

Report Date: February 19, 2015  
Contact: Jane Pickering  
Contact No.: 604.873.7456  
RTS No.: 10798  
VanRIMS No.: 08-2000-20  
Meeting Date: March 4, 2015

TO: Standing Committee on City Finance and Services

FROM: General Manager of Planning and Development Services

SUBJECT: Approval of Commercial Drive BIA Renewal & Hastings North BIA Expansion

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

- A. THAT Council approve the application of the Commercial Drive Business Society (CDBS) as described in this Report;

FURTHER THAT Council instruct the Director of Legal Services, in consultation with the Director of Planning, to bring forward by-laws to re-establish the Commercial Drive BIA, to establish a new funding ceiling, and to remit monies for the business promotion scheme.

- B. THAT Council approve the application of the Hastings North Business Improvement Association (HNBIA) as described in this Report;

FURTHER THAT Council instruct the Director of Legal Services, in consultation with the Director of Planning, to bring forward by-laws to expand the Hastings North BIA, establish a funding ceiling, and to remit monies for the business promotion scheme.

#### **REPORT SUMMARY**

This report provides background information on the BIA creation, renewal and expansion process, the procedure for property-owner and business notifications, an analysis of objections received in response to the notifications, an overview of possible Council actions, and recommendations based on objections received as of the date of the report.

#### ***BIA Renewal Council Initiative***

The Commercial Drive Business Improvement Area must be re-designated (renewed) by Council in order to continue. This report recommends that Council approve the proposed Commercial Drive BIA application for a 7-year renewal term, and that Council instruct staff to prepare by-laws to re-establish the BIA, establish a new funding ceiling, and remit monies for a business improvement scheme.

### ***BIA Mid-term Expansion Council Initiative***

The Hastings North Business Improvement Association (HNBIA) has applied for a BIA expansion in mid-term. Mid-term expansions are accomplished by designation of a separate by-law timed to expire when the existing BIA renews. This report recommends that Council approve the proposed Hastings North BIA expansion area for three years, and that Council instruct staff to prepare by-laws to establish the BIA expansion area, establish a funding ceiling, and remit monies for a business improvement scheme.

### ***COUNCIL AUTHORITY/PREVIOUS DECISIONS***

#### ***BIA Renewal and Expansion Council Initiatives***

##### Vancouver Charter

Sections 455 through 463 of the Vancouver Charter make provision for the creation, renewal, expansion and funding of Business Improvement Areas (BIAs). Taxation of properties in an area pays for a variety of programs to promote and enhance the area.

BIAs are a form of Local Improvement. Under Charter section 506(2)(a), approval of a Local Improvement Council Initiative requires a resolution passed by at least two-thirds of all the Council members present. Section 506(2)(b) provides that a “sufficient number” of notices of objection to defeat a Council Initiative is deemed to be more than *one-half* of the assessed property owners, representing more than *one-half* of the value according to the last revised real-property assessment roll, of the parcels liable to be assessed. However, Council guidelines also apply, and provide an additional standard for BIA approval.

##### Council Policy

Council policy with respect to BIA applications has been to identify the “sufficient number” of objections to be either *one-third* of the assessed owners, representing at least *one-third* of the assessed value *OR* one-third of the *business tenants*, counted separately.

The one-third guideline has been used to recognize that Council Initiatives require those who oppose an application to make the case that the levy is not desired. Typically, local improvements involve only a few property owners, who have petitioned to have the work done. This is usually not the case for BIA applications, which may have many property owners, and in which the task of assembling sufficient opposition is difficult. For this reason, Council policy is to consider rejection if one-third, rather than one-half, of the owners or tenants oppose the application.

##### Commencement of Council Initiatives

On November 25, 2014 (*Approval of Council Initiative - Commercial Drive BIA Renewal*), Council considered the Commercial Drive BIA renewal application, which requests renewal of the BIA for a 7-year term. Council approved commencement of a Council initiative, referred the application to Court of Revision, and instructed staff to notify affected property owners and businesses prior to a decision on the initiative.

On December 16, 2014 (*Approval of Council Initiative - Proposed Hastings North BIA Mid-term Expansion*), Council considered the Hastings North BIA expansion application. The application requests designation of a separate expansion-area BIA for a 3-year term to coincide with renewal of the existing BIA. Council approved commencement of a Council initiative, referred the application to Court of Revision, and instructed staff to notify affected expansion-area property owners and businesses prior to a decision on the initiative.

#### ***CITY MANAGER'S/GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS***

The City Manager and General Manager of Planning and Development Services RECOMMEND approval of the foregoing.

#### ***REPORT***

##### ***Background/Context***

##### ***Background***

Before a BIA designation, expansion or renewal application can be approved, the proposal must be considered by Council:

- Prior to considering the BIA application, the Council directs staff to notify all commercial property owners and business tenants in the affected area, providing information on the proposed levy, and details on filing objections; and
- After the one-month period for objections, Council is advised of the numbers and commercial assessed value of objections received, and also hears delegations, if any. Council policy is that if one third of property owners, representing one third of the commercial assessed property value, or one third of business tenants, counted separately, object, the BIA proposal will be defeated.
- If approved, Council directs that a by-law be prepared:
  - establishing, re-establishing, or expanding the BIA boundaries; and
  - establishing a funding ceiling.

Further explanation of the notification and approval process follows.

##### ***Process for Notification of Property Owners and Business Tenants***

##### **Applicant Outreach to Affected Owners and Businesses**

As outlined in the BIA Council Initiative Reports dated November 4 and November 26, 2014, BIA sponsors (applicant groups) are required to conduct an extensive outreach process to engage affected commercial property owners and business tenants within the proposed BIA, BIA Expansion, or BIA renewal, area. If, after completion of outreach, the BIA proposal seems to be generally supported, Council may approve commencing a BIA Council Initiative; forward the application to a Court of Revision; and instruct staff to notify the affected owners and tenants prior to Council deciding whether or not to approve the application.

## Notifications

BIA applications are a form of Local Improvement. As such, the City is required to mail to the owners of parcels liable to be assessed: (a) notification of the project, (b) the designated area, and (c) the estimated annual rate. Council may approve a BIA if, within one month of the notification, the requisite number of property-owner objections have not been received. While the Vancouver Charter does not require notification of tenants, it is City policy to notify business owners of a BIA proposal. Property owners and business tenants in the areas affected by the BIA proposals have been notified as follows:

### Commercial Drive BIA Renewal:

- Individually addressed letters were sent, postmarked on or before December 9, 2014, to all property owners affected by the BIA application (Appendix A).

Due to business turnover, and to ensure all affected business owners were notified, letters were hand delivered on or before December 14, 2014, to all businesses affected by the BIA application (Appendix B).

### Hastings North BIA Expansion:

- Individually addressed letters were sent, postmarked on or before January 5, 2015, to all property owners affected by the BIA application (Appendix C).

Due to business turnover, and to ensure all affected business owners were notified, letters were hand delivered on or before January 11, 2015, to all businesses affected by the BIA application (Appendix D).

## *Tabulation of Objections - Issues and Considerations*

### Distinguishing Property-Owner and Business-Tenant Objections

The Vancouver Charter requires the City to tabulate *all* property-owner objections to determine whether or not a BIA application is defeated. However, it is Council policy to also receive and tabulate objections from business tenants. The two tabulations would produce duplication where letters are received from businesses who also *own* the property or commercial strata unit they occupy (i.e. are not tenants). Therefore, past practice has been to count all objection letters from property-owner businesses as 'property owner' objections rather than as 'business tenant' objections.

### Petitions and Form-letters

The City's notification instructs recipients to register objections in the form of an original letter because the identity and authority of the writer is more readily discernible than a signature on a mass petition. Also, with a mass petition, there is uncertainty around the degree to which petitioners are influenced by information from petition organizers. Similar considerations apply to mass-reproduced 'form-letters' that have been collected by opposition organizers in the same way as petitions.

## Privacy Issues

To protect the confidentiality of respondents, under the provisions of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, the identity of persons submitting objections is not made available to BIA applicants, supporters, opponents, or the public. However, City Clerk will have available for Council copies of all objections received prior to the meeting date.

## *Strategic Analysis*

### *Tabulation of Objections - Results*

Notification letters sent to affected property owners / business tenants specified that objections to the BIA application may be submitted in the form of a letter to the City Clerk, with the letter being received by 5:00pm on January 23, 2015 (Commercial Drive BIA renewal) and 5:00 pm February 10, 2015 (Hastings North BIA expansion) .

The following section provides separate information specific to the Commercial Drive BIA Renewal Initiative and the Hastings North BIA Expansion Initiative, including notification data for the application, and a tabulation of objections received as of:

- 5:00pm January 23, 2015 (Commercial Drive BIA renewal)
- 5:00pm February 10, 2015 (Hastings North BIA expansion)

If objections or counter-petitions arrive after the submission deadlines, a supplementary memo with updated opposition data will be distributed should Council wish to consider late objections or other correspondence such as petitions. Council will also have an opportunity to hear delegations, if any.

## COMMERCIAL DRIVE BIA RENEWAL APPLICATION: Analysis and Results

### **Application to Re-establish (Renew) BIA**

On November 25, 2014, Council considered an application by the Commercial Drive Business Society (CDBS) to commence a Council Initiative to re-establish (renew) the Commercial Drive BIA (Appendix E). Council referred the application to Court of Revision and directed staff to notify affected owners and businesses prior to considering the Initiative.

The proposed BIA levy ranges from \$36 to \$36,847 annually, depending upon the assessed value of the property. Eighty properties will have a levy under \$500, 114 properties will have a levy between \$500 and \$2,000, and 65 properties will be charged over \$2,000 annually.

As the BIA levy will be based on the 2015 property assessment, the actual BIA levies may differ slightly from the estimates provided in the City's notification, which was based on the 2014 assessment.

### **Notification**

Individually addressed letters were mailed, postmarked on or before December 9, 2014, to 180 property owners, owning 259 legal parcels located within the BIA area. One letter was returned undeliverable. Letters were hand delivered to all 454 businesses within the BIA area.

## Letters of Opposition

The table below shows the letters of objection, by number and assessed value, received as of 5pm, January 23, 2015. For information, should Council wish to apply the one-third guideline, the centre column shows the numbers and assessed value of objections (subject to adjustments) needed to defeat the proposed BIA renewal.

Objection Categories	Needed to defeat BIA under Council 1/3 policy (1/3 = 33.33%)	Letters of opposition as of January 23, 2015	
		#	% of total
# of property owners*	60	4	2.2 %
# of assessed properties*	86	5	1.9 %
total assessed value	\$137,999,884	\$9,235,799	2.2%
OR # of business tenants	151	0	0 %

\*Note: Since there are many multiple owners, the number of assessed properties is greater than the number of actual owners.

### Results

As of January 23, 2015, neither the number of business tenants, nor the number and assessed value of properties /property owners is sufficient to defeat the proposed BIA renewal.

## HASTINGS NORTH BIA EXPANSION APPLICATION: Analysis and Results

### Mid-term Application to Expand BIA

On December 16, 2014, Council considered an application by the Hastings North Business Improvement Association (HNBIA) to commence a Council Initiative to expand the Hastings North BIA (Appendix F). Council referred the application to Court of Revision and directed staff to notify affected owners and businesses prior to considering the Initiative.

The proposed BIA levy ranges from \$43 to \$17,414 annually, depending upon the assessed value of the property. Seventeen properties will have a levy under \$500, 44 properties will have a levy between \$500 and \$2,000, and 25 properties will be charged over \$2,000 annually.

As the BIA levy will be based on the 2015 property assessment, the actual BIA levies may differ slightly from the estimates provided in the City's notification, which was based on the 2014 assessment.

### Notification

Individually addressed letters were mailed, postmarked on or before January 5, 2015, to 62 property owners, owning 86 legal parcels located within the BIA area. No letters were returned undeliverable. Letters were hand delivered to all 102 businesses within the BIA area.

## Letters of Opposition

The table below shows the letters of objection, by number and assessed value, received as of 5pm, February 10, 2015. For information, should Council wish to apply the one-third guideline, the centre column shows the numbers and assessed value of objections (subject to adjustments) needed to defeat the proposed BIA expansion.

Objection Categories	Needed to defeat BIA under Council 1/3 policy (1/3 = 33.33%)	Letters of opposition as of February 10, 2015	
		#	% of <i>total</i>
# of property owners*	21	16	25.8 %
# of assessed properties*	27	21	24.4%
total assessed value	\$64,119,039	\$53,984,834	28.0 %
OR # of business tenants	34	2	2 %

\*Note: Since there are many multiple owners, the number of assessed properties is greater than the number of actual owners.

Results

As of February 10, 2015, neither the number of business tenants, nor the number and assessed value of properties /property owners is sufficient to defeat the proposed BIA expansion. The proposed BIA expansion-area zoning is predominantly M-2 with a mix of light industrial / commercial uses, and is an extension of similar industrial uses already included in the existing Hastings North BIA. For its existing industrial-area members, the BIA provides a range of services such as area safety programs, public realm maintenance, graffiti removal and advocacy to the City to address industrial-area needs and issues. Some of the property owners in the proposed expansion area have contacted the City by phone or provided written comments along with their objections. Common themes are related to the impact of an additional tax levy, and whether services a BIA could provide to industrial users with no on-site customers would justify the additional cost.

*Implications/Related Issues/Risk (if applicable)*

*Financial*

There are no financial implications.

**CONCLUSION**

The Commercial Drive Business Society has applied to renew the Commercial Drive BIA for a further 7 years. In November, 2014, Council approved commencement of a Council Initiative and instructed staff to notify affected commercial property owners and business tenants. As of January 24, 2015, very few objections had been received in response to the notification; therefore, this report recommends approval of the BIA renewal.

The Hastings North Business Improvement Society has applied to expand the Hastings North BIA by way of a separate expansion-area designation by-law. The expansion area would have a three-year term to coincide with renewal of the existing BIA. In December, 2014, Council approved commencement of a Council Initiative and instructed staff to notify affected commercial property owners and business tenants in the proposed expansion area. As of February 10, 2015, objections had been received from 26% of expansion-area property owners, representing 25% of properties and 28% of the commercial assessed property value. As the objections in all categories fall below Council’s one-third guideline, this report recommends approval of the proposed expansion.

\* \* \* \* \*



PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES  
City-Wide & Regional Planning  
BIA Program

November 25, 2014

«Name\_1»  
«Name\_2»  
«Mailing»

RE: PROPOSED RENEWAL OF COMMERCIAL DRIVE BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT AREA (BIA)  
SPECIAL ASSESSMENT NOTIFICATION

COORDINATE: «Folio»

PROPERTY ADDRESS: «Civic»

City of Vancouver records indicate you are the owner of the above property. The Commercial Drive Business Society is proposing to renew a BIA in your area.

To cover the cost of services, a BIA levy would continue to be added to your property tax. Information about the services to be provided, and the process for approval of the BIA renewal, is attached.

If the BIA renewal is approved, your estimated share would be: «Annual\_Charge»

Based on your included commercial assessed property value of: «Included Asses»

*A Court of Revision will be held on Wednesday, February 4, 2015 at 6:00 p.m. in Council Chambers, 3rd floor, City Hall. At that time Council will hear complaints from property owners concerning errors only with respect to the names of the assessed owners and the length of the frontage of other measurements of the parcel, and any variation applied pursuant to section 508 (g) and (j) of the Vancouver Charter.*

*A copy of the Special Assessment Roll, which includes the names of property owners, is filed in the office of the Collector of Taxes, ground floor of City Hall, and is available for inspection during office hours.*



If you have questions, the attached materials provide phone numbers to contact the Commercial Drive Business Society and the City of Vancouver BIA Program.

Yours truly,



Peter Vaisbord  
Coordinator, BIA Program

*peter.vaisbord@vancouver.ca*

*Phone: 604.871.6304*

PV/eh



PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES  
City-wide and Regional Planning  
BIA Program

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## NOTICE OF INTENTION TO RENEW A BIA

November 25, 2014

Dear Property Owner(s):

The City's records indicate that you own property which is within an existing BIA. If approved, the renewal will mean a BIA levy will continue to be added to your property tax. This letter contains information about the services provided by a Business Improvement Area, the cost of the BIA levy, and your opportunity to tell the City whether you do or do not support the BIA renewal.

The City encourages Business Improvement Areas as a way for property owners and business tenants to promote business and enhance services in their area. The City collects the BIA levy as part of the property taxes and turns all of the money over to the BIA to use. The BIAs use the funds for a variety of activities to improve area profile, such as producing advertising and business directories, providing banners and other identifying material, improving business-area appearance, and enhancing safety. The BIA money is administered by a Board of Directors. The Board is comprised of commercial property owners and business tenants who are elected by all owners and tenants in the area.

Earlier this year, your BIA association approached the City with an application to renew its BIA mandate, which expires on March 31, 2015. The City requested the association discuss this proposal with owners and tenants in the BIA area to assess support for the renewal proposal. As requested, the association conducted outreach activities to inform businesses and property owners about the proposed renewal and to receive input.

As part of its Annual General Meeting (AGM), your BIA association notified all property owners and business tenants of a proposed resolution to renew the BIA. The proposed renewal was approved at the AGM, and the association requested the City to act on the BIA renewal application.

However, before the BIA renewal can be approved and the levy applied, the proposal must be considered by City Council. On November 25, 2014, City Council agreed to consider the BIA renewal. Council instructed City staff to write all the property owners and business tenants to verify the level of support for the BIA renewal proposal.

The attached materials provide information prepared by the BIA association which describes their renewal proposal and the services they offer. If you have questions about the proposed BIA renewal, I encourage you to contact the association at the number(s) provided in their material (enclosed).

The BIA levy is calculated based on each owner's share of the total assessed value of properties in the BIA area. The amount for each owner varies because of different assessed values. The attached Notice

of Special Assessment indicates the amount which would be assessed against your property in 2015. Over the program's lifespan, it is possible that your share of the BIA budget may change. Each property owner's share will be reapportioned annually according to the assessed values determined by the BC Assessment Authority.

The Vancouver Charter provides that a BIA Initiative will not proceed if, within one month of mailing the notification, more than one-half in number of the then assessed owners, representing more than one-half of the value according to the last real-property assessment roll, of the parcels liable to be specially assessed have, in writing, given notice to the City Clerk that they object to the BIA Renewal Initiative. Further, Council's policy is to consider rejection of a BIA renewal initiative if 1/3 or more of the property owners or business tenants register objections.

After you have reviewed the material, if you support the proposed BIA renewal, you do not need to respond to this letter. However, if you wish to object, please submit your objection in the form of a letter to the City Clerk, Vancouver City Hall, 453 West 12th Avenue, Vancouver, BC, V5Y 1V4. The letter should include the writer's name and position of authority (eg. owner or property manager), the property owner name (if different) and property information (eg. address, folio number or legal description). Written objections against the proposal should be filed with the City Clerk *before 5pm on Friday January 23, 2015.*

Should the BIA renewal initiative be approved by City Council, your BIA association will still need to obtain approval of the program and budget from its membership on an annual basis (at its annual general meetings) before Council releases funds. If you wish further information about the City's role in the BIA renewal process, please call me at (604) 871-6304.

Yours truly,



Peter Vaisbord  
Coordinator, BIA Program  
*peter.vaisbord@vancouver.ca*  
*Phone: 604.871.6304*

Enclosures



PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES  
City-wide and Regional Planning  
BIA Program

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## NOTICE OF INTENTION TO RENEW A BIA

November 25, 2014

Dear Business Owner:

I am writing to advise you that the Business Improvement Association (BIA) for your area is proposing to renew its BIA mandate as required at the end of its current term. Since many lease agreements require that BIA levies be paid by the tenants, this letter provides information about the renewal proposal, possible costs, and your opportunity to tell the City whether you do or do not support the proposed renewal. Because this letter is being hand delivered, delivery may extend beyond the proposed boundaries. Before responding, please check the attached map to confirm that your business is within the BIA area.

The City encourages Business Improvement Areas as a way for property owners and business tenants to promote business and enhance services in their area. The City collects the BIA levy as part of the property taxes and turns all of the money over to the BIA to use. The BIAs use the money for a variety of activities, such as producing advertising and business directories, providing banners and other identifying material, improving business-area appearance, and enhancing safety. The BIA money is administered by a Board of Directors. The Board is comprised of commercial property owners and business tenants who are elected by all owners and tenants in the area.

Earlier this year, your BIA association approached the City with an application to renew its BIA mandate, which expires March 31, 2015. The City requested the association discuss this proposal with owners and tenants in the BIA area to assess support for the renewal proposal. As requested, the association conducted outreach activities to inform businesses and property owners about the proposed renewal and to receive input.

As part of its Annual General Meeting (AGM), your BIA association notified all property owners and business tenants of a proposed resolution to renew the BIA. The proposed renewal was approved at the AGM, and the association requested the City to act on the BIA renewal application.

However, before the BIA renewal proposal can be approved and the levy applied, the proposal must be considered by City Council. On November 25, 2014, City Council agreed to consider the BIA renewal. Council instructed City staff to write all the property owners and business tenants to verify the level of support for the BIA renewal proposal.

The attached materials provide information prepared by the BIA association which describes their renewal proposal and the services they offer. If you have questions about the proposed BIA renewal, I encourage you to contact the association at the number(s) provided in their material (enclosed).

The amount of each property owner's levy varies because of different assessment values. City staff have mailed all property owners estimates of the proposed BIA levy. To determine how the proposed

BIA levy could impact your business, I suggest that you discuss the matter with your landlord, and/or contact your BIA association.

After you have reviewed the material, if you support the proposed BIA renewal, you do not need to respond to this letter. However, if you wish to object, please submit your objection in the form of a signed letter to the City Clerk, Vancouver City Hall, 453 West 12th Avenue, Vancouver, BC, V5Y 1V4. The letter should include the writer's name and position of authority (e.g. business owner or manager), and the business name and street address. Written objections against the proposal should be filed with the City Clerk *before 5pm on Friday January 23, 2015*.

The *Vancouver Charter* provides that a BIA Initiative will not proceed if, within one month of mailing the notification, more than one-half in number of the then assessed owners, representing more than one-half of the value according to the last real-property assessment roll, of the parcels liable to be specially assessed have, in writing, given notice to the City Clerk that they object to the BIA Renewal Initiative. Further, Council's policy is to consider rejection of a BIA renewal initiative if 1/3 or more of the property owners *or business tenants* register objections.

Should the BIA renewal be approved by City Council, your BIA association will still need to obtain approval of the program and budget from its membership on an annual basis (at its annual general meetings) before Council releases funds. If you wish further information about the City's role in the BIA process, please call me at (604) 871-6304.

Yours truly,



Peter Vaisbord  
Coordinator, BIA Program  
*peter.vaisbord@vancouver.ca*  
*Phone: 604.871.6304*

Enclosures



PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES  
City-Wide & Regional Planning  
BIA Program

January 5, 2015

«Name\_1»  
«Name\_2»  
«Mailing»

RE: PROPOSED EXPANSION OF HASTINGS NORTH BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT AREA (BIA)  
SPECIAL ASSESSMENT NOTIFICATION

COORDINATE: «Folio»

PROPERTY ADDRESS: «Civic»

City of Vancouver records indicate you are the owner of the above property. The Hastings North Business Improvement Association is proposing to expand a BIA in your area.

To cover the cost of services, a BIA levy would be added to your property tax. Information about the services to be provided, and the process for approval of the BIA expansion, is attached.

If the BIA expansion is approved, your estimated share would be: «Annual\_Charge»

Based on your included commercial assessed property value of: «Included Asses»

*A Court of Revision will be held on Wednesday, February 4, 2015 at 6:00 p.m. in Council Chambers, 3rd floor, City Hall. At that time Council will hear complaints from property owners concerning errors only with respect to the names of the assessed owners and the length of the frontage of other measurements of the parcel, and any variation applied pursuant to section 508 (g) and (j) of the Vancouver Charter.*

*A copy of the Special Assessment Roll, which includes the names of property owners, is filed in the office of the Collector of Taxes, ground floor of City Hall, and is available for inspection during office hours.*

If you have questions, the attached materials provide phone numbers to contact the Hastings North Business Improvement Association and the City of Vancouver BIA Program.

Yours truly,



Peter Vaisbord  
Coordinator, BIA Program

*peter.vaisbord@vancouver.ca*

*Phone: 604.871.6304*

PV/eh



## NOTICE OF INTENTION TO EXPAND A BIA

January 5, 2015

Dear Property Owner(s):

The City's records indicate that you own property which is within a proposed BIA expansion area. If approved, the expansion will mean a BIA levy will be added to your property tax. This letter contains information about the services provided by a Business Improvement Area, the cost of the BIA levy, and your opportunity to tell the City whether you do or do not support the BIA expansion.

The City encourages Business Improvement Areas as a way for property owners and business tenants to promote business and enhance services in their area. The City collects the BIA levy as part of the property taxes and turns all of the money over to the BIA to use. The BIAs use the funds for a variety of activities to improve area profile, such as producing advertising and business directories, providing banners and other identifying material, improving business-area appearance, and enhancing safety. The BIA money is administered by a Board of Directors. The Board is comprised of commercial property owners and business tenants who are elected by all owners and tenants in the area.

Earlier this year, the Hastings North Business Improvement Association (HNBIA) approached the City with an application to expand the existing BIA (see shaded areas on enclosed map). The City requested HNBIA discuss this proposal with owners and tenants in the proposed expansion area to assess support for the expansion proposal. As requested, HNBIA conducted outreach activities to inform businesses and property owners about the proposed expansion and to receive input.

However, before the BIA expansion can be approved and the levy applied, the proposal must be considered by City Council. On December 16, 2014, City Council agreed to consider the BIA expansion. Council instructed City staff to write all the property owners and business tenants to verify the level of support for the BIA expansion proposal.

The attached materials provide information prepared by the HNBIA which describes their expansion proposal and the services they offer. If you have questions about the proposed BIA expansion, I encourage you to contact HNBIA at the number(s) provided in their material (enclosed).

The BIA levy is calculated based on each owner's share of the total assessed value of properties in the BIA area. The amount for each owner varies because of different assessed values. The attached Notice of Special Assessment indicates the amount which would be assessed against your property in 2015. Over the program's lifespan, it is possible that your share of the BIA budget may change. Each property owner's share will be reapportioned annually according to the assessed values determined by the BC Assessment Authority.



The Vancouver Charter provides that a BIA Initiative will not proceed if, within one month of mailing the notification, more than one-half in number of the then assessed owners, representing more than one-half of the value according to the last real-property assessment roll, of the parcels liable to be specially assessed have, in writing, given notice to the City Clerk that they object to the BIA expansion initiative. Further, Council's policy is to consider rejection of a BIA expansion initiative if 1/3 or more of the property owners or business tenants register objections.

After you have reviewed the material, if you support the proposed BIA expansion, you do not need to respond to this letter. However, if you wish to object, please submit your objection in the form of a letter to the City Clerk, Vancouver City Hall, 453 West 12th Avenue, Vancouver, BC, V5Y 1V4. The letter should include the writer's name and position of authority (eg. owner or property manager), the property owner name (if different) and property information (eg. address, folio number or legal description). Written objections against the proposal should be filed with the City Clerk before 5pm on Tuesday February 10, 2015.

Should the BIA expansion initiative be approved by City Council, the HNBIA will still need to obtain approval of the program and budget from its membership on an annual basis (at its annual general meetings) before Council releases funds. If you wish further information about the City's role in the BIA renewal process, please call me at (604) 871-6304.

Yours truly,



Peter Vaisbord  
Coordinator, BIA Program  
*peter.vaisbord@vancouver.ca*  
Phone: 604.871.6304

Enclosures



PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES  
City-wide and Regional Planning  
BIA Program

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## NOTICE OF INTENTION TO EXPAND A BIA

January 5, 2015

Dear Business Owner:

I am writing to advise you that the Hastings North Business Improvement Association (HNBIA) is proposing to expand the existing BIA area. Since many lease agreements require that BIA levies be paid by the tenants, this letter provides information about the expansion proposal, possible costs, and your opportunity to tell the City whether you do or do not support the proposed expansion. Because this letter is being hand delivered, delivery may extend beyond the proposed expansion boundaries. Before responding, please check the attached map to confirm that your business is in the BIA expansion area.

The City encourages Business Improvement Areas as a way for property owners and business tenants to promote business and enhance services in their area. The City collects the BIA levy as part of the property taxes and turns all of the money over to the BIA to use. The BIAs use the money for a variety of activities, such as producing advertising and business directories, providing banners and other identifying material, improving business-area appearance, and enhancing safety. The BIA money is administered by a Board of Directors. The Board is comprised of commercial property owners and business tenants who are elected by all owners and tenants in the area.

Earlier this year, the HNBIA approached the City with an application to expand the existing BIA (see shaded areas on enclosed map). The City requested HNBIA discuss this proposal with owners and tenants in the BIA area to assess support for the expansion proposal. As requested, HNBIA conducted outreach activities to inform businesses and property owners about the proposed expansion and to receive input.

However, before the BIA expansion proposal can be approved and the levy applied, the proposal must be considered by City Council. On December 16, 2014, City Council agreed to consider the BIA expansion. Council instructed City staff to write all the property owners and business tenants to verify the level of support for the BIA expansion proposal.

The attached materials provide information prepared by the HNBIA which describes the expansion proposal and the services they offer. If you have questions about the proposed BIA expansion, I encourage you to contact HNBIA at the number(s) provided in their material (enclosed).

The amount of each property owner's levy varies because of different assessment values. City staff have mailed all property owners estimates of the proposed BIA levy. To determine how the proposed BIA levy could impact your business, I suggest that you discuss the matter with your landlord, and/or contact HNBIA.

After you have reviewed the material, if you support the proposed BIA expansion, you do not need to respond to this letter. However, if you wish to object, please submit your objection in the form of a

signed letter to the City Clerk, Vancouver City Hall, 453 West 12th Avenue, Vancouver, BC, V5Y 1V4. The letter should include the writer's name and position of authority (e.g. business owner or manager), and the business name and street address. Written objections against the proposal should be filed with the City Clerk *before 5pm on Tuesday February 10, 2015*.

The *Vancouver Charter* provides that a BIA Initiative will not proceed if, within one month of mailing the notification, more than one-half in number of the then assessed owners, representing more than one-half of the value according to the last real-property assessment roll, of the parcels liable to be specially assessed have, in writing, given notice to the City Clerk that they object to the BIA expansion initiative. Further, Council's policy is to consider rejection of a BIA expansion initiative if 1/3 or more of the property owners *or business tenants* register objections.

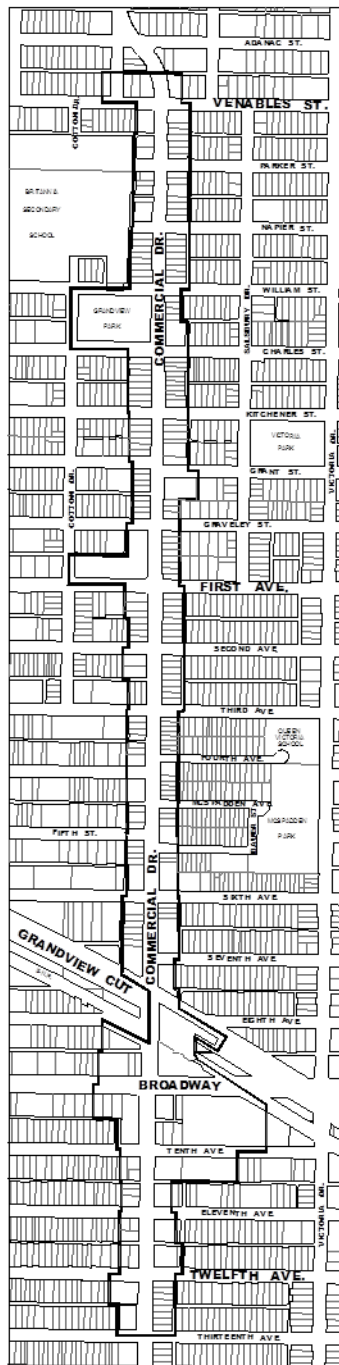
Should the BIA expansion be approved by City Council, HNBIA will still need to obtain approval of the program and budget from its membership on an annual basis (at its annual general meetings) before Council releases funds. If you wish further information about the City's role in the BIA process, please call me at (604) 871-6304.

Yours truly,

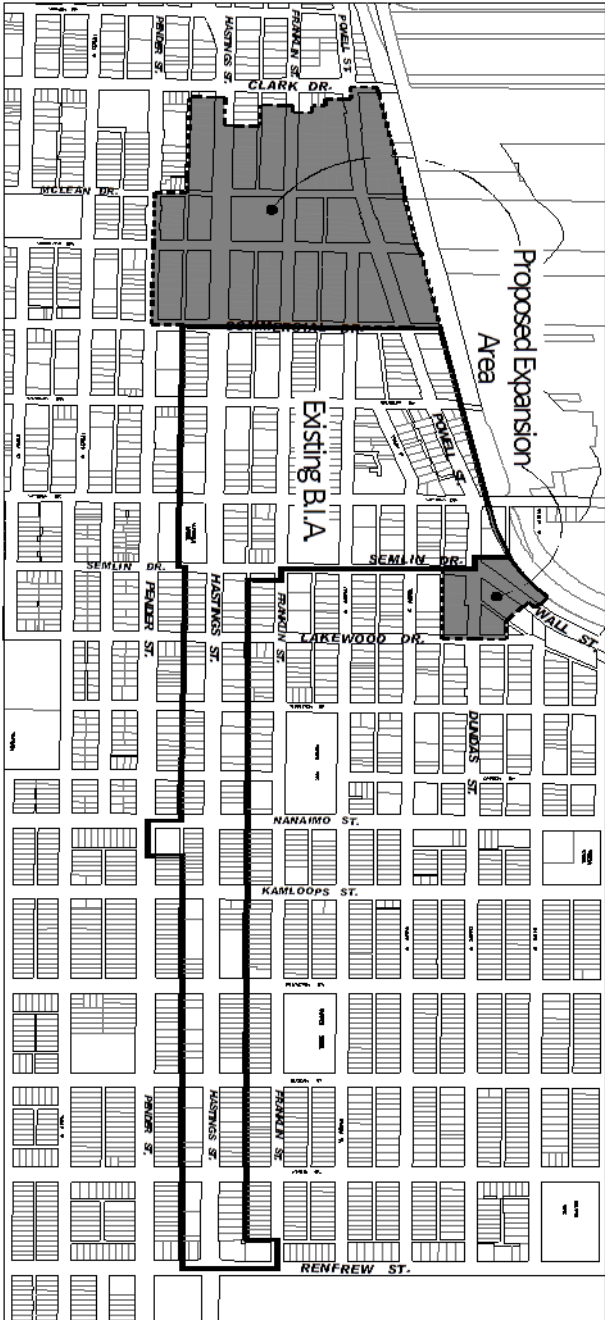


Peter Vaisbord  
Coordinator, BIA Program  
*peter.vaisbord@vancouver.ca*  
Phone: 604.871.6304

Enclosures



**Commercial Drive B.I.A.**



Existing Hastings North B.I.A. with Proposed Expansion-area

