

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES

Friday, May 6, 2022
Electronic and in Meeting Room G
Lower Level, City Hall

PRESENT

Kendra Johnston*	Alternate Chair, Representative, Downtown New Westminister Business Improvement Association
Councillor Chinu Das*	Council Representative
Monita Cheng*	Community Representative from Commercial Area
Mark Evans*	Sectoral Representative from Local Business Community
Jolene Foreman*	Sectoral Representative from Local Business Community
Jordan Foss*	Sectoral Representative from Local Business Community
Imran Gill*	Sectoral Representative from Local Business Community
Vera Kobalia*	Community Representative from Commercial Area
Bart Slotman*	Representative, Uptown Business Association

REGRETS

Councillor Mary Trentadue	Chair
Nikki Morris	Representative, New Westminister Chamber of Commerce
Paul Romein	Sectoral Representative from Local Business Community
Catherine Williams	Sectoral Representative from Local Business Community

STAFF PRESENT

Jen Arbo	Economic Development Coordinator
Carolyn Armanini	Economic Development Planner
Blair Fryer	Manager, Communications and Economic Development
Katie Stobbart	Committee Clerk

*Denotes electronic attendance

1. CALL TO ORDER AND LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Kendra Johnston opened the meeting at 9:03 a.m. and recognized with respect that New Westminster is on the unceded and unsurrendered land of the Halkomelem speaking peoples. She acknowledged that colonialism has made invisible their histories and connections to the land. She recognized that, as a City, we are learning and building relationships with the people whose lands we are on.

2. INTRODUCTIONS AND ICEBREAKERS

There were no items.

3. CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

There were no changes to the agenda.

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

4.1 Minutes of March 4, 2022

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the Minutes of the March 4, 2022 Economic Development Advisory Committee meeting be adopted.

Carried.

All members present voted in favour of the motion.

5. REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS

5.1 Business Association Seed Program

Jen Arbo, Economic Development Coordinator, provided a presentation entitled "Business Association Launch Program", noting that the program

will now be called the Business Association Launch Program rather than Seed Program. Ms. Arbo also provided a draft program brochure for feedback.

In response to questions from the Committee, Ms. Arbo advised:

- There were some businesses that seemed excited about the idea of the launch program, and we will talk to them first;
- Many business owners who took the survey indicated that they hoped for greater advocacy, and this helps to meet that goal; and
- The grant could be used to hire a contractor, though we would like to see a formal society established before anyone is hired, which helps to validate from the City's perspective that we are working with an organization with accountability.

The Committee suggested having businesses fill out a questionnaire instead of a report at the end, so they know what information we are looking for.

5.2 Retail Strategy Update

Carolyn Armanini, Economic Development Planner, provided an update on the Retail Strategy, noting the following:

- Phase one was brought before Council and was favourably received;
- Douglas College has indicated they would support the City in continuing to maintain the inventory that was done;
- Planning has a workshop planned in May with the consultants to look at oversupply with a specific lens to the OCP land use designations;
- In the analysis, ratios of retail space per capita are not used as these are problematic and vary from area to area; instead it is modelled by trade area, which accounts for different income levels and how that impacts spending potential from area to area. This is driven by disposable incomes, not gross incomes;
- Four to six percent is considered a healthy vacancy rate;
- In this second phase, focused workshops are planned with EDAC members as well as other groups such as BIA boards, and business owners who want to take part;

- The intention is to have a draft ready by the summer. To accommodate this, the next EDAC meeting will be rescheduled from July 8 to June 21, 2022.

6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

There were no items.

7. STANDING REPORTS AND UPDATES

There were no items.

8. NEW BUSINESS

There were no items.

9. END OF MEETING

The meeting ended at 9:33 a.m.

10. UPCOMING MEETINGS

Remaining meetings for 2022, which take place at 9:00 a.m. unless otherwise noted:

- July 8
- September 2
- December 2

Certified Correct,

Original Signed
Councillor Mary Trentadue
Chair

Original Signed
Katie Stobbart
Committee Clerk