

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 this report be received for information purposes.

REPORT

The Finance and Economic Development Committee 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, by telephone poll, approved granting of the next \$10,000 in funding to the Heights Merchant's Association.

This is for the information of Council.

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 APRIL 20

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 \$10,000 in funding.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. **THAT** the Finance and Economic Development Committee approve granting of the next \$10,000 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. 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*), and the Finance and Economic Development Committee was authorized to approve payment of funds in installments subject to acceptance of the reviews. The initial grant forwarded to the BDO in 1998 November was \$15,000. This report is intended to inform the Committee of the BDO's progress to date in order to enable the Committee to forward the next \$10,000 in funding to the BDO.

2.0 DISCUSSION

2.1 Business Development Office Activities to Date

On 1998 November 9 the Heights Merchants Association hired a staff person for the BDO. Since this time the staff person has been working on the campaign to renew the existing BIA and expand the BIA to the three block portion of Hastings Street between Willingdon Avenue and Gamma Avenue. Campaigning efforts for renewal and expansion have included going door-to-door along Hastings Street to inform businesses of the renewal and expansion plans. In the renewal area this has included informing businesses of the numerous accomplishments of the BIA in its initial five years. In the expansion area this has included explaining to business proprietors and property owners what a BIA is and how it can help improve the area and encourage customers to visit the area. The BDO staff have successfully contacted numerous businesses in the expansion area and discussed at length with them potential goals for the BIA in this area. Information about the types of businesses in the existing BIA has been updated in the Merchants Association's database and information about businesses in the expansion areas has also been added to the Association's database.

The BDO staff person has also prepared two separate brochures for the renewal and expansion BIA areas. These eight page brochures (available in the City Clerk's Office) explain the accomplishments of the BIA to date and the renewal or expansion processes. These brochures were distributed to area businesses and property owners in mid-January 1999. Other information has been distributed to area merchants and property owners through "The Heights" insert in the Burnaby Now newspaper to update the community on BIA progress and accomplishments.

The BDO staff person has also organized three public meetings to display materials and talk to community members about the BIA renewal and expansion. These meetings were held on 1999 January 27th at the Gilmore Community School Library, February 24th at the Easy Business Centre in the expansion area and March 10 at the Gilmore Community School Library. Merchants and property owners who attended these meetings were given an opportunity to discuss any concerns they had regarding the BIA renewal and expansion and share any ideas on projects for the BIA.

The BDO staff person has also facilitated the establishment of a start-up committee of merchants from the expansion area between Willingdon and Gamma. This committee has approximately 20 members representing 13 businesses and the committee has established a regular meeting schedule. The purpose of the committee is to provide the Heights Merchants Association with feedback about the Association, raise issues that merchants would like to have addressed and strategize for the expansion campaign. Upon establishing the Board of Directors in June, sub-committees will be established to deal with beautification issues, Hats Off Day and promotions in the expansion area.

The petition process for the BIA renewal and expansion closed on 1999 April 03 and had a low response rate of property owners in opposition, allowing the BIA Bylaws to proceed. Council did give Final Adoption to the Bylaws for renewal and expansion of the BIAs at the 1999 April 12 meeting illustrating the effectiveness of the BDO's efforts in campaigning for renewal and expansion of the BIA.

2.2 Future Goals of the Business Development Office

The immediate future for the BDO will be a period in which to establish who would be interested in becoming involved in the BIA, either through sitting on the board of directors or contributing to committees of the board. Another immediate goal is to develop various BIA membership support materials and potential privileges between members to help improve visibility of the BIA among its members.

Longer term goals of the BDO staff person include participation in organization of Hats Off Day and formulation and implementation of merchant and customer surveys to begin gathering information for the purposes of business recruitment in the Heights as outlined in the original BDO report to the Finance and Economic Development Committee.

3.0 SUMMARY

The Heights Merchants Association BDO has met the goals for its first four months of operation as outlined in the report adopted by Council on 1998 September 14. These goals were to hire a short term contract employee to develop printed materials and campaign for the BIA renewal and expansion. Therefore, it is recommended that the next \$10,000 in funding be forwarded to the Heights Merchants Association in order to facilitate continuation of the BDO. The next evaluation will occur after 1999 August in order to assess the success of Phases 1 and 2 of the BDO's budget. If the BDO is found at this time to be successful in accomplishing its goals, a further \$15,000 in funding for Phase 3 will be forwarded. The final \$10,000 in funding would be forwarded to the BDO if a final evaluation after 2000 May is favourable.



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

Unifvind/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

<u>Phase 3 Office & Miscellaneous Expenses</u>	\$1,250
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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 & 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.

