



## Town of Tecumseh Business Improvement Area Overview

The Tecumseh BIA is a geographic area within the Municipality of the Town of Tecumseh. The BIA has a Board of Management (Directors) who provides promotion and improvements within the designated district to create a thriving, competitive, and safe business area that attracts shoppers, diners, tourists, and new businesses.

### Area

The boundary encompasses many pockets of business in our Town and represents all business owners in the core area of Tecumseh Rd. between Brighton Rd. and Southfield, Lesperance Rd. between Riverside Dr. and Westlake Dr, and Manning Rd. on both sides from Riverside to the railroad and then only the West side to Country Rd. 22 (see *BIA Member Properties & Plazas map*).

### Purpose

The main purposes of a BIA are to revitalize and maintain a dynamic local business district and to promote the area as a business and shopping destination.

### Mandate

- Oversee improvement, beautification and maintenance of municipally owned land, buildings and structures in the area beyond that provided at the expense of the municipality.
- Promote the area as a business and shopping district.

### Activities:

- Advocacy – act as a voice for the business network and establish important relationships with levels of government and institutions such as the Chamber of Commerce, Small Business Centre, Tourism, schools and churches, community organizations and local groups.
- Economic Development – work with property owners to help ensure that available space is occupied with an optimum business and service mix.
- Beautification & Streetscaping – revitalization through customer-friendly lighting, signage, street furniture, planters, banners, sidewalk treatments, and seasonal decorations. Enhance cleanliness & safety with graffiti removal and garbage receptacles, and assist members and the Town with AODA Standards compliance.
- Marketing & Events – organize and partner with businesses in promotions and events that highlight unique attributes of the area and increase customer visits.

### Benefits:

- Business Operators – gain advantages by retaining more local customers and attracting visitors. Cost savings to members result from improved integration of capital funding and promotional activities.
- Property Owners – improvements and activities help increase demand for retail and office space, lead to a decrease in commercial vacancy rates, and increase property values.
- Surrounding Neighbourhoods – improve quality of life through local shopping and services, job opportunities, cleanup & safety programs, and community gatherings.
- Wider Community – stimulate new impetus for tourism and investment, improve municipal and sales tax base, and support public services of benefit to all. Engagement fosters interest, spirit and pride.

### Funding

Once the budget is approved by the BIA members and ratified by Council, funds are raised through a levy on all commercial and industrial properties within the BIA's boundary. Calculation of this levy is based on the proportionate value of each property's commercial assessment. Once the levy is collected by the municipality, the funds are returned to the BIA to manage. In addition, the BIA may undertake public and private fundraising to raise funds for special projects.

## History

In 1970, responding to a request by a Toronto business association, Ontario passed enabling legislation to create the world's first Business Improvement Area in Bloor West Village. There are now more than 270 BIAs in Ontario, varying in size from fewer than 60 business and property owners to more than 2,000. The BIA concept is now global, adopted by more than 500 communities across Canada, 2,000 throughout the United States, and thousands more around the world including Europe, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand and Japan.

Established in 1977, the Tecumseh BIA has over 500 businesses in its membership.

## Province

The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) is responsible for administering the legislation and policy that governs BIAs. MMAH responds to inquiries from municipalities, the public, BIAs, and BIA Associations. The Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) also works to support rural BIAs through economic development advisors. OMAFRA has programs to assist rural BIAs including the Business Retention & Expansion program and the Rural Economic Development program. MMAH and OMAFRA each have a staff member who sits on the Ontario Business Improvement Area Association Board.

## Municipality

The BIA Board of Management, municipal Council and staff work together to achieve their common goal for a strong and vibrant business community. Council representatives keep the BIA informed of pertinent council matters. All BIA meeting minutes, policies, procedures, bylaws and motions are subject to final approval by the Municipality of the Town of Tecumseh.

Provides & Contributes:

- General support (ex. staff assistance re: organization and meetings)
- Leadership (ex. growth management and development strategy)
- Awareness & representation
- Public consultation process
- Instituting public improvements
- Financial and technical resource assistance
- Annual budget approval and monitoring
- Encourage participation

## Membership

Members consist of both property owners and their tenants. Membership includes attendance at BIA meetings and eligibility to vote on BIA-related issues such as the annual budget and selections to the Board of Management.

Associate members are businesses in the surrounding area, but not included in existing BIA boundaries.

## Board of Management

The Board of Management (Directors) are volunteers who are business and/or property owners within the area, ratified by Council, and serve a four-year term concurrent with the term of Council. Administration and strategic management of the BIA is the responsibility of the Board of Management. The Board is responsible for overseeing the planning, budgeting, implementing and evaluating of BIA projects.

Rules in the Municipal Act, 2001 and Town of Tecumseh By-Law Number 2008-69 apply to the term of Directors of the BIA Board of Management:

- The term of the Directors of the Board of Management is the same as the term of the Council that appointed them, but continues until their successors are appointed.
- Directors are eligible for re-appointment.

The Board of Management usually consists of between five and ten members. Council designates a position on the Board of Management for the local Councillor that represents the area within which the

BIA is situated. Apart from the position on the Board reserved for Council appointees, the rest of the Board is selected through a vote by the BIA membership subject to approval by Council.

### **Operations**

The BIA Board of Management establishes or recommends rules for the composition and activities of the Board and its officers (i.e. Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer) to Council:

- Board duties and responsibilities, establish and review committee & subcommittee functions and meetings
- Board size, officer positions, executive selection, vacancies procedures
- Elections, voting/proxy voting
- General meetings, rules of order, quorum
- Annual budget, general expenditures
- Contracts, hiring staff
- BIA policies, constitution, and operating bylaws
- Review and assess BIA programs and projects

### **Financials**

The BIA Board of Management submits their annual budget estimate for Council approval. The BIA Board cannot spend money unless it is included in the estimate or a reserve fund. The Board cannot borrow money nor incur debts extending beyond the current year without prior Council approval. The Board submits to Council an annual report including audited financial statements for the preceding year, by the date and in the form set by Council.

### **Executive**

The Board of Management selects the Executive. The Executive consists of: Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer, and Committee Chairs. The Executive is chosen by majority vote of the Board.

### **Committees**

The Board of Management establishes BIA committees. The Board has established two committees. Committees range in size from three to eight people. The Chair of each committee is a member of the Board of Management. Other committee members can include BIA members or volunteers. Committee members may be appointed for any length of time during the tenure of the Board.

The Chair of the Board is automatically a member of all committees (aka “ex-officio” position). Notices of meetings and agendas are to be sent to committee members in advance. Committees are responsible for their budgeted funds and seek board approval for any funds that exceed their budget.

The Chair of a committee is accountable to the Board of Management for all expenditures within the committee budget. The committee Chair may plan and organize programs and projects in the committee’s area of responsibility, and present progress reports to the Board on all programs and projects undertaken by the committee. The committee may have practical responsibility for developing and implementing their budget, and for programs and projects required to carry out the mandate of the committee. Committees with responsibility for a wide range of programs and projects establish subcommittees.

### **Staff**

The BIA has paid professional staff. The BIA employs a manager for the day-to-day management and operation of the BIA and its programs and projects. The BIA Board of Management needs to consider minimum requirements that the municipality has established for staff of its local boards (i.e. compensation, benefits, etc.), and determine resources and help that may be available.

### **Rules of Order**

The Board of Management establishes rules of order for meetings of the Board, committees and subcommittees, and is accountable to the Town’s Code of Conduct.

### **Quorum**

This is the number of Directors that must be present for business to be conducted. It is half the voting members of the Board, plus one.

**Order of Business**

Following parliamentary procedure:

- Call to Order – Chair “The meeting will please come to order.”
- Roll Call – members say ‘present’ when their name is called.
- Minutes – Secretary reads a record of the last minutes.
- Officers’ Reports – financial report from the Treasurer, and Chair report.
- Committee Reports – reports from ‘standing’ or permanent committees, then ‘ad hoc’ or special committees.
- Special Orders – important business previously designated for consideration at this meeting.
- Unfinished Business – business carried over from previous meetings.
- New Business – introduction of new topics.
- Announcements – inform the assembly of other subjects and events.
- Adjournment – meeting ends by a vote or general consent (or Chair’s decision if time of adjournment was prearranged by vote).

**Voting**

The Board of Management establishes rules concerning voting procedures at meetings. A corporate member of the BIA may nominate in writing one individual to vote on behalf of the corporation. Each member of the BIA has one vote regardless of the number of properties that the member owns or leases in the improvement area. Plaza owners have one vote as does each tenant in the plaza.

**Elections**

The Board of Management establishes procedures concerning elections or selections to the Board, including a process for nominating candidates for the Board.

**Legislation**

It is important for all Board of Management members to remember that any policies, bylaws and other matters they act on must be consistent with the law, including legislative and bylaw requirements. Important for the BIA are sections 204-215 of the Municipal Act, 2001, BIA related provisions in the Town of Tecumseh By-Law Number 2008-69, Policy Number 63/08, Policy Number 6/2004 and other pertinent Town of Tecumseh By-laws and Policies.