

Orangeville Business Improvement Area (OBIA)

Adopted in 1976, the Orangeville BIA (OBIA) was created in an effort to build a stronger business area in an era when traditional downtowns began the struggle to compete against malls and plazas. Its goal was to bring independent business people together to build a stronger business area. The OBIA currently represents over 230 businesses in the Fairgrounds Shopping Centre and in the downtown area, from Lakeview Court and the Best Western in the east along Broadway to Faulkner St. and Cunningham Vacuums at its western border and includes all or portions of several side streets in between.

The OBIA is responsible through By-Law #23-78: "To oversee the improvement, beautification, and maintenance of municipally owned lands, buildings and structures in the area beyond that which is provided at the expense of the Corporation of the Town of Orangeville and to promote that area as a business or shopping area." In essence, the OBIA is a self-help business organization supported by the municipality with the goal of creating and maintaining a downtown that exudes small town charm while being a vibrant social and cultural business centre.

The value to the members of a BIA is precisely that it provides a mechanism for organizing and financing programs that would not be available to independent business owners by any other means. Most of the businesses within the OBIA boundaries are small, independently owned and operated retail stores, restaurants or services. The OBIA is financed by a special tax levied on **commercial properties** (as determined by MPAC), within the BIA boundaries. Individual BIA levies are expressed as a percentage of the total commercial assessment within the BIA area, which in turn determines each business' proportionate share of the overall levy. The funding structure reflects the principle that all who benefit should be required to bear their fair share of the cost of the program. This arrangement provides a secure source of funding for BIA activities.

Quite simply, the Orangeville BIA is based on the principal that together we can accomplish more than we can alone. We believe that the best way to protect our downtown's heritage is to look to the future. The OBIA believes that a vision of a vibrant, prosperous Orangeville must include a thriving Downtown. To achieve that, local, small businesses and commercial property owners must work together to encourage locals and tourists to do business in our beautiful downtown. The OBIA serves as the vehicle that drives Orangeville's downtown in that direction. Our goals are long term as we look to the coming decades and the need for a strong, healthy local economy.

Our strength is in the commitment and support of our members and the community at large.