

Calgary Downtown Association – Change in Boundaries Request

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Community Development Committee recommend that Council:

1. Give three readings to the proposed Bylaw to amend the Calgary Downtown Association Business Improvement Area Bylaw 38M2017 with respect to the identified boundaries; and
2. Provide an opportunity, before second reading, to current and would-be taxpayers in the area to make representations to Council concerning the change in boundaries.

HIGHLIGHTS

- In February 2022 Administration received a formal request from the Board of Directors of the Calgary Downtown Association (CDA) Business Improvement Area (BIA) to expand its boundaries. The area of the expansion includes the west end of downtown from 9th Street to 14th Street south west bordered by the Bow River on the north and the Canadian Pacific Railway tracks on the south.
- What does this mean to Calgarians? With this change in boundaries, CDA would be able to expand their programs, services, and activations to this area and local business owners will benefit from the supports and services CDA provides to its members. With the expansion, the area commonly thought of as the downtown would be entirely represented by a BIA.
- Why does this matter? BIAs benefit all Calgarians by improving, beautifying and maintaining property in the BIA; developing, improving and maintaining public parking; and promoting the BIA as a business or shopping area. The proposed expansion will enhance the downtown by supporting businesses in the west end of downtown that are not currently included in a BIA.
- Strategic Alignment to Council's Citizen Priorities: A prosperous city
- Background and Previous Council Direction is included as Attachment 1.

DISCUSSION

The *Municipal Government Act* (Alberta) sets out that the Minister may make regulations governing BIAs which includes how the boundaries of a BIA are established and amended. Section 8 of the *Business Improvement Area Regulation* (AR93/2016) (the Regulation) sets out the requirements that need to be met for Council to pass an amending bylaw that changes the boundaries in an established BIA.

The CDA Board informed Administration of the request to expand their boundaries in February 2022 and provided the board minutes with the record of the decision (Attachment 2). To approve an expansion request, Council must pass an amended bylaw that reflects the change to the BIA's boundaries (Attachment 3). The Regulation also sets out that the municipality must give notice to all current and would-be taxpayers in the proposed expanded area and communicate the opportunities for them to make representations to Council.

To meet this requirement, between this report being presented to Committee and final presentation to Council for consideration, Administration will issue a letter to all current and would-be taxpayers explaining the details of the CDA's expansion request and provide information about how to make a representation to Council.

Calgary Downtown Association - Change in Boundaries Request

To prepare for this request, the CDA did an engagement campaign with businesses in the proposed expansion area. The CDA's engagement included a dedicated website, door-to-door visits, a mailout and an open house. The CDA team has continued to engage directly with businesses in the area and plan to continue to do so in August.

The CDA mailout provided information about the expansion to all current and would-be taxpayers, invited them to attend the open house on 2022 May 3 and to submit comments online. The CDA is planning further engagement to take place prior to the Council meeting where this report is expected to be considered. Attachment 4 includes the CDA's engagement material.

Current and future work in the area includes improving the performance of a Calgary Parking Authority lot through programing such as a small downtown festival site (Lot 6) during the 2022 summer and early fall, street level beautification for the area, as well as coverage by Downtown Ambassadors as a front-line link to businesses.

The CDA currently has approximately 2,500 member taxpayers. With the proposed expansion, this will increase by approximately 120 taxpayers. With the expansion, the CDA's boundaries would include all business south of the Bow River, north of the CP rail tracks, from 14th Street SW to 3rd Street SE (Attachment 5), excluding the area that is within the Chinatown BIA. Including this area within the CDA boundaries will allow the CDA to program and improve the businesses environment in the west end of downtown as well as create a consistent look and feel through placemaking, activation, and other initiatives.

Calgary's Greater Downtown Strategy – Roadmap to reinvention, has as a priority to be active and proactive to address problems, seek out solutions and embrace opportunities. The expansion of the CDA aligns with this priority. The western area of downtown is highlighted in the Strategy as an area of opportunity for more investment and partnership with the BIA to improve vibrancy, programing, and the public realm. The Strategy recommends rebuilding this neighbourhood's identity and vitality which the BIA can support.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION (EXTERNAL)

- Public Engagement was undertaken
- Public Communication or Engagement was not required
- Public/Stakeholders were informed
- Stakeholder dialogue/relations were undertaken

In addition to the engagement done by the CDA, The City of Calgary will send a letter to every current and would-be taxpayer informing them of the request for a change in boundaries and how to make representations to Council as required under the BIA Regulation. Administration also worked with the CDA to ensure that the legislative requirements were met and engagement with taxpayers was undertaken. Administration and the CDA also met with the chair of the Downtown West Community Association to discuss the expansion.

IMPLICATIONS

Social

Calgary Downtown Association - Change in Boundaries Request

Programs and services offered by the CDA support community vibrancy and a strong local economy, enhance public spaces, and support overall increased quality of life in the downtown for residents and visitors.

Environmental

The CDA supports improved walkability through wayfinding and an enhanced public realm. This helps in the reduction of local residents', visitors' and customers' carbon footprints.

Economic

The CDA contributes to a strong and vibrant local business community by improving, beautifying and maintaining property in the business improvement area; developing, improving and maintaining public parking; and promoting the BIA as a business or shopping area. Their programs and services contribute to implementation of *Calgary in the New Economy: An economic strategy for Calgary*, and the CDA provides knowledge, insight and support to implement *Calgary's Greater Downtown Strategy – Roadmap to reinvention* which outlines partnerships a key component to achieving its outcome of a thriving, future-focused downtown.

Service and Financial Implications

No anticipated financial impact

RISK

There is low risk to The City in adopting this recommendation. Risk related to this change in boundaries request is mitigated through the engagement and notification process required by CDA and The City. All City obligations under the Regulation for the change have been met. In preparation for this report, Administration engaged with the Downtown West Community Association president who raised concerns about a lack of activity by the BIA in the west area of downtown. To address this concern, the CDA has committed to street level beautification, increased presence of the Downtown Ambassadors and working to program the festival site in the west downtown at Lot 6.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Previous Council Direction, Background
2. Calgary Downtown Association (CDA) Board Minutes to Request Boundaries Change
3. Proposed Wording for Bylaw to Amend the Calgary Downtown Association Business Improvement Area Bylaw 38M2017
4. Change in Boundaries Engagement Summary
5. Map of the Proposed Changes to the Calgary Downtown Association Business Improvement Area
6. Presentation

Department Circulation

General Manager/Director	Department	Approve/Consult/Inform
Jill Floen	City Solicitor & General Counsel	Inform