



CITY OF VANCOUVER

A7

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Report Date: November 15, 2005
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CC File No.: 8320
Meeting Date: November 29, 2005

TO: Vancouver City Council
FROM: Director of City Plans
SUBJECT: Approval of Council Initiative - Proposed Cambie Village BIA

RECOMMENDATION

- A. THAT Council approve the Cambie Business Association as sponsor for the proposed Cambie Village BIA
- B. THAT Council approve the commencement of a Council Initiative to establish the proposed Cambie Village BIA;

FURTHER THAT Council forward the application of the Cambie Business Association to a hearing of the Court of Revision.
- C. THAT the City notify the property owners and tenants in the area (outlined in Appendix A) of the proposed BIA and BIA levy.
- D. THAT Council approve a 5 year (2006 -2011) funding-ceiling of \$650,000 for the proposed Cambie Village BIA, subject to Council approval of the BIA at the Court of Revision.

GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The General Manager of Community Services recommends APPROVAL of the foregoing.

COUNCIL POLICY

Section 456 of the Vancouver Charter gives Council the authority to create a Business Improvement Area (BIA). Council may grant money to a BIA for planning and implementation of business promotion schemes provided that the money is recovered through a special property tax.

Council policy with respect to the establishment of a BIA was approved on October 14, 1997 as follows:

A BIA may be established by Council Initiative; property owners and commercial tenants receive notification of the Initiative. The BIA will not proceed if one-third or more of the owners representing one-third of the assessed property value, or one-third of the tenants, counted separately, are in opposition.

PURPOSE

The Cambie Business Association (CBA) has completed the first step in the process of establishing a new Business Improvement Area (BIA). The purpose of this report is to commence the second step, which is to approve the CBA as sponsor of, and to commence a Council Initiative for, the proposed Cambie Village BIA, and to forward the BIA application to the Court of Revision.

BACKGROUND

Merchant associations have probably been active on Cambie Street, as evidenced by hardware on utility poles, likely used for flags or seasonal decoration. In the mid-nineties, the Cambie Corridor Merchants Association was formed, partially in response to previous rapid transit proposals. Except for a brief revival in 1998, the group has been inactive.

Anchored by the Park Theatre and two food markets, the vicinity of Cambie and 16th has enjoyed moderate day and evening vitality as a predominantly small business area. After a brief closure, the Park Theatre has re-opened under new ownership, and a new Capers market will soon be opening. Lower Cambie, between 6th and 12th, has a hotel (Plaza 500), two retail malls (City Square and Fairchild Plaza), and a new large-format Canadian Tire / Best Buy outlet. A new Save-On-Foods is expected on the Grosvenor site in the 2300 block Cambie, and a Whole Foods market is expected to locate in a redeveloped Fairchild Plaza.

Notwithstanding these positive developments, property owners and merchants along both parts of Cambie see a BIA as crucial to maintaining business vitality during the RAV line construction period, and as key to the street achieving its full potential in the future. Key proposed initiatives include marketing and promotion, street enhancement, and crime prevention.

The Cambie Business Association was registered as a non-profit society under the Societies Act in Spring 2005. As required, the CBA will amend its Constitution and By-laws to meet the City's BIA requirements prior to approval of the BIA at the Court of Revision to be held in February, 2006.

DISCUSSION

The proposed Cambie Village BIA comprises nineteen blocks of Cambie Street between Sixth and Twenty-fifth avenues, of which fourteen are commercial. A map of the proposed boundary is attached as Appendix A.

The CBA proposes a Year 1 budget of \$100,000.00, representing an annual levy rate of \$0.59 per \$1,000.00 of assessed property value, or approximately 3.59% of commercial property taxes. A copy of the proposed budget is attached for information as Appendix B. If Council approves the BIA at the Court of Revision, staff will report back for approval of the Year 1 budget along with all of the other BIAs' 2006 - 2007 budget requests.

The proposed funding-ceiling of \$650,000 is the maximum amount that may be levied over the proposed Cambie Village BIA 5-year term.

Outreach Activities

In May 2005, the CBA distributed a survey to all 364 property owners and business tenants in the proposed BIA (79 owners and 285 businesses). The survey asked respondents to mark their priorities for Cambie Street, and to indicate whether or not they were interested in a BIA. Seventy-eight responses were received, including 18 property-owners (22.8% of owners) and 60 business tenants (21.1% of tenants). Of the 78 responses, 48 (62%) were interested, 2 (3%) were not interested, and 28 (36%) were either not sure or did not answer the question.

In early June, packages were distributed to all property owners and business tenants. The packages included background information on BIAs, tabulated results of the May survey, and a notice to attend a BIA outreach meeting.

On June 28, 2005, the CBA convened the first of three BIA outreach meetings, to which all property owners and business tenants were invited. All three meetings were attended by the City's BIA Coordinator, who explained the BIA formation process, answered questions, and monitored the proceedings. Thirty owners and business tenants attended the initial meeting. The CBA summarized the results of the May survey, explained how the results would be used to develop a BIA proposal, and invited discussion. An informal show of hands indicated unanimous support for continuing the BIA process, and near unanimous support for a large BIA extending from Sixth Avenue to 25th.

In early July, a second set of packages were distributed. In addition to material distributed prior to the first meeting, they included an application form for CBA membership, a notice for meeting #2, and a draft BIA budget for discussion.

The second BIA outreach meeting - attended by 40 property owners and businesses - was held on July 25, 2005. Eleven other owners and tenants were represented by 'proxy'. Survey results were summarized, and a draft BIA budget was presented for discussion. Comments and

questions centred around budget allocations, priorities, and the most effective use of limited funds. Levy estimates were available on request, with generally favourable responses. An informal show of hands indicated unanimous support to proceed with a BIA proposal and budget at \$100,000.

Proposed BIA budget line items and budget allocations were revised on the basis of input at the July 25 meeting. A package was distributed in mid-September containing background materials previously distributed, a summary of the process to date, a revised BIA budget, and a meeting notice. The third BIA outreach meeting was held on October 6, 2005. Fifty-three property owners and business tenants attended, with four 'proxies'. The budget revisions were generally supported. A show of hands unanimously approved a \$650,000 5-year funding ceiling, and affirmed proceeding with a BIA application.

In October, a final BIA support survey was distributed to all property owners and business tenants. The survey was accompanied by previously sent BIA background information and a copy of the proposed budget, and asked respondents whether or not they supported the BIA proposal. Twenty-seven completed surveys (7.7% of owners and tenants) were returned by the October 31 deadline. The respondents included 12 property owners (15.2% of owners) and 15 tenants (5.3% of tenants). Of the property owner responses, 7 (58%) supported the BIA proposal, with 3 owners (25%) opposed. Of the tenant responses, 13 (87%) supported the BIA proposal, with 2 tenants (13%) opposed. One respondent needed more information, and one respondent indicated they would support the BIA *after* the RAV line is completed.

Based on their surveys and general outreach, the CBA believes the BIA proposal is generally supported.

The Cambie Business Association formally applied to the City for consideration of a BIA on November 7, 2005. A copy of their application letter and documentation of their outreach activities is attached as Appendix C (on file in the Office of the City Clerk).

Staff Comments - Outreach and Support

Staff are satisfied that the Cambie Business Association has notified all property owners and tenants within the proposed BIA boundaries. Staff attended three public information meetings held on June 28, July 25, and October 6, 2005, respectively. Forty to sixty people attended at each meeting, with attendance increasing over the course of the meetings. These numbers represent a very high participation rate in the outreach process, a process in which participants seemed generally supportive. An informal show of hands at the end of the meetings indicated an overwhelming majority in support of the BIA proposal.

Based on the final BIA survey, negative responses from property owners and tenants were 25% and 13% respectively, significantly below Council's 'one-third' policy. However, a return rate of less than 8% on the final survey (combined owners and tenants) is not a highly reliable indication of property owner and tenant opposition.

At the instruction of staff, the CBA notices contained the name and telephone number of the City's BIA Coordinator. As of the date of this report, the Coordinator has received no calls or other communication from individuals opposed to the BIA.

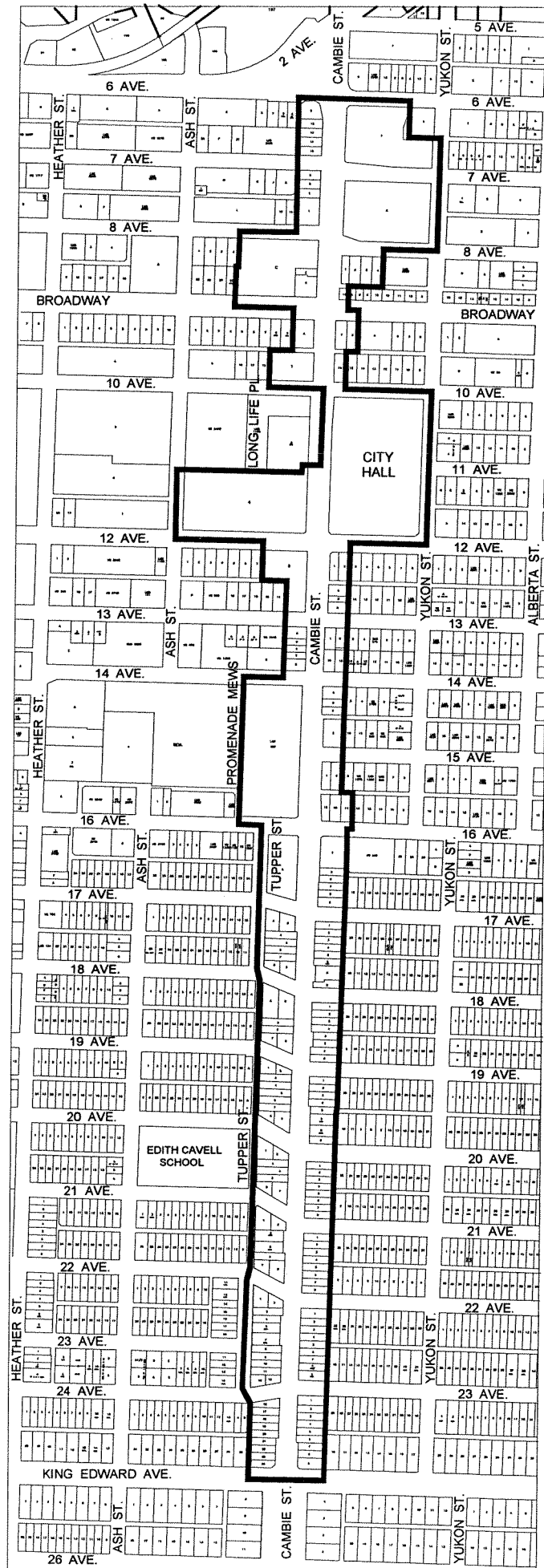
FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications.

CONCLUSION

The Cambie Business Association is requesting that Council consider approval of the proposed Cambie Village BIA and 5 year funding ceiling of \$650,000, and has asked that their application be forwarded by way of Council Initiative, to a Court of Revision, in order that the BIA may commence operations in April 2006. The results of the CBA's outreach activities indicate a reasonable level of support and a moderate level of opposition at this stage in the process. If Council approves the Cambie Village BIA at the Court of Revision, staff will report back for approval of the Year 1 budget along with all of the other BIAs' 2006 - 2007 budget requests.

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Proposed Cambie Street B.I.A.



**CAMBIE BUSINESS ASSOCIATION
PROPOSED BUDGET
APRIL 1, 2006 TO MARCH 31, 2007**

REVENUE:

BIA Levy	\$100,000
Directory Advertising Sales	\$5,000
TOTAL REVENUE:	\$105,000

EXPENSES:

Administration/Membership Services		\$4,000
Audit	\$1,000	
Insurance	\$1,000	
Legal	\$1,000	
Meetings	\$500	
Miscellaneous (office expenses)	\$500	
 BIA Coordinator		 \$15,000
 Crime Prevention		 \$20,000
Bike and Foot Safety Patrols		
Education and follow up		
 Marketing and Promotion		 \$21,000
Advertising	\$10,000	
Business Directory	\$10,000	
Website	\$1,000	
 Special Events/Street Festivals		 \$6,000
 Street Enhancement/Amenities		 \$33,000
Anti-Graffiti Program	\$5,000	
Banners (Design, Hardware, Installation, And Production)	\$15,000	
Holiday Decoration	\$5,000	
Sidewalk clean up program	\$8,000	
 Contingency		 \$6,000
 TOTAL EXPENSES:		 \$105,000