement. The area is increasing its residential population through buildings conversions from commercial to residential. The near completion of numerous condos within the district, has Spring Garden working toward a 15-minute community.

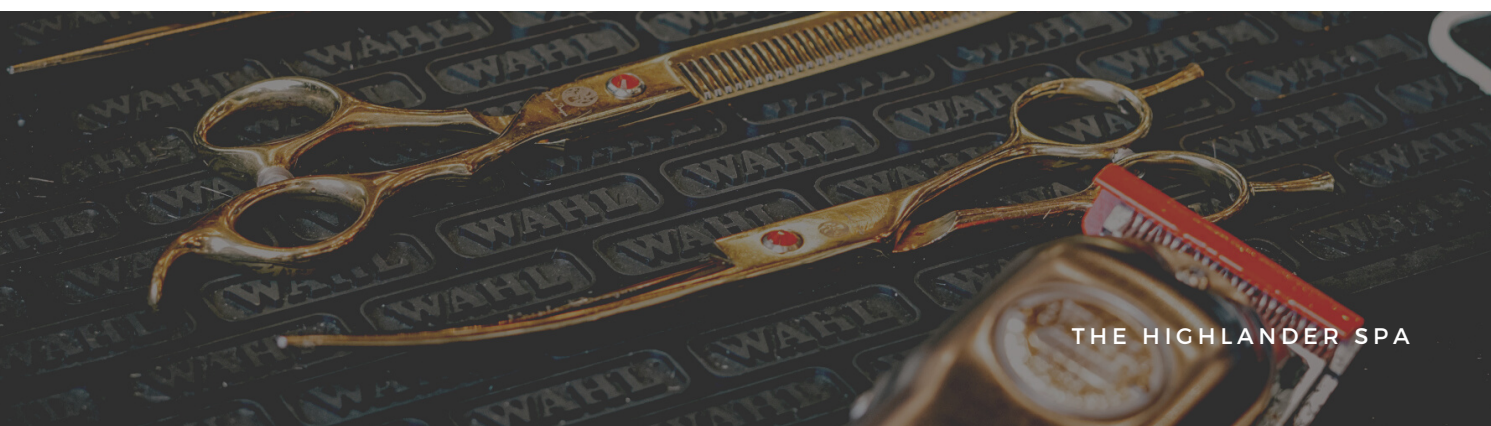
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## GRANTS

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Lastly, the association partnered with Halifax's business improvement districts with funding from the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agencies, to create a digital marketing program that aided in the creation of customizable grants that fit the needs of small businesses. The categories businesses received help in were the following:

- Digital marketing certifications
- Digital marketing courses
- E-commerce website creation
- Management of existing e-commerce websites
- Strategic marketing of e-commerce websites





## MEMBER & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

SGABA exists to serve our members who provide a unique and valuable perspective on Halifax’s business landscape. During the pandemic, the Association increased its efforts to engage with members to better understand how best to meet their needs. Member surveys, face-to-face / virtual meetings, networking events, and information sessions are just some of the tools we will continue to use to engage our members.

The Association is also increasing efforts to forge alliances with the broader Spring Garden community. Working together on areas of common interest will give us a stronger voice to advocate for positive change. The residents and local community have been very receptive and we will make every effort to strengthen that in the year ahead.



**7TH Annual Children's Festival**

# MEDIA

Providing a multimedia strategy to our member businesses

Our media partners during the height of the pandemics were pertinent in assisting us and our member businesses. Through 96.5 FM sponsorship, we created clear, consistent messaging in alignment with Public Health and The Province of Nova Scotia. Our messaging encouraged supporting local businesses while adhering to the new COVID-19 safety protocols.

For our print advertisement needs, we use Curated Magazine, The Coast, and Halifax Magazine for the promotion of "Shop Local Campaign". The campaign was designed to highlight local businesses in the Spring Garden while focusing on businesses' new offerings to the public such as curbside pick, next day delivery, new online stores.

To help increase the range of our voice and amplify our message for businesses, we partnered with local social media juggernauts, Halifax Noise, and Discover Halifax on Instagram and intend to continue this relationship. Billboards will be booked to promote Spring Garden during the Holiday season. With a full-year plan in place, we will continue to grow our current relationships with media partners and provide our members with beneficial cooperative opportunities for advertising.

Our social media channels continued to promote members' sales and announcements, as well as the Association's events and community updates. We see growth in our connections through social media. While we have continued to build upon our new marketing campaign "Faces of Spring Garden" we have broadened our approach online to aid in creating social media assets for businesses including interchangeable banner posts, business highlight reels, and stock photos.

Our social media channels numbers as of March 31, 2022, our Instagram has 2,700 followers and our Facebook page has over 1,900 followers, and our Twitter page has almost 13,400 followers.



**2.7 K**



**13.4 K**



**1.9 K**



## CONTESTS

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To further support businesses coming out of COVID-19 we created several giveaway campaigns to highlight local businesses. Giveaways are created as bundles or prize packs for recognized dates and special events.



## WEBINARS

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As businesses changed and adapted to the new consumer environment. We curated weekly lists of webinars available to our membered businesses. These webinars were sent to our members via our electronic mailing list.

## NEWSLETTER

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Over the course of the year, there were times when we could not deliver the physical Newsletter to our members as we were adhering to the COVID guidelines and restrictions. We did, however, always produce a monthly newsletter which was released online through our mailing list. We are now back to hand-delivering our newsletter to businesses.



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## PARTNERSHIPS

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The recovery of COVID-19 finally allowed The Province of Nova Scotia to ease restrictions and bring back community events and partnerships. While COVID-19 still presented some obstacles for events, we saw many of our previous community events return. Spring Garden was pleased to support local fan favourite events such as Halifax Burger Week, Open City, The Evergreen Festival, and much more. Spring Garden also received the opportunity to form new partnerships at events like The Patio Lantern Festival, Halifax Jerusalema Dance Month, and Tea Time in the Gardens. While we are unable to financially sponsor all events, we promote them through social media channels, our monthly newsletter, radio ads and on our website's event calendar.

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## SPONSORSHIPS

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We continue to sponsor landmark community events such as the Chronicle Herald Parade of Lights, FIN Atlantic Film Festival, and SWITCH Halifax. We have entered into new partnerships with Halifax – Dartmouth Natal Day Celebration, Off the Eaten Path presented by Lumi Studios, and Around the World in 80 Plates. Participating in these events is of great benefit to our members and the surrounding community. We plan to continue these partnerships in the coming years. As for our non-financial sponsors, we continue to show our support by providing them with physical infrastructure, access to our newsletter, or promotion on our social media channels. We plan to continue the support of our current sponsorship and look to other events we can support in 2022.



# EVENTS

Engaging Community and Businesses

COVID-19 had a significant impact on our event calendar like many other organizations this year. Due to the ever-changing landscape of COVID-19 restrictions and guidelines we were not able to hold the following events: The Annual Children's Festival, Spring Garden Harvest Festival, and Clean Sweep. We were however able to modify or COVID proof several of our flagship events such as Yoga in the Park, Shopping Under the Stars, and International Women's Week.

## YOGA IN THE PARK

Since its inception in 2017, Yoga in the Park has been a massive success in the Spring Garden area. In 2021, we continued our weekly classes with additional COVID protocols in place. We were required to limit our number of participants, offer pre-registration, and participants had to bring their own yoga mats.

Shanti Yoga is back to host the sessions in Victoria Park this year, holding classes every Thursday from 12:05-12:55, in July, August, and September. This event is free for the public and helps us stay connected to the community.



YOGA IN THE PARK



SHOPPING UNDER THE STARS



INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S WEEK

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## SHOPPING UNDER THE STARS

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Shopping Under the Stars (SUTS) is Spring Garden's way of kicking off the holiday season. For two nights of holiday fun, the SGABA coordinates carolers, contests, hot chocolate, and an appearance by Santa Claus.

This year was our first year back on the streets since COVID-19. Everyone was delighted to be back in-person shopping and enjoy the vibrant street life. In addition to our marketing campaign, we brought back our carolers, handed out free hot chocolate, and even had a visit from Santa himself.

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## INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S WEEK

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We reinvigorated a past event called Women Rock Spring Garden for our new event International Women's Week. The event last year consisted of a week of events including breakfasts, free yoga sessions, a historic walk through the Public Gardens, live musical performances, and much more.

This year due to COVID we weren't able to host physical events. However, that didn't stop us. Moving the event online, we highlighted on social media women entrepreneurs in our area and designed an interactive map of female-owned businesses. These women shared their stories of how they started their business, the positive impact they've made in the community and the exciting new ventures they have coming this year.



# SPRING GARDEN STREETSCAPE

Building Businesses and Community

## WE'RE DIGGIN SPRING GARDEN

We're Diggin Spring Garden! The Spring Garden Area Business Association and Burke and Burke created the tagline We're Diggin Spring Garden for the Spring Garden Road Streetscaping Project which launched in June 2021. Our goal was to create a unique experience and easy navigation throughout the construction process. We designed and created "The Spring Garden Construction Tool Kit" booklet. These booklets were created for the Spring Garden businesses to provide an overview of the construction process, help in developing planning strategies for construction work, and post-construction ideas to celebrate the completed work.

We achieved this by working with various entities working within HRM to ensure we had the most up-to-date information on transit routes, construction orders, and designated delivery zones. We developed a new mailing list for both businesses and the community to share this vital information.



## MARKETING EFFORTS

The Spring Garden Area Business Association and marketing agency Burke and Burke were working in tandem to create a unique experience and robust marketing campaign for the businesses and community of Spring Garden. Landing us with "We're Diggin Spring Garden"!

The We're Diggin Spring Garden Campaign was launched on June 7 as Brycon broke ground on Spring Garden Road. The campaign consists of a new landing page DigSpringGarden.com and a new social media account DigSpringGarden. We worked with Burke and Burke on the DigSpringGarden.com page to act as a vessel of information for all questions on the streetscaping project. We created pages for Q and A's, route maps for designated drop-off and loading areas, as well as an added place to promote businesses' specials/promotions.

For social media, we used the new DigSpringGarden Instagram account to further promote business specials, showcase business profiles through our Faces of Spring Garden Campaign, and offer progress updates on the construction project. We also reinvigorated our mini VW Bus parking campaign. Keeping with the We're Diggin Spring Garden campaign we create three new promotional videos. Our new campaign has three scripts, the first was a welcome back video for all the Spring Garden Businesses from provincial lockdowns. The video welcomed back the businesses to the street and encouraged the public to shop or dine in-store. Followed by a fun creative take on the 1980s hit movie Back to the Future, we showcased the evolution of Spring Garden Road. Our third video featured a throwback to another '80s hit a Safety Dance parody promoting the parkades and parking in the area.

In addition to our online presence, we installed hoarding along the fences on Spring Garden Road and at The Mills construction site. There was also wayfinding signage created for businesses on the sidestreets of Spring Garden. This signage was placed at the beginning of the sidestreets when walking down Spring Garden Road.



GOOD  
VIBES  
AHEAD

DigSpringGarden.com

SHOP MEET  
EAT DRINK  
EXPERIENCE  
ENJOY LIVE

GOOD  
VIBES  
AHEAD

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## CLEANLINESS

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We are committed to ensuring that the Spring Garden area is a clean and friendly place for visitors, residents, and employees. Throughout the year, we encourage members to clean the areas surrounding their businesses. Association staff also monitor the area to make sure any damaged infrastructure or dangerous situations are reported and taken care of in a timely manner.

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## FLOWER PLANTERS

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Beginning in early June, and continuing through the summer months, the Association staff will plant and maintain the flower beds in the area. We currently own 29 planters that bring colour and beauty to our sidewalks. We are continuing our contract with Blooming Gardener to plant and maintain the flower beds.

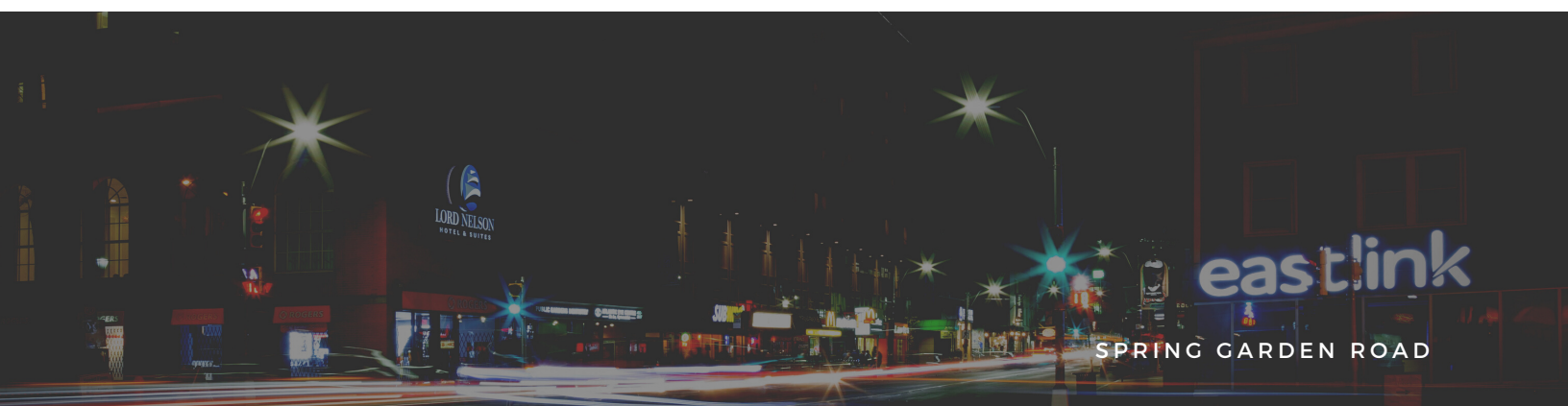
With the success of the summer planters, we have since extended the planter to suit the festive winter holidays. Creating a year-round vibrancy of beautiful planters.

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## GRAFFITI ABATEMENT

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We provide our members a cost sharing program for the removal of graffiti. Members who notice graffiti on their buildings are encouraged to contact the Association as soon as possible for a quote to have it removed. Working with Atlantic Graffiti Removal Company, the Association staff also survey the area and contact members who have a significant amount of noticeable graffiti on their property.



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## HOLIDAY DECORATIONS

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Over the holiday season, we purchased new seasonal lighting fixtures for along Spring Garden Road and distributed the older lighting fixtures to the side streets. To further encourage the holiday spirit on the street, we lend out our decorations and lights to businesses for the season.

## NAVIGATOR STREET OUTREACH PROGRAM

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The SGABA, in partnership with the Downtown Halifax Business Commission, oversees the Navigator Street Outreach Program. Eric Jonsson, The Program Coordinator, Navigator Street Outreach Program, works with street involved individuals to provide them with assistance and help connect them to available services.

## SAFETY

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Ensuring the safety of the Spring Garden area is of utmost importance to the Association. We continue to have a great relationship with the Halifax Regional Police and our Community Response Officer, Constable James Bennett. We regularly liaise with Constable Bennett to remain updated on any major safety concerns.

