



DOWNTOWN BARRIE BUSINESS ASSOCIATION (BIA)

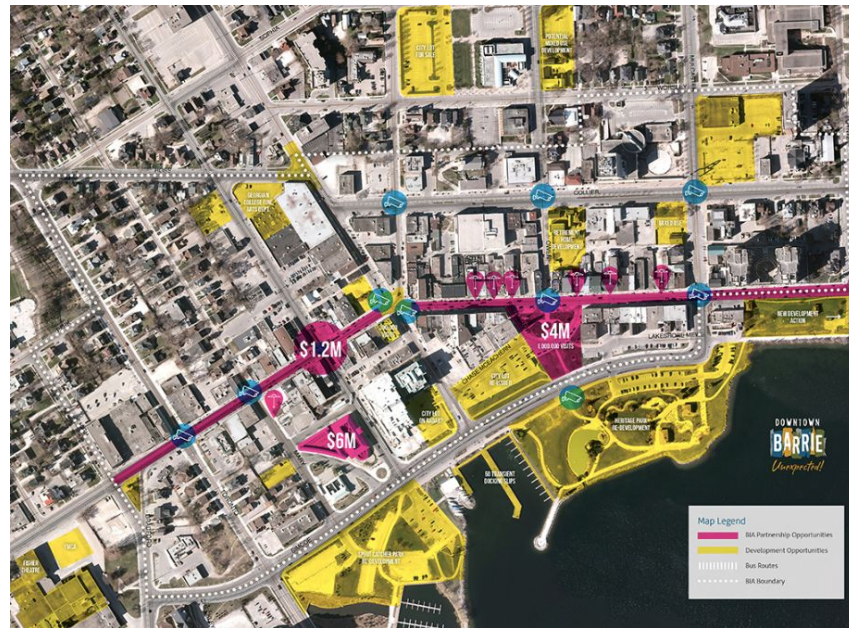
MEMBER HANDBOOK

WHAT IS THE BIA?

The Business Improvement Area (BIA) consists of commercial properties and their non-residential tenants within a defined boundary. Working in partnership with the City of Barrie, the Downtown Barrie Business Association (BIA) focuses its efforts into maintaining a strong and vibrant community within downtown Barrie for property owners, business owners, residents, visitors and tourists alike.

AM I IN THE DOWNTOWN BARRIE (BIA)?

Take a look at the map below! If your business sits within the Downtown Barrie (BIA) boundary, then you're already a member.



HISTORY

Downtown Barrie has historic roots and heritage dating back 200+ years. Before there was Barrie, there was the beginning of the Nine Mile Portage. Then came the War of 1812 and a cluster of storehouses and homes. The first streets on Barrie were named after British Officers Collier, Bayfield, Owen and Poyntz. Then came the extension of the railway which allowed the Town of Barrie to expand its transportation, agriculture and natural resource industries.

In the late 1800s, downtown Barrie experienced many fires, one which destroyed the entire north side of Dunlop Street from Bayfield Street to Owen Street. This led to a bill prohibiting construction of wooden-sided buildings and the redevelopment of a brick streetscape turned Barrie into a town complete with a commercial centre.

Today, Downtown Barrie is full of vibrancy. It's a community with an exciting future where friends, family and visitors gather to make and share memories - right at the centre of our city.

HOW DOES A BUSINESS BECOME A MEMBER OF THE BIA?

Downtown Barrie is designated a Business Improvement Area under a special municipal by-law and legislated by the Province of Ontario. If your business falls within the catchment area, then you are automatically a member of the Downtown Barrie Business Association (BIA). The boundaries of the catchment area were defined by the City of Barrie.

WHAT DO MEMBERS PAY TO BE A PART OF THE BIA?

All commercial property owners within the BIA pay a special levy on their property taxes. This levy is dependant on the property's commercial assessment and is paid when the property taxes are paid. A property owner may choose to factor in this special levy when determining the details surrounding leasing out their property to a business. Both property owners and business owners are members of the Downtown Barrie Business Association (BIA).

WHO OPERATES THE DOWNTOWN BARRIE BUSINESS ASSOCIATION (BIA)?

The Downtown Barrie Business Association (BIA) is run by a volunteer Board of Management and an office staff of three full-time employees.

The 2019-2022 Board of Management consists of 12 Board Members comprised of property owners, business owners and members of Barrie City Council.

- Denise Tucker, Chair
- Tom Ambeau, Vice Chair
- Michelle Huggins, Secretary Treasurer
- Wayne Hay
- Paul Lynch
- Teresa Woolard
- Tracey Baker
- Randy Aylwin
- Chad Ballantyne
- Jason Ing
- Keenan Aylwin, Councillor
- Clare Riepma, Councillor

The Downtown Barrie Business Association (BIA) staff is comprised of three full-time staff.

- Craig Stevens, Managing Director
- Stacey Zubczyk, Office and Events Administrator
- Kristen Eatch, Creative Communications

The Downtown Barrie Business Association (BIA) also works closely with its partners.

- Barrie Police Service
- Greater Barrie Chamber of Commerce
- Tourism Barrie
- City of Barrie

WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE DOWNTOWN BARRIE BUSINESS ASSOCIATION (BIA) AND THE CITY OF BARRIE?

The Downtown Barrie Business Association (BIA) operates independently of but with a highly valued partnership to the City of Barrie. Maintaining such a strong working relationship is vital to much of what we do including facilitating events and festivals, promoting the economic development of the downtown and more.

WHAT DOES THE DOWNTOWN BARRIE BUSINESS ASSOCIATION (BIA) OFFICE DO?

The staff, interns, co-op students and volunteers implement, facilitate and monitor all the activities of the organization. We are constantly working on our operating model in order to fully leverage our four pillars.

THE FOUR PILLARS OF THE DOWNTOWN BARRIE BUSINESS ASSOCIATION (BIA):



Event Facilitator

New visits to the Downtown have the opportunity to bring new business to the Downtown. Promoting the Downtown area through visitor experience is a key priority for BIAs and hosting events is a way for Downtowns to really show off all they have to offer. Events have the power to make visitors realise that the Downtown area is a place they want to be.

As an event facilitator, it is the BIA's responsibility to bring these Downtown events to life. With creative flair, BIAs identify target audiences, implement events for these audiences, support event brands, help devise event concepts and can organize technical aspects. Additionally, BIAs help spread the word through social media, strategic marketing and by reaching out to local media outlets.

Event attendance is a good way to measure the ability of the BIA to draw visitors to the Downtown area. Core to visitor experience is the ability to generate a sense of strong cultural community building; facilitating events to draw people to the area creates a sense that Downtown is worth visiting.



Area Marketer

A BIA that promotes the Downtown area also promotes its businesses. This includes generating well thought out marketing campaigns utilizing all forms of media while remaining 'on brand'. The aim is to draw attention not only to the Downtown area, but all the businesses within it. The BIA uses a model that focuses on 3 key brand building categories:

- 'Brand Product Development' - focusing on small but significant physical attributes.
- 'Brand Marketing' - developing creative campaigns to reach the public.
- 'Brand Presentation' - a direct communication program that connects to local influential networks, partners and organizations.

Using this model results in the BIA marketing the Downtown area as a vibrant space that people will want to visit, strengthening the sense of community and establishing the Downtown and its businesses as places people want to be.



Public Realm Investor

At its inception in 1970, the BIA concept was based on the importance of investing in 'the space between and surrounding the buildings and businesses' - the public realm. Investing in the public realm creates a vibrant and enjoyable sense of place that attracts visitors to the Downtown. A BIA aims to generate a personal connection for visitors (by way of beautification investments as simple as flower planters and banners or as complex as large public buildings, venues and parks) to public spaces strengthening a visitor's connection to your business.

BIAs that are invested in the public realm recognize that the backbone to a successful Downtown begins with drawing visitors to it by making it a sociable, exciting, and vibrant environment.



Policy & Partner Influencer

With strong Strategic Plans (Brand Action Plans), BIAs become integral vehicles for communicating localized business opportunities and challenges to policy makers, government partners, local community agencies and commercial organizations. By embracing a cooperative relationship with these partners, BIAs are able to advocate and influence positive change on behalf of the Downtown area, its businesses, and local community.

The ability to share captured data and effectively address policies and investment helps establish the right environment to contribute to building our local businesses and community. Creative problem solving and strong working relationship with all key partners keeps the BIA on your side for creating a vibrant and exciting Downtown area.

**Please note that much more information can be found at
DOWNTOWNBARRIE.CA/MEMBER-NEWS**



Welcome to Downtown Barrie!

WE'RE HAPPY TO HAVE YOU AS ONE
OF OUR VALUED MEMBERS.

