



Economic Development Advisory Committee

Friday, June 7, 2019 – 8:00 a.m.
City Hall, Committee Room #2

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT:

- | | |
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| Councillor Mary Trentadue | - Chair, City Council Member |
| Councillor Chinu Das | - City Council Representative |
| Mark Evans | - Sectoral Representative from Local Business Community |
| Jolene Foreman | - Sectoral Representative from Local Business Community |
| Jorden Foss | - Community Representative from Commercial Area |
| Jonathan Graves | - Community Representative from Commercial Area |
| Kendra Johnston | - Downtown New Westminster Business Improvement Association Representative |
| Vera Kobalia | - Sectoral Representative from Local Business Community |
| Richard Patterson | - Uptown Business Association Representative |
| Paul Romein | - Sectoral Representative from Local Business Community |
| Catherine Williams | - Sectoral Representative from Local Business Community |

MEMBER REGRETS:

- | | |
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| Alejandro Diaz | - Community Representative from Commercial Area |
| Quinn Waddington | - New Westminster Chamber of Commerce Representative |

STAFF PRESENT:

- | | |
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| Mike Anderson | - Transportation Engineer |
| Blair Fryer | - Manager of Communications & Economic Development |
| Tristan Johnston | - Senior Planning Analyst |
| Heather Corbett | - Committee Clerk |

The meeting was called to order at 8:03 a.m.

1.0 ADDITIONS / DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA

1.1 Additions to the Agenda

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the agenda of the June 7, 2019 Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC) meeting be amended as follows:

- *Add Item 5.4: Follow up with Businesses Closing or Leaving the City*

CARRIED.

All members of the Committee present voted in favor of the motion.

2.0 ADOPTION OF MINUTES

2.1 Adoption of the Minutes of March 1, 2019

MOVED AND SECONDED

THAT the Minutes of the March 1, 2019 Economic Development Advisory Committee meeting be adopted as circulated.

CARRIED.

All members of the Committee present voted in favor of the motion.

3.0 PRESENTATIONS

There were no items.

4.0 UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There were no items.

5.0 NEW BUSINESS

5.1 General Economic Development Office Update

Blair Fryer, Manager of Communications and Economic Development, provided an overview of the recent activities and priorities of the Economic Development office (EDO), noting the following:

- The business ambassador role is being formalized, whereby a staff person has been identified to assist and follow up with businesses on particular aspects of license applications, and help the City to identify issues and challenges that businesses experience and that need addressing.;
- The EDO has started development of a 'how to establish business' guide, using content sourced from the Economic Development Plan consultation process;
- Work is ongoing with the BCIT Business Management program customer journey research, in which students are conducting surveys and interviews with businesses and City staff to gain a deeper understanding of potential City process roadblocks being experienced by businesses and identify potential improvements that can be made;
- Quarterly meetings have been established between the EDO and various City departments (Engineering, Building, Planning, Business Licensing) to discuss issues impacting local business, and develop solutions. External stakeholders, i.e. business improvement associations, NW Chamber of Commerce, are invited to every other meeting to provide input and feedback;

- The EDO is currently coordinating outreach and engagement efforts on construction projects in the Downtown so that the Downtown BIA can share and exchange updates and relevant information with impacted members; and,
- Interviews are now complete, and the City's new Economic Development Coordinator will be in place for the next EDAC meeting.

Blair Fryer, provided the following update on new businesses opening in the City:

- Another Beer Company is now open in the Sapperton Industrial Area;
- Kids in Motion Creative Arts Studio has expanded to a second location in Sapperton;
- Pho Nam restaurant has recently opened in the West End;
- Angelina's Dutch Corner has recently moved into the former Wild Rice restaurant location in River Market;
- Amaranthus, a vegan restaurant run by El Santo's owner, is now open in River Market;
- The Taco Factory has recently opened in Sapperton; and,
- Rocky Point Ice Cream has recently opened at its location in Uptown.

5.2 Parking Issues and Economic Development

Mike Anderson, Transportation Engineer, provided an overview of the ongoing recent activities and priorities of the Transportation department, noting the following:

- The Downtown Transportation Plan is underway, which would provide a wide-ranging plan about the Downtown, including:
 - Streets, parking, loading bays;
 - Greenways;
 - Revisioning of streets around New Westminster skytrain station;
 - Curbside use in general;
 - Taxis, and emerging transportation modes such as ride-hailing; and,
 - The next round of public engagement would occur in the fall and the plan would be completed subsequently;
- Staff are aware that residential sections of Quayside Drive have been impacted by construction in the Downtown, and have been working on implementing changes such as time limits, allowing parking in loading zones overnight, and painting parking stalls to ensure clarity and efficiency in the area;
- The City has identified a Great Streets program in the Master Transportation Plan (MTP), which looks at several commercial streets in the City as the top priorities for development as Great Streets;
 - Ewen Avenue was rebuilt recently and designed with features such as more pedestrian space and a multi-use path;

- The next Great Street priority has been identified as Sixth Street – staff have met with the Uptown BIA and the long-term visioning would start in the Fall, but would be a long-term, gradual process occurring in concert with developments; and,
- Staff are aware that construction is a big issue, particularly with workers requiring parking. There is currently no policy in regards to construction and parking for workers; however staff have been working with Bosa to reduce impacts on parking by offering workers onsite tool storage and transit passes to encourage commuting.

In response to questions from the Committee, Mr. Anderson provided the following information:

- There may be some data available on the usage of the Downtown parkade; however, often parkades can look less occupied than expected, but many of the spots are reserved; and,
- Parking strategy, pricing and implementations from the Downtown study are on staff's workplan.

The Committee made the following comments:

- While parking is a valid concern, prioritizing transit or car share (as per the MTP) should be a key focus;
- It would be beneficial to find opportunities to promote Evo car share and encourage BCAA to expand the car share territory;
- Providing more designated Evo spots in the Downtown may encourage less parking;
- Women coming into the downtown area in the evening may be more likely to park on the street to avoid returning to parkades at night;
- It would be useful to monitor Bosa's transit incentive program, as it would make a great case study to show future developments;
- It would be useful for the Committee to receive reports on the progress of the Downtown Transportation Plan recommendations, occupancy and utilization rates of the parkade, and statistics on car sharing services in the City, such as trips that end in the Downtown; and,
- It may be useful to monitor the amount of parking tickets that are issued in the City, and the revenue they generate, as there may be other options, such as monthly parking passes, which may be popular among residents who use parking services.

It was decided that staff would follow up on:

- Providing the Committee with progress of the parking study and relevant sections of the Master Transportation Plan; and,
- Obtaining statistics from Evo and reporting back to the Committee.

5.3 Economic Development Metrics – Presentation and Discussion

Tristan Johnson, Senior Planning Analyst, provided a PowerPoint presentation on the subject of developing metrics for measuring economic development in New Westminster, detailing the City's previous EDAC indicators, and asked the committee for feedback on how many indicators should be used going forward.

The Committee made the following comments:

- The list is very comprehensive and could be used again, with the addition of any missing indicators;
- It would be useful to see what other Metro Vancouver cities are using as economic indicators;
- Additional indicators noted by the Committee included:
 - Residential factors such as vacancy rates; childcare vacancies; and childcare wait times;
 - Number of home-based businesses versus physical;
 - Cost of living; and,
 - Family income growth, including both adjusted and unadjusted figures.

5.4 Follow up with Businesses Closing or Leaving the City

Jolene Foreman, Sectoral Representative from Local Business Community, inquired whether the City receives feedback from businesses which have closed down or are leaving the City, and if so, what information is attained.

In response, Blair Fryer, Manager of Communications and Economic Development, noted that the City had been looking at receiving this type of information through City Hall process improvement action items outlined in the Future Forward economic development plan. Examples included:

- Business Ambassador gathering feedback when refunding the unused portion of a business license; and,
- Implementing a questionnaire at business license renewal time.

The Committee made the following comments:

- There often appears to be errors with business license data;
- The age of businesses are often difficult to track, therefore the Downtown BIA keeps notes;
- Process improvements to the business license form may improve data – for example, a tickbox to indicate whether a business is new or renewing; and,
- There may be opportunity for exit interviews to be taken on by the City's BIAs and Chambers.

It was decided that the next EDAC meeting would feature a section about the Business Ambassador's role and how it is related to business outreach.

6.0 REPORTS

There were no items.

7.0 CORRESPONDENCE

There were no items.

8.0 NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for September 6, 2019 at 8:00 a.m. in Committee Room #2.

9.0 ADJOURNMENT

ON MOTION, the meeting was adjourned at 9:23 a.m.

Certified Correct,

ORIGINAL SIGNED
Councillor Mary Trentadue
Chair

ORIGINAL SIGNED
Heather Corbett
Committee Clerk