

50th ANNIVERSARY & BIA WEEK TOOLKIT

Celebrating 50 years of
Connecting People & Place



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INCLUDED IN THIS KIT



50th Anniversary
& BIA Week

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STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

1 PICK A WEEK

Decide what week works best for your BIA(s) to hold a BIA week at your local City/ Town Hall. It is encouraged to choose a week that will overlap with a scheduled council meeting, as the main purpose of this week is to educate city/town staff, Councillors, and members of the general public about what a BIA is and what it does for the community.

Choose a week leading up to (or including) September 16th, the official anniversary of the enabling legislation.



2 REQUEST A DEPUTATION TO CITY/TOWN HALL

This is when you will present what a BIA is, what your BIA has done, and what BIAs do for the community. Check with your local City/Town hall for how to submit.

Use resources provided in this package to help build your presentation.



3 PROMOTION

Decide how you'd like to promote your BIA(S) during your scheduled BIA week. TABIA asks BIAs to submit spare banners and branded swag. Interested BIAs are also asked to submit creative promotion their BIA. This creative is printed on large coroplast boards and displayed around Toronto City Hall rotunda (this will depend on the layout of your own City/Town Hall).

Bring OBIAA in to present to your Council!



4 THE NEXT LEVEL

If you'd like to take BIA week a step further, you can schedule additional events during the week to celebrate. In Toronto, TABIA holds a Councillor luncheon with food donated from different BIAs. The purpose of this events is to allow an opportunity for Councillors, City/Town staff, BIA boards/staff, and members to network

THE HISTORY OF BIAs



CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF BIAs

In 1967, challenges were facing retailers as a proliferation of shopping malls were springing up on the outskirts of the city. As a result, some merchants were forced to close their shops or even in some instances, follow the crowds to the malls. Vacancies resulted and many local shopping areas began to look run down and seemed doomed to oblivion.



Out of sheer frustration, a group of businessmen including Alex Ling a true visionary in the west end of Toronto, along Bloor Street West, went to City Hall and the Province seeking legislation that would compel all businesses within a designated area to pay a levy for the purpose of revitalizing their business strip through physical improvements and promotional activities. The levy would be collected by the City and turned over to the elected Board of Management to be used as needed. After some persuasion, the idea was finally adopted and the Business Improvement Area (BIA) legislation was enacted and became Section 204-217 of the Municipal Act. Bloor West Village became the pioneer of the BIA concept and was designated as the first BIA in 1970!

Currently there are more than 300 BIAs in the province of Ontario. The model is used across Canada and throughout The United States and abroad. Businesses, governments, and community members believe in the concept and have seen the successes in the model of "Main Street" communities everywhere.

OBIAA & BIA FAQs



QUESTIONS ABOUT OBIAA

WHAT IS OBIAA?

OBIAA is an acronym for the Ontario Business Improvement Area Association. It is a provincial, non-profit corporation that provides support to business improvement areas in Ontario through several resources and services. Comprised of an elected Board of Directors with members from different BIAs, and full-time staff in Port Credit, OBIAA works closely with the Province to sustain and advance the livelihood of small businesses in Ontario.

WHO GETS OBIAA SERVICES & WHAT KIND OF SERVICES ARE AVAILABLE?

Members of OBIAA have access to its services. Members are BIAs that pay a fixed annual fee to OBIAA which is based on the levies they receive from their respective municipalities. OBIAA mainly acts as a central resource for business improvement areas by connecting them together through Member Needs Assistance sessions, Best Practices calls, an annual conference and more. Furthermore, it provides opportunities for BIAs to learn and grow through regional workshops, webinars and other professional development sessions. OBIAA also represents its members at government meetings, lobbying on behalf of them to pursue their best interests.

CAN OBIAA CONNECT MY BIA WITH OTHER BIAs? HOW CAN I DO SO?

Connecting BIAs across Ontario with each other was a main reason for the formation of OBIAA. OBIAA offers several resources that provide BIAs an opportunity to engage with other BIAs. These include monthly Best Practices calls and Member Needs Assistance forums for those that are seeking advice and/or support. OBIAA also provides more sessions for learning and guidance with other BIAs such as the Community of Practice initiative, regional workshops, and the annual conference. These events are an excellent way to network as well.

WHAT HAPPENS AT THE ANNUAL OBIAA CONFERENCE?

The conference serves as an excellent learning opportunity for BIAs with several leadership and professional development training events taking place. Each year, there is also a lineup of exceptional speakers who share their own expertise, experience, and knowledge. Additionally, it is an excellent networking opportunity for OBIAA members and non-members alike to gather, share, and learn with representatives from BIAs across the province. BIAs are recognized for their hard work and contribution to their local communities through the Awards Gala at conference as well. The conference plays host to a tradeshow too, with many vendors promoting their services and products that may be of use to specific business improvement areas.

OBIAA & BIA FAQs (con't)

GENERAL BIA INFO

HOW DO I START A BIA?

Starting a BIA takes a lot of work, time, and commitment. Before doing so, one needs to be sure that they truly want to start one and is dedicated to seeing the process through to the end. With that being said, one must also ensure that other people and/or businesses are on board with the idea and have the same amount of interest and commitment as they do. Starting a BIA is a large task and requires a team to complete. Furthermore, you and your team must have the support of businesses in your community and that a BIA would benefit everyone involved.

Once you have taken care of the aforementioned items, you can look to the contents of the reference binder for detailed steps on establishing and maintaining a BIA. Section 3 – Establishing a BIA can get you started, as it contains the main tasks required for a BIA's conception. Section 4 – Leadership and Management has important information on the governance of a BIA, including samples and templates of vital documents that are essential for a BIA's operation. If you have further questions or concerns that are not covered in the binder, please do not hesitate to contact OBIAA.

WHAT DOES THE STRUCTURE OF A BIA LOOK LIKE?

A BIA consists of a Board of Management that oversees and is responsible for all the operations, activities, and decisions of a BIA. The Board consists of elected individuals from members of a BIA and municipal staff appointed from City Council. Under the Board are subcommittees that are dedicated to specific areas of work and carry out assigned tasks. They are led by Board members but are composed of people from Council, other municipal staff, and individuals in the community. There is also a manager or executive director position that keeps committees on track. At the bottom of the hierarchy are BIA members who can be entitled to participate in BIA meetings and voice themselves to the Board.

IS A BIA A NOT-FOR-PROFIT ORGANIZATION?

No, a BIA is a local board of a municipality. It cannot make a profit but is not considered a not-for-profit organization.

Download the full FAQ document
from the 50th Anniversary & BIA Week
Toolkit page on OBIAA's website!

LOGOS & BRANDING GUIDE

OBIAA LOGO



50th ANNIVERSARY LOGO



Please feel free to use the 50th logo anywhere and everywhere! We created it for YOU to use.

Download these logos and the Branding Guide from the [50th Anniversary & BIA Week Toolkit page](#) on OBIAA's website!

50th TEASER VIDEO



A BIA is integral to advancing a distinct, livable, vibrant and resilient business district within their local community. This video celebrates all that BIAs have achieved over the last 50 years. Where can we go from here? What does a BIA look like 50 years from now?

[Click here to view the video on our YouTube page!](#)

You can also download the video from the [50th Anniversary & BIA Week Toolkit page](#) on OBIAA's website!

SAMPLE MEDIA RELEASE



Use this to help you write a media release for your 50th Anniversary and/or BIA Week celebrations. Make sure you include OBIAA's logo as well as the 50th Anniversary logo.

[BIA NAME] Celebrates the 50th Anniversary of BIAs

[DATE – MONTH, DAY, YEAR]: [LOCATION – CITY, PROVINCE] – [BIA NAME] is proud to celebrate the 50th anniversary of BIAs by hosting a BIA Week on [DATE] at [TIME] at [LOCATION]. During BIA Week the _____ BIA will present to council on [DATE] at [TIME] at [LOCATION]. The deputation will include a presentation on what a BIA is, what it does, and the value our BIA has in our community as well as across the province.

On September 16, 1970, Bloor West Village BIA in Toronto became the first BIA in the world when the Municipal Act was amended to add Sections 204-217.

Fast forward to 2020, and there are now more than 300 BIAs in Ontario, a growing list. Across Canada there are 500 BIAs (or their equivalent) and the idea has also spread worldwide, with BIAs (or their equivalents) in more than 10 countries around the world, such as US, UK, Scotland, Germany, Singapore, Australia, New Zealand, China, and India.

“BIAs are integral to advancing distinct, livable, vibrant and resilient business community in Ontario and beyond, and arguably Ontario’s (Toronto’s) greatest export,” says Kay Matthews, Executive Director of OBIAA. “We’re excited to see the idea spread and OBIAA strives to be pivotal in building capacity of our BIAs by providing a platform for sharing their wonderful ideas and best practices amongst our BIAs.”

[Include any additional events happening throughout the week here (e.g. BIA Week Party at the BIA office). You should also include something if your BIA or Town also happens to be celebrating your own anniversary or milestone this day/week/month/year – double down on the excitement!]

[SUGGESTED QUOTE FROM YOUR BIA] “The _____ BIA, formed in YEAR, proudly celebrating ____ years alongside this 50-year milestone. says [INSERT BIA SPOKESPERSON]. “Our BIA has added to the vitality of our community by [LIST YOUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS].”

[Include information on any additional BIA initiatives outside of your BIA Week here.]

SAMPLE MEDIA RELEASE (con't)

ABOUT [YOUR BIA NAME]:

[YOUR BIA BOILERPLATE HERE]

ABOUT OBIAA:

OBIAA is the network that represents unique and vibrant BIAs across Ontario. The Association, incorporated in 2001, supports and advocates on behalf of its members through the building and nurturing of strong relationships and partnerships. OBIAA is a leader in the development and sharing of information, tools, resources and best practices, and is the ONE voice on common issues. www.obiaa.com



MUNICIPAL ACT

Designation of improvement area

204 (1) A local municipality may designate an area as an improvement area and may establish a board of management,

(a) to oversee the improvement, beautification and maintenance of municipally-owned land, buildings and structures in the area beyond that provided at the expense of the municipality generally; and

(b) to promote the area as a business or shopping area. 2001, c. 25, s. 204 (1).

MEDIA CONTACT:

[YOUR BIA CONTACT INFORMATION]

Let us know when you send out a media release! Add us to your media email list so we can help share your success!

EMAIL COPY FOR MEMBERS

EMAIL SUBJECT: Celebrating 50 Years of BIAs Connecting People & Place

SUGGESTED EMAIL CONTENT:

Dear [first name],

2020 marks the 50th anniversary of the legislation that created BIAs, a made-in-Canada initiative that has become one of our greatest exports. The legislation has inspired Downtown Revitalization around the world with BIDs, BIAs, and BIZs in many countries, including the US, Great Britain, Scotland, Australia, New Zealand, Germany, Singapore, India, and China.

Our BIA is thrilled to announce that we will be celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the legislation that created BIAs by hosting a BIA Week [or “Day”] at [NAME OF CITY/TOWN] City [or “Town”] Hall the week [or “day”] of [DATES]. We will be presenting a Deputation to Council at [TIME] on [DATE] to highlight our successes and raise awareness of what our BIA does for the community.

[Include any additional events happening throughout the week here (eg. BIA Week Party at the BIA office). You should also include something if your BIA or Town also happens to be celebrating your own anniversary or milestone this day/week/month/year – double down on the excitement!]

We encourage you to get involved!

1. Share stories of how our BIA has made a positive impact on your community.
2. Promote our BIA in your business and in your area by including our BIA logo in your window or email signature (“proud member of ___ BIA!”).
3. Share our BIA Week [or “Day”] posts on your own social media.
4. Attend the deputation to Council in order to show your support for our BIA.
5. [Add any additional engagements here – the more the better but keep it simple!]

We are excited about this opportunity and hope you are too!

Sincerely,

[YOUR NAME,
BIA NAME
& CONTACT INFO]

SOCIAL MEDIA LINKS

Please ensure that your BIA follows OBIAA's social media channels. OBIAA's social media includes a great supply of useful content to like and share to your members. These actions will amplify the messages and are the easiest way to help us get the word out.

SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS:



@ontariobiaassociation

Link: <https://www.facebook.com/ontariobiaassociation>



@obiaa_

Link: https://www.instagram.com/obiaa_/



@Ontario BIA Association

Link: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/obiaa/>



@obiaa_

Link: https://www.twitter.com/obiaa_



Remember to use #50YearsForward on all your posts!

SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT

Below is some suggested content for you to publish on your channels to get you started. You can copy these suggestions directly into your BIA's social media.

Our local BIA Week is [DATES]! Get involved by _____. #50YearsForward
#BIAWeek

Did you know that this year marks the 50th anniversary of BIAs? Even though our BIA hasn't been around the whole time, we still want to celebrate! #50YearsForward

September 16th is the official day that BIAs came into existence 50 years ago. Help us celebrate this milestone anniversary by _____. #50YearsForward

A BIA is integral to advancing a distinct, livable, vibrant and resilient business district within their local community. This year, we celebrate all that BIAs have achieved over the last 50 years. Where can we go from here? What does a BIA look like 50 years from now? #50YearsForward

How has our BIA impacted you? Share your success stories and help us share ours! #50YearsForward

Use items from the Important Figures Table (below) to highlight the ROI of your BIA in your social media! When your members understand what you do, they can support you better!

Remember to use #50YearsForward on all your posts!

A BIA is integral to advancing a distinct, livable, vibrant and resilient business district within their local community.

Download the *Value of BIAs Presentation* from the [50th Anniversary & BIA Week Toolkit page](#) on OBIAA's website!

Use this presentation as part of your deputation to Council. Customize it however you need to best fit your needs.

IMPORTANT FIGURES



The following are some great numbers that you could include in your deputation to council. These numbers help to outline the Return on Investment of BIAs.

How many years has the BIA existed?	Since [year]
What is your current BIA Levy?	
What is your current BIA budget (if different from the BIA Levy)?	
What is the Accumulated Levy Over the Years?	\$___ x ___ years = \$_____
How do you seek additional revenues?	
What is the Commercial Assessment of the BIA?	
Commercial Assessment of the BIA vs Commercial Assessment of the Whole Community	
What is the Number of Volunteer Hours for all those involved in the running of the BIA (staff, board) as well as events?	

Build a Strategic Action Map - how a BIA maps their accomplishments!

You should also make sure you include key projects & successes in your deputation.

TORONTO BIA WEEK FACTS & SAMPLE RESOLUTION



JOHN TORY
MAYOR

Proclamation

Toronto Business Improvement Area Week

January 31 – February 6, 2018

WHEREAS Toronto Business Improvement Area (BIA) Week is an opportunity to acknowledge the work of the 82 BIAs located in the City of Toronto. They help to attract business to their local communities while providing bridges between small businesses and the municipal and provincial governments.

The City of Toronto recognizes the contributions of businesses, organizations and groups in making Toronto a great city in which to live, work and play. The dedication and hard work of many enrich the lives of Torontonians daily and make our city stronger, safer, vibrant and healthy.

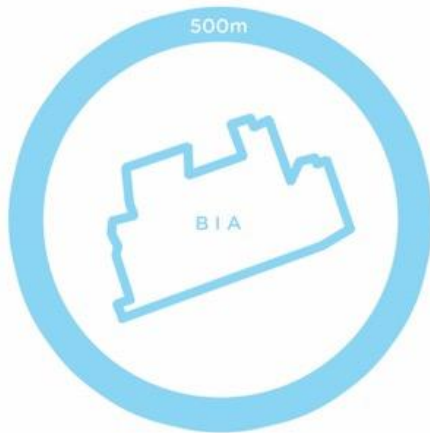
NOW THEREFORE, I, Mayor John Tory, on behalf of Toronto City Council, do hereby proclaim **January 31 – February 6, 2018** as "**Toronto Business Improvement Area Week**" in the City of Toronto.



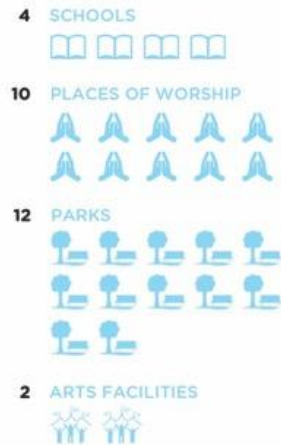
John Tory
Mayor of Toronto

Download this document from the [50th Anniversary & BIA Week Toolkit page](#) on OBIAA's website!

ROI INFOGRAPHICS



PLACEMAKING ASSETS



ASSESSED PROPERTY VALUE

100,000 - 500,000 POPULATION CITIES **25% HIGHER**

AVERAGE:

\$ 216,428,280

500,000 - 1,000,000 POPULATION CITIES **125% LOWER**

EVENTS



FACADE GRANTS

AVERAGE BIA:

MUNICIPAL CONTRIBUTION **\$1 : 2.5** PRIVATE SECTOR SPENDS
PER CAPITA SPENDING = **\$0.17**



UNDER 100,000 POPULATION:

MUNICIPAL CONTRIBUTION **\$1 : 6.6** PRIVATE SECTOR SPENDS
PER CAPITA SPENDING = **\$2.53**

EMPLOYMENT



Check out the full [ROI Report](#) on our website!

DMS INFORMATION

For information on Digital Main Street, check out our website by clicking the links below!



[DIGITAL MAIN STREET](#)

[DIGITAL MAIN STREET 2.0](#)



About the Ontario Digital Main Street Initiative:

Digital Main Street was created and first launched by the Toronto Association of Business Improvement Areas (TABIA) in 2016 with direct support from the City of Toronto, and supported by a group of strategic corporate sponsors, including Google, MasterCard, Microsoft and Shopify.

To help Ontario's main street small businesses enhance their digital capabilities and online presence, the Ontario BIA Association (OBIAA) and the Province of Ontario partnered to expand the program through a \$12 million Digital Main Street initiative over two years. OBIAA is thrilled to be administering this program across the rest of Ontario by building on the Toronto-based program and expanding the services for small business across the province.



HOW TO USE THE CONTENTS OF THIS KIT

Components	Suggested Use					For Your Reference
	Add to Your BIA's Website	Email to Stakeholders (Members & Contacts)	Post on Social Media	Print	Include in/Use to Build Your Deputation	
Background Materials – please read						
History of BIAs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
OBIAA & BIA FAQs	✓			✓		✓
Logos & Graphics						
OBIAA Logo	✓	✓	✓		✓	
50 th Logo	✓	✓	✓		✓	
50 th Logo Branding Guide						✓
50 th Teaser Video	✓		✓			
Samples & Templates						
Media Release Template	✓	✓				
Email Copy for Members		✓				
Social Media Links & Content			✓			
Value of BIAs Presentation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Important Figures	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Toronto BIA Week Facts (Sample Resolution)					✓	✓
Infographics						
ROI Infographic		✓	✓		✓	✓
DMS Information		✓	✓		✓	✓

Make sure you send information on your BIA week to your local MP and MPP!