



Submitted electronically by:  
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Emailed to:  
Prime Minister Justin Trudeau [justin.trudeau@parl.gc.ca](mailto:justin.trudeau@parl.gc.ca)  
Premier Doug Ford [premier@ontario.ca](mailto:premier@ontario.ca)  
Mayor John Tory [mayor\\_tory@toronto.ca](mailto:mayor_tory@toronto.ca)

## **URGENT REQUEST FOR APRIL 1<sup>st</sup> SMALL BUSINESS RELIEF**

Dear Prime Minister Trudeau, Premier Ford and Mayor Tory,

We are writing on behalf of the Riverside Business Improvement Area (BIA) to provide an urgent request for relief for commercial tenants/ small business owners.

### ***Who we Are:***

The Riverside BIA is a local Board of the City of Toronto under the *City of Toronto Act, 2006*. For 40 years, the Riverside BIA has been a community-oriented not-for-profit association of local business people and property owners who work in partnership with the City of Toronto to enhance the Riverside business district, located along Queen Street East from Davies Avenue to Empire Avenue. The BIA's mandate is to improve, beautify and promote Riverside as a business and shopping district through marketing, public programming and streetscape improvements. Our members include over 100 business and property owners, a large proportion of which are small independent family businesses.

I am sure you agree that small businesses play a vital role in supporting our local economies and the Canadian way of life. Over the past several years this group has been largely overlooked – BUT now is the time they need you more than ever. Their survival is imperative as this group of people will play a vital role in rebuilding our amazing country and bringing back community “spirit” and togetherness when this pandemic and physical distancing is over.

Small businesses employ millions of Canadians and help serve as the backbone of community and economic life. If these businesses aren't saved from ruin over the next few months, local businesses will need to be rebuilt from scratch with new owners and “neighbourhoods” will suffer for years to come.

### **The Challenge**

- Commercial rents are coming up with no relief for tenants nor requirements for commercial landlords in place
- Hundreds of thousands of Canadian small business owners have effectively lost their jobs due to COVID-19 either because revenue has drastically reduced or from being required to close
- Expenses (rent, utilities, etc) remain with no protection if they default
- Many business owners have personal guarantees on leases or other business assets and have ZERO protection if they default

### **Immediate Request (needed NOW)**

- Small business owners need cash, and they need relief on their expenses -- especially rent

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- **Provincial Government:** needs to immediately order the banning of lock-outs by commercial landlords if a tenant cannot pay rent due to COVID-19 and provide off sets to landlords with federal funding help.
- **Federal government:** needs to order a financial lockdown country wide so all payments freeze including rent, mortgages, taxes etc. until we get through this - not a downloading to some and not others

**Medium/Long-Term Recommendation – Main Street Bailout**

Only strong immediate action by governments, large financial institutions and insurance companies will ensure Canada’s small businesses survive this devastating time. In order to ensure small businesses not only survive, but can thrive when physical distancing is over, we encourage you to consider the full proposal for a Main Street Bailout ([savesmallbusiness.ca](http://savesmallbusiness.ca)).

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter and taking the immediate action needed.

Please contact us directly at 416-466-8167 or office@riverside-to.com should you require further information.

Sincerely,

Rosemary Jeffares  
Riverside BIA Board of Directors Co-Chair

On behalf of the Riverside BIA:

- Rosie Little Jeffares, Board of Directors Co-Chair (Owner of Quince Flowers)
- Mitchell Korman, Board of Directors Co-Chair(Owner of Korman & Co. Real Estate Lawyers)
- David Watson, Board of Directors (Owner of Eastbound Brewing Co)
- Athena Ellinas Towers, Board of Directors (Owner of The Opera House)
- Dianna Kennedy, Board of Directors (Re/MAX Hallmark Brokerage)
- Jamie Zeldin, Board of Directors, Treasurer (Hullmark)
- Adrienne McRuvie, Board of Directors (Owner of Oma Chiropractic)
- Natasha Varjacic, Board of Directors (Owner of Nell & Natasha’s Real Estate Homeward)
- Councillor Paula Fletcher , Board of Directors (Ward 14-Toronto Danforth)

*c.c. Toronto Association of BIAs (TABIA),*

*For Toronto Danforth: MP Julie Dabrusin, MPP Peter Tabuns, Councillor Paula Fletcher*