

River Landing and Downtown Business Improvement District: Next Steps in Boundary Adjustment

ISSUE

In collaboration with the Downtown Saskatoon Business Improvement District, Administration is moving forward to adjust the boundary of the Downtown Business Improvement District to incorporate the eastern portion of River Landing, as directed by City Council in February 2021. This work has been moving forward throughout 2021. The boundary change requires an amendment to Bylaw No. 6710, Downtown Business Improvement District Bylaw, 1986.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Standing Policy Committee on Planning, Development and Community Services recommend to City Council:

1. That the City Solicitor be directed to prepare amendments to Bylaw No. 6710, Downtown Business Improvement District Bylaw, 1986 to reflect the boundary alteration as identified in this report; and
2. That the City Solicitor be directed to prepare amendments to Bylaw No. 6774, Capital Reserve Bylaw, 1993 to exclude the allocation of parking revenues from River Landing to the Streetscape Reserve – Core BID as outlined in this report.

BACKGROUND

At the October 21, 2019, Governance and Priorities Committee meeting, Administration provided a report on the financial and governance model of River Landing. At the meeting, a request was made by the Downtown Saskatoon Business Improvement District (DTNYXE) to consider altering their Business Improvement District (BID) boundary to include the eastern portion of River Landing. Governance and Priorities Committee requested Administration to:

“Report back on reincorporating the east portion of River Landing into the Downtown BID; and the west portion of River Landing into the Riversdale BID.”

At the February 16, 2021 Governance and Priorities Committee meeting, Administration presented a report outlining the steps required to pursue the boundary adjustments noted above.

In consideration of the February 16, 2021 report, City Council, at its Regular Business meeting on February 22, 2021 resolved that:

“1. City Council rescind the following motion passed at the March 17, 2008 meeting of City Council:

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“1) that, for the operations and maintenance of River Landing, City Council approve: the establishment of a civic-owned non-profit corporation, similar to that for TCU Place;”

2. Should Council support the rescission of the March 17, 2008 motion, the Administration pursue the appropriate steps to reincorporate River Landing into the Downtown and Riversdale Business Improvement Districts, including consultation and engagement with affected property owners and area businesses, bringing forward reporting at the appropriate time to pursue necessary bylaw amendments.”

As noted in the previous report, the timeline to advance similar changes for the Riversdale BID to incorporate the western portion of River Landing is separate and as determined by consultation with the Riversdale BID. It will be the subject of a future report, following the same steps.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

Working with the DTNYXE’s Executive Director and with the support of the DTNYXE Board of Directors, Administration has undertaken steps to further advance the requested boundary alteration. These steps include:

- Identifying affected properties and calculating the estimated BID levy applicable to each property.
- Preparing joint communication packages from the City and DTNYXE for each affected property, including those which would not be subject to the BID levy (ie. residential and tax exempt properties).

These communications were intended to identify the implications of the proposed change, provide a contact point for direct discussion and an opportunity to gather feedback. DTNYXE’s Executive Director supported these activities with further direct contact to each of the properties which would be subject to the BID levy.

Through this process, letters were sent to six property owners/groups. Of these, only three will be subject to the BID levy. The other three properties include two residential properties and one tax exempt property. Information was provided to these entities so they would be aware of the proposed changes and have an opportunity for discussion and feedback. See Appendix 1 for Downtown BID Expansion Map.

Feedback Received

Communications, as noted above were sent out in July of 2021. As a result, one email was received asking to clarify the levy amount and one letter was received in support of the proposed change.

Next Steps

Based on the feedback received, Administration recommends proceeding with the proposed boundary alteration in order to incorporate the changes for 2022. This would allow DTNYXE to prepare their annual budget based on the new boundaries.

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In order to proceed to officially change the BID boundaries to incorporate the River Landing area into the DTNYXE, an amendment to the Bylaw, with appropriate public notice is required.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Implications to Property Owners

Properties within a BID area are charged the appropriate BID levy on their tax notices from the City of Saskatoon (City) in accordance with Bylaw No. 9753, Business Improvement Districts Levy Bylaw, 2021. The BID Board of Directors determine the amount of revenue required to pay for the services they choose to provide for their area. The levy rate required to collect this revenue is then calculated by Corporate Revenue and is collected by the City on behalf of the BID. The levy is charged on all property used or intended to be used for business purposes within each BID. As of 2021, the DTNYXE levy rate is 0.06278%. If the BID boundaries are expanded, all eligible properties within the proposed expansion area would be charged the appropriate BID levy rate in conjunction with their property tax.

Implications to the River Landing Financial Plan

A change to the BID boundaries to incorporate River Landing does not have direct implications for the Financial Plan for River Landing. The current model of a future self-sustaining district can be maintained. However, to maintain the current model, the parking revenues from surface parking in the River Landing area will continue to be dedicated to River Landing, as opposed to being allocated under the Parking Meter Revenue Allocation Formula. Once River Landing has fully paid back all investments in the area, further discussion of the potential allocation of area parking revenues could occur. Amendments to Bylaw No. 6774, Capital Reserve Bylaw, 1993 are required to clarify this exemption.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS

There are no environmental, privacy, or CPTED implications or considerations.

NEXT STEPS

The City Solicitors Office will prepare the required bylaw amendments, and necessary public notice, in accordance with requirements of *The Cities Act* and the Public Notice Policy. A Public Hearing will be required to consider the Bylaw amendment.

APPENDICES

1. Proposed Downtown BID Expansion Map

REPORT APPROVAL

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