



February 9, 2023

The Honourable Peter Bethlenfalvy
Minister of Finance
c/o Budget Secretariat
Frost Building North, 3rd Floor
95 Grosvenor Street
Toronto, Ontario M7A 1Z1

RE: OBIAA Submission to 2023 Provincial Budget Consultations

To Peter Bethlenfalvy, the Honourable Minister of Finance,

As the Government of Ontario prepares for the 2023 Budget deliberations the Ontario BIA Association has identified issues that affect main streets across Ontario's 444 municipalities. The OBIAA is the only voice that speaks directly to and about our main streets.

The attached document encapsulates the issues that are currently affecting our main streets (BIAs) as well as recommendations and actions that have relevance to your budget cycle. Much of our response is drawn from your pre-election budget.

We thank you for your time in reviewing the attached document as we hope it will help inform and align with the Government of Ontario's budget priorities and in turn will enhance Ontario's main street economy.

Our Business Improvement Areas (BIAs) are part of the framework of the Ontario community and economy. Many of our BIAs represent the founding villages, towns and cities that make up Ontario. While BIAs have only been a part of the Canadian landscape for the past 50 years, they are responsible for providing their business areas an almost 100% return on investment of local funds. Our BIAs and OBIAA are therefore key industry partners. Our BIAs are Public Realm Investors, Area Marketers and Event Facilitators. The businesses within our BIAs are innovators, entrepreneurs and part of the creative community. Our BIAs most often are the 'heart' of their community, representing *heritage, economy, arts, revitalization and tourism*.

The work of BIAs has never been more critical than it is today during this unprecedented time in history, the COVID-19 pandemic. *Now we must turn our sights to recovery*. Our BIAs represent thousands of small businesses with a critical employment base, which is integral to driving our economy. Our future recovery must start with our BIAs' small businesses.

**A BIA IS INTEGRAL TO ADVANCING A DISTINCT, LIVABLE,
VIBRANT AND RESILIENT BUSINESS DISTRICT WITHIN THEIR LOCAL COMMUNITY.**



The OBIAA welcomes the opportunity of being a key stakeholder in relation to Ontario's small businesses, the main street economy, current social issues that affect our main streets and our common goal of rebuilding Ontario's economy.

Upon reviewing our issues, we welcome the opportunity to meet with you to further discuss the issues affecting main street.

Sincerely,

Doug Sams

Doug Sams, President
Ontario BIA Association

- Cc:**
- Minister Steven Clark, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing
 - Minister Lisa Thompson, Minister of Agriculture Food and Rural Affairs
 - Minister Vic Fedeli, Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade
 - Minister Neil Lumsden, Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport
 - Hon. Parm Gill | Minister, Ministry of Red Tape Reduction
 - Stephen Crawford. Parliamentary Assistant, Ministry of Finance
 - Cam Vidler, Head of Policy and Budget, Ministry of Finance
 - Shir Barzilay | Executive Director of Policy and Budget | Ministry of Finance
 - Robert Thompson, Chief of Staff, Ministry of Red Tape Reduction
 - Jonathan Stathakos | Stakeholder Relations Advisor, Ministry of Red Tape Reduction

OBIAA Ministry Liaisons:

- Terry Fenton, Acting Manager, Local Government and Housing, MSO Central Region, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing
- Stephen Morris, Team Lead, Business Analysis and Resources Unit, Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs
- Eva Pinto, Assistant Director for Small Business, Office of Red Tape Reduction & Small Business, Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade
- Darryl Soshycki, Manager, Regional Tourism and Data Analysis | Regional Tourism and Research Analysis Unit, Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Cultural Industries