



MAY NEWSLETTER

MAY Highlights

1. Monthly Message from BIA General Manager, Jamie Pritchard
2. Stratford Festival offers deal on Spring Tickets!
3. New Business (Owner) - Brū Garden
4. BIA Coffee Club - May 30th @ 8:45am @ Bradshaw Collective
5. 2024 Car Free Friday Schedule
6. Ontario By Bike
7. Ten Bucks Back - Get Your Bucks In!

MONTHLY MESSAGE FROM OUR GENERAL MANAGER



I wanted to talk about accessibility week coming up May 25-June 1. When I sat down to write this piece an Instagram post from walking.on.wheels came to mind. So I would like to share those thoughts with you today.

Accessibility is more than a ramp. This is pretty thought provoking as it is human nature to relate almost any statement we hear to own situations but this is where we need to open our thought process to a little broader scope.

I reviewed a few definitions of what accessibility means and the one I found that was most on point was this one. *"Accessibility means giving people of all abilities the opportunities to participate fully in everyday life."*

Taking it from there I was thinking how it relates to me and my challenges in walking but again a broader scope encompasses more. We need to think about noise levels in an environment. Volume levels when speaking and presentation volume settings are so important to get right. Perhaps consider having amplified headphones for those that may require them. Perhaps consider a sign interpreter when putting together your event.

Lighting for the sighted is of utmost importance as it is much more comfortable

viewing with proper lighting. Does your documentation contain ordinary standard fonts? There is some evidence that an ordinary typeface, using upper and lower cases, is more readable than italics, slanted, small caps, or all caps. Avoid complicated, decorative fonts, and reserve such styles, for emphasis only. Can you include braille on documents, signage, or dedication plaques? Do your videos, presentations, and Social Media campaigns include subtitles?

Lastly there may be challenges getting into your place of business. The shopability of your business will increase with items such as doorbells for assistance, power door openers, and even though I started with *“Accessibility is more than a ramp”* they are needed, as ramps are of paramount importance in many of our businesses. There are challenges with heritage buildings and architecture, but challenges are not insurmountable and can be turned into opportunities.

What does it take to accomplish improved accessibility? It takes awareness, planning, and cooperation with an overall umbrella of commitment. Together we can build Downtown Stratford's reputation as the most accessible downtown in Ontario that welcomes all.

Your BIA is here for you and is always interested in your feedback. If you see me rollin along downtown on the silver ghost scooter please catch my attention, I would love to hear from you! jpritchard@downtownstratford.ca

See you Downtown!

Stratford FESTIVAL

Around the corner, a world away.

The Stratford Festival invites you to shake off that winter frost with tales of romance, tragedy, hilarity and wonder that will fire up your brain, warm your heart and get your toes tapping.

Being a local has its perks, like attending select spring performances with access to superior savings with tickets from \$21

Check it out at <https://www.stratfordfestival.ca/offer/Locals-Deal>

NEW BUSINESS

Click the button below to read our New Owner story in the Business Spotlight section of our website.



BRU GARDEN - New Owners!

BIA COFFEE CLUB - THURSDAY, MAY 30th



DOWNTOWN
STRATFORD
BIA COFFEE CLUB



BRADSHAW COLLECTIVE

Thursday, May 30th
8:30 to 9:45am,
245 Downie St. Unit 100

We've had fabulous turnout these last few months! Please mark the date and join us for our May Coffee Club on **May 30th** at the brand new **Bradshaw Collective**, a stunning work space in the Bradshaw building.

To assist our Host Business with their coffee order, we'd like to request an RSVP by May 28th. That said, unregistered drop-ins are welcome!

[RSVP HERE!](#)

Photos of April's Coffee Club are on our [website](#)! Thank you to Rob Russell and his team for hosting us! And for the fun trivia games!!

CAR FREE FRIDAYS

2024 CAR FREE FRIDAYS in Downtown Stratford

Leave your car at home and join us on the following dates!

Free Coffee/Juice ☺ Free Swag ☺ Enter Draw to Win!



8am - 10am

Friday, June 7th ~ KDB Law

Friday, July 5 ~ Shoppers Drug Mart

Friday, August 9 ~ TBD



This summer downtown businesses will be hosting our Car Free Fridays, and for that we are grateful! Our first host is Katie DeBlock Boersma and her team at KDB Law, located at 14 Downie St. Commute to work the morning of June 7th using active transportation and join us for hot coffee or cold juice provided by our host KDB Law!

**Friday, June 7th | 8am-10am 14 Erie St
in the Parking Lot**

PUBLIC INTERACTIONS and MENTAL HEALTH SESSION

On Monday evening, more than 20 BIA members came out to hear informative and important information from the following social services:

- Sara Kuntz - Connection Centre
- Kim McElroy and Tina Ritsma - Social Services, City of Stratford
- Jennifer Evans - Victim Services, Huron Perth

The BIA is gathering pertinent phone numbers and contacts that can be used by our members facing a variety of situations in their place of business. We will share this



as soon as it's ready.

This session was organized by the BIA's Advocacy and Education Committee, in response to your feedback at the end of last year stating this topic was the most important to those who responded. Thank you to our speakers for their time Monday and their commitment in caring for our community.

ONTARIO BY BIKE - IS YOUR BUSINESS ON THE MAP?



business here: ontariobybike.ca/industry/how-to-add-your-business.

Have you completed the free online registration to become certified cycle-friendly by Ontario By Bike? If accepted, you will receive an online map listing for your location and they will promote your services to cyclists. There are currently 13 listed for Stratford and 6 for St. Marys. Together we can tell the cycling story and how our destination is ready for cyclists to visit. Register your

TEN BUCKS BACK



We've had just over \$6,000 of the Ten Bucks Back promotional certificates redeemed by business owners. We'd like to ask that if you have any on hand that they be turned in to us by the end of the month so we can close out the program for this year. Thank you!

SOCIAL MEDIA - GET IN TOUCH!

If you haven't already we'd love for your to join our BIA MEMBERS ONLY Facebook Group. A great discussion and sharing forum for all things business & downtown!

[JOIN NOW!](#)

Reach out to us through our Downtown Stratford BIA Social Media platforms and remember to tag us so we can share in our stories!

Facebook: @downtownstratfordbia

Instagram: @downtownstratford

Twitter: @dtStratfordBIA

519-508-1415 | kgriffiths@downtownstratford.ca | downtownstratford.ca

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Downtown Stratford BIA | 47 Downie St | Stratford, ON N5A 1W7 CA

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