

# THE VALUE OF OTTAWA'S BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT AREAS

Driving Ottawa's Economy and  
Communities Forward

*We are*  
**Open**



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# OTTAWA'S BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT AREAS

Ottawa is home to distinct Business Improvement Areas (BIAs), found across urban, suburban, and rural communities. Each one is more than just a place to shop – they are neighbourhoods to explore, stroll through, and connect in. BIAs are vital hubs of culture and commerce, driving both community life and Ottawa's economy.



DOWNTOWN RIDEAU BIA



# WHAT MAKES A BIA UNIQUE

CENTRETOWN BIA

A Business Improvement Area (BIA) is a “made-in-Ontario” innovation that allows local business people and commercial property owners and tenants to join together and, with the support of the municipality, to organize, finance, and carry out physical improvements and promote economic development in their district.

BIAs are local boards of the municipality, governed by a volunteer board of management that includes the local City Councillor. They consult with businesses throughout the year, hosting monthly meetings to plan initiatives, as well as an annual general meeting to approve budgets and elect board members. Participation & input are welcome from all members.



WESTBORO VILLAGE BIA

PRESTON ST. BIA

MANOTICK BIA



# HOW IS A BIA FUNDED

DOWNTOWN BIA

Businesses provide input to shape the budget and vote on it each year at the Annual General Meeting (AGM). The City collects a levy from commercial property owners (typically passed through to tenants) and provides it to the BIA. Here's how it works:

- BIA Board of Directors Prepares an Annual Budget  
The budget covers BIA operations, member programs, beautification of the mainstreet, marketing the area, events, and more.
- BIA Members Approve Annual Budget  
Members approve the budget at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) by vote.
- City Council Approves the Budget  
Each year the BIA presents its budget to City Council for approval.
- BIA Levy is Calculated  
The levy is calculated by dividing the BIA's approved budget by the total taxable assessment of the area.
- BIA Levy is Collected and Transferred  
The City collects and transfers the levy directly to the BIA's operational account.
- BIA gets to work  
The BIA executes the approved operational plan, as presented to members at the Annual General Meeting.

# OUR SHARED OBJECTIVES

SOMERSET VILLAGE BIA

BEAUTIFY

Beautify and maintain public spaces beyond what is provided by the municipality.

PROMOTE

Promote the district as a destination to shop, dine, and do business.

SUPPORT

Support economic growth by helping local businesses thrive and attract new investment.

BUILD

Build stronger connections between businesses, residents, and visitors.



# WHY BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT AREAS MATTER



CARP ROAD CORRIDOR BIA

## DRIVING LOCAL ECONOMIES

BIAs improve their local economies through:

- ◆ Advertising and promotions that showcase local businesses
- ◆ Hosting neighbourhood festivals and events
- ◆ Street enhancements and beautification projects
- ◆ Advocating with a unified business voice
- ◆ Safety and crime-prevention initiatives
- ◆ Strategic business recruitment and market studies

## CIVIC IMPROVEMENT

BIAs help shape a strong, distinct identity for neighbourhoods and position them as places to eat, shop, work, and play. This strengthens local visibility, supports tourism, and helps main streets compete with online retail.

BIAs are catalysts for civic improvement and contribute significantly to Ottawa's economy and quality of life. To support thriving, competitive, and safe commercial areas, the City provides a range of programs to BIAs.

## FORMING CONNECTIONS

BIA initiatives bring people into the area and build year-round awareness. Through marketing, events, streetscape enhancements, and advocacy, BIAs work with businesses to deliver initiatives that complement—not replace—City services and individual efforts. BIAs strengthen connections among local businesses, residents, and the wider community.

## IMPROVING QUALITY OF LIFE

BIAs enhance neighbourhood quality of life through physical improvements, welcoming streetscapes, diverse shopping and service options, job opportunities, cleanup and safety programs, and community gatherings.

## IMPROVING THE GREATER COMMUNITY

Local economic growth within a BIA can spark broader tourism, investment, and revitalization. Increased business activity strengthens both municipal and sales tax bases and supports public services. By fostering engagement and pride, BIAs help build stronger, connected communities well beyond their boundaries.



# WHAT BUSINESS IMPROVEMENTS AREAS DO

CHINATOWN BIA



## SPECIAL EVENTS

Organizing and partnering on events that showcase the area, attract visitors, and strengthen community connection.



## MARKETING

Creating targeted promotions to retain and grow the customer base, with shared advertising, media features, and seasonal campaigns that keep the area top of mind.



## STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS AND OTHER AMENITIES

Enhancing business districts through lighting, planters, banners, and public art to create an inviting, vibrant environment.



## BUSINESS RECRUITMENT

Working with property owners and realtors to fill spaces and maintain a strong, balanced business mix.



## ADVOCACY

Supporting businesses by addressing local issues such as parking, permits, and commercial taxes, and by acting as a liaison with key stakeholders.

# BIAS BY THE NUMBERS: A 2025 SNAPSHOT

KANATA NORTH BIA

**\$11,993,836,612**

in combined commercial property value assessment



**\$396,224,379**

in municipal commercial property taxes generated



**\$10,400,729**

reinvested into neighbourhoods by BIAs



**3257**

commercial properties represented



**7100 +**

businesses in BIAs



Every dollar invested by BIAs multiplies into measurable returns – in economic growth, community pride, and improved quality of life.





Properties: 182

Levy: \$498,652.34

Municipal Taxes: \$32,645,915.53

Assessment: \$1,018,800,280



Properties: 314

Levy: \$124,999.88

Municipal Taxes: \$7,869,528.83

Assessment: \$302,467,318



Properties: 164

Levy: \$1,038,558.56

Municipal Taxes: \$34,757,610.68

Assessment: \$1,010,030,036



Properties: 113

Levy: \$210,499.17

Municipal Taxes: \$9,997,289.74

Assessment: \$338,186,100



Properties: 34

Levy: \$12,999.22

Municipal Taxes: \$416,459.49

Assessment: \$10,083,000



Properties: 218

Levy: \$2,475,012.20

Municipal Taxes: \$115,529,091.67

Assessment: \$3,259,098,641



Properties: 119

Levy: \$738,690.15

Municipal Taxes: \$10,487,975.06

Assessment: \$355,477,540



Properties: 217

Levy: \$394,870.62

Municipal Taxes: \$20,666,399.19

Assessment: \$720,961,636



Properties: 72

Levy: \$262,636.95

Municipal Taxes: \$2,158,151.38

Assessment: \$71,225,721



Properties: 329

Levy: \$798,502.09

Municipal Taxes: \$18,460,844.03

Assessment: \$629,078,507



Properties: 151

Levy: \$491,391.79

Municipal Taxes: \$31,133,781.79

Assessment: \$978,483,363



Properties: 140

Levy: \$476,000.08

Municipal Taxes: \$8,763,426.66

Assessment: \$240,601,896





Properties: 99

Levy: \$163,589.90

Municipal Taxes: \$2,698,603.48

Assessment: \$67,325,168



Properties: 17

Levy: \$20,369.96

Municipal Taxes: \$665,108.81

Assessment: \$23,224,600



Properties: 324

Levy: \$524,573.17

Municipal Taxes: \$13,830,641.74

Assessment: \$352,268,078

## RIDEAU

Properties: 411

Levy: \$1,149,749.14

Municipal Taxes: \$64,510,107.85

Assessment: \$2,010,274,141



Properties: 242

Levy: \$537,500.59

Municipal Taxes: \$12,079,299.65

Assessment: \$371,219,598



Properties: 114

Levy: \$482,134.04

Municipal Taxes: \$9,554,143.78

Assessment: \$235,030,989

# ABOUT OCOBIA

OCOBIA is the unified voice of Ottawa's 18 Business Improvement Areas across urban, suburban, and rural settings. Together, they represent thousands of businesses and employees who power Ottawa's local economy.

OCOBIA advocates for policies that support mainstreets, protects the interests of BIAs, and communicates the impact of BIAs on the city's economic and social well-being. It also facilitates joint initiatives, shares knowledge and resources, and amplifies the collective voice of Ottawa's BIAs.





# OUR VISION AND MISSION

GLEBE BIA

## VISION

OCOBIA is a respected, proactive advocate and key influencer on issues and policies affecting the economic development and well-being of Ottawa BIAs and the businesses they represent.

## MISSION

As the collective voice of Ottawa BIAs, OCOBIA provides communication, collaboration, guidance, and influence – working with members and stakeholders to strengthen Ottawa's mainstreets.



GLEBE BIA

ZAC VANIER BIA

BRETON ST. BIA