



Why be part of a BIA?

Business Improvement Areas play a crucial role in the economic development of small towns in Ontario, serving as catalysts for local business growth, community revitalisation and economic resilience.

Economic Stimulation:

BIAs are instrumental in developing and growing local businesses in rural Ontario. They work to:

- attract investment, businesses, customers, and families
- increase the number of businesses
- grow our town's GDP
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Collective Resource Pooling (along with the municipality and other organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce):

- fund improvements to social, economic and physical conditions of an area through beautification efforts, promotions and events
- attract new customers and increase property values

Community Revitalisation:

For 50 years BIAs have been pivotal in main street community revitalisation with focuses on:

- public space improvement
- entrepreneurship support
- community advocacy

Placemaking and Tourism:

BIAs contribute to making small towns attractive destinations by

- organising local festivals, farmers' markets and specialised local events
- through street beautification with plants, banners, public art and street furnishings

Partnerships and collaboration:

Government:

BIAs serve as a bridge between local businesses and municipal governments, indeed we can say that the Town of Saugeen Shores supports the efforts and initiatives of the BIA 100%!

Through the provincial body, OBIAA, BIAs have a voice at the Provincial and Federal tables as well

Service groups, businesses and other organisations

BIAs work with local service groups (Rotary, Lions), member businesses, the Chamber, Town, the County of Bruce and RTO7 to create partnerships for social events, business events, and business support

Long Term Strategic Planning

to ensure sustained economic development

Balancing Local and Chain Businesses

On average, chains make up 7% of BIA membership in Ontario, helping to maintain the unique character of small towns like ours.

While BIAs are typically associated with core commercial districts, service businesses located outside of these areas can still benefit from BIA Membership.

1. Collective Marketing and Promotion
 - inclusion in BIA-wide promotional campaigns and events
 - inclusion on BIA business directory and online platforms
 - access to collective advertising initiatives that reach a broader audience
2. Networking and Collaboration
 - opportunities to connect with other local businesses and potential clients
 - access b2b services within the BIA network
 - potential for collaborative projects or partnerships with other members
3. Community Engagement
 - participation in BIA-organised events and initiatives that, enhance brand visibility
 - opportunities to contribute to local economic development initiatives
 - Enhanced reputation through association with community improvement efforts
4. Access to grants and incentives
 - BIAs are often the first to know of funding opportunities that might benefit member businesses such as Spruce the Bruce and RT07 grants

Economic Spillover Effects:

Improvements in the core commercial district can benefit businesses throughout the town:

- increased overall economic activity in the area can lead to more customers for service businesses
- enhanced town image and reputation can attract new residents and businesses, expanding the potential client base

While the direct physical improvements may not affect businesses presently outside our boundary, the overall economic and community benefits of BIA membership can still provide significant value to service businesses outside the core commercial district.

In conclusion, BIAs are essential drivers of economic development in small Ontario towns and they serve to foster business growth, community engagement and resilience in the face of economic challenges. Our ability to adapt to changing circumstances and collaborate with various stakeholders makes us invaluable assets for the continued vitality of our community. A vibrant local economy supported by BIA initiatives can attract more customers and increase business activity, benefitting service businesses indirectly.

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