

**BID Expansion Presentation – City Council**March 29, 2016

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Good Evening Mayor Fougere and City Council. My name is Judith Veresuk and I am here on behalf of the Regina Downtown Business Improvement District. We are respectfully requesting approval of the proposed adjustments to our Business Improvement District Boundary.

Regina Downtown was founded in 1981 as a business improvement district, which was a new idea at the time. Local property owners, including Paul and Carol Hill of Harvard Developments, Harold Hague of Loggie's Shoes and the late Robert Gardikiotis of the Copper Kettle, initiated the formation of Regina's Market Square. For many years the original BID boundary stayed the same – the railroad tracks to the north, Albert to the west, Broad to the East and Victoria to the south. In the late 2000's, the boundary was extended one block to the east and west to Angus and Osler.

We now hope to expand our boundaries to reflect the growing business community throughout Regina's inner core. Our proposed expansion would extend the boundary of the BID south to 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue, along Broad between Victoria and College and east to Halifax Street from Saskatchewan Drive to 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue. This area encompasses 125 commercial properties, 19 of which are exempt.

RDBID is self-funded through a BID levy assessed on commercial properties within the boundary. The levy fee is dependent on the assessed value of the property. Within the expansion area, fees are estimate to range between \$40 to \$16,477. Of the 106 commercial properties within the expansion area, 49 will have a levy of less than \$250, 26 will be between \$251 and 500, 16 will be between \$501 and \$1000, 9 will be between \$1001 and \$2500. 6 properties will have a levy of more than \$2500.

Our public engagement process was extensive. Information packages mailed out in May and October 2014 to both the property owner and the business owner. Open Houses were held on October 27, 28 and 29, 2014. Business visits were made by RDBID staff in October 2014. During these visits, we hand delivered the Open House invitations, dropped off information packages and administered a short survey through our iPads. Additional letters were sent out in July of 2015 confirming the RDBID's intent to request the boundary expansion and two more additional open houses were held on July 27 and 28, 2015. Of the 125 properties included in the expansion request, we received 7 comments of support for inclusion in the BID and 41 unsure. Since the expansion request went to the Finance and Administration Committee on March 8, we have heard from Mr. Neil Cromarty, who is in opposition to the expansion and Michelle Espino, Dave Boys, Daniel Ince, and Kimberly Fyfe in support of the proposal.

Regina Downtown offers many benefits to its members. Our programs are intended to enhance those services already provided by the City of Regina. If the boundary expansion is

approved, RDBID will expand the following services to businesses and properties in the expansion area.

- Clean and safe services - We conduct regular sidewalk sweeping from April through October, depending on weather, litter removal and minor graffiti removal. We have determined that we would be able to provide cleaning services within the expansion area one to two times a week. However, if there is a situation that needs immediate attention, the business only needs to call us and we will deploy someone to address the problem. We have two Clean team members on staff currently and are in the process of hiring two more.
- Safety and security – Our Operations Manager has been working closely with RPS and other service providers in monitoring the safety and security of our district. This includes regular meetings with RPS and information sessions with downtown members. Where there are acute needs, we will assist with developing a solution that works for everyone involved.
- Marketing and Communications – We have developed a robust marketing and promotional strategy that would be open to expansion businesses to participate in. You will see some examples of our marketing material in your package. We recently concluded the inaugural Regina Restaurant Week at no cost to our members. In anticipation of the expansion, we reached out to the Artful Dodger and The Diplomat to see if they wanted to be a part of the event, which they did.
- Advocacy – RDBID does a tremendous amount of advocacy work for our members. We have assisted with the development of solutions that work for our membership while also meeting the goals of our project partners. We have worked with the City on transit improvements on 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue, circulation and activation of City Square Plaza and the future development of the Railyard Renewal lands. We have lobbied on behalf of our members for limitations on office development outside of downtown. We have recently scheduled ongoing meetings with City of Regina Department Heads to discuss downtown issues that our membership faces, such as infrastructure improvements, street and sidewalk cleaning, events and waste removal. We are optimistic that having this dialogue with key City staff will result in solutions that benefit our membership.

As you can see, the value that we offer our members is tremendous and we look forward to working with our new members to enhance and improve our downtown community.

Thank you for your consideration. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.