

November 1, 2022

C-12

HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
City of Long Beach
California

RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt a Resolution approving the Annual Report for October 1, 2022 to September 30, 2023, for the Bixby Knolls Parking and Business Improvement Area, declaring its intention to levy the annual assessment, and setting the date of hearing for November 15, 2022. (Districts 7, 8)

DISCUSSION

The Bixby Knolls Parking and Business Improvement Area (BKPPIA) was established by the City Council in 1989, allowing for the levy of an annual business license assessment to be paid by businesses located in the BKPPIA. The City of Long Beach (City) contracts with the Bixby Knolls Business Improvement Association (BKPIA) to manage the BKPPIA and the BKPIA Board of Directors serves as the Advisory Board to the City Council on matters related to the BKPPIA. The BKPIA promotes and markets the BKPPIA using funds generated through the BKPPIA business license assessment.

State law governing Parking and Business Improvement Areas requires that an annual report be submitted to the City Council by the Advisory Board designated for this Assessment District. On October 4, 2022, the BKPPIA Advisory Board voted to recommend to the City Council approval of the 2022-2023 BKPPIA Annual Report (Annual Report) (Exhibit A to the Resolution), which describes boundaries, proposed activities, and budgetary information, as well as the method and basis for continuation of the assessment. The Annual Report proposes no change to the BKPPIA boundaries. The Annual Report proposes a \$205.75 increase in the base rate for businesses and a \$55.45 increase for nonprofit organizations.

The Annual Report, transmitting the recommendations of the Advisory Board, proposes the following assessment rates.

Method of Assessment

The current annual base assessment for businesses is \$314.25 and \$204.55 for nonprofits. The BKPIA Advisory Board proposes an increase to the base assessment fee as there has not been a significant increase in seven years. The fee shall be comparable to other PBIAs and reflect the level of service and value offered by the BKPIA to its membership.

The BKPIA Advisory Board is not requesting a Consumer Price Index (CPI) adjustment for Fiscal Year 2023 (FY 23). After conducting a cost-benefit analysis of the services they offer to their membership and the cost to provide them, they realized a larger increase was necessary to maintain the current level services. Since the BKPIA lost \$200,000 in annual revenue from

the Redevelopment Agency, they have only implemented one significant assessment increase seven years ago. Their analysis included a comparison of several Business Improvement Districts (BID) in Long Beach and arrived at a midpoint assessment amount. In early 2022, BKBIA consulted City staff managing the BID program for guidance and support. The result of this process was a recommendation to increase the current annual base assessment to \$520 for businesses and to \$260 for nonprofits. The BKBIA notified members of the BKPBA of the proposed increase and held public meetings. BKPBA membership supports the increase and has not expressed opposition.

FY	Business Base Rate	Total Rate	Nonprofit Base Rate	Total Rate
22	\$314.25	\$314.25	\$204.55	\$204.55
23	Increase \$205.75	\$520.00	Increase \$55.45	\$260.00

Each year, the City calculates the Consumer Price Index (CPI), an adjustment for consumer goods and services, and applies the CPI to various City fees on July 1st of each year. Parking and Business Improvement Area Advisory Boards may request a CPI adjustment for business license assessments. The BKPBA Advisory Board has decided not to request a July 2023 CPI adjustment.

The recommended Resolution grants approval of the Annual Report, declares the intention of the City Council to levy the assessment for proposed activities, and sets the date of the public hearing for November 15, 2022.

This matter was reviewed by Deputy City Attorney Marsha Yasuda on October 13, 2022 and by Budget Operations and Development Officer Rhutu Amin Gharib on October 7, 2022.

TIMING CONSIDERATIONS

City Council action is requested on November 1, 2022, to set the date of the public hearing for November 15, 2022. The new contract year began on October 1, 2022.

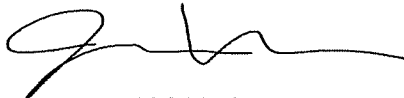
FISCAL IMPACT

It is estimated that the BKPBA will generate \$319,200 with the increased base rate in FY 23 through the proposed continuation of the assessment. This amount is \$115,200 over FY 22. Assessment funds are collected by the City on behalf of the BKBIA through additional fees and passed directly through to the BKBIA for implementation of annual programs. This recommendation has no staffing impact beyond the normal budgeted scope of duties and is consistent with existing City Council priorities. There is no local job impact associated with this recommendation.

SUGGESTED ACTION:

Approve recommendation.

Respectfully submitted,



JOHNNY VALLEJO
ACTING DIRECTOR
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

APPROVED:



THOMAS B. MODICA
CITY MANAGER

ATTACHMENT: RESOLUTION

RESOLUTION NO.

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE
CITY OF LONG BEACH APPROVING THE ANNUAL
ASSESSMENT REPORT FOR OCTOBER 1, 2022 TO
SEPTEMBER 30, 2023, FOR THE BIXBY KNOLLS
PARKING AND BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT AREA; AND
DECLARING ITS INTENTION TO LEVY THE ANNUAL
ASSESSMENT FOR THAT FISCAL YEAR

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 36533 of the California Streets and
Highways Code, the Bixby Knolls Business Improvement Association has caused a Report
to be prepared for October 1, 2022 to September 30, 2023, relating to the Bixby Knolls
Parking and Business Improvement Area ("PBIA") which is located generally in that section
of the City of Long Beach bounded by Wardlow Road, Long Beach Boulevard, Del Amo
Boulevard and Orange Avenue and as more specifically described in the Report; and

WHEREAS, said Report contains, among other things, with respect to
October 1, 2022 to September 30, 2023, all matters required to be included by the above
cited Section 36533; and

WHEREAS, having approved such Report, the City Council hereby declares
its intention to:

A. Modify assessments and confirm levy of and direct collecting
assessments for the Bixby Knolls PBIA for October 1, 2022 to September 30, 2023. Said
assessments are proposed to be levied on such classifications and at such rates as are
set forth in Exhibit "A" attached hereto and incorporated herein. These assessments are
not proposed to be levied on owners of commercial or residential property;

B. Provide that each business shall pay the assessment annually, at the
same time the business license is due. This is the same collection procedure which

1 occurred in the previous fiscal year; and

2 WHEREAS, to this end, the proposed activities and improvements
3 undertaken by the Area include those generally specified in the establishing Ordinance No.
4 C-6646, Section 5, as adopted by the City Council on September 19, 1989; and

5 WHEREAS, a copy of the Report is on file with the City Clerk and includes a
6 full description of the activities and improvements to be provided from October 1, 2022 to
7 September 30, 2023, the boundaries of the area, and the proposed assessments to be
8 levied on the businesses that fiscal year and all other information required by law; and

9 WHEREAS, it is the desire of this City Council to fix a time and place for a
10 public hearing to be held regarding the Report, the levy and the proposed program for
11 October 1, 2022 to September 30, 2023;

12 NOW THEREFORE, the City Council of the City of Long Beach resolves as
13 follows:

14 Section 1. That certain Report entitled "2022-2023 Annual Report Bixby
15 Knolls Parking and Business Improvement Area" as filed with the City Clerk is hereby
16 approved.

17 Section 2. On November 15, 2022, at 5:00 p.m., in the Civic Chamber,
18 City Hall, 411 West Ocean Boulevard, Long Beach, California 90802, the City Council of
19 the City of Long Beach will conduct a public hearing on the levy of proposed assessments
20 for October 1, 2022 to September 30, 2023 for the Bixby Knolls PBIA. All concerned
21 persons are invited to attend and be heard, and oral or written protests may be made, in
22 accordance with the following procedures:

23 A. At the public hearing, the City Council shall hear and consider
24 all protests. A protest may be made orally or in writing by any interested
25 person. Any protest pertaining to the regularity or sufficiency of the
26 proceedings shall be in writing and shall clearly set forth the irregularity or
27 defect to which the objection is made.

28 B. Every written protest shall be filed with the City Clerk at or

1 before the time fixed for the public hearing. The City Council may waive any
2 irregularity in the form or content of any written protest and at the public
3 hearing may correct minor defects in the proceedings. A written protest may
4 be withdrawn in writing at any time before the conclusion of the public
5 hearing.

6 C. Each written protest shall contain a description of the business
7 in which the person subscribing the protest is interested sufficient to identify
8 the business and, if a person subscribing is not shown on the official records
9 of the City as the owner of the business, the protest shall contain or be
10 accompanied by written evidence that the person subscribing is the owner of
11 the business. A written protest which does not comply with this section shall
12 not be counted in determining a majority protest.

13 Section 3. The City Clerk shall give notice of the public hearing called for
14 in Section 2 by causing this Resolution of Intention to be published once in a newspaper
15 of general circulation in the City not less than seven (7) days before the public hearing.

16 Section 4. This resolution shall take effect immediately upon its adoption
17 by the City Council, and the City Clerk shall certify the vote adopting this resolution.

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I hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was adopted by the City Council
of the City of Long Beach at its meeting of _____, 2022, by the
following vote:

Ayes: Councilmembers: _____

Noes: Councilmembers: _____

Absent: Councilmembers: _____

Recusal(s): Councilmembers: _____

City Clerk

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EXHIBIT "A"



2022-2023 Annual Report Bixby Knolls Parking and Business Improvement Area

SUBMITTED BY BIXBY KNOLLS BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT
ASSOCIATION

SEPTEMBER 21, 2022

Table of Contents

DISTRICT OVERVIEW	3
District Background	3
Bixby Knolls Parking and Business Improvement Area Boundary Map.....	4
Proposed Changes.....	5
District Advisory Board	6
District Personnel	6
METHOD OF ASSESSMENT	7
Consumer Price Index Adjustments.....	7
Budget.....	8
Contributions from Other Sources	10
BIXBY KNOLLS BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION PROGRAM.....	21
2021 – 2022 Program and Year in Review	21
Ongoing Monthly Events and Programs.....	14
Member Outreach	13
Business Retention/Business Recruitment.....	15
Marketing and Branding.....	14
Personnel Changes	15
Goals	16

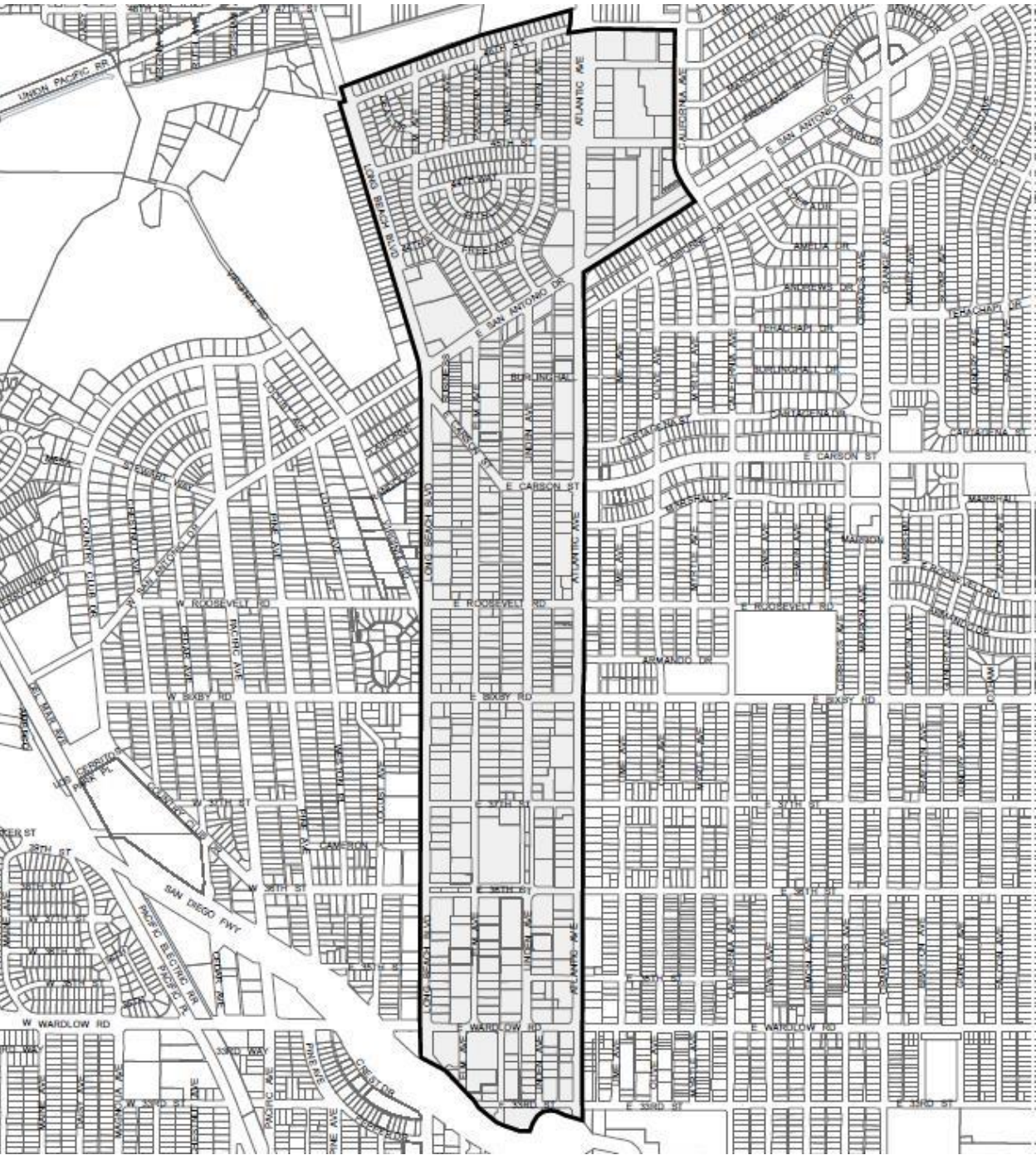
DISTRICT OVERVIEW

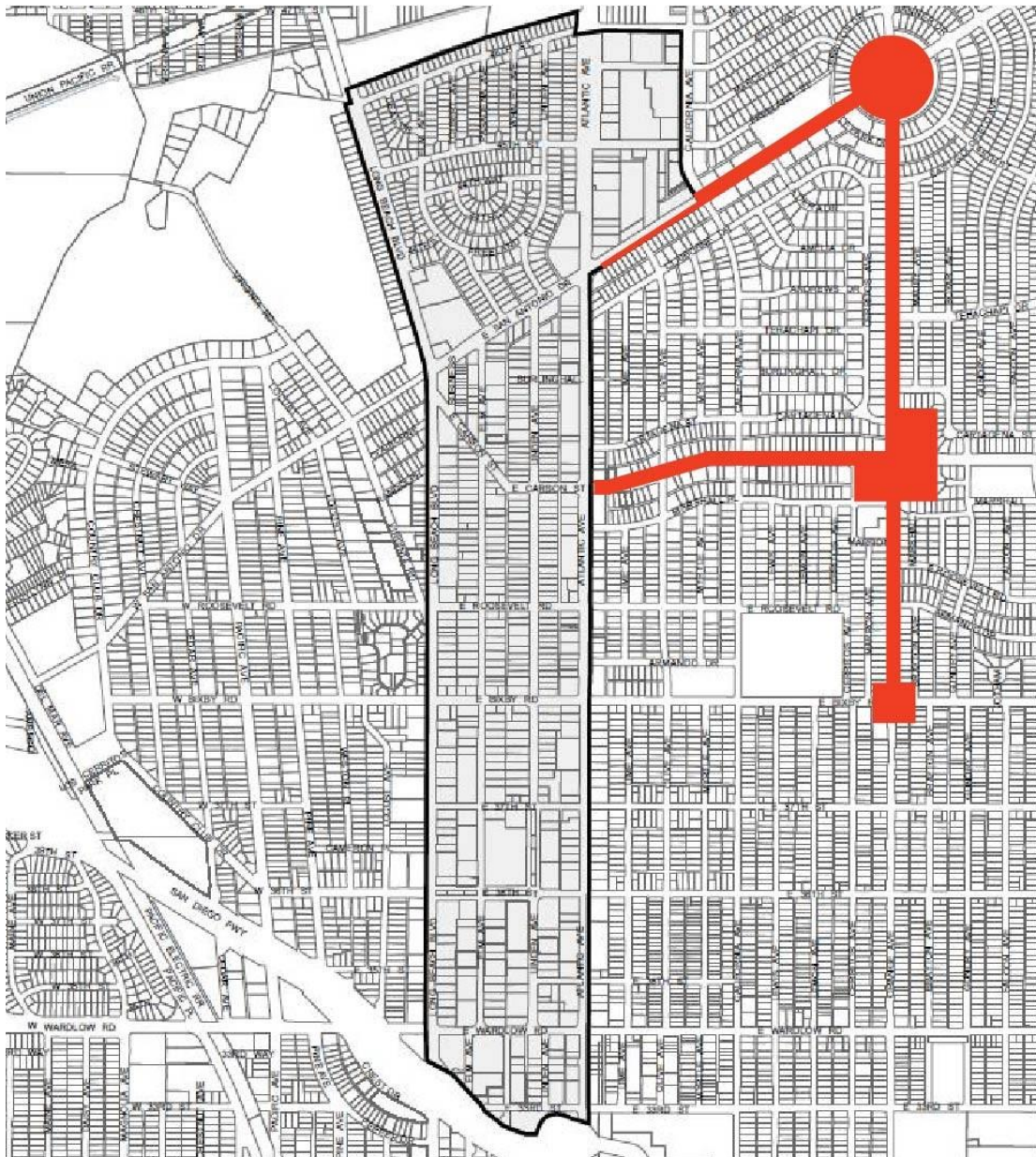
District Background

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

*As part of our efforts to increase our revenue due to the loss of redevelopment funds, the BKBIA has begun outreach to businesses along the Orange Avenue corridor to possibly expand our district boundaries. This may include businesses along San Antonio to Orange, Orange and Carson, Orange and Bixby Road. This would take considerable time so “expansion or annexing” if approved would most likely occur in next year’s budget.

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 are two vacancies that shall soon be filled and add to the diversity of board representation.

Anthony Wingfield, President,	UPS Store	Wardlow Road
Aaron Hovis, Vice President,	GOfetch	Wardlow Road
Crystal Rogers, Treasurer,	Lucy's Boudoir	Long Beach Blvd.
Bill Larson, Secretary,	First Team	Long Beach Blvd.
Anthony Puente,	Digital Revolution	Atlantic Avenue
David Ayala,	F&M Bank	Bixby Knolls Shopping Center
Bjoern Risse,	Rasselbock	Atlantic Avenue
Jeff Beasley,	Bundts on Melrose	Long Beach Blvd.
Starr Bunch,	Five Starr Pilates	Long Beach Blvd.
Vacant		At-Large
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, 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.

METHOD OF ASSESSMENT

The current annual base assessment for businesses is \$314.25. Nonprofits are assessed a base fee of \$204.55. An additional \$20 is added annually to the assessment fee to make up the gap between the loss of redevelopment funds and assessment fees.

NEW: The BKBIA board of directors has voted to increase the base assessment fee as there has not been a significant increase in seven years. The fee shall be comparable to other PBIAs and reflect the level of service and value offered by the BKBIA to its membership.

The proposal is to increase the annual assessment fee to \$520 (\$10/week); this increase serves as the first step, of the many, to raise additional funds for the BKBIA not only lost from the sunseting of the former redevelopment contract, but to enable the BKBIA to be equipped to further its mission most effectively, with necessary staff and resources.

NOTIFICATION TO MEMBERSHIP: The BKBIA has been in contact with its membership about the potential fee increase. We mailed two letters to the entire membership with the notification of the proposed increase as well via email. We hosted two meetings for business owners to come learn about the proposed increase, discuss any issues they may have, and speak with our board members to learn about how the increase in fees would be used.

Uses: More specifically, the fees would allow the BKBIA to have its Clean Team member working on litter, weed, and graffiti abatement five days a week as well as hiring private security day/night patrols to ensure the safety of the district. Fees would also support staff and promotional costs.

Notification process: The BKBIA first informed its membership of the proposed assessment increase at our Annual "State of the Business District" Meeting in February of 2021. We again discussed necessity of this increase at our Annual Meeting on April 28, 2022.

Additional outreach included:

- June 9th - 1st Letter & information pamphlet was mailed to the membership
- June 27th - Email version of the letter plus reminder of meetings went out
- June 28th - First meeting held at Tony's Kitchen restaurant
- July 7th - 2nd letter was mailed to the membership
- July 11th - Second meeting held at the Expo Arts Center
- September 15 – Member Business Breakfast

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 2022-2023 contract year.

BUDGET

Bixby Knolls Business Improvement Association Projected Budget

Revenue

Assessment	319,200
Contributions	15,000
Grant Awards	2,500
Rental Income	55,000
Federal Relief Grant	136,000

Gross Revenue	<u>527,700</u>
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Expenditures

Administration

General Admin Expenses	8,000
Fees & Finance Charges	400
Insurance	4,600
Licenses and Permits	4,400
Office Equipment & Supplies	12,640
Outside Services	2,600
Clean and Safe	79,000
EXPO Bldg. Supplies	2,800
Utilities	20,000
EXPO Repairs & Maintenance	3240

Total Administration	<u>137,680</u>
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On-Going Promotions

Advertising & Marketing	32,040
Banner Installation & Maint	1,600
Median Maint Utilities	2,400
Median Maintenance	3,600
Member Outreach	8,400

Total On-Going Promotions	<u>48,040</u>
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Promotional Event Expenses	
Annual Meeting	3,000
New Promotions	3,000

Total Promotional Event Expenses	6,000
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Payroll Expenses	
Wages (a)	125,000
Wages (b)	116,000
Payroll Preparation	2,800
Payroll Tax - Employer Contrib	15,288
Workers Comp Insurance	2,110

Total Salaries/Benefits	261,198
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Special Programs	
BusinessBreakfast/Member Outreach	4,000
Concerts	200
First Fridays	51,000
Good Spirits Club	400
Kidical Mass	600
Literary Society	1,000
Misc Special Events	3,500
Strollers	1,000
Trees & Landscaping	6,700
Special Programs - Other	300

Total Special Programs	68,700
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TOTAL EXPENDITURES	521,618
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NET REVENUE	86,082
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Contributions from Other Sources

Contributions:	\$ 15,000
Private donations/Sponsorships:	\$ 21,500*
Grant Awards:	\$ 2,500
Rental Income:	\$ 55,000****
Bridge Funding balance:	\$150,000**
Federal Relief Grant Funds	\$136,000***
TOTAL:	\$ 377,000

*Donations from CD5 (\$19,000) and LB Airport (\$2,500)

Not included on budget pages as these funds were approved last year by city council -- \$200,000 **“bridge” funding to cover our last year of redevelopment funds. These are restricted funds. We had a \$50,000 advance to pay consultants with our assessment increase outreach and early efforts for district expansion.

***American Recovery Plan funds: \$136,000 in total; 50% received thus far to be used towards our approved Scope of Work.

****Rental income includes tenants and events from the Expo Arts Center.

BIXBY KNOLLS BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION PROGRAM

2021 – 2022 Program and Year in Review

Current theme: Back to a (New) Normal.

The focus of 2021-2022 was a transition back to “normal” for our business members. The BKBIA spent many months supporting its membership via promotions or direct financial business support, and always trying to keep morale and hope up as the pandemic continued.

The BKBIA continued to monitor health orders and the rise and fall of COVID cases that would dictate new health orders/restrictions for businesses. BKBIA with the Council of Business Associations worked closely with the mayor’s office, council offices, city management, and the Economic Development Department on the changing landscape and support available to the business community. As there was a post-holiday surge in case numbers, the BKBIA limited any large events such as First Fridays, but then returned to a “normal” in March of 2022.

Communication with our membership remained a priority and we significantly increased our member outreach efforts 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, updated health orders, and business support information supplied by Economic Development, SBDC and county and state resources.

Community engagement always plays a close second as a top priority to the BKBIA, and we rallied even more support from the community for our business members throughout the year. We organized a Community Cleanup Day in April with an enthusiastic turnout. We had moved all our regular events and programming online to be “virtual,” but by June 15, 2021, (when restrictions had been lifted) we were promoting the inside dining and in-person events. Over the last year, we have increased our Instagram followers to over 15,000. Facebook has 5,700; the Bixby Knolls Community page where do the majority of our posting has 9,200 followers.

Meanwhile, the Bixby Knolls Strollers safely met every Saturday (celebrating 14 years); Literary Society has met in person (celebrating 14 years); Knights of the Round (Turn)Table meetings went back to in-person first in our “Allery” space and then at The Pan restaurant as our host location.

We organized our last vehicle parade in June of 2021, before hosting more in-person events.

Also, to keep our businesses front-of-mind, we created business profiles/showcases/features, including: National Black Business Month, Hispanic Heritage Month, Women’s History Month (showcasing women-owned businesses), and Pride Month. For new businesses or those needing extra promotional help, the BKBIA created individual Business Profiles and Small Business Saturday promotions for further support.

The use of our “Allery” was ideal over the last year and the “Open Streets” outdoor dining program transitioned back to indoor dining for our restaurants.

We communicated with our board of directors constantly on all issues arising in the district. We held board meetings on Zoom and recently returned back in person at The Pan restaurant.

A big change to the BKBIA was the adjustments in personnel again—we have a new part-time Clean Team member (Kevin Evans who is a volunteer through Care Closet LBC 501c3) and the addition of Content Manager, Ines Torres. Myra Pimentel remained in the catch-all position of Project Manager as we said goodbye to Ashlee Orellano in July of 2021.

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 to shrink the gap in funding with the loss of redevelopment funds. We met with Commune Communication for design and outreach assistance for the assessment fee increase and the potential expansion of the BKBIA borders to the east with the addition of businesses along San Antonio, Orange Avenue, to Bixby Road. The approved “bridge funding” allows us the resources and time to pursue additional revenue streams through various options; We 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 are working with a grant writer to pursue grants of all sorts for the Bixby Knolls Community Foundation 501c3; we are hoping to organize an annual fundraiser for the BKBIA; We just launched our “Community Membership” donation program with a positive response. The option for a PBID formation is still under consideration.

The Bixby Knolls Community Foundation 501c3 has received donations from local community members who share the concern about the sunseting of our redevelopment funds and 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” gave the BKCF \$50,000 to help local non-profits with the stipulation that their share of the funds be spent in Bixby Knolls. We are working closely with these same donors on a new program to help feed the food insecure students at LBCC and CSULB with weekly food provided by Bixby Knolls restaurants. The donors also provide funds to the BKBIA for staff time for this program.

The recent redistricting process brought 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 CD5 has been consistent and clear in addressing any/all issues.

Our Scope of Work was approved for the American Recovery Act Grant Funds, and at the time of this writing, we have received 50% of the funds (\$68,000) of the \$135,000 allotted, to include: Business Assistance, Marketing & Promotion, Clean and Safe program support, and Admin/staff management costs. We are now working on implementing our business support plan to begin immediately.

The recent redistricting shifted the BKBIA mostly operating within the 5th District while still in the 8th District north of San Antonio. We are working closely with CD5 on a number of streetscape issues and events prior to the changes resulting from the upcoming November election.

Other Notes:

Creating the budget for 2022-2023 has been challenging in that given the ongoing negative effects of COVID-19 on some of our business members, we are facing a reduced assessment revenue budget for the next year; potentially another 20% reduction from last year. However, with the assessment increase this deficit would be corrected as would the gap between the annual \$200,000 lost from redevelopment and our operating budget.

Ongoing Monthly Events and Programs

Over the last year our events and programs transitioned back to in-person meetings. (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. 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.

Our “Bixby Saturday Nights” weekly playlists ended in June 2021 as we started to bring First Fridays back in-person.

Our Strollers (14 years) continued to walk each Saturday without fail and the walks were managed safely. The Literary Society (14 years) met again in person. Kidical Mass (10 years) resumed in January of 2021; We recently hosted our “Concerts in the Park(ing Lot)” summer concert series; First Fridays returned as “lite” and then resumed as normal in March 2021, after going dark once again in January and February 2022 as COVID cases increased.

Our Knights of the Round (Turn)Table has had 32 monthly meetings and 55 weekly playlists via email during the shutdowns.

We were able to host our Annual “State of the Business District” Meeting for our members in April of this year at Ambitious Ales. Their back patio area worked very well for the 80 businesses in attendance.

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

With the budget challenges, we plan on fewer events that are higher in costs, with the exception of First Fridays (though with a reduced budget) and the Beer Bus. We will continue to engage the community in other ways, especially through social media. We have been fortunate to receive sponsorship from the 5th District Council Office for an Inaugural “Taste of Bixby Knolls” event set for October 16, 2022.

Member Outreach

Member outreach is as important to us as our Clean and Safe programs. In “normal” conditions, and more so now, communicating with our membership is critical. We have emailed 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 with the health order closures. More specifics:

- 102 emails sent to members
- 5 letters mailed
- 391 Instagram posts
- Annual Meeting: April
- Assessment Increase meetings: June & July
- Business Breakfasts: September
- 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 recruitment and retention. Often this can be the most challenging area for us given the limited staff, resources, and time. Business retention has been the top priority during the COVID-19 shutdowns. 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. 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.

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.” Another donor gave the BKBIA \$50,000 to “help save the restaurants.” The same donors gave another \$50,000 to support local non-profits with the condition that the funds be spent in Bixby Knolls. And a third round of anonymous donations to the BKBIA will be used to purchase meals from our restaurants that will be delivered to the food pantries at LBCC and CSULB for food insecure students.

Marketing and Branding

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). Our “Bixby Knolls Strong” brand helped to promote neighborhood pride and the effort we needed from the community to spend money around the district at businesses permitted to remain open. 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 an Inaugural Strollers Holiday Night Lights Stroll, hosted the “Almost St. Patrick’s Day” fundraiser, and have been consistent with new business promotional “teasers” and grand opening celebrations. As previously mentioned, we are currently working on the “Taste of Bixby Knolls” event for October.

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.

Personnel Changes

Staffing changed for us over the last year. Myra Pimentel has filled the role of Project Manager in a big way. We have also received some assistance from Long Beach Care Closet for district cleanups as our "clean and safe" must continue without fail. Ines Torres came aboard recently as our Content Manager. We are working with Pacific Gateway on Ines's employment at this time. In the meantime, the BKBIA continues to meet its mission, engage the community, and participate in other projects when asked.

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. Our efforts focus on all possible options including members assessment increase; grant funds; annual fundraisers; district boundary expansion; rental revenue from the Expo Arts Center; private donations; potential PBID formation.

Federal Grant Funds

At the time of writing, we have received 50% (approximately \$68,000) of the total \$135,000 allotted for our relief grant funds. We have the format for reporting how we are utilizing the funds and will immediately begin implementing our programs. Our Scope of Work for these funds include: Business Assistance, Marketing & Promotion, Clean and Safe program support, and Admin/staff management costs.

CONCLUSION

The best news over the last year is the 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.

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.

Goals

Our goals for 2022-23 are as follows:

- 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.