

CITY OF BURNABY

FINANCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

HIS WORSHIP, THE MAYOR  
AND COUNCILLORS

Re: Heights Merchants Association - Business  
Development Office - Progress Report

**RECOMMENDATION:**

1. THAT Council grant \$15,000 in funding to the Heights Merchants Association Business Development Office based on the information contained in the attached report.
2. THAT a copy of this report be sent to Claudia Laroye, Executive Director, Heights Merchants Association, 102 - 4011 Hastings Street, Burnaby, B.C., V5C 2J1.

**REPORT**

The Finance and Economic Development Committee, at its meeting 1999 October 25, adopted the attached report providing an update on progress of the Heights Merchants Association's Business Development Office. At its meeting of 1998 September 14 Council granted authority to the Economic Development Committee to, based on an on-going review, incrementally release the remaining funds of a \$50,000 grant provided to operate the Business Development Office. Accordingly, upon review of this status report the Finance and Economic Development Committee recommend approval of the next \$15,000 in funding to the Heights Merchant's Association.

Respectfully submitted,

Councillor L.A. Rankin  
Chair

Councillor D.N. Johnston  
Member

Councillor N.M. Volkow  
Member

COPY	-	CITY MANAGER
	-	DIRECTOR FINANCE
	-	DIRECTOR PLNG. & BLDG.

**TO:** FINANCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
COMMITTEE

1999 October 14

**FROM:** DIRECTOR PLANNING AND BUILDING

**SUBJECT: HEIGHTS MERCHANTS ASSOCIATION  
BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT OFFICE - PROGRESS REPORT**

**PURPOSE:** To inform the Committee of the Heights Merchants Association Business Development Office's progress to date to enable forwarding of the next \$15,000 in funding.

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**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. **THAT** the Finance and Economic Development Committee recommend that Council grant \$15,000 in funding to the Heights Merchants Association Business Development Office based on the information contained in this report.
2. **THAT** a copy of this report be sent to Claudia Laroye, Executive Director, Heights Merchants Association, 102-4011 Hastings Street, Burnaby, B.C., V5C 2J1.

**R E P O R T**

**1.0 BACKGROUND**

On 1998 September 14, Council adopted the recommendations contained in a report from the Finance and Economic Development Committee to grant funding for the creation of a Business Development Office (BDO) for the Heights Merchants Association (HMA). The Heights Merchants Association administers the Hastings Street Business Improvement Area (BIA) which was created in 1994 to help the local business community with physical improvements and marketing efforts and is funded by the collection of a levy on all commercial properties in the area. The total funding granted to the BDO was \$50,000 to be released incrementally based on an on-going review of the BDO's ability to achieve the goals as set out in the 1998 September 14 report (see Appendices 1 and 2 *attached*). The initial grant forwarded to the BDO in 1998 November was \$15,000, followed by \$10,000 in 1999 May. This report is intended to inform the Committee of the BDO's progress to date in order to enable the forwarding of the next \$15,000 in funding to the BDO.

**2.0 DISCUSSION**

**2.1 Business Development Office Activities to Date**

As outlined in the 1999 April 20 report from the Director Planning and Building, the first review period for the BDO was from 1998 November to 1999 March. During this period the BDO was

involved with campaigning for the renewal and expansion of the BIA including canvassing of the merchants along Hastings Street, creation of information brochures for renewal and expansion, organization of public meetings on the process, and creation of a start-up committee of merchants from the expansion area. The successful renewal and expansion was formalized by the Final Adoption of the BIA Bylaws by Council on 1999 April 12.

Since the time of the renewal and expansion, the BDO has been involved in a number of BIA membership support materials. One of these has been a Business Recruitment Package for the Heights. The BDO worked in conjunction with a professional graphic designer in development of the Recruitment Package which has a multi-purpose design intended to welcome new businesses to the area, draw new businesses to the area, encourage new development and provide general education of the Heights. Specific information in the Package includes vacancy listings, testimonials, demographic information, and current news items.

Another initiative the BDO has been involved with is the redesign of the HMA web site. The BDO has been working with a professional web design company since 1999 August on this project and hopes to achieve increased awareness of the Heights and its merchants, advertising of special events, business recruitment, member service initiatives and general information dissemination from the redesigned web site. The new web site is expected to be completed by 1999 December.

The BDO has also been analyzing data which was collected through a survey implemented by two students hired through the Youth Community Action program. The BDO designed the survey and the students collected the data from a total of over 1,600 respondents. The survey was designed to indicate awareness of the Heights commercial district, the variety of goods and services that survey respondents wanted to see in the Heights and any improvements respondents wanted in the Heights. Survey respondents included residents of the Heights community and municipalities across the Lower Mainland. The results of the survey are being used to help determine future goals and campaigns of the BDO and the HMA.

The BDO staff person has also been very involved with organization of community events such as *Hats Off Day* and *Rediscovering the Heights* celebrations. The main purpose of the BDO's involvement in Hats Off Day was to encourage merchants from the expansion area to become involved in the event. This included canvassing expansion area merchants for involvement in Hats Off Day and arranging booths for expansion merchants at the event. The Rediscovering the Heights celebration was organized by the BDO to celebrate the successful renewal and expansion efforts of the HMA and thank the merchants and larger community for their support. This event was held on 1999 September 26 in Confederation Park and included a barbeque, hot air ballooning, an interactive science demonstration, a variety of games and information booths for the HMA, Burnaby Recycling Services, and the Burnaby Fire Department. This event was very successful with approximately 500 people in attendance, and may become an annual event for the HMA and the Heights community.

The BDO staff person has also been liaising with a number of agencies on behalf of the HMA. Agencies such as the Business Improvement Association of B.C. and the Burnaby Board of Trade are agencies which the BDO has been in contact with in order to better serve the members of the HMA.

## **2.2 Future Goals of The Business Development Office**

With the Business Recruitment Package completed and the redesign of the Heights web site almost complete, the BDO will focus on compiling the Library of Business, Tourism and Civic Information which will lead directly into the active recruitment of new businesses to the Heights which will be the focus of the BDO's efforts in the next phase.

The future phase of the BDO's plan will include continuing with active business recruitment and encouraging new development along Hastings Street and the Heights in general. The BDO plans to create a catalogue of vacant sites and work with realtors, property owners, developers and City departments to bring new development to the Heights.

## **3.0 SUMMARY**

The Heights Merchants Association BDO has met the goals for its second phase of operation as outlined in the report adopted by Council on 1998 September 14. These goals were to conduct a survey to collect information about the perception of the Heights in order to develop effective business recruitment and promotions for the Heights and to organize celebrations such as Hats Off Day and Rediscover the Heights. Therefore, it is recommended that the Committee recommend to Council the forwarding of the next \$15,000 in funding to the Heights Merchants Association in order to facilitate continuation of the BDO. The next evaluation will occur after 2000 May in order to assess the success of Phases 1, 2 and 3 of the BDO's budget. If the BDO is found at this time to be successful in accomplishing its goals, a final \$10,000 in funding for Phase 4 will be forwarded.



D.G. Stenson  
Director Planning and Building

PSF:gk  
Attach.

cc: Director Finance  
City Manager

# APPENDIX 1

## HASTINGS BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT OFFICE PROGRAM BUDGET

1998 NOVEMBER 01 - 2000 OCTOBER 31

### PHASE 1

#### Business Improvement Area Expansion and Renewal - 1998 November 1 - 1999 April 30

Printed Materials	\$2,400
Open House/Public Meetings	250
Advertising	500
Short Term Contract Personnel	16,000
Office & Miscellaneous Expenses	<u>1,250</u>

PHASE 1 SUBTOTAL = \$20,400

### PHASE 2

#### Surveys and Information Gathering Project - 1999 January 1 - 1999 August 31

Surveys (Residential, Pedestrian & Commuters)	\$500
Short Term Contract Personnel	2,500
Interim Evaluation of Hastings Business Development Office	350
Office & Miscellaneous Expenses	<u>1,250</u>

PHASE 2 SUBTOTAL = \$4,600

### PHASE 3

#### Unifunc/Awareness Street Celebration - 1999 October 01 - 1999 December 31

Short Term Contract Personnel	\$3,500
Staging Event	<u>1,500</u>
	5,000

#### Business Recruitment Program - 1999 October 01 - 2000 April 30

Hastings Street Web Page	\$1,000
Business Recruitment Brochure	2,000
Business Orientation (Tour/Meetings)	250
Short Term Contract Personnel	<u>6,000</u>
	9,250

#### Library of Business, Tourism & Civic Information - 2000 May 01 - 2000 May 31

Printing	\$500
Short Term Contract Personnel	<u>1,000</u>
	1,500

Phase 3 Office & Miscellaneous Expenses \$1,250

PHASE 3 SUBTOTAL = \$17,000

#### PHASE 4

##### Attracting Property Development to Hastings Street - 2000 June 01 - 2000 July 31

Contacting Developers/Publicity	\$500
Catalogue of Potential Sites	500
Short Term Contract Personnel	<u>3,000</u>
	4,000

##### Business Education Development - 2000 August 01 - 2000 September 30

Short Term Contract Personnel	\$2,500
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##### Evaluation of Hastings Business Development Office Program - November 2000

Reports	\$50
Short Term Contract Personnel	<u>250</u>
	300

<u>Phase 4 Office &amp; Miscellaneous Expenses</u>	\$1,200
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PHASE 4 SUBTOTAL = \$8,000

... TOTAL FUNDS = \$50,000

## *APPENDIX 2*

### HASTINGS BUSINESS EXPANSION AND DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Phase 1 of our plan will be to hire short term contract personnel who will develop printed materials and who will aid us in campaigning the business district east of Willingdon around Hastings Street. This person will also have similar responsibilities to help the Heights Merchants Association (HMA) through the renewal process which we expect to be a simple and less time consuming project. The goal by April 30, 1999 will be to have two Business Improvement Areas (BIAs) ready to amalgamate on May 1, 1999.

Phase 2 of our plan will be an information gathering phase. We will hire short term contract personnel and work with schools (when possible) to assess the total business inventory of the new BIA. We will survey customers, residents of North Burnaby, pedestrians and commuters to determine which businesses need to be attracted to our BIA. We will also determine if customers are satisfied with those businesses who currently serve the public, how could we improve our services, etc. This information will be used in other phases of this project.

Phase 3 of our plan is to bring about awareness of our new expanded BIA. We plan to create awareness through a Web page. We will create a new promotion or expand an existing street celebration for the North Burnaby community we serve. We will develop a business recruitment package using the information gathered in Phase 2 and we will approach businesses with the purpose of attracting them to our BIA. We would set up a library of business, tourism, and civic information.

Phase 4 of our project would be to attract new development to our BIA. We would encourage developers to utilize vacant land to increase the visual interest Hastings Street would have for pedestrians. We would catalogue potential sites and work with realtors, property owners, developers and the city planning department. We would continue our business recruitment efforts throughout this phase, as well as providing needed training and educational resources to existing merchants based on surveys conducted in Phase 2.

The HMA will leverage this contract by using our volunteers and by working with schools whose students are enrolled in studies related to our projects. This will cause some distortions in our timing but will give us the best results possible for the amount spent. At the end of each phase we would assess if we have met our stated goals and review the contract to determine if the BIA and the City of Burnaby were receiving good value for the money and time spent. A full report will be made available at the end of November for each of the two years of this project.

