



Establishing a Business Network in LaSalle

You have been invited to participate in a workshop to explore the potential of establishing a business network or association in LaSalle.

The goal of the workshop is to:

- Determine the services and programs LaSalle businesses need to be successful.
- Consider the various forms of community associations including BIAs, Chambers of Commerce (Boards of Trade) and Business Associations.
- Discuss the potential for establishing a business network or association in LaSalle.
- Identify the business network model that would address the needs of LaSalle businesses.

The following pages include background information for your review in advance of our meeting to make the best use of our limited time together.

DEFINITIONS:

Business Improvement Association

“An association of commercial property owners and tenants within a defined area who work in partnership with the Municipality to create thriving and safe business areas that attract shoppers, diners, tourists, and new businesses. By working collectively as a BIA, local businesses have the resource capacity (funds and people) to actively enhance the quality of life in their local neighbourhood and the Municipality as a whole.” (obia.com)

Chamber of Commerce

“A voluntary business organization, supported by its member firms to promote the area’s economic growth and development. Chambers enable business people to accomplish collectively what they may not be able to do individually, creating a pool of professional and business resources from which they can draw inspiration, new ideas, energy, and finances...It is a collective voice that speaks out on policy issues that affect business.” (atlanticchamber.ca)

Business Association

“Business associations do not have a rigid structure. They are often born from a group of volunteers and usually collect membership fees as a source of funding for their projects. The structure of a business association is defined by the people who run it and the interest they have in their businesses and communities.” (cbdc.ca)

PRE-WORKSHOP REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Please take a moment to consider:

- What you hope to achieve through the workshop.
- Your vision for supporting LaSalle businesses. What will be different in five years if we have successfully established a business network in the Town?



UNDERSTANDING THE DIFFERENT MODELS OF BUSINESS NETWORKS

	BIA	Chamber	Business Association
Membership	Mandatory (must be approved by 75% of businesses in the designated area)	Voluntary (fee based)	Voluntary (may include a membership fee)
Eligible Members	Building owner and/or designated tenant	Businesses, employees and interested parties	Interested parties
Area served	Defined geographic area	Less defined border, community-wide business network (city, County or even region)	Less defined
Fee	Levy in addition to regular municipal property tax Based on property assessment value	Member dues are typically applied in two ways: Fair share model (based on # of employees, revenue, size or other) or Investor model (flat rate plus fee for individual services))	Varies
Fee paid by	Building owner	Business or employee	Individual member
Governance	A corporation of the municipality regulated under the Ontario Municipal Act. Budgets are submitted to Municipality for approval. The Municipality may establish a board of management to provide direction for BIA efforts.	Non-profit organization governed by a board of directors. Supported by the Ontario Chamber of Commerce and the Canadian Chamber of Commerce	Varies, could be a non-profit organization or a committee of interested parties with no formal legal standing



COMMON SERVICES (WILL VARY BY ORGANIZATION)

BIA	Chamber	Business Association
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Street beautification (banners, plants, seasonal lighting etc.) • Street and sidewalk maintenance and capital improvements • Promotion of the BIA for business, employment, visitors or shopping (business directories, advertising, etc.) • Special events and festivals • Security and crime prevention • Graffiti and poster removal services • Advocate on behalf of the membership • Strategic plans including business recruitment, market studies, capital improvements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Networking events • Business Excellence Awards • Mayor’s breakfast • Business education (webinars, workshops, etc.) • Advocacy with all levels of government • Member discounts • Promotion on behalf of members • Group insurance and benefits provider • Payroll services • Mailing lists • Community engagement (charity drives, local events, community clean ups, event sponsorship) • Economic development initiatives • Surveys/research 	<p>Based on common goals that benefit members and the community. Typical activities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Networking • Special events • Advocacy • Education and training • Business promotion • Community engagement (charity drives, local events, community clean ups, event sponsorship) • Business workshops, seminars • Economic development initiatives • Business Excellence Awards • Surveys/ research