

**Community Services Report to
SPC on Community and Protective Services
2019 September 11**

**ISC: UNRESTRICTED
CPS2019-1038**

Establishment of the Bridgeland Business Improvement Area

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On 2019 March 29 City Administration received a request to establish a Business Improvement Area (BIA) in the community of Bridgeland, to be called Bridgeland BIA. The request meets the legislative requirements of the Business Improvement Area Regulation, AR 93/2016 (the Regulation).

As the request for establishment of a BIA has met legislative requirements, Administration is recommending that Council consider approving this request to establish the BIA. Administration has prepared the proposed wording for a bylaw for the establishment of the Bridgeland BIA.

ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATION:

That the Standing Policy Committee on Community and Protective Services recommend that Council:

1. Approve the establishment of the Bridgeland Business Improvement Area as outlined (Attachment 1);
2. Give three readings to a proposed Bylaw to establish the Bridgeland Business Improvement Area (Attachment 2); and
3. Appoint, by resolution, the individuals listed in Attachment 3 as the interim Bridgeland Business Improvement Area board until an Annual General Meeting is held and board members are approved by Council by Q1 2020.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION / POLICY

On 2014 November 3 Council adopted PFC2014-0760 Business Revitalization Zones 2015-2018 Business Plan, which identifies the growth of new BIAs (formerly known as Business Revitalization Zones or BRZs) as a key outcome.

BACKGROUND

In 1983 June, the Government of Alberta amended the *Municipal Government Act* Alberta (MGA) to empower municipalities to enact a bylaw to establish a Business Improvement Area (BIA). Council's authority to establish a BIA is found in sections 50 to 52 of the MGA, and Sections 2 to 6 of the Business Improvement Area Regulation AR 93/2016 (the Regulation). The MGA sets out the purposes of the BIA, to: improve, beautify and maintain property in the area; develop, improve and maintain public parking; and promote the areas as a business or shopping district. The bylaw establishes a board to govern the BIA, and the board members are appointed by Council.

BIA operations are funded through a tax paid by all taxable businesses in the BIA and collected from business operators. The tax enables the business owners to collectively fund activities to promote and improve the economic vitality of their area for purposes set out in the MGA. Calgary currently has 12 BIAs, established between 1984 and 2017.

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INVESTIGATION: ALTERNATIVES AND ANALYSIS

The businesses in support of the proposed BIA seek to work together to re-vitalize the Bridgeland business community by improving storefronts to attract and retain clients, promoting development to new investors and business operators, and marketing the area as a tourist destination to visitors, pedestrians and patrons as a place to eat, shop, and be entertained. The proposed initiatives fall within section 50 of the MGA.

Engagement about the request to establish the BIA began in 2018 with several meetings between local business owners. In 2019 three major engagement events occurred with a presentation about BIAs. The presentation was also widely circulated amongst business owners. Business owners working on the request to establish the BIA also sent emails, and visited businesses in person or called to discuss the BIA proposal. See Attachment 4 for details about the request to establish a BIA and engagement.

Administration assessed the request to establish a Bridgeland BIA for compliance with Sections 3(1) and (2) of the Regulation. The Regulation requires the request to be signed by at least 25 per cent of the businesses that would be liable to pay the BIA tax if the BIA were established. The request included valid signatures from 35 of the 134 businesses, which amounts to 26.1 per cent of the businesses in the proposed BIA. A notice of request letter was mailed by Administration to every business in the proposed area that would be a taxable business if an area was established on 2019 April 22 as per Section 3(3) of the Regulation.

Pursuant to the Regulation, a petition objecting to the establishment of a BIA may be submitted. No petition against the establishment of the Bridgeland BIA was submitted to The City.

Stakeholder Engagement, Research and Communication

Administration provided information and assistance to the organizers of the BIA establishment request. The organizers have been notified of the September 11 Standing Policy Committee on Community & Protective Services and September 30 Combined Council meeting dates.

Strategic Alignment

BIAs encompass networks of businesses that support *Calgary in the New Economy: An Economic Strategy for Calgary*, more specifically the Business Environment Area of Focus, through activities that support local economic development, placemaking and revitalization. Their activities also contribute to the *Cultural Plan for Calgary* and Tourism Calgary's *Destination Strategy*. BIA's located in the downtown contribute to implementation of The City's Downtown Strategy.

The BRZ/BIA 2015-2018 Business Plan identifies the growth of new BIAs as a key outcome.

Social, Environmental, Economic (External)

BIAs provide an opportunity to promote Calgary, support economic activity and neighbourhood revitalization. Under *One Calgary*, BIAs are within the Economic Development and Tourism line of service and support the implementation of *Calgary in the New Economy: An economic*

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strategy for Calgary, The City's Downtown Strategy, a Cultural Plan for Calgary, Centre City Plan and Resilient Calgary Strategy.

BIA board members are local business community volunteers appointed by Council under the terms of The City's bylaw that established the BIA. The board is responsible for addressing the needs of the defined area as identified by the business owners that are liable to pay the BIA tax.

Financial Capacity

Current and Future Operating Budget:

There are no operating budget implications associated with this report. The revenue paid by taxpayers in the BIA will be transferred directly to the interim and established BIA board.

Current and Future Capital Budget:

There are no capital budget implications as a result of this report.

Risk Assessment

The request to establish the proposed BIA and the petition were reviewed for compliance with the MGA and the Regulation. The legislation was reviewed to determine Council's obligation to consider the request and Council's authority to pass a bylaw to establish the BIA.

Administration has notified the establishment group of the meeting where this report will be considered, and advised them of their opportunity to present to the Standing Policy Committee and Council. The proposed boundary of the BIA does not infringe on any of the 12 currently established BIA boundaries.

REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S):

The request to establish the Bridgeland BIA meets the legislative requirements. No petition was submitted opposing the establishment of the BIA. The BIA regulation requires Council to consider the request.

BIAs are a defined geographical area that come together to improve said area. The MGA sets out purposes of the BIA, to: improve, beautify and maintain property in the area; develop, improve and maintain public parking; and promote the areas as a business or shopping district. Administration has prepared a bylaw to establish the proposed BIA.

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. Attachment 1 – Proposed Bridgeland Business Improvement Area (BIA) map
2. Attachment 2 – Proposed Bridgeland BIA bylaw
3. Attachment 3 – Proposed interim Bridgeland BIA board
4. Attachment 4 – Documents relating to Bridgeland BIA proposal