

# SafeTObia

Investing in our Neighbourhoods & Business Improvement Areas through an Economic Development Lens

**March 2024**



DOWNTOWN



# Team

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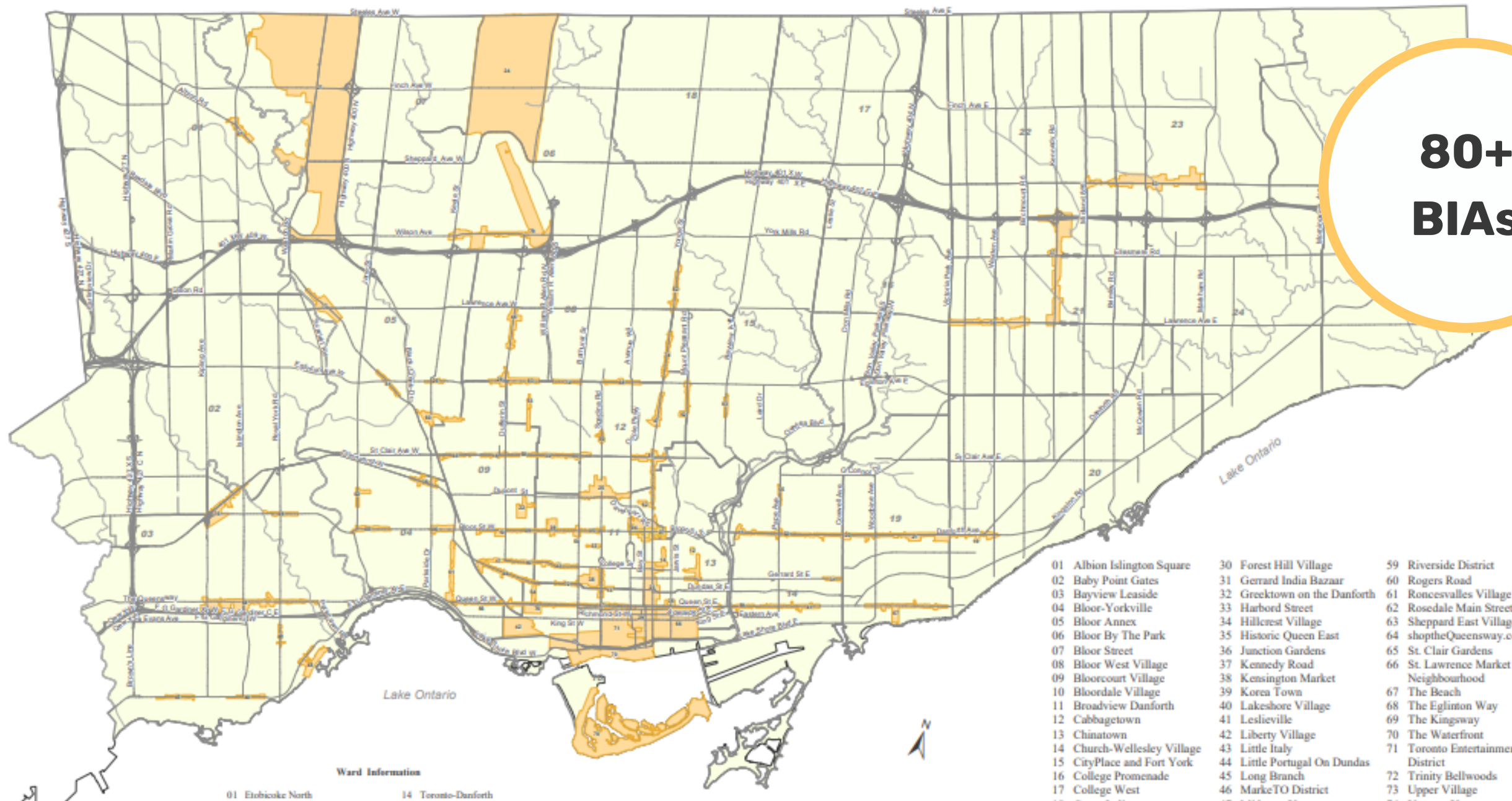
# Agenda

- 1. Review “Whats” (BIAs, SafeTO, SafeTObia, CS&WB)
- 2. Engagement Process & Results Phase (Stage 2&3).
- 3. Solutions Exploration (Stage 4).

# What are BIAs?

A Business Improvement Area (BIA) is an association of commercial property owners and tenants within a defined area who work in partnership with the City.

BIA's are catalysts for civic improvements & enhancing the business climate & quality of life of the neighbourhood:



- **Promotion** of the BIA
- **Festivals** and events
- **Safety**, security & crime prevention initiatives
- **Maintaining** Commercial Facades (Graffiti & poster removal)
- **Strategic planning** ( Business recruitment, market studies)
- **Advocate**
- **Capital Cost-share Programs** ( streetscape master-plans, mural projects)

# What is SafeTO?

SafeTO is the city's 10 year plan **advancing Community Safety & Well-being** by working collaboratively across sectors, communities and governments. It will drive **26 priority actions** across **7 strategic goals**.

## SafeTO x DYBIA = SafeTObia

The Downtown Yonge Business Improvement Area (DYBIA) and SafeTO have partnered on a year long pilot project to address the **growing challenges of community safety and well-being in BIAs**.



**Does this community feel safe and well?**



**Businesses behind Encampments**



**Vulnerable Community Members**



**Heavy Traffic**



**Drug Dealing**



**Boarded up Businesses**



**Biking between buses and cars**



**Dangerous crossings due to high speed**



**Broken trash bins and litter**



**Dark & Unappealing Park**

# Everyone needs to participate in Community Safety & Well-being



Public Health

Housing & Shelter



Planning & Development

Housing & Shelter

Public Health



Streets, Parking & transportation

Planning & Development

Public Health



Police

Economic Development

Public Health



Planning & Development

Economic Development



Streets, Parking & transportation

Public Health

Planning & Development



Streets, Parking & transportation

Planning & Development

Public Health



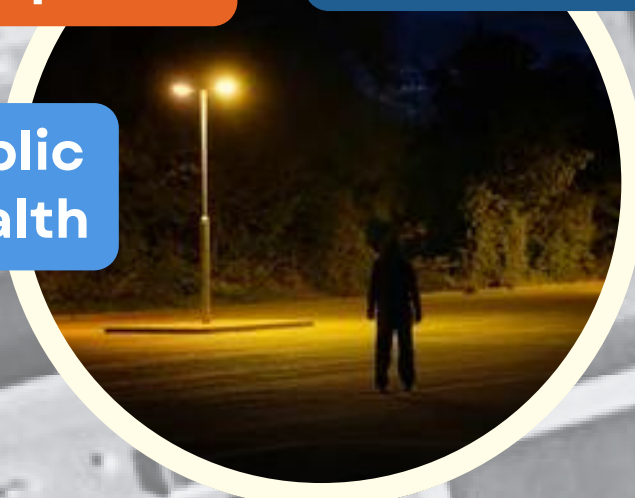
Public Health

Streets, Parking & transportation

Planning & Development

Parks, Forestry & Recreation

Planning & Development



Public Health

Community safety and well-being is **not only about** crime and violence **BUT ALSO** about our urban environment & how we perceive it



Perceived safety: 3.2



Perceived safety: 3.02



Perceived safety: 1.71



Perceived safety: 5.49



Perceived safety: 6.34



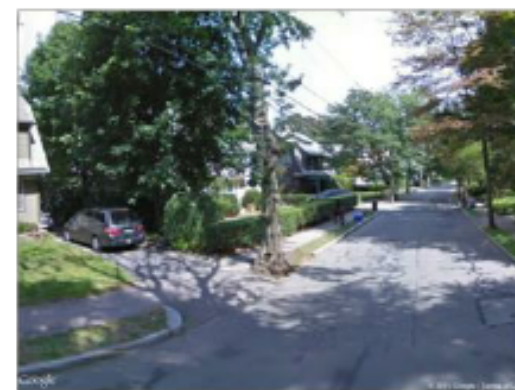
Perceived safety: 4.97



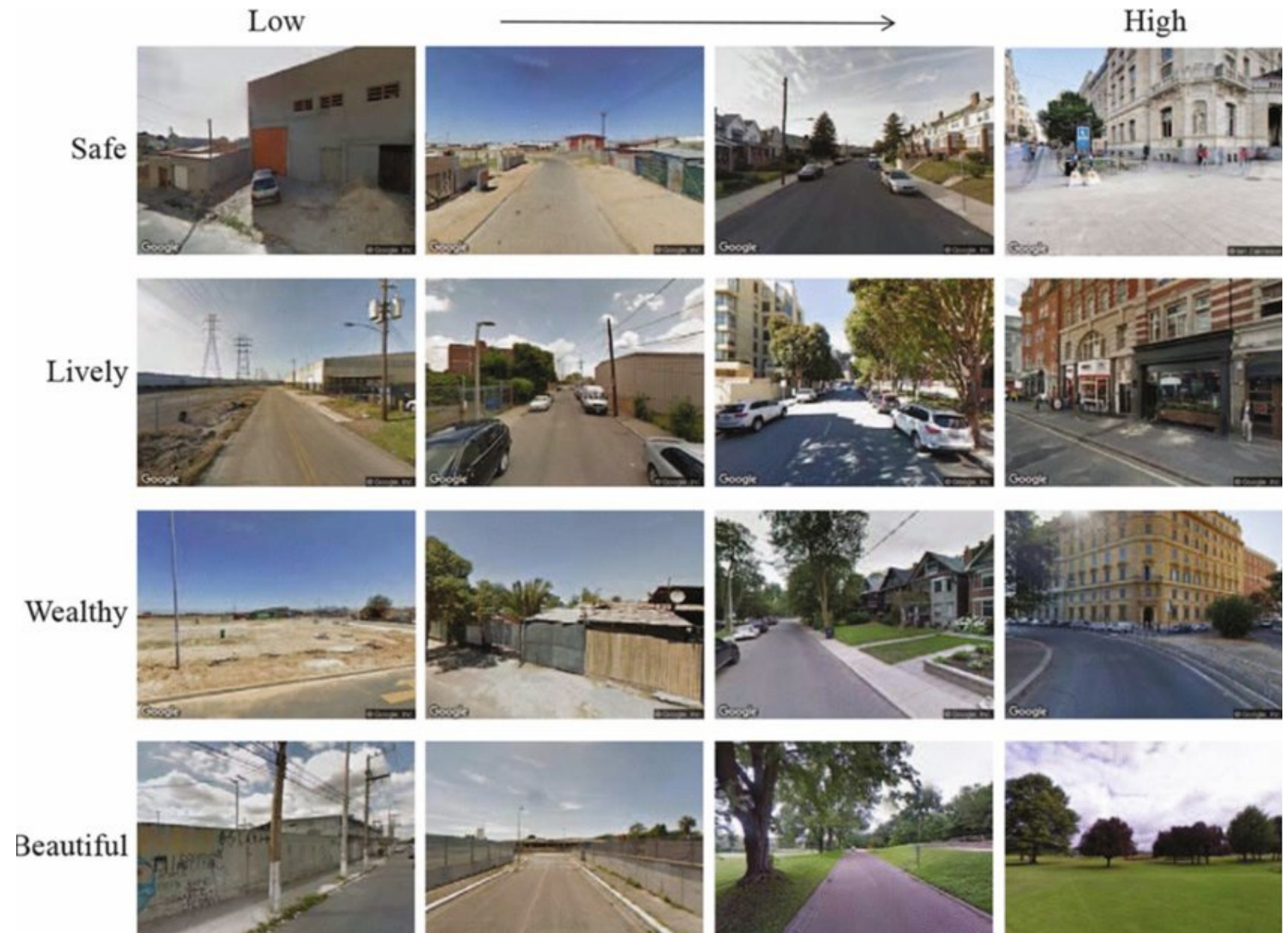
Perceived safety: 7.95



Perceived safety: 7.42



Perceived safety: 8.35



...The visibility of green vegetation plays an important role in increasing perceived safety in urban areas.

We perceive certain spatial and physical qualities in our urban areas as safe, lively, wealthy and beautiful



# Many different urban qualities contribute to Community Safety & Well-being

Public Space



Positive pull factors

Infrastructure



Positive

Businesses



Positive

Community



Positive

And many more!



Negative push factors



Negative



Negative



Negative



# Let's Review....

BIA's are key in keeping our mainstreets thriving by supporting our local business community

1.

Community safety & well-being

encompasses MANY aspects of urban living - which makes it complex, and **NEEDS** to be a collaborative effort!

2.

SafeTO is a city wide strategy to address community safety and well-being

3.

SafeTObia is a city-wide pilot exploring community safety and well-being within the BIAs

4.

# What is the goal of SafeTObia?



**To provide BIAs** with resources, processes and the capacity to better address **Community Safety & Well-being issues** (CS&WB) in the short and medium term.



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During and post pandemic, **a significant increase in issues related to safety and well-being** was identified among the business community through initial SafeTO consultations.



## GOAL

**To provide BIAs** with resources, processes and the capacity to better address **Community Safety & Well-being issues** (CS&WB) in the short and medium term.



## WHY

During and post pandemic, **a significant increase in issues related to safety and well-being** was identified among the business community through initial SafeTO consultations.



## HOW

**SafeTObia will engage** with BIAs and key stakeholder across city departments to better understand the the issues to then explore solutions with participating BIAs.

# SafeTObia **TIMELINE**

SafeTObia - One year pilot project from  
May 2023 - May 2024

**WE ARE HERE**

**01**

**Learn &  
Connect**

**May 2023 - June**

**02**

**Engage**

**June/July - Sept**

**03**

**Assess**

**Oct - Dec**

**04**

**Re-engage,  
Test & Assess**

**January - May**

**05**

**Share**

**April/May 2024**

02

Engage

June/July -  
Sept 2023

# Engagements



Engagements  
(July - Sept 2023)

**~90 Participants**

- BIAs (60/84\*)
- BIA office & city staff
- BIA business members
- Organizations

Group interviews, General Info sessions  
One-on-one interviews, Email correspondence  
Fillable forms, Site visits, BIA board presentations  
BIA - Led Workshop Sessions, The SafeTObia Summit  
Survey, BIA Advisory team

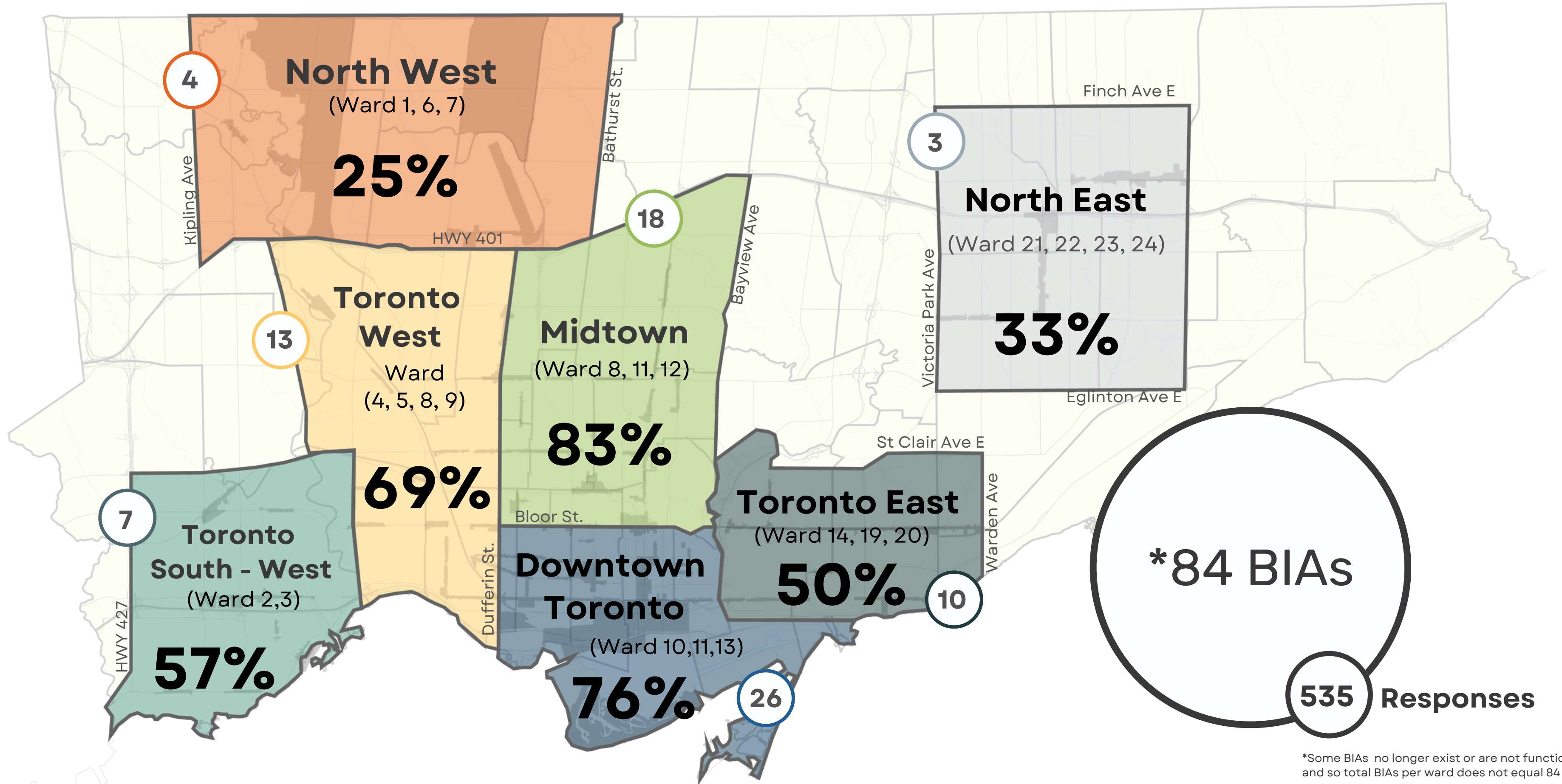


SafeTObia  
Summit  
(Dec 2023)

**165 Participants**

- **150 people** registered
- **50+ BIAs reps** were present
- Mayor Chow, Councillor Chris Moise & MPP Wong Tam were in attendance
- Various departments from the **city**, **Toronto Police** and some **not for profit organizations** were in attendance

# What BIA Participation looked like...





03

Assess

Oct - Jan  
2023

# Engagement Results

## Key categories

Used to organize qualitative data

#1

Safe Streets &  
Built  
Environment

Majority of respondents' concerns centre on **cleanliness, safe streets, and under-utilized public spaces**

#2

The Roles of  
BIAs & The  
City

Majority of respondents' concerns centre on **issues working with city departments** and a **lack of BIA capacity**

#3

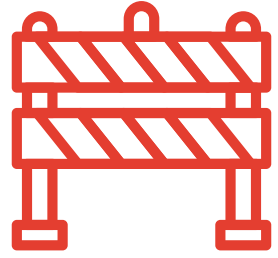
Reduce  
Vulnerabilities

Majority of respondents' concerns centre on **substance use** and **increase of people experiencing homelessness** in or around their BIA

#4

Reduce  
Violence

Majority of respondents' concerns centre on **personal property damage & theft**

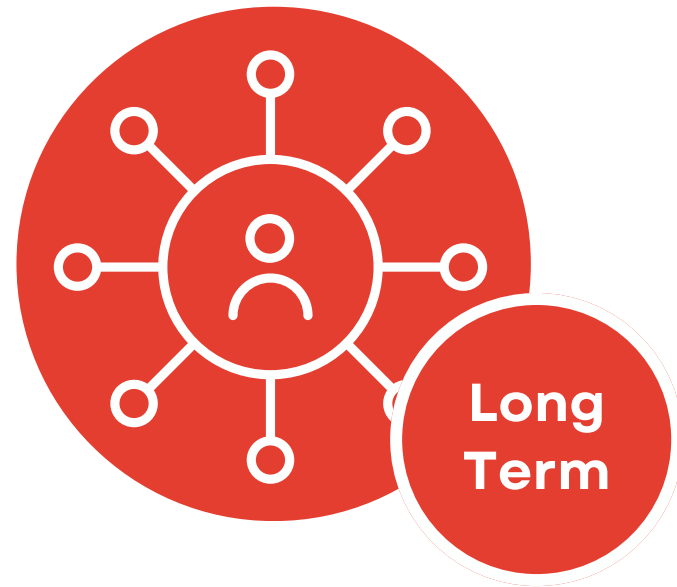


# Barriers identified at SafeTObia Summit



# Solutions identified at SafeTObia Summit

## Systemic



## Spaces & Infrastructure

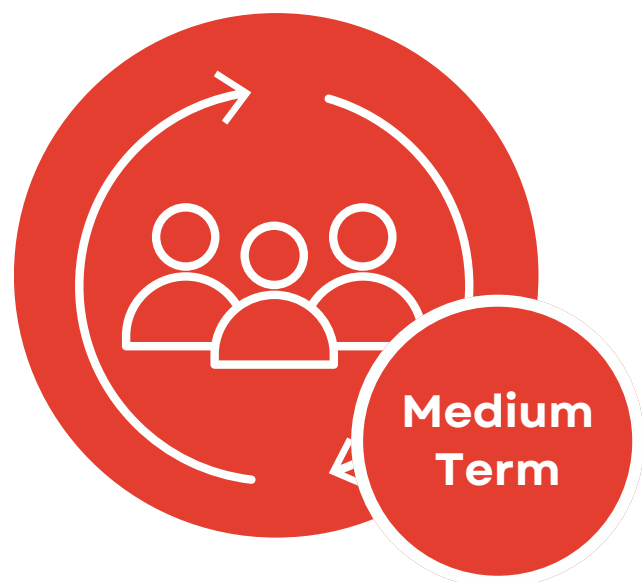


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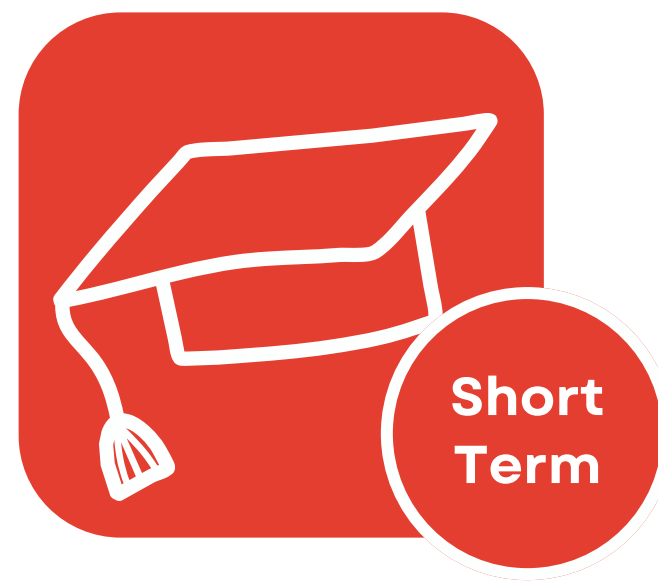
## Advocacy



## Lack of communication & relationships



## Lack of Knowledge

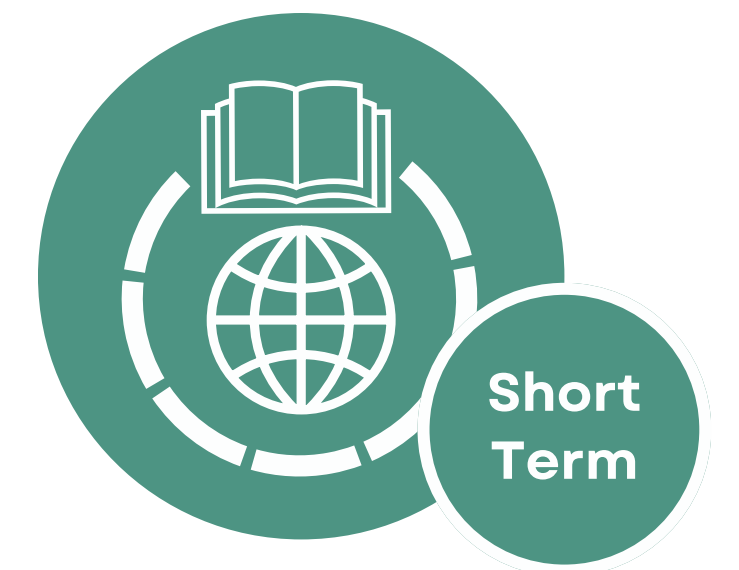


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## Initiatives



## Build Knowledge & Relationships



# Let's Review....

SafeTObia engaged **100+ people in BIA communities city-wide** to better understand community safety & well-being

**1.**

**4 key themes** were identified as core issues during our engagement phase

**2.**

SafeTObia Summit brought together a **diverse range of people** to discuss the 4 key themes to brainstorm solutions

**3.**

04

Re-engage,  
Test & Asses

Jan - May  
2023



# Step 1 Build Knowledge & Relationships



**PalmettoPride**  
Litter Trashes Everyone

## Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) Training

The Psychology of Human Interactions with Our Environment

Date: June 27-28, 2023 8:15 AM-5 PM Cost: Free  
Where: Aiken County Government Center Sandlapper Rm  
1930 University Parkway, Aiken, SC

Our physical surroundings provide psychological cues informing us whether an area is safe for our intended activity. CPTED strategies discourage undesirable behavior while inviting appropriate





Sometimes the starting point is simple. Just engaging in conversation



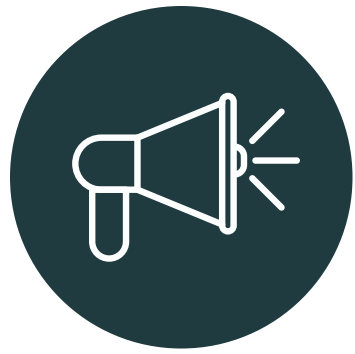
## Step 2 Program/Pilot Opportunities

“Small experiments with radical intent”

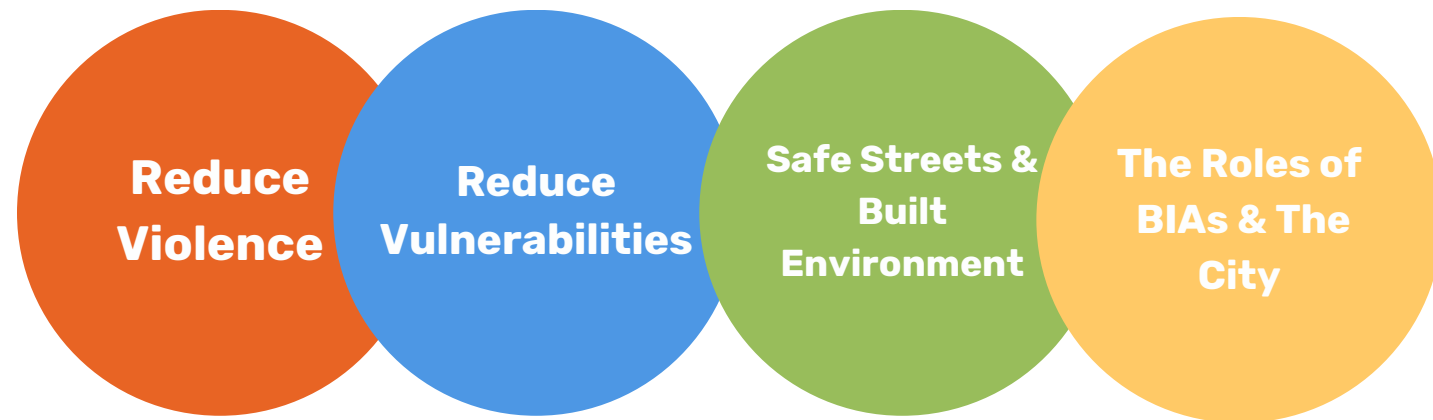




The experiment, named Babies of the Borough, follows other attempts to use the environment to moderate crime and anti social behaviour.



## Step 3. Ongoing Advocacy



- Collective Collaboration
- Letters Website
- “Call To Action” (SOS)
- Events
- **BIA-led advisory & task force**
- Build relationships with MPs & MPPs
- Deputations
- Partnering with groups outside of the BIA





# Downtown Yonge BIA Solutions

....but there are SO MANY other opportunities

De-escalation Training



Community Engagement Team



Walkabout



Street Audits



Resource Booklet



## Work with us!

..on addressing community safety & well-being issues together!



# Thank you!

Send me an email at **calves@downtownyonge.com** if you have any additional questions.

**[www.downtownyonge.com/safetobia/](http://www.downtownyonge.com/safetobia/)**

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