

REGULAR MEETING OF THE TASK FORCE ON CULTURE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Notice is hereby given of the following Regular Meeting of
the Task Force on Culture and Economic Development

November 29, 2021 at 9:30AM
Meeting Held Electronically under Ministerial Order No. M192/2020

AGENDA

Call to order.

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA - Urgent/time sensitive matters only

1. *MOTION to Add or Delete Items from the Agenda.*

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

2. *MOTION to adopt the minutes of the October 25, 2021 meeting.*

PRESENTATIONS

3. **Retail Strategy** (Blair Fryer, Manager, Communications & Economic Development)

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Task Force on Culture and Economic Development will occur on:

Date:	TBD
Time:	9:30 AM
Location:	Conference call

ADJOURNMENT



Corporation of the City of
NEW WESTMINSTER

REGULAR MEETING OF TASK FORCE ON CULTURE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Monday, October 25, 2021

Regular Meeting of

the Task Force on Culture and Economic Development

which convenes at 9:30AM

Meeting Held Electronically under Ministerial Order No. M192/2020

MINUTES

PRESENT:

Mary Trentadue, Chair
Councillor Chinu Das
Councillor Jaimie McEvoy

STAFF:

Lisa Spitale - CAO
Emilie Adin – Director, Development Services
Harji Varn – CFO/Director, Finance
Blair Fryer – Manager, Communications and Economic Development
Serena Trachta - Manager, Inspections - Building and Plumbing
Erika Mashig - Manager, Parks and Open Space Planning, Design & Construction
Kim Deighton - Manager, Licensing & Integrated Services
Gordon Duggan – Director + Curator, New Media Gallery
Sarah Joyce – Director + Curator, New Media Gallery
Todd Ayotte – Manager, Community Arts & Theatre
Robert McCullough – Manager, Museums and Heritage Services
Jen Arbo – Economic Development Coordinator
Carolyn Armanini – Planner, Economic Development

The meeting was called to order at 9:33AM.

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA - Urgent/time sensitive matters only

1. No items were added.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

2. **MOVED and SECONDED**

THAT the minutes of the Culture and Economic Development meeting of October 25, 2021 be adopted.

CARRIED.

All members of the Task Force present voted in favour of the motion.

NEW BUSINESS

3. **Downtown Livability Plan Discussion** (Blair Fryer, Manager, Communications & Economic Development)

Jen Arbo gave a presentation outlining the Downtown Livability Plan and components comprising short and immediate term actions items. Members had the following comments:

- Support for business is paramount at this time. Safety, security and cleanliness are important for business and those are also top of mind for customers.
- Have noted garbage piled up and overflowing from garbage cans so addressing with new, larger receptacles should be helpful.
- Encourage staff to discuss cleanliness of downtown Skytrain stations with TransLink, along with a discussion on access to toilets. Other issues to address with TransLink include pigeon mess throughout the New West Station retail/platform areas, and overflowing adjacent to the bus loop.
- Businesses are looking for support on how to deal with behavioural issues when encountered outside their business; clarification on their role and when or how they should/shouldn't intervene.
- Suggestion to engage directly with vulnerable people regarding the garbage and discussing the concerns of garbage on streets.
- A lot of construction is taking place in the downtown right now (e.g. infrastructure works, private development, parks and open space installations, etc.). We have a series of north-south public space in the downtown that has been neglected and need to explore how the City could capitalize on those spaces (e.g. improved lighting, animating empty lots through programming, music, etc.) to celebrate that the downtown is an area in transition. This could be done in collaboration with downtown partners (e.g. DBIA). A mapping exercise of the Downtown with public spaces, conflict areas, may help identify areas for programming or other interventions.

- Ensure plain language and translation for any outreach materials that staff are preparing.
- A communication dashboard will be helpful to enhance internal communication and tracking of plan implementation progress.
- Educating the community at large could be considered through provision of general education so residents understand what is going on in the community and that everyone has a role to play in the City's compassionate approach.
- Is there a need for a greater presence of naloxone, potentially to Anvil staff?
- Understand the reality of the situation, it's not a healthy to go on anecdote, how many actual boarded up businesses are there, how acute is the problem for existing businesses? A State of the Downtown report, with accompanying data and information (including updated numbers on homelessness and interventions) could inform and direct work on identifiable goals.
- Recognition that there is a strong element of culture to this work and Downtown Livability work should necessarily bridge over to other Task Forces for discussion and action where required.
- It is noted that the Building Division is developing a process to fast track small Tenant Improvement building permits. Over the counter permits are also being considered as well. Additionally, the City's materials recycling bylaw may need to be reviewed to make it more robust. Building is looking at moving to a deconstruction bylaw, which could potentially encourage/force derelict buildings to demolish sooner.
- Current Business Licensing restrictions for pawn shops are rigorous, but few exist for cheque-cashing establishments. It was also noted that banks are often not accessible to the unhoused and cheque-cashing stations perform an important service.
- This year's grants have been challenged by Covid, construction activity, and ever changing restrictions as to what type of programing could happen. Looking forward, there are encouraging signs that next year will be more of a return to normal and programming of spaces can occur again.
- Cultural Services is looking to work with the BIA on a list of spaces that are vacant and potentially available for artists.
- It will be very helpful for Council to understand the range of options that may be available with respect to vacant properties, and what could influence change.
- Need to change the language around public toilets as listed under nuisance activity, it needs to be both understood and seen as a basic human need.
- The Unsightly Premises Bylaw doesn't include cosmetic aspects, and it needs to be balanced. It has never been an aggressive bylaw that it proactively enforced as it is complaint based. Need to also consider that commercial property owners have been impacted by the pandemic.

- The City currently has a Fire Bylaw that can dictate security. Audits of properties are regularly conducted but more aggressive application of this bylaw could be considered.
- Could additional fire prevention tools for Downtown buildings be considered, such as grants for sprinklers?

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Task Force on Culture and Economic Development will occur on:

Date:	November 29, 2021
Time:	9:30 AM
Location:	Conference call

ADJOURNMENT

ON MOTION, the meeting was adjourned at 10:39AM.

NAME
CHAIR

NAME
TITLE