



# Corporation of the City of NEW WESTMINSTER

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES

**Friday, September 16, 2022**

**Open to public attendance in Committee Room G**

**Lower Level, City Hall**

**Committee members may attend electronically**

### PRESENT

Councillor Mary Trentadue\*

Councillor Chinu Das\*

Monita Cheng\*

Mark Evans\*

Jolene Foreman\*

Imran Gill\*

Vera Kobalia\*

Nikki Morris\*

Bart Slotman\*

Catherine Williams\*

Chair

Council Representative

Community Representative from Commercial Area

Sectoral Representative from Local Business

Community

Sectoral Representative from Local Business

Community

Sectoral Representative from Local Business

Community

Community Representative from Commercial Area

Representative, New Westminster Chamber of

Commerce

Representative, Uptown Business Association

Sectoral Representative from Local Business

Community

### REGRETS

Jorden Foss

Kendra Johnston

Paul Romein

Sectoral Representative from Local Business

Community

Alternate Chair, Representative, Downtown New

Westminster Business Improvement Association

Sectoral Representative from Local Business

Community

### STAFF PRESENT

Jen Arbo

Carolyn Armanini

Economic Development Coordinator

Economic Development Planner

DOC#2152683

Blair Fryer	Manager, Communications and Economic Development
Erika Mashig	Manager, Parks and Open Space Planning, Design and Construction
Diane Merenick	Manager, Integrated Services
Camille Oliveira	Bylaw Officer / Livability Coordinator
Katie Stobbart	Committee Clerk

\*Denotes electronic attendance

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**1. CALL TO ORDER AND LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

Councillor Mary Trentadue 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**

The Committee completed a round of introductions, as there is a new member of the Committee, Paige Strand, and answered the question, "What is your favourite thing about Fall?"

**3. CHANGES TO THE AGENDA**

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the September 16, 2022 Economic Development Advisory Committee Agenda be adopted.

**Carried.**

All members present voted in favour of the motion.

#### **4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

##### **4.1 Minutes of June 21, 2022**

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the Minutes of the June 21, 2022 Economic Development Advisory Committee meeting be adopted.

**Carried.**

All members present voted in favour of the motion.

#### **5. REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS**

##### **5.1 Integrated Services New Approach - Proactive Enforcement of Livability and Property Use**

Camille Oliveira, Bylaw Officer / Livability Coordinator, and Diane Merenick, Manager, Integrated Services, provided a presentation on the Integrated Services New Approach – Proactive Enforcement of Livability and Property Use.

In response to questions from the Committee, Ms. Oliveira, Ms. Merenick, and Jen Arbo, Economic Development Coordinator, advised:

- Livability coordinators will still respond to calls such as noise complaints, and complaints about unsightly property or bylaw infractions will be addressed, just not at the forefront of their task lists;
- The Purpose Society's Health Contact Centre is always willing to provide naloxone training for businesses, which is a concrete way businesses can support these efforts;
- October 8 to 16, 2022 is Homelessness Action Week, and the New Westminster Homelessness Coalition has activities for the community as well as opportunities to donate time, supplies, and resources; and
- A new protocol was recently introduced that when a business license is approved, they are sent proactive information and a resource guide.

The Committee had the following comments arising from discussion:

- The Committee would like to share the presentation and to hear more about opportunities to help;
- Appreciate seeing such a human-centered approach, as everyone has a story that can be learned through conversation;
- Business owners do not always see the full story—it would be ideal to see the full picture and to understand what we are doing as a community to help deal with challenges that lead people to fall into homelessness. Businesses should feel engaged and like part of the solution;
- Would like to see a more streamlined process for businesses to get information;
- The shift in the approach for bylaw officers should be communicated to the community; and
- Consider rewording “nuisance” related to discussions of homelessness.

## **5.2 Business License Bylaw Modernization - Discussion on Key Focus Areas**

Carolyn Armanini, Economic Development Planner, and Jen Arbo, Economic Development Coordinator, provided a presentation on Business License Bylaw Modernization, requesting suggestions for alternative language to terms like “graffiti, dumped garbage, loitering, needles, and nuisance”. The Committee suggested the following:

- Livability reporting or Civic Needs reporting;
- Graffiti: unauthorized public artwork or unsolicited art;
- Nuisance: destructive behaviour, with examples of what that behaviour looks like;
- Garbage: miscellaneous debris and abandoned items;
- Needles: Unsafe, hazardous items;
- Instead of focusing on the “nuisance activity,” focus on what we hope to achieve to create livability (public art, cleanliness, etc.);
- Challenged the word loitering—who decides what is loitering?

The Committee discussed historically problematic uses and discussed perceived risks in current environment:

- Given legalization, questioned whether cannabis is still a risk;
- Arcades need to be reviewed and could be similar to regulations for pubs and bars;
- The City may want to look into best practices around raves so public venues are safely able to host them, rather than having them take place “underground”;
- Some of the categories presented should be reviewed on a case-by-case basis rather than not permitting the business type; and
- It would help to have more information about why business types were not permitted, e.g. karaoke venues.

The Committee discussed whether there are other business types or uses that should be included in new and evolving industries beyond what staff suggested, and noted that online services with demonstrations should be accommodated—for example, for a fitness school or cooking demonstration.

Staff requested feedback from the committee on licensing non-profits and societies. The Committee advised:

- Societies that provide activism or religious services may actually be political lobbyists. There is need to frame what gets licensed as a non-profit or society and what is the limit on the activities of the group;
- Everyone should be licensed, even just for data collection;
- Would not want fees to be a barrier to someone moving ahead with a non-profit or not. Some non-profits are large organizations that can handle a business license fee, and for others it would be a barrier; and
- The range of size of non-profits makes it difficult to determine who can afford it and who cannot.

Staff requested feedback on mobile licensing and whether to simplify the City’s approach or continue with the status quo. The Committee advised:

- Staff should consider what is in the best interests of the food truck community, and whether there may be unintended impacts of having more food trucks in the community on existing restaurants and businesses; and

- Food trucks are an exciting part of our festivals and a big pull for residents and visitors, so we would like to remove barriers where we can.

Staff asked for the Committee's thoughts on licensing mobile vendors on public and/or private property. The Committee advised that more flexibility in zoning is appealing, but when it comes to things like property taxes, it would be interesting to view it more as a sublease—the City is already getting property taxes for the property, and some businesses might want to encourage use of their space to help with higher operating costs, for example.

Staff asked whether members support a business license type and fee associated with temporary and pop-up uses. The Committee advised:

- There is support for a business license type and fee for temporary and pop-up uses;
- There are a number of studies that show pop-ups are positive for the community and for businesses;
- Many small businesses use this to test products and services, and it could activate a lot of dead spaces; and
- There are possibilities for damage, and this needs to be assessed on a case-by-case basis: is this a true retail entry into the market, or does it undermine an existing retail business?

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

- Staff work with non-profit and social groups and can arrange to bring those perspectives in on word choice; and
- There is still an effort to address undesired behaviours, but staff would like to use language that is more inclusive and modern, to ensure the new bylaw reflects where we are in 2022/23 and is able to respond to the challenges every community faces.

### **5.3 Belmont Plaza - Discussion on Programming Uses and Ideas**

This item was postponed to the December meeting.

### **6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

There were no items.

### **7. STANDING REPORTS AND UPDATES**

Catherine Williams reminded the Committee that Douglas College is still looking for business partners for its internship program.

### **8. NEW BUSINESS**

There were no items.

### **9. END OF MEETING**

The meeting ended at 11:00 a.m.

### **10. UPCOMING MEETINGS**

The remaining meetings scheduled for 2022:

- December 2, 2022 at 9:00 a.m.