



OBIAA PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAY

SHORING UP YOUR
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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Working with BIAs

From a municipal lens

It is not only beneficial but vital to work with BIAs as it relates to community and economic development.

BIAs are often the “doers”, the hands-on folks coordinating and implementing the many ways we build our communities.

By supporting and strengthening the BIAs, we are essentially building a stronger tool that helps to achieve community and economic development goals at a municipal level.





Benefits of working with your BIA

Business Environment

Working with BIAs it helps encourage a more vibrant and sustainable business environment, benefiting the businesses and the community.

BIA member insight

The business owners and BIA members are usually locals or permanent residents who have a unique understanding of the “essence” of the community they live and work in.

Strategic Planning

When our goals and strategies are aligned, we can plan events and initiatives year-round the benefit visitors and residents.

Collaborative marketing

Strategically planning co-marketing initiatives helps achieve common goals e.g. drive foot traffic downtown and engage residents to shop local.

Enhance Public Spaces

BIAs typically work on beautification projects such as landscaping, public art installations, improved sidewalks and crosswalks for pedestrian traffic, and physical design.

Shared resources

The municipality can share resources with the BIAs, including people resources, funding streams for marketing and promotions, events and festivals, or physical updates.



How to create a collaborative relationship

Genuine dialogue

Learn about each others' goals, strategic initiatives, challenges, and a common "passion" for their work as it related to downtown businesses and the vital role the BIA plays in creating a connected community.

Recurring meetings

Set sustainable recurring meetings, ideally in-person. Attend member meetings and AGMs when you can, and other professional development events.



How to create a collaborative relationship

Develop an MOU

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) sets the terms and understanding between the municipality and the BIA on their respective areas of responsibility in working together in the successful improvement and ongoing development of the downtown areas.

Include BIAs in plans

Ensure both the municipality and the BIAs have defined in their strategic and/or business plans how they are working together, and on what initiatives.





BIAs as an economic development tool

The BIA's focus is driving residents and visitors downtown to encourage spending in local businesses, increasing revenue (year-round we hope!).

This supports economic growth in their areas, which may work to attract new businesses, support startups, and investment attraction.

When we support and promote businesses in the shoulder season, for example, we encourage residents to buy local. Having amenities, community events, shopping, dining, etc. available year-round encourages people to relocate, converting visitors and seasonal residents into permanent residents, increasing the taxbase, allowing us to invest more in our community.



Key take aways for BIAs

Connect with your local economic development or community development person and start dialogue.

Set regular meetings with your BIA Coordinator or Chair.

Develop an MOU Are there gaps in service and support that can be seen as areas of opportunity.

Review BIA and municipal strategic plans together and identify ways to collaborate and include each other in the planning process.



Look for opportunities the municipality can support the BIA initiatives while aligning with economic and community development goals.

Identify challenges and barriers each party is facing as it relates to executing goals and initiatives.



THANK YOU