



## MEDIA RELEASE

### **The Waterdown Village Business Improvement Area brightens main streets in support of equity deserving groups in 2024**

Chairing is Caring received My Main Street support to draw visitors and increase vibrancy in Waterdown Village

**[October 23, 2024 – Waterdown, ON]** – The Waterdown Business Improvement Area (BIA) is pleased to announce that the Chairing is Caring (CIC) public art project was selected for the [My Main Street Community Activator](#) initiative and has received support to help tell stories of the diverse communities that make up Waterdown Village through artist-painted chairs and benches.

Chairing is Caring saw 18 painted Muskoka chairs displayed on Waterdown's main streets all summer long. Artwork on chairs focused on equity-deserving themes as interpreted by 18 different artists, reflecting the unique experiences of youth, seniors, women, newcomers, Indigenous people and more. The chairs were auctioned in September in support of local non-profit organizations. The Legacy Phase of Chairing is Caring will see artwork appear on four more benches this fall, sustaining a permanent and colourful impact for years to come.

The Waterdown Village BIA expresses gratitude to the artists who painted, businesses that hosted and visitors who bid on a chair this summer. Downtown visitors are encouraged to walk through Waterdown this fall to keep an eye out for legacy benches coming soon. Visit [waterdownvillage.ca](http://waterdownvillage.ca) for the latest updates.

My Main Street is built on the principle of supporting community economic development and creating vibrant and diverse neighbourhoods which will enhance the overall quality of life for residents while also promoting sustainable and inclusive community development. My Main Street is delivered by the [Canadian Urban Institute](#) (CUI), and supported by a Government of Canada investment through the [Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario](#) (FedDev Ontario). Learn more about the My Main Street program at [mymainstreet.ca](http://mymainstreet.ca).

## Quotes

“The Waterdown Village BIA is committed to enhancing the downtown core through placemaking initiatives. We aspire to introduce more public art to our streetscape to reflect the diversity, compassion and resiliency of our business community. My Main Street support allowed us to go bigger, bolder and expand our reach through Chairing is Caring. We are thrilled to be painting the town and telling unique stories through art.”

- *Amanda Groves, Chair, Waterdown BIA*

“Chairing is Caring is one of the many impactful placemaking projects happening across Ontario’s main streets thanks to the federal government’s investment in My Main Street Community Activator projects. Placemaking supports healthy, vibrant main streets and millions of Ontarians who live and work around them. The Waterdown Village BIA has been empowered to leverage community activations on their main street to create a hub of social and economic activity, setting long term change in motion.”

- *Mary W. Rowe, CEO and President, Canadian Urban Institute*

“The Canadian Urban Institute, with support from the Government of Canada, is investing in community projects, such as the Waterdown BIA’s Chairing is Caring project. These projects attract visitors to our main streets, support local businesses, and revitalize our communities – helping shops, restaurants and local economies thrive. Together, we’re building stronger, more vibrant communities.”

- *The Honourable Filomena Tassi, Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario*

## Associated Links

- [Waterdown Village BIA](#)
- [My Main Street](#)
- [Canadian Urban Institute](#)
- [FedDev Ontario](#)

-30-

## Media Contacts

Susan Pennie  
Executive Director, CIC Project Manager  
Waterdown Business Improvement Area  
[susan@waterdownvillage.ca](mailto:susan@waterdownvillage.ca)  
(289) 260-1261

Samantha Staresincic  
Communications Manager  
My Main Street  
[Media@mymainstreet.ca](mailto:Media@mymainstreet.ca)

Edward Hutchinson  
Press Secretary  
Office of the Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario  
[edward.hutchinson@feddevontario.gc.ca](mailto:edward.hutchinson@feddevontario.gc.ca)

**Background:**

**About Waterdown Village Business Improvement Area (BIA)**

The Waterdown Village Business Improvement Area is a geographic commercial district with more than 250 shops, restaurants, salons, spas and service providers, each dedicated to offering a unique visitor experience. The BIA's mandate is to enhance and beautify the BIA district, and nurture business opportunities through marketing and promotions, streetscaping, seasonal events and decorations as well as community and capacity-building initiatives. The BIA supports and helps sustain a vibrant, lively community that people want to be a part of and where businesses can thrive.

**About My Main Street:** The My Main Street program has returned with an additional Government of Canada investment, building on an initial investment in 2021, through the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario (FedDev Ontario) to spur local economic recovery. To date, the initial investment has supported nearly 4,500 businesses and organizations, nearly 7,500 jobs and leveraged nearly \$19 million in additional investment. The funding aims to revitalize neighbourhood main streets with a healthy retail mix while generating inclusive economic opportunities. The program now features two streams – Business Sustainability and the Community Activator. My Main Street is delivered by the Canadian Urban Institute (CUI).

**About Canadian Urban Institute (CUI):** The [Canadian Urban Institute](#) is a leading organization dedicated to advancing urban solutions. CUI collaborates with city builders, researchers, and community leaders to create thriving, equitable, and sustainable urban spaces across Canada.

**About FedDev Ontario:** For 15 years, the Government of Canada, through [FedDev Ontario](#), has worked to advance and diversify the southern Ontario economy through funding opportunities

and business services that support innovation, growth and job creation in Canada's most populous region. The Agency has delivered impressive results, which can be seen in southern Ontario businesses that are creating innovative technologies, improving productivity, growing revenues, creating jobs, and in the economic advancement of communities across the region. Learn more about the impacts the Agency is having in southern Ontario by exploring our [investment profiles](#), our [Southern Ontario Spotlight](#), and FedDev Ontario's [X](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [LinkedIn](#).