



2022 OBIAA Municipal Election Toolkit

OCTOBER 2022

INCLUDED IN THIS KIT

ITEM	LOCATION	PAGE
OBIAA Corporate Resource Policy	The Toolkit, Resource Binder, OBIAA Website	3
Basic Questions for use at "all candidate meetings"	The Toolkit, OBIAA Website	4
Municipal Election Toolkit Announcement	The Toolkit, OBIAA Website, Newsletter	7
Communications to Candidates on What is a BIA Social Call outs	The Toolkit, OBIAA Website	9
Communications to Candidates on What is a BIA The Value of BIAs Letter	The Toolkit, Resource Binder, OBIAA Website	10
50th Anniversary of BIAs video	The Toolkit, OBIAA Website, YOUTUBE	12
Video: What is a BIA	The Toolkit, OBIAA Website, YOUTUBE	12
The Value of a BIA Presentation	The Toolkit, OBIAA Website	12
How BIAs can engage with new Councillors (checklist)	The Toolkit, OBIAA Website	13
Post Election Letter to Council	The Toolkit, OBIAA Website	15
Post Election Letter to Clerks	The Toolkit, OBIAA Website	17
How to request, make and conduct a deputation to the new council	The Toolkit, Resource Binder, OBIAA Website	19
BIA Board Election Toolkit	The Toolkit, Resource Binder, OBIAA Website	20

OBIAA CORPORATE RESOURCE POLICY

Corporate Resource Policy (Letter and/or Email)

Use of Corporate Resource during an Election Year

As a local board of the municipality, BIAs are subject to Municipal Policies around the **Use of Corporate Resources**.

Considerations for your BIA and potential actions:

- A. Review your Municipality's Policy for Corporate Use of Resources during an Election Year, circulate and/or adopt the Municipal Policy. (Ask your Municipal Clerk)
- B. Or your BIA may consider creating your own policy. In this case, you will need to ask your Municipal Clerk to review before adopting (as they should review all of your policies).
- C. Circulate these documents to your Board of Directors, including the OBIAA Use of Corporate Resources Toolkit.

[Ontario Elections Act](#) - Use of municipal, board resources 88.18 - Before May 1 in the year of a regular election, municipalities and local boards shall establish rules and procedures with respect to the use of municipal or board resources, as the case may be, during the election campaign period. 2016, c. 15, s. 56.

Note: The restrictions include Board participation in campaign activities and employee participation in campaigning during working hours. The purpose and general intent of the policy is to ensure the neutrality of the Corporation (Board) during the election.

Statement from OBIAA:

We urge you to read the full **Municipal Corporate Resource Policy Toolkit** and identify early with each of your boards, that as a local board of the municipality your BIA is subject to Municipal Policies around the **Use of Corporate Resources**. Furthermore, OBIAA recommends that all BIAs remains at arm's length (neutral) from engaging in any politics around the elections, including but not limited to, holding all-candidates meetings.

MUNICIPAL ELECTION QUESTIONS

How to use these questions:

OBIAA understands that our BIAs are Local Boards of Council and have to be arms-length and non-partisan in our approach to our Municipal Elections. However, we know our areas matter and we need to be able to ask questions about how our areas will be supported.

These questions, therefore, are for the use of your members and community. We encourage you to take these questions and put them on your website as “I Believe” Statements. An example of this would be from question 5 “Our BIA Believes that our area would be enhanced with access to improved infrastructures, such as well-maintained public washrooms.

Note: some of these questions may not apply to your BIA, for instance, policing if you are in a Regional Government area.

We encourage you to localize or tailor your questions with local examples.

Suggested Questions

1. How would you support the local intensification and/or building developments in the BIA to include 2nd-floor (or higher) business locations (up to the local planning limit)?
 - I.E. if you have intensification planned for your BIA, ask if there are plans to add bike routes, car share spaces, EV Charging stations, and improved transit to accommodate the increased number of residents
 - Would you support the implementation of a Community Benefits Program? (The council of a local municipality may create a by-law to impose community benefits charges against land to pay for the capital costs of facilities, services, and matters required because of development or redevelopment in the area to which the by-law applies: <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90p13#BK60>)

MUNICIPAL ELECTION QUESTIONS

2. Would you support reviewing the Community Improvement Plan (CIP) or implementing one, to include security components such as lights, fixtures, or cameras, facade and building improvements, etc. - Please reference Hamilton, Cambridge, and Timmins for CIP examples)
3. How would you support integration and increase of Police and social services to provide better security in our BIA community (downtown, uptown, neighbourhood, main street area)?
4. Vacant, unused properties can be a blight on our main street. How would you as a Council member support enhancing property standards for the BIA (enforcing derelict, run-down empty properties)? (St. Catharines - Vacant Building Registry By-law: <https://www.stcatharines.ca/en/news/vacant-building-by-law-to-drive-re-development-and-promote-safety.aspx>)
 - a. How will you encourage vacant property owners to improve (and potentially work with the Municipality/BIA) to animate their properties?
5. How would you support the required/needed City infrastructure improvements needed in our BIA? (roads, curbs, sidewalks, street lighting, street furniture, public washrooms, enhanced accessibility, etc.)
6. In order to improve walkability and safety would you support Council in the implementation of 30km/h speed limit or other traffic calming measures through the BIA?
7. As BIAs are local Boards of Council, how would you enhance your municipality and our BIA relationship/partnerships?
 - I.E. Would you support the implementation of a Memorandum of Understanding between the BIA and the City? (Collingwood provides a great example)
 - How will you welcome and support the BIAs involvement in policy reviews and the master planning and strategic planning processes?
https://www.haltonhills.ca/en/your-government/resources/Documents/07_Town-of-Halton-Hills-Official-Plan-Part-D.pdf

MUNICIPAL ELECTION QUESTIONS

8. How will you support the development of a framework for strategic planning that includes First Nation participation?

- Encourage collaboration between Heritage, Arts and Indigenous partners

9. What are your plans for new Green/Environmental projects to support the development of our BIA, and how would you partner with the BIA to implement them? Such as increase bikeability networks in and around the BIA, improved transit, EV charging stations, permeable paving, and community gardens).

10. Would you support (additional) financial supports directed to the BIA for implementing community events, improved beautification, and infrastructure (ie. patios, planters, wayfinding signage, street furniture, lighting)?

11. Would you support the Main Street Relationship Management system and the improved economic development data that comes with it, being created by OBIAA? www.obiaa.com/projects

12. Do you support investments to improve Fibre internet connectivity within the BIA?

- Would you support free public WiFi in the BIA?

Here Is How Your BIA Can Localize It?

Are there special 'dream' projects that your BIA has identified as important to you that will enhance the public realm? If so, cite that specific request as a part of question 5 (as an example.)

MUNICIPAL ELECTION TOOLKIT ANNOUNCEMENT

OBIAA Helps Ontario's BIAs Prepare For 2022 Municipal Election

October 3, 2022 | In preparation for the upcoming 2022 Municipal Election, the Ontario Business Improvement Area Association (OBIAA) is pleased to share with Ontario's BIAs resources and a toolkit that will assist BIA Boards and members in informing them about the key practices in preparing for the October 24, 2022 Municipal election, and your BIA Board's election.

Kay Matthews, Executive Director of OBIAA, notes **"BIAs must be prepared for the upcoming Municipal Election, which coincides with BIA Board Elections under the Ontario Municipal Act. OBIAA is pleased to share our newly created Municipal Election Toolkit. It is our hope local BIAs will tailor resources from the Toolkit to their local needs."**

BIAs are often misunderstood in their connection to the Municipal Act and in some cases, the change of Municipal Council and the subsequent change of the BIA's Board can create confusion. BIAs are a Local Board of Council, but their funds come from a special levy on their designated commercial properties in their area. The Municipal Act states that a local municipality may designate an area as an improvement area and may establish a board of management 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 to promote the area as a business or shopping area. This means each area is created for the collective good and the often-misunderstood role of the BIA is to make the area a better place to do business, rather than help the individual businesses.

The Municipal Election Toolkit includes guidance on how BIAs engage in elections, how to participate in all candidates' meetings, as well as communication strategies on what a BIA is. It will go on to assist BIAs in how to partner and present to their new Council.

Marty Williams, as President of OBIAA and Executive Director of the Downtown Guelph BIA sees the value of this toolkit, he states **"OBIAA's Municipal Election Toolkit will aid each and every BIA who uses this valuable resource in building a great relationship with their local Council. Connecting our new council with the work BIAs do to make our main streets great community locations means that BIAs are key partners. This unique and essential municipal partnership is worth fostering."**

Local communities have an opportunity every four years to define our communities with our vote. OBIAA supports active involvement from every resident of Ontario to define the type of community that brings us together.

--30--

MUNICIPAL ELECTION TOOLKIT ANNOUNCEMENT

ABOUT OBIAA

OBIAA is the network that represents unique and vibrant BIAs across Ontario. The Association 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.

OBIAA's purpose is to support BIAs – Business Improvement Areas - and their municipalities across the province to be more effective through education, partnership, sharing, and networking. We work together on common opportunities and common concerns, finding resolutions to challenges to our individual communities specifically and the province.

OBIAA collectively represents:

- A combined levy of more than \$765 million spent keeping Ontario's communities vital and economically strong
- More than 100,000 businesses
- More than 18,000 property owners
- 1.6 million employees and jobs
- CVA of more than \$70 billion
- Our BIAs collectively generate <\$55 million in public realm investment funds through special municipal levies

ABOUT Ontario's BIAs

The first BIA Legislation in the world was created in 1970 in a partnership with Ontario's Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Bloor West Village, and the City of Toronto. Since then, the BIA Legislation has continued as a partnership between the businesses, within a by-lawed boundary, and the municipality with monies generated by a "self-funded" - additional levy on commercial property owners within the BIA boundaries. BIAs work hand-in-hand with the economic development offices in their municipalities to create jobs and strong businesses.

MORE INFORMATION

1. <https://obiaa.com/updates-announcements/value-of-bias-presentation/>
2. <https://obiaa.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/BIA-50th-Teaser.mp4>

Kay Matthews
Executive Director, OBIAA
kay.matthews@obiaa.com



COMMUNICATIONS TO CANDIDATES

ON WHAT A BIA IS



OBIAA.com is a great website for resources, information, contacts, presentations, and videos for Candidates to visit.

OBIAA is active on the following Social Media Platforms:



Facebook (@ontariobiaassociation)



Twitter (@OBIAA_)



Instagram (@obiaa_)



Youtube (OBIAA)



LinkedIn (Ontario BIA Association)

COMMUNICATIONS TO CANDIDATES

ON WHAT A BIA IS

The Value of BIAs Letter

Mayor and Council,

The first BIA was formed in 1970, by a group of Toronto business people. Ontario passed enabling legislation to create the world's first Business Improvement Area (BIA) in Bloor West Village.

Previously relying on voluntary contributions for its projects, the BIA(s) can now plan on a steady stream of revenue as collected from only the commercially assessed properties within the area as determined by Municipal Bylaw. This legislation allows for long-term planning to improve the area, self-funded by the property owners and their tenants. The BIA funding is intended to create equity.... all who benefit are required to contribute. The Municipality simply collects the additional revenue, through the tax bill, for the BIA to use for the revitalization of their area.

Since the creation of this first BIA, many more have been established. Now there are more than 300 BIAs in Ontario, varying in size from fewer than 60 business and property owners to more than 2000. The BIA concept is now global, adopted by more than 500 communities across Canada, 2000 throughout the United States, and thousands more around the world including Europe, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, and Japan.

A Business Improvement Area (BIA) is a "made-in-Ontario" innovation that allows local business people and commercial property owners and tenants to join together and, with the support of the municipality, to organize, finance, and carry out physical improvements and promote economic development in their district.

The basic function of a BIA, under the Municipal Act, is 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
- Promote the area as a business or shopping area

The success in this legislation is in the number of Municipalities that have enabled and partnered with their business community, with the amount of BIAs in Ontario growing every year.

In the past years, further changes have been made to the legislation that have made the local BIAs a 'local board' of the municipality, solidifying this unique partnership between the municipality and their BIA (business community). Municipalities understand the benefits of supporting a business

COMMUNICATIONS TO CANDIDATES

ON WHAT A BIA IS

The Value of BIAs Letter

area that is, through the self-funding mechanism, helping the whole community towards economic vitality.

BIAs are involved in many aspects of economic development and community revitalization, through good governance, they include (but are not restricted to):

- Strategic Planning and Visioning
- Beautification and Maintenance
- Marketing
- Events and Promotions
- Commercial Research
- Streetscape Improvements
- Public Art and Murals
- Creating Safe Environments
- Façade Improvement Programs
- Business Retention & Expansion, and...
- Championing the Area

Through good governance, the Board of Management, volunteers to guide the BIA (over and above the work of their own business(es)) to make the business area a better place in which to do business and steward the communities growth and future.

The Municipality and the BIA need to foster this partnership by guaranteeing that Municipal Act requirements, strong and solid governance documents, and good communications are in place. The Municipal Act determines that a BIA must have (*the Toronto Act for BIAs may have different requirements):

1. Constitution/Operating Bylaw
2. Purchasing Policy
3. Personnel Policy
4. An Annual Audit by the Municipalities Auditor
5. Present an Annual Report to Council

A municipality can further good governance by providing training on governance and other legislation and confirm (and review) all governance documents held by their local board.

COMMUNICATIONS TO CANDIDATES

ON WHAT A BIA IS

The Value of BIAs Letter

The benefit of having, strengthening, and supporting BIAs has proven itself over the past 45 years.

- Business Operators see the benefit from improved atmosphere and ambiance, whether they are retail, service, professional or property owner.
- The Property Owner can realize the potential to increase property values and occupancy as well as attracting a tenant that adds to the business mosaic of the area.
- The Community benefits by having a more vibrant community, a more prosperous local economy, and a potential to increase property values. So many realtors prove this over and over as they advertise properties for sale that are within walking distance of the downtown!
- Of course, the Municipality and Province benefit from the partnership as BIAs continue to prove they are strong local economic engines.

Whether you are a small, large, urban or rural community, using the BIA legislation effectively can foster economic growth and stability. The Ontario BIA Association is here to assist you and your BIA by offering networking, sharing of best practices, governance, and other training and support. If you or your BIA need any assistance, we are here to help.

Sincerely,

The Board and Staff of the Ontario BIA Association on behalf of your BIA.

**What is a BIA
Video**



**The Value of a BIA
Presentation**



**50th Anniversary
of BIAs**



HOW BIA CAN ENGAGE WITH NEW COUNCILLORS CHECKLIST

BIA Council Orientation Checklist:

Once the municipal election is completed and the new council sworn in, OBIAA recommends, as a local Board of Council, reaching out to further strengthen the working relationship with your Municipal Council. The following list provides ideas from which you can build, initiate and implement to enhance your BIA's relationship with your municipality.

Here are key suggestions/checklists your BIA can do:

- Send a letter of thanks to your Municipal Clerk
- Send a letter of congratulations to all Municipal Council members
- "What is a BIA" presentation
- "Value of BIA's" presentation and Letter
- Defined map of local BIA boundary
- BIA Levy / Budgeting process
- Tour of BIA to highlight areas that require Municipalities' assistance
- Schedule regular recurring meetings with key Municipal Staff, BIA Board, and Municipal Council
- Ensure Council is on email lists for upcoming events, new releases, and monthly or quarterly updates

HOW BIAS CAN ENGAGE WITH NEW COUNCILLORS CHECKLIST

BIA Council Orientation Checklist:

- Deputation before Municipal Council to introduce staff and events - showcasing the importance of the BIA to their community
- Conduct governance training with the new BIA Board (including Council representatives and Municipal Clerk) – OBIAA provides this service for a fee (Minimum \$500.00 plus expenses)
- OBIAA Reference Binder (with OBIAA membership receive PDF copy)
- Create a Memorandum of Understanding between the BIA and Municipality
- Return on Investment Infographic
- Annual Report to Council (AGM materials)

POST ELECTION LETTER TO COUNCIL

PUT THIS ON YOUR LETTERHEAD

Dear Mayor _____:

Dear Councillor _____:

Congratulations on your Election or Re-election!

The **BIA NAME** is truly looking forward to working with you to build a strong local business community. Clearly, the community has put faith in your work and your vision.

BIA OPTION: (Here you may want to pick some of the questions for Candidates from the List in the Toolkit and list them as joint priorities. Your BIA may want to highlight some campaign promises made by your incoming Council representatives)

For your information, the **BIA NAME** was formed in **YEAR OF MUNICIPAL BY-LAW FORMING THE BIA**. Since that time we have continued to work for the collective good of those businesses and property owners within our boundaries as well as the local residents. There is more information on what a BIA is at the end of this letter for your knowledge and interest.

Our BIA is involved in many aspects of economic development and community revitalization while striving for good governance, some of our recent work includes:

BIA NAME list some of the accomplishments of your BIA here (some suggested examples are below):

- Strategic Planning and Visioning (link to your Strategic Plan)
- Beautification and Maintenance
- Marketing
- Events and Promotions
- Commercial Research
- Streetscape Improvements
- Public Art and Murals
- Creating Safe Environments
- Façade Improvement Programs
- Business Retention & Expansion, and...
- Championing the Area

POST ELECTION LETTER TO COUNCIL

Our BIA is eager to foster a great working partnership with Council and you specifically by guaranteeing that Municipal Act requirements, strong and solid governance documents, and good communications are in place between the Municipality and our BIA.

Our BIA is a member of the Ontario BIA Association which provides Governance training to BIAs as well as offers Professional Development to BIAs and Municipalities through an Annual Conference and Webinars. We hope you will join us by attending this annual Conference, which will be held April 16-19, 2023 in London, Ontario.

Beyond this, we know that clear communications are imperative and we are asking to 'be at the table' regarding planning and zoning, economic development, by-law enforcement, tourism incentives, Official or Secondary Plan reviews, and other items that may have an effect on our area. Together, we can forward the vision for our collective community.

Once again, Congratulations

Sincerely,

The Board and Staff of the **BIA NAME**.

HISTORY OF BIAs FOR YOUR INTEREST AND KNOWLEDGE

The first BIA was formed in 1970, by a group of Toronto business people. Ontario passed enabling legislation to create the world's first Business Improvement Area (BIA) in Bloor West Village.

Previously relying on voluntary contributions for its projects, the BIA(s) can now plan on a steady stream of revenue as collected from only the commercially assessed properties within the area as determined by Municipal Bylaw. This legislation allows for long-term planning to improve the area, self-funded by the property owners and their tenants. The BIA funding is intended to create equity... all who benefit are required to contribute. The Municipality simply collects the additional "Special Levy", through the tax bill, for the BIA to use for the revitalization of their area.

Since the creation of this first BIA, many more have been established. Now there are more than 300 BIAs in Ontario, varying in size from fewer than 60 business and property owners to more than 2000. The BIA concept is now global, adopted by more than 500 communities across Canada, 2000 throughout the United States, and thousands more around the world including Europe, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand and Japan.

A Business Improvement Area (BIA) is a "made-in-Ontario" innovation that allows local business people and commercial property owners and tenants to join together and, with the support of the municipality, to organize, finance, and carry out physical improvements and promote economic development in their district.

The basic function of a BIA, under the Municipal Act, is 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
- Promote the area as a business or shopping area

The success in this legislation is in the number of Municipalities that have enabled and partnered with their business community, with the amount of BIAs in Ontario growing every year.

In the past years further changes have been made to the legislation that have made the local BIAs a 'local board' of the municipality, solidifying this unique partnership between the municipality and their BIA (business community). Municipalities understand the benefits of supporting a business area that is, through the self-funding mechanism, helping the whole community towards economic vitality.

POST ELECTION LETTER TO CLERKS

PUT THIS ON YOUR BIA's LETTERHEAD

Dear Clerk,

On behalf of the **BIA NAME**, we wish to extend our thanks for your work to prepare for the 2022 Municipal Election as well as thanking you for your ongoing support.

As you know the BIA NAME is a Local Board of Council and therefore governed by the Municipal Act of Ontario. This means we are subject to:

- Municipal Act, 2001 (Sections 204-216 and references to “Local Board”),
- Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA),
- Portions of the Municipal Elections Act, 1996,
- Municipal Conflict of Interest Act; and one of the following:
 - Ontario Ombudsman
 - Meeting Investigator
 - Integrity Commissioner

We also understand that under the Municipal Act we must have the following:

- Procedure By-Law and Notice
- Procurement/Purchasing
- Personnel (HR)
- Land acquisition/ownership
- Records Retention

These policies, and more, are subject to approval by the Municipal Council with the BIA's Procedure By-Law needing the additional approval of the BIA Membership.

The Municipal Act does outline who the members of our BIA are but is less clear on who is eligible to be a board member, so our Board would very much appreciate your input on determining this important item as we prepare for our BIA Election.

POST ELECTION LETTER TO CLERKS

Clearly, as a Local Board of Council and as indicated above, we are subject to a number of Acts and as a private-public partnership, many of our Board Members (and general Members) may not be proficient in these Acts. We humbly request that our BIA Board be notified and eligible to attend any training you are providing to your new Council on these Acts, or on items such as holding Open and Closed Meetings.

The goal of our BIA is clear, under the Municipal Act, we wish to work together as and for the collective good of our community, with good governance and know in order to achieve this we need to work closely with you, while respecting the busy-ness of your position.

Thank you for all you do on behalf of our Municipality.

Sincerely,

BIA NAME

HOW TO REQUEST, MAKE AND CONDUCT A DEPUTATION TO NEW COUNCIL

*Council Deputation (10 minute) Format:

- Contact the Clerk's Office to request a deputation (date to be scheduled after new Council takes effect on November 15, 2022)
- Introduce BIA speakers (E.D. & Board President)
- Congratulate Mayor and Councillors on new council and winning of elections
- Briefly outline BIA (hand out map if available) in flyer that highlights BIA benefits
- Invite Mayor and Council to attend a BIA tour and dinner (hosted in the BIA) - include key department heads
- Highlight BIA accomplishments and key activities/events
- Show OBIAA 50th Video and "What is a BIA" video
- Ask for any questions (outside of 10 minutes)

BIA BOARD ELECTION TOOLKIT

So Your BIA is Having a Board Election...

This toolkit will focus on preparing for your BIA Board Elections while providing you with great best practices to help you build a smooth election cycle and BIA Board of Directors.



MUNICIPAL ACT ON BIA ELECTIONS

The Municipal Act States	Plain Language Explanation of the Municipal Act
<p>Term 204 (10) The term of the directors of a board of management is the same as the term of the council that appointed them but continues until their successors are appointed. 2001, c. 25, s. 204 (10).</p> <p>Reappointment (11) Directors are eligible for reappointment. 2001, c. 25, s. 204 (11).</p>	<p>Directors' term on the board of management is tied to the term of the municipal council who appoints them. That said, a board of management's term continues until its successor is appointed.</p> <p>Directors can be reappointed.</p> <p>The whole slate of the board of management is on the ballot</p>

