

November 18th, 2019

His Worship the Mayor and Members of City Council
City Hall, City of Saskatoon
222 3rd Avenue North
Saskatoon, SK S7K 0J5

Dear Mayor Clark and City Council,

This letter is a response to the Governance Review of Business Improvement Districts (BIDs). A general governance model for all BIDs is welcomed by the five Business Improvement Districts in the City to ensure best practices and effective policies and procedures.

While Option 1, a Consolidated BID Governance Approach, is supported by the BIDs, there are a few suggestions and concerns regarding the recommendation. The City should recognize the flexibility needed for various BID sizes and capacity especially around any mandates regarding:

- **Board Composition and Eligibility.** Each individual board should determine the appropriate mix of skills and experience that ensures appropriate representation for their unique merchant blend. The recommendation is to keep board eligibility flexible as some BIDs have found it has been difficult in the past to get landowner representatives to attend and participate. Individual BIDs should be allowed to determine if non-profit representation on the board is appropriate as many contribute greatly to the economic viability of the district but do not necessarily contribute to the levy.
- **Board committees.** Is it necessary to have committees within the board? With a limited volunteer pool we do not want to burn out the volunteers we have or add extra bureaucracy where none is needed. We believe the decision on committees should be left with each individual BID.
- **Membership structure and participation of members.** Some BID's have struggled to get quorum for annual general meetings, attendance at events and responses on surveys. Transparency to members is a guiding principal but mandated participation or responses from members is difficult to attain.
- **Reporting/performance requirement.** Although we believe reporting to the City is very important, unnecessary and excessive reporting would be strenuous on the board, and they are already accountable for the workings of the organization. HR matters should also remain the purview of the board.

Other areas of concern include the recommendation for BIDs to have strategic alignment with the City's strategic goals. BIDs are first and foremost accountable to the members within their district, and their strategic plan may or may not align with the City's. Stakeholder engagement, policy and advocacy are pillars of BID organizations and this focus is supported by the International Downtown Association (IDA). BIDs need to remain autonomous with their strategic plans so they can give honest and reliable feedback to the municipality.

Recommendations around purchasing may also limit the flexibility and the timeliness of BIDs being able to maneuver and adapt to changing circumstances within their BIDs. BIDs do not have the capacity to follow the same request for tender purchasing guidelines to get relatively small projects completed in short timeframes including planning and executing special events, marketing and urban design.

We would also like to see a mechanism in any future policy that provides guidance to any BID looking to change their boundaries, and wording that spells out the fiduciary responsibility of board members. Any future policy should also provide information that the City of Saskatoon carries Directors and Officers Liability Insurance for board members.

Having a council member as a voting and participatory member of the Board is also appreciated and valued to help further communications between the City and the BID. We hope this valuable position is retained in all options proposed.

Any future policy must recognize that the five BIDs are different, ranging in size, number of employees, and operating budgets. As a result, some guiding policies can certainly be the same but the individuality of each BID must also be recognized and Board's should have the ability to work within their parameters, and not be constrained or forced to operate beyond their means.

We look forward to continued dialog on the proposed updates and to have the ability to examine and offer suggestions once a new draft bylaw is created for our respective BIDs.

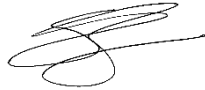
Sincerely,



DeeAnn Mercier
Executive
Director
Broadway BID



Brent Penner
Executive
Director
Downtown BID



Shane Biehn
Board Chair
Riversdale
BID



Lloyd Moker
Executive Director
Sutherland BID



Dan Matthews
Executive
Director
33rd St BID