

PROMOTIONS REPORT



Advertising Program

Throughout the year, the DDB places advertisements in local print media including the Elgin County Visitors Guide. This fund also covers the cost of social media advertising and pays for the website domains owned by the DDB. The 2024 budget allows \$4,000 to cover these costs.

The Downtown VIBE

In August 2020 we launched a new monthly printed publication called the Downtown VIBE. The VIBE interviews and highlights our many unique Downtown businesses, brings awareness to our historical and cultural features and introduces the many exciting events happening in our Downtown. Checkout The VIBE Facebook page at www.Facebook.com/TheDowntownVibe or read all VIBE issues online at <https://issuu.com/stthomasddb>. The 2024 budget allows \$7,500 to cover the Downtown VIBE printing and distribution costs.



Radio Advertising

The DDB has worked hard to promote our downtown businesses and events using radio advertisements. Through MYFM 94.1, we implemented a program where we are on the radio on a consistent schedule. The 2024 budget allows \$10,000 to cover Radio advertising.

Joe Thornton Centre and Social Media

A DDB donation of \$150,000, paid off in 2015, allows the DDB to maintain a graphic display wall along with a slideshow presentation on a television screen to display Downtown scenes, activities, events and to promote the businesses in Downtown St Thomas.

In 2023, as a test program, we expanded our social media budget which resulted in a much needed expansion of our online presence. In December 2023 the DDB launched an expansion of our social media posts, bringing our 2024 budget to \$6,500 for Website, Joe Thornton Centre programming updates and Social Media expenditures.

Home Show

The DDB participated in the 2023 St Thomas Home Builders Home Show. We have signed up to participate in the April 12-14, 2024 Home Show, but we need your help to setup and remove the display as well as work in the booth. The 2024 budget allows \$2,000 for this event.



Welcome to Downtown St Thomas

The DDB continued a program to recognize and welcome the many new businesses that choose to locate in downtown St Thomas. A flower arrangement and a Downtown Dollars window sticker are delivered to each new business. Thanks to Sarah Van Pelt, our Membership booklet was completely revised in 2023, to better explain the DDB events and services provided by our DDB. The 2024 budget allows \$1,000 for this program.

Easter Shop Hop

After a 3 year hiatus due to Covid, the Easter Shop Hop event was held on Saturday April 8, 2023 bringing smiles and chocolate Easter Eggs to downtown shoppers. The 2024 budget allows \$500 for sponsorship of this event which is scheduled for Saturday March 31, 2024 from 11am - 1pm.



Nostalgia Nights Car Show and Free Train Rides www.nostalgianights.ca

The 9th annual Nostalgia Car Show, held on Saturday July 15, 2023 from 4pm - 9pm, was relocated to east Talbot Street due to the Talbot Street construction project. Morning rain clouds caused many car owners to stay home. However, the skies cleared in the afternoon bringing a decent crowd to our Downtown to view some amazing classic cars, enjoy some great food, hear some toe tapping music and to participate in the Free train rides. The July 13, 2024 event budget allows \$6,000 for the event.



Oktoberfest www.downtownoktoberfest.ca

The DDB developed a new event in 2024 to celebrate the reopening of Talbot Street. On Saturday October 14th Downtown St Thomas welcomed an Oom-Pah-Pah band to the big tent and beer garden. Visitors enjoyed Free train rides, a crafters and artisans alley and 200 pumpkins were decorated and given away. Many thanks to the committee for making this new event a huge success. The 2024 budget allows \$15,000 for the 2nd annual event on Saturday September 21, 2024 from 1pm - 8pm..



Downtown Pumpkin Prowl www.downtownpumpkinprowl.ca

The 6th annual Downtown Pumpkin Prowl, held on Friday October 27th, was a tremendous success this year, seeing thousand's of eager children and parents visit over 80 participating Downtown businesses to collect a few tasty treats. The 2024 budget allows \$500 for sponsorship of this event. The 2024 event is scheduled for Friday October 25th from 5pm - 8pm.



Tree Lighting Celebration

The DDB held our largest ever recorded annual Christmas Tree Lighting Celebration on Friday November 17th with over 1000 smiling faces in attendance. At 5:45pm, Santa arrived on a St Thomas Fire Truck and lit the tree at 6:00pm. Visitors were treated to Hot Chocolate and cookies, listened to Christmas tunes and over 200 children were able to meet with Santa. Since 2016 we have hired a professional lighting company to install an enhanced package of tree lights. The 2024 budget allows \$4,500 for the sponsorship of the upcoming event on November 22, 2024 and \$200 for City Hall washroom security.



Light Up Talbot www.lightuptalbot.ca

The DDB added yet another new event in 2024 to coincide with the ever popular Tree Lighting Celebration on November 17th. Over 48 Downtown businesses participated in the passport program by either staying open through the night or lighting their windows with festive displays. Visitors enjoyed hot drinks and treats at 4 warming stations from John Street to Elgin Street, choirs, popup crafters, flash mobs and even a horse and wagon ride. Many thanks to Suzanne Faris and committee for developing this new event. The 2024 budget includes \$5,000 for the November 22, 2024 event.



Optimist Santa Claus Parade

The DDB did not participate in the 2023 Optimist Santa Claus Parade since the Optimists were unable to secure a premiere band. However, the 2024 budget allows \$1,000 for sponsorship of the November 23, 2024 parade which passes through Downtown St Thomas bringing thousands of visitors to our business core.



Black Friday

The Black Friday event was not held in 2023 however, the 2024 budget allows \$500 of funding in the Other Community Event to sponsor this event. With participation from our Downtown businesses, the 2024 event is scheduled for Friday November 29th.

Downtown Santa

For the 8th year, Santa returned to Downtown St Thomas on Saturday December 2nd from 11am - 2:30pm to greet Christmas shoppers and collect Christmas wish lists. We used \$1,500 Downtown Dollars to surprise Downtown shoppers by paying for their purchases. As Santa headed back to the North Pole, he promised to return next year. Thanks to Dave Thomson, Annette Sbarra and Grayden Laing for making this a successful event. The 2024 budget allows \$1,600 cover the expenses for this event which is scheduled for Saturday December 7, 2024.



Bridges to Better Business

As a sponsor of the Bridges to Better Business, the DDB has the honour of presenting the Downtown Small Business Award. The 2023 Downtown Small Business Award winner was Dave Thomson of MYFM St Thomas. As Promotions Chair, Dave handles our radio ads, doubles as an Easter Bunny and brings smiles to the faces of shoppers at Downtown Santa. Dave is a true advocate for Downtown St Thomas. The 2023 budget allows \$5,000 to cover Community Events and Sponsorship with \$1,000 specifically earmarked to cover this Bridges to Better Business Sponsorship.



MYFM Spirit Awards

The DDB is honoured to have been awarded not 1, but 2 myFM Spirit Awards in 2023 - both for our Nostalgia Nights Car Show. We won the Favourite Local Event and the Favourite 55+ Event / Activity Awards.



Downtown Dollars Program

In 2023 we donated Downtown Dollars to different promotions such as the Scavenger Hunt, the Home Show, Nostalgia Nights Car Show, Pumpkin Prowl, Oktoberfest, Tree Lighting and Light Up Talbot. To make it easier for the Downtown Dollar recipients to find participating businesses that accept Downtown Dollars, we have created a special page on our Downtown St Thomas webpage - visit www.downtownstthomasdirectory.ca. Please make sure your business participates in the Downtown Dollar program. If not, please contact us for more information.

Downtown Dollar Promotion

As a follow up to the very successful Downtown Dollar promotions in 2021 and 2022, we once again launched a discounted Downtown Dollar program in 2023, to encourage residents to #ShopLocal. \$15,000 was allocated from the Reserve Fund, to allow for the sale of up to \$100,000 in Downtown Dollars at a 15% discount. Sales began on November 20th with an end date of December 20th. Even more reason to make sure your business participates in the Downtown Dollar program.



Horton Market

For the 3rd year, the DDB sponsored Serge Lavoie in his efforts to raise funds for the St Thomas Food Bank during the Christmas Horton Market. The sale of local chestnuts being roasted over a wood charcoal BBQ raised \$300.00 and enhanced the shopping experience for market shoppers.

Also, the DDB provided The Horton Market with a \$5,000 sponsorship donation to support the colourful painting by Grayden Laing, of Downtown St Thomas in the rear entrance foyer of the market building.



Downtown Jingle

In the spring of 2015, the DDB launched a Downtown Jingle advertising plan to highlight and promote our downtown. The main jingle is 30 seconds in length but with many options to allow a sing in, sing out or just a musical score. Using the theme "Love Where You Shop" as the tag line we have continued to use this theme in all signage and print material.

DDB Coach

Unveiled at our July 12, 2014 Nostalgia Nights Car Show, our DDB Coach became a major investment in our downtown St Thomas advertising plan. With the help of St Thomas Tourism, who designed the vinyl wrap graphics, and in cooperation of the ECRM who supplied their 70' 120 passenger Quebec Coach, the DDB Coach has been the showpiece over the past 9 years at Nostalgia Nights and our first annual Oktoberfest. In 2024, we will purchase the DDB Coach to preserve this significant historical piece of railway history.



Discover Downtown St Thomas Sign

In 2016, after 25 years of service, the DDB replaced the "Discover St Thomas" sign at the intersection of Talbot Street, Sunset Drive and Wellington Road with a new "Love Where You Shop - In Historic Downtown St Thomas" sign. Due to ongoing deterioration of this structure, in 2024 we plan to perform a physical upgrade and replace the advertising content.

