

Overview

- ✓ IDA Canada is continuing to engage with elected officials on our advocacy issues ahead of the upcoming budget announcement.
- ✓ FedDev Ontario has opened a new round of applications for the My Main Street initiative, which provides funding for businesses and community projects in Southern Ontario.
- ✓ The Minister of Small Business announced funding for Indigenous entrepreneurship programs.
- ✓ Join us on Twitter to amplify initiatives in your community, and advocate for crucial issues facing our members.

On the Hill

To advance our advocacy issues, IDA Canada has been conducting outreach to Liberal caucus chairs across the country, to set up discussions for opportunities to collaborate between our members and their federal representatives. The 2024 Budget will be announced on April 16, outlining the federal government's priorities for the upcoming year.

On February 22, the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario (FedDev Ontario) opened another round of applications under the [My Main Street](#) initiative to provide a total of \$15 million in funding to businesses and placemaking projects in Southern Ontario. The Business Development stream will support brick-and-mortar businesses on main streets across southern Ontario, while the Community Activator Stream provides funding for not-for-profit projects focused on animating public spaces, like streetscape enhancements, and community events. Businesses, municipalities, BIAs, and other community organizations can apply until March 31, 2024.

Minister of Small Business Rechie Valdez announced [\\$2.5 million in federal funding](#) for the Indigenous Women's Entrepreneurship Program and to support the creation of the Indigenous Youth Entrepreneurship Program. These investments will break down barriers for Indigenous women and youth to start their own businesses, and support the strength of Canada's economy.

Media Updates

We are leveraging Twitter to connect with politicians and spotlight our members' work and advocacy efforts. We're building our page as a central hub for members to showcase their initiatives, exchange ideas, and build our collective voice. As our social media presence expands, we encourage you to tag @IDACAN_Downtown in your posts or feature your own initiative through this [Google form](#)!

For more information, please contact Impact Public Affairs: Jayme Wilson, jayme@impactcanada.com

IDA Canada, a national coalition of the International Downtown Association, represents organizations across the country that manage Canada's business districts, making them vital places in the nation's identity and key centres of economic wealth and social and cultural growth. The National Network of IDA Canada has been created to provide a single voice for business district professionals while sharing best practices, experiences, and the tools to create more vibrant cores in our cities and towns. For more information: www.downtown.org/ida-canada.

Overview

The IDA Canada leadership group is engaging with stakeholders and decision-makers as the House resumes. The leadership group continues to work to address nationwide concerns through ongoing meetings. FedDevOntario's recent \$15 million investment will support the continuing My Main Street program in 2024, providing support for community revitalization and economic resiliency.

On the Hill

The IDA Canada leadership group is continuing efforts to advocate for solutions to build on the momentum generated during this fall's Hill Day, meeting with stakeholders and decision-makers across the country. Representatives from Atlantic Canada met with officials from the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency to continue discussions facing their region, while Puneeta McBryan from the Downtown Edmonton BIA met with Blake Desjarlais, a rising star in the federal NDP representing the riding of Edmonton Griesbach. We will continue to carry the energy generated through our coming submission to inform the federal budget and are in the preliminary stages of preparing for a spring Hill Day to continue to take action on the issues facing our members.

On January 16, FedDevOntario announced a \$15 million investment to continue the [My Main Street](#) program in 2024, delivered through the Canadian Urban Institute. The program provides direct-to-business and community support to main streets in southern Ontario, launching on February 15, 2024. Building on its original iteration, it will include the Community Activator stream, supporting placemaking and revitalization projects in 75 communities, and also introduce the Business Sustainability Program, which will provide non-repayable contributions of up to \$20,000 for productivity enhancements to up to 325 main street businesses in southern Ontario.

Media Updates

We aim to use our Twitter to connect with politicians and raise awareness about the work of our members and the issues that we are advocating for on their behalf. We are also looking to grow the Twitter page as a hub for our members to promote their own initiatives, issues, and events, where members can share best practices and learn from each other. As we continue to grow our social media presence, we urge you to continue to tag @IDACAN_Downtown in your posts, or please fill out this [google form](#) to be featured!

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