

February 2025

RE: OBIAA Helps Ontario's BIAs Prepare For 2025 Provincial Election

In preparation for the upcoming 2025 Provincial Election, the **Ontario Business Improvement Area Association (OBIAA)** is pleased to present our 2025 Provincial Election Priorities for Ontario's Main Streets and BIAs.

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.

Our Main Street communities need a concerted effort. Our key priorities are:

- 1. Funding for Ontario's Main Street revitalization program**
- 2. Safe and Fully Utilized Infrastructure - utilization of vacant buildings and properties on Main Streets for housing, while maintaining the unique character of many of our Main Streets**
- 3. Healthy and Sustainable Main Streets**

Doug Sams, as President of OBIAA and Executive Director of the Kerr Village BIA recognizes the economic value of Main Street to the Province of Ontario, he states *"Provincial Leadership includes recognizing the value of Main Streets and BIAs to the local economy and to supporting the local community. OBIAA's Election priorities are essential in building and maintaining a strong economy. The next Provincial Government needs to recognize and prioritize our key areas as unique, local drivers of entrepreneurship in a free enterprise setting."*

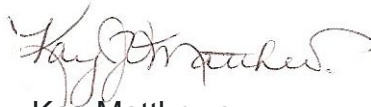


For further information about our priorities, please don't hesitate to contact OBIAA. We look forward to partnering with you to create vibrant Main Streets in Ontario.

Your Truly,



Doug Sams
OBIAA President
Kerr Village BIA Executive Director



Kay Matthews
OBIAA ED

ABOUT OBIAA

OBIAA, since 2001, is the network that represents unique and vibrant main streets and BIAs across Ontario. As the leading catalyst, OBIAA raises the profile and builds the capacity of main streets across the province, working to build economic prosperity and social cohesiveness, making Ontario stronger by ensuring main streets are desirable and viable places to invest and live.

OBIAA collectively represents:

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

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. Value of BIAs Presentation - <https://obiaa.com/updates-announcements/value-of-bias-presentation/>
2. What is a BIA Video - <https://youtu.be/97nb27sOF2s>

