

BIAs

A Business Improvement Area or “BIA” is a geographic area designated by City Council as an improvement area. Within the improvement area, the owners of property in a business property tax class and business tenants of the property are the members of the BIA. There is a Board of Management for each BIA and the Board members are called directors.

A BIA Board of Management is a local board of the City

Under the *City of Toronto Act, 2006*, a Board of Management of a BIA is a local board of the City (restricted definition). As a result, the directors of the Board of Management of a BIA and BIA staff are public office holders for the purpose of the lobbyist registration requirements.

BIA Board directors and BIA staff communicating with the City

Board directors and staff ***when acting in their official capacity*** do not have to register when communicating with other City public office holders. This includes communication with Council Members and their staff, employees of the City, and members and employees of other local boards (restricted definition).

General requirement to register to communicate with a BIA Board of Management

A person who communicates for payment (including a person who represents a business or is an owner of a business) with a BIA Board director or BIA staff on a subject matter defined in Municipal Code Chapter 140, Lobbying, must register before communicating:

1. regarding a decision to be made by the board of the BIA; and/or
2. regarding a decision to be made elsewhere with the City.

Such communications would only require registration if they are not occurring in public or part of a public process. For example, a person communicating with the BIA Board at a duly called meeting of the Board would not be required to register.

If any person, including a member of the BIA, wishes to communicate with a BIA Board director or BIA staff about their own business interest outside of a duly called board meeting or public process, this communication regarding a decision or approval would require registration.

There are some exemptions to communications requiring registration. Please check the website for general exemptions at: www.toronto.ca/lobbying.

Some communications are exempt from registration

Public meetings of the Board or its committees: A member of the BIA or their representative may participate in a Board or committee meeting. Public disclosure of any communication at these open meetings is already achieved and the communications are exempt from the registration requirement. (This includes written deputations sent to the Board for consideration at the meeting.)

General information: These communications deal with general information, for example, how and where to apply for a grant or other application (e.g., information required as part of the application, related factual information, or information about the review process). Because there is no advocacy or promotion of the merits of the permission or approval, registration is not necessary.

Response to a written request: When responding to a written request from a Board director or Board/City employee, as long as the communication does not go beyond the general information discussed above, no registration is necessary.

Technical information: Sometimes the communications require technical expertise or language interpretation. As long as there is no advocacy or debate about the merits of a particular application or proposal, registration is not required.

Administrative process: Any Board/City employee who has a role in processing a particular application may be contacted by the applicant during pre-application consultation, to file an application, or during the application review process.

TABIA

TABIA is not a local board under the *City of Toronto Act, 2006* and TABIA board members and staff are not public office holders in their roles for TABIA. No registration is required to communicate with TABIA. TABIA is exempted in Schedule B of Municipal Code Chapter 140 and therefore TABIA is not required to register when acting in TABIA's official capacity to communicate with public office holders such as City Councillors, BIA board members and City employees.