

Relationships, Good Governance and Key Actors

BIAs and their local municipalities

Stephen O'Brien, City of Guelph

OBIAA Conference

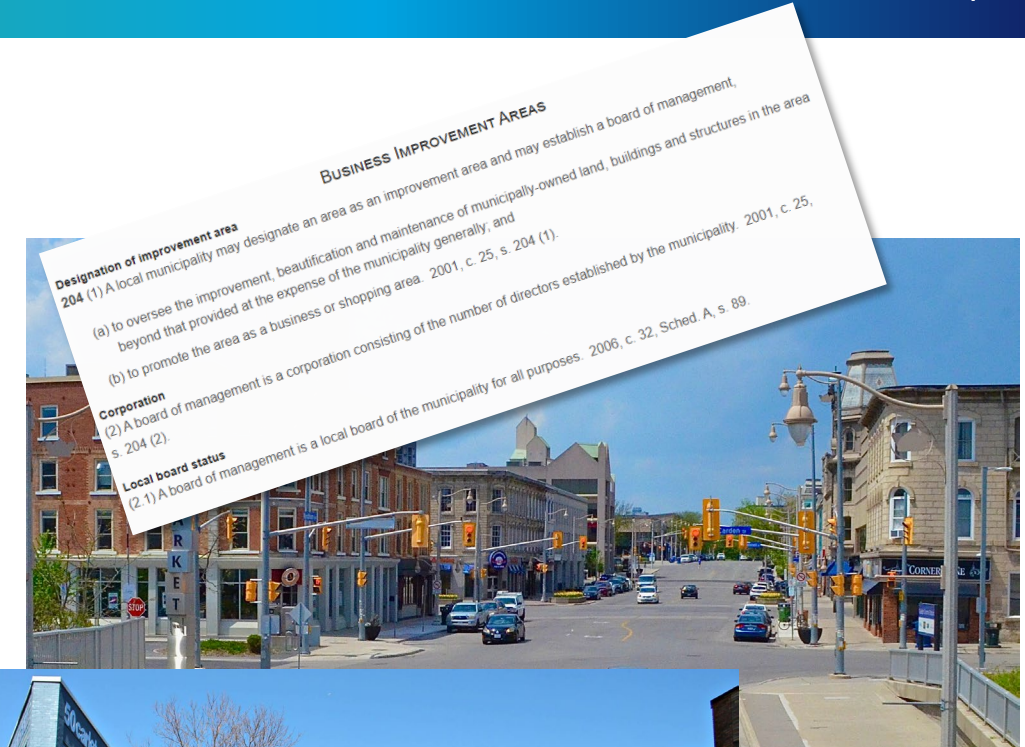
April 29, 2024

Lots to discuss

- Starting point...the legislation
- Key positions and persons in the relationship
- Building strong relationships
- Best practices in good governance

Starting point...the legislation

- 1970s and Bloor West Village
- General functions:
 - Oversee improvement, beautification, and maintenance of municipally-owned land, buildings and structures in the area beyond that provided by the municipality.
 - Promote the area as a business or shopping area.
- BIAs are local boards
- Sections 204 – 215 of the Municipal Act
- A corporation / body established by the municipality



Downtown Guelph



Downtown Sudbury

- What is the significance of being a Local Board?
 - Subject to certain requirements of the Municipal Act
 - Subject to accountability and transparency regime
 - Integrity commissioners / codes of conduct
 - Ombudsman
 - Open meetings / Closed Meeting Investigator
 - Access to records and MFIPPA
 - Required policies
 - Sale and disposition of land
 - Hiring of employees
 - Procurement of goods and services
 - Meetings and meeting processes
 - Must adopt a procedure by-law that governs the calling and processes of meetings.
 - Close a meeting to the public for narrow reasons (means most are public meetings)



Key positions and persons in the relationship

Members of Council

- Some may be part of your BIA board
- Local councillor that represents the area the BIA is located
- Linkages to broader municipal decision making
- Provide good experience and context
- Advocates for BIA activities and work at the Council table
- Can assist with board and governance best practices



Thorold and Barry's Bay BIAs



Jane Clohecy, Michael Dubin, Marlon Kallideen and Michael Prowse

Chief Administrative Officer

- Senior most unelected official in municipal government
- Strategic and operational advice to Council
- Help to link with other related local boards and community stakeholders
- Vision of how the administration should operate
- Monitor performance and manage financial and human resources

Economic Development Staff

- Traditionally, a supportive, rather than regulatory, role in economic development policy
- Attract capital investment, incentivize businesses to relocate to local communities, and create employment opportunities
- Supports for entrepreneurs, business retention and expansion (BR+E) strategies, and workforce development programs
- Cluster strategies to strengthen the competitiveness of cities and city-regions





Municipal Clerk

- Experts in good governance and requirements of Municipal Act
- Supports board appointments
- Supports BIA creation and expansion process
- Can be a resource on required policies, open meeting rules, Municipal Act requirements
- Unelected and therefore apolitical
- “Hub of government” and serves as a direct link between city residents and their government

Integrity Commissioner and other accountability roles

- Code of conduct and conflict of interest act advice (Integrity Commissioner)
- Enforcement of code of conduct (Integrity Commissioner)
- Investigation of improperly closed meetings (Closed Meeting Investigator)
- Handle complaints about the administrative processes and policies (Ombudsman)
- Registration of lobbyists and complaints relating to lobbying (Lobbyist Registrar)



LOBBYISTS
REGISTRY



Downtown Renfrew BIA



Downtown Huntsville BIA

Most importantly...BIA boards and members

- Entrepreneurs with lived experience
- Wide ranging experience and services offered
- On the ground knowledge
- Windows into community dynamics
- Selected by peers
- Often serve as 'working' board members given their experience
- Opportunities for direct feedback

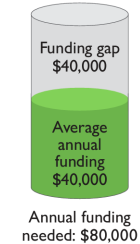
Building strong relationships

Transparency in decision making

- Open meetings
- Agendas posted early and predictably
- Accessible minutes shortly after meetings
- Policies and governing by-laws available online
- Annual reports
- Financial/budget reports
- Strategic Plan
- Data, KPIs and metrics

Business Improvement Area

Total asset replacement value	\$200,000
Current condition	POOR ⬆
Projected condition in 25 years	EXCELLENT ⬆
Annual funding needed to meet target performance	\$80,000
Annual average funding	\$40,000
Annual funding gap	\$40,000
Funding source	BIA levy and grants
Data maturity level	Not applicable



Uptown Waterloo BIA AM Report

BY-LAW OF THE DOWNTOWN BARRIE BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT AREA (BIA) (THE "ASSOCIATION")

FINANCIAL POLICY BY-LAW

By-Law No.: 2021-01

A. BUDGET AND PLANNING

1. Pursuant to section 204 of the *Municipal Act, 2001*, funds of the Association shall only be used for the promotion, improvement, beautification or maintenance of municipally-

Downtown Barria BIA By-law



Uptown Waterloo BIA Strategic Plan 2022 – 2025



Communication

- Who helps link your BIA to your municipality?
 - CAO
 - Ec Dev team
 - Clerk
 - Executive Director/manager
- Elected Councillor on the BIA board
- Regular 'chats'
- Availability
- Reliability
- Active, constant and ongoing

Trust, respect, collaboration and feedback

- Trust is built over time and can be lost quickly – need to nurture
- Respect the roles of each 'player' in the game – BIA boards have an integral role, so too does Council and staff
- Collaboration can be a powerful means to build trust and respect
- Feedback that is honest, considerate and constructive helps prevents problems from smoldering



Best practices in good governance

A dozen good governance tips...

1. Understand the origins in legislation
2. Know what it means to be a Local Board
3. Know the accountability and transparency regime that is in place
4. Make by-laws and policies available online
5. Give notice of meetings and hold them in open
6. Know Council's role

A dozen good governance tips...

7. Know where and how staff can support – CAO, Ec Dev teams, Clerk
8. Support and engage with BIA members – their ‘ground’ knowledge is unparalleled
9. Build and support transparency in decision making
10. Practice open communication techniques – be available, be reliable, be active and be present
11. Foster trusting relationships by respecting roles, collaborating and providing feedback
12. Share in wins, support during trying times, and remember who we all serve



Comments, questions and thoughts?