

PLANNING, ENVIRONMENT, RESOURCES, LAND DEPUTY MINISTERS' COMMITTEE (PERL) - 2015 PRIORITIES SUMMARY

PRIORITY #	ISSUE:	SOLUTION(S):	SUMMARY
PRIORITY #1 MUNICIPAL ACT	In October, OBIAA will be submitting a positioning paper regarding the Municipal Act Review.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Definition of BIAs: We ask that the definition of a BIA be expanded and amended to include 204. (1) (b) as follows: <i>“to promote the area as: economic development, community and place-making, living space, attracting tourists, employment hubs”</i> • BIAs as Local Boards: A clear statement on the ways in which BIAs differ (diverge) from other local boards. • Interpretation of the Municipal Act (204-216): A clear statement that Section 216 does not apply to BIAs. 	We are taking this opportunity to present our recommendations to the PERL Deputy Minister’s Committee to gain insight and your understanding in order to garner support and inform our recommendations.
PRIORITY #2 HISTORIC BUILT FORM ACCESSIBILITY	Our basic downtown infrastructure has not changed radically since the 1960’s, although many outside influences have changed. Limited accessibility has always been there. New awareness, changing demographics, an aging population and new legislation, which has been introduced to break down the barriers, has changed this landscape.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical Barriers at Street Level: Encourage municipalities to find ways to make temporary solutions like ‘Stop Gap’ work. When helping with infrastructure programs include improving accessibility at street level as a condition. • Access to Upper Storeys and Basements: Clarify accessibility requirements for festivals, events, and agencies receiving Provincial funding; establish support through direct funding or tax incentives (CIPs) to renovate for accessibility in upper floors and basements. 	We are taking this opportunity to present our recommendations to the PERL Deputy Minister’s Committee to encourage the Province to aid municipalities for improved accessibility guidance in Historic Built Form.
PRIORITY #3 ASSESSMENT	Assessment is a complex and broad topic. It has many different elements to consider that can have a profound effect on a BIA’s operation and ultimate success. The following related issues, as identified by local BIA Boards and/or their members, are considered very important: 1. Vacant Unit Rebate 2. Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) 3. Government Building Exemptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attraction Rebate for Main Street Class (non-office towers): Year One - 100% of the 30% (Commercial) or 35% (Industrial); Year Two - 50 % of the 30% or 35%; Year Three - 25 % of the 30% or 35%; Year Four - 0% of the 30% or 35%. • MPAC Methodology: We recommend and request that property assessment in/on Ontario Main Streets/BIAs be reflective of ‘current use’ versus future potential valuation. • Government Building Exemptions: We submit that the province should lead by recognizing that where their operations are located within BIA designated zones, the for-profit enterprise should contribute to the local BIA levy. 	We are taking this opportunity to present our recommendations to the PERL Deputy Minister’s Committee to encourage appropriate Ministries to assist OBIAA with the implementation of our recommendations.
PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITY DATA COLLECTION	The current challenge is the inability to quantify the ‘return on investment’ for the community vitality and economic impact of BIAs.	Through the PERL Secretariat, we are advocating for a multi-ministry partnership with OBIAA to launch a research project with the objective of gathering available data to understand and quantify the economic impact of BIA’s and their stakeholders. This requires partnering to define project objectives from a business perspective, to convert this knowledge into a data mining strategy and complete a preliminary project plan. <i>This partnership could involve University research, identifying potential Grants, adding questions to MMAH’s FIR, aggregating all appropriate data available throughout various Ministries</i>	OBIAA is seeking ways and means to increase our capacity, understanding that this type of research is critical. OBIAA needs the support of the Province to ‘make the business case for BIAs’ in a community, and province-wide data collection initiative.