# For Immediate Release - April 17, 2018

# **Ontario BIA Association (OBIAA) Announces New**

# **“Accessibility on Main Street” Project**

*Ontario’s Main Street Public Spaces to Become More Accessible for Everyone.*

Collingwood, ON— The Ontario Business Improvement Area Association announced today that it will work with BIAs to improve the accessibility of main streets throughout the province. The year-long *Accessibility on* *Main Street Project*, funded in part by the Government of Ontario’s EnAbling Change Program, commenced on April 1st.

The *Accessibility on* *Main Street Project* aims to identify the built environment accessibility challenges experienced by OBIAA’s 300 BIAs and their more than 60,000 business members and to offer a range of possible solutions.

This project will:

* Clarify the obligations of businesses and BIAs under the AODA’s Accessibility Standard for the Design of Public Spaces (DOPS);
* Identify the ways in which businesses and BIAs can influence the accessibility of their public spaces;
* Showcase real examples of how businesses in Ontario and elsewhere have made their built environments more accessible to their communities and customers;
* Identify invisible barriers businesses customers may be experiencing and how to reduce/remove/prevent them.

The project will be guided by an Advisory Committee and will involve a survey of the accessibility challenges and opportunities for second floor businesses; focus group meetings on how to increase the accessibility of main street public spaces; the creation of an Accessible Main Street Handbook; and webinars to disseminate the information gathered.

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***About OBIAA***

The **Ontario BIA Association (OBIAA)**, since 2001, acts as an important resource for education, partnership and collaboration to each BIA across the province. OBIAA is the network that represents the more than 300 unique and vibrant BIAs across Ontario.  OBIAA is a leader in the development and sharing of information, tools, resources and best practices, and is the ONE voice on common issues.

**For more information, please contact:**

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