

Southampton BIA Summer Delegation



May 11, 2026

Executive Summary


Welcome Back to Southampton




The Southampton Business Improvement Area is pleased to provide an update on the High Street Revitalization, ongoing business support efforts and key initiatives aimed at strengthening our local economy. While the completion of construction within our downtown core marks a significant milestone, it is important to acknowledge that many businesses continue to experience a meaningful decline in sales. This reflects both broader economic pressures and the lingering impacts of the construction period.

Although the core streetscape work is now complete, we recognize that economic recovery does not occur as quickly as physical construction, and continued support and strategic action remain essential.

Key highlights include:


 At the local level, our **Love Local Winter Campaign** provided targeted support during a traditionally slower season, with 12 community members receiving a \$100 voucher to spend at participating businesses. This initiative was designed to stimulate immediate spending and support businesses still navigating post-construction impacts.

 Council and staff are warmly invited to join us for our **High Street Grand Reopening Celebration on May 16**, including a ribbon cutting at 1:00 PM followed by live music, sidewalk sales, and community activities that will reintroduce our downtown as a vibrant and welcoming destination.

With this in mind, the BIA has prioritized both local and regional initiatives to help rebuild momentum.

The Experience Hwy 21 initiative brings together neighbouring BIAs to collaboratively position our region as a destination, encouraging visitors to explore multiple towns along the corridor rather than viewing them in isolation.

As we move forward, our focus remains on activation, promotion, and regional collaboration to ensure a strong and sustained recovery for Southampton's downtown.

 The BIA would especially like to express our sincere appreciation for the ongoing collaboration and support from municipal staff including (and in no particular order), Amanda Monaghan, Ruhul Amin, Lukas Heathers, Paul McGrath, Adam Parsons and Trevor Robinson and his team. Their partnership, responsiveness, and commitment have played a huge role in supporting both the HSR Project and our business community throughout this period.

Experience Hwy 21 Initiative – Regional Collaboration

Experience Hwy 21

In response to ongoing shifts in consumer behaviour and a continued decline in year-over-year sales, the Southampton BIA identified an opportunity to move beyond traditional, individual community marketing and instead take a more coordinated, regional approach.

The Experience Hwy 21 initiative began with outreach from the Southampton BIA to neighbouring BIAs including Lakeside Downtown Kincardine BIA, Downtown Port Elgin BIA, Downtown Goderich BIA, and Owen Sound River District BIA, to explore opportunities for collaboration.

These early conversations were met with strong interest and a shared recognition that our communities are facing similar economic challenges *and* opportunities.

Together, we developed a collective vision to position the Highway 21 corridor as a connected destination experience that encourages visitors to explore multiple communities in a single trip rather than viewing them in isolation.

The Southampton BIA was pleased to initiate and help facilitate these early discussions with all participating BIAs contributing their perspectives, ideas, and ongoing commitment to shaping the initiative. This collaborative approach has been key to building momentum and ensuring the initiative reflects the strengths and character of each community.



The Experience Hwy 21 initiative focuses on:

- Coordinated marketing and storytelling across communities
- Encouraging a shift from single-stop visits to multi-community experiences
- Strengthening regional identity along the Lake Huron and Georgian Bay corridor
- Creating opportunities for shared campaigns and cross-promotion

This initiative reflects a broader and necessary shift, from individual promotion to collective destination-building, and demonstrates how regional collaboration can strengthen economic resilience across all participating communities.

The Southampton BIA is proud to be part of this partnership and looks forward to continuing building on this joint mission.

OBIAA Overview



Award of Merit for Streetscaping & Public Realm

Please join us as we have a Re-opening Celebration May 16th 1-5pm

The Southampton BIA is proud to share that the High Street Revitalization project was recognized with a Certificate of Merit in Streetscaping & Public Realm Improvements by the Ontario Business Improvement Area Association at their recent conference.

This recognition reflects not only the physical transformation of High Street, but also the collaborative effort behind it including thoughtful design, strong communication, and a shared commitment to supporting businesses throughout construction.

The award acknowledges the work of the Municipality of Saugeen Shores, project partners, and the business community. It reinforces the value of investing in public spaces that are both functional and reflective of Southampton's character.

Why An Award Matters



It validates the investment in High Street. It provides independent validation that the project was not only necessary, but well-executed and impactful.



It strengthens Southampton's reputation as a destination. This recognition supports tourism, business attraction, and overall community pride by elevating how our downtown is perceived both regionally and provincially.



It highlights the strength of collaboration. It demonstrates that strong communication, shared goals, and collaboration can lead to meaningful outcomes even through complex and disruptive projects like major construction.



Paul McGrath, Economic Development Officer,
Sara Porter, BIA Chair, Amanda Monaghan,
Community Development Officer

Provincial Advocacy

ROMA Delegations

As part of ongoing advocacy efforts, I participated in delegations at the Rural Ontario Municipal Association Conference, engaging directly with provincial representatives on issues impacting small and rural communities.

These discussions focused on the realities facing downtown business areas, including construction mitigation, economic recovery, and the unique challenges of seasonal economies.

Participation in these delegations ensured that the voice of Southampton, and the broader BIA network, was represented in conversations shaping provincial policy and funding priorities.



Rachel Braithwaite, OBIAA Executive Director, Sue Nicholson, OBIAA Board Member, Sara Porter, SBIA Chair, Bob Bailey Ministry of Rural Affairs Parliamentary Assistant, and Andrew Marks, OBIAA Board Member

Association of Municipalities of Ontario

I will also be attending AMO (August 16-19th) with OBIAA Executive Director Rachel Braithwaite and President Stephanie Hicks. We are currently in our planning process for our AMO presentations and will share those with Amanda Monaghan and Paul McGrath during our monthly meetings so the Town is aware of OBIAAs recommendations.



OBIAA Conference Roundtable with Minister Tangri

At the OBIAA Conference in April, I had the opportunity to moderate roundtable discussions with Nina Tangri, Ontario's Associate Minister of Small Business.

This session brought together BIA leaders from across the province to share insights, challenges, and opportunities directly with the Minister.

Particular concerns were for small business support, economic recovery, and the evolving role of BIAs. BIAs want to ensure that frontline experiences from communities like Southampton are reflected in provincial conversations.

Escarpment Magazine





Clothing in these photos from Southampton's Lac Boutique featured in past issues of Escarpment

8 Page Escarpment Summer spread

01

A Photo Walking Tour Through Southampton

From locations the Bruce County Museum and Cultural Centre, Town Hall, The Flag, Scubby's Point and our beautiful High Street businesses, we can bring Southampton Georgian Bay, Grey/Simcoe and surrounding areas.

02

Showcase Our Services

Our service industries often don't need the same support from BIAs that our Retailers do. Their customer base is often solid and not expanding. This gives us an opportunity to showcase our personal care businesses.

03

Expand our Reach

Escarpment® distributes 22,000 copies with a reach of 50,000 per issue. Magazines may be found at local hot spots, popular businesses and high traffic locations free of charge. In an email survey directed at our existing advertisers, an overwhelming 98% of respondents replied "YES" when asked, "Has involvement in Escarpment® Magazine helped bring you clients to grow your business or increased your brand awareness?"

Additional SBIA Information





ELECT RESPECT

DEMOCRACY DEPENDS ON IT

electrespect.ca

The Southampton BIA has moved to elect this initiative and we encourage the Town to do so, as well.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

THAT **The Town of Saugeen Shores Council** supports the Elect Respect pledge and commits to:

- Treat others with respect in all spaces - public, private, and online;
- Reject and call out harassment, abuse, and personal attacks;
- Focus debate on ideas and policies, not personal attacks;
- Help build a supportive culture where people of all backgrounds feel safe to run for and hold office;
- Call on relevant authorities to ensure the protection of elected officials who face abuse or threats, and
- Model integrity and respect by holding one another to the highest standards of conduct.

AND THAT **The Town of Saugeen Shores Council** calls on elected officials, organizations and community members to support the Elect Respect campaign and sign the online pledge at www.electrespect.ca.

AND THAT a copy of this resolution be sent to the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, Ontario's Big City Mayors, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, the Office of the Mayor of Burlington, relevant MPs and MPPs, Regional Police, the Ontario Provincial Police and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

Public Art



Kennedy Cameron-Nashkewa

Kennedy Cameron-Nashkewa is a 17-year-old Anishinaabe Kwe artist from Saugeen First Nation, known for her vibrant, community-focused art that highlights Indigenous culture, the 7 Grandfather Teachings, and land stewardship. She has gained recognition for her work, including murals for the Southampton Arts Centre and the official land acknowledgement artwork for Bruce County seen here.

We will be unveiling a new mural by Kennedy on the Southampton Bell Building during the Southampton Arts Festival on August 2nd

Upcoming Events

2026 Events

Check southamptonbia.com for full listing of community events!

MAY 16 HIGH ST REOPENING 1 PM ON
Celebration & Sidewalk Sale

JUN 28 SETTLEMENT SERVICES MULTICULTURAL DAY 11-1 PM
Pioneer Park

JUN PRIDE MONTH
NATIONAL INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' DAY - JUNE 21

JULY 1 CANADA DAY
On the Street & at the Flag!

JUN thru AUG PARTICIPATING STORES OPEN LATE UNTIL 8

JUN thru AUG CRUISER'S CRUISE NIGHT UNTIL 8
Grosvenor at High Supporting SMHF

OCT 16 LADIES AT THE LAKE CHECK BACK FOR TIME
Fashion Show at Lac Boutique

OCT 17 LADIES AT THE LAKE CHECK WEBSITE FOR DETAILS
Loads of in-shop promos & events

OCT 17 LATL DANCE 7-11PM
This years theme will be a surprise! Please check back

NOV 19 SPARKLES NIGHT 6:30 PM
Christmas tree lighting & holiday shopping

NOV 27 **DEC 11, 18** FESTIVE FRIDAYS 4:30-8PM
Horse Drawn Wagon Rides

NOV 28 SOUTHAMPTON GLOWS CHRISTMAS MARKET 12:30 - 11:30 PM

DEC 18 4TH ANNUAL SANTA SUMMIT 2PM ON

Scan below for full details or visit our website at southamptonbia.com



More...

WALK STORE TO SHORE...

Our businesses are open to share their unique goods and quality products with you, and there are so many other things to see & do with our Community Partners!!!

- Friday Night Piper at the Flag, all summer
- Concerts at Fairy Lake Fri evenings
- Bruce County Bash June 27
- Bruce County Museum ongoing
- Saugeen First Nation Market Thurs nights
- Artisan & Tastes Market Fridays
- Bruce County Playhouse all summer
- Bruce County Comicon July 11
- Marine Heritage Festival July 24-26
- Southampton Arts Festival Aug 1-3
- Gran Fondo Aug 15
- Legion Parking Lot Party Aug 28
- National Day for Truth & Reconciliation Sept 30
- Pumpkinfest Oct 3-4
- Chambettes ShareCrows Food Drive Oct 20-31
- Chambettes Christmas House Tour Nov 14
- Saugeen Shores Rotary Santa Claus Parade Dec 4

Questions?

Tourist information?

Who's open when?

www.southamptonbia.com



Again, the Southampton BIA would like to extend our sincere thanks to Council and Staff for your continued support, collaboration, and commitment to our community.

Community projects require not only investment, but ongoing partnership, communication, and trust. We are grateful for the role the Municipality of Saugeen Shores has played in supporting both the High Street Revitalization and the businesses that continue to navigate its impacts.

As we move into this next phase, we look forward to building on this momentum together, focusing on activation, visitation, and long-term economic resilience for our community.

We hope to see you on May 16th as we celebrate the reopening of High Street and welcome the community back downtown!

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sara Porter". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sara Porter, Chair

