

MINUTES OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STANDING COMMITTEE MEETING  
HELD IN THE BOARD ROOM, CITY HALL,  
ON MONDAY, 2003-NOV-17, COMMENCING AT 10:21 A.M.

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PRESENT: Councillor T. K. Krall, Chair

Members: Councillor M. D. Brennan  
Councillor C. S. Manhas  
Mayor G. R. Korpan, Ex-Officio

Others: Councillor R. A. Cantelon  
Councillor L. D. McNabb  
Councillor D. Tyndall

Staff:	G. D. Berry	T. McQueen
	A. C. Kenning	A. Millward
	A. W. Laidlaw	J. T. Bowden
	B. N. Mehaffey	K. L. Burley
	B. E. Clemens	C. Hambley
	T. P. Seward	

1. ADOPTION OF MINUTES:

- (a) Minutes of the 2003-OCT-20 Meeting of the Economic Development Standing Committee held in the Board Room, City Hall at 10:13 a.m.

Moved by Councillor Manhas, seconded by Councillor Krall that the Minutes be adopted as circulated. The motion carried.

2. RECEIVING OF DELEGATIONS:

Moved by Councillor Manhas, seconded by Councillor Brennan that the Delegations be permitted to address the Committee. The motion carried.

- (a) Mr. Jerry Pink and Ms. Diana Johnston, Economic Development Group, regarding Nanaimo Proud! A Plan to Enhance Nanaimo's Image and Reputation.

Mr. Pink and Ms. Johnston were previously authorized to address the Committee.

Mr. Pink stated that:

- he is the Chair of the Economic Development Group (EDG) which is a coalition of community and business leaders who are committed to building a prosperous future for Nanaimo.

- in 1999, EDG produced an economic development strategy for our City and among the strategy's key findings, was recognition that a City's image and reputation directly affect efforts to retain and expand a quality workforce and business base.
- Nanaimo's image and reputation influence the City's economic potential.
- their image and reputation is important to tourism.
- how they are perceived by potential visitors has a direct impact on their success as a tourism destination.
- last fall, EDG decided that Nanaimo's image and reputation was its highest priority for action.
- they brought together community leaders from key organizations, and those long interested in boosting community pride to oversee development of an image and reputation plan for Nanaimo.
- the team has drafted a plan which they call *Nanaimo Now*.
- the plan provides a framework for actions that build community pride and that contribute to a positive reputation for Nanaimo.

Ms. Johnston stated that:

- while they all believe that Nanaimo is one of the most desirable, liveable small cities in North America, they needed to do a reality check to find out what other people thought.
- they hired a market research firm to recruit local residents to participate in focus groups, and ask influential opinion leaders who live elsewhere but are familiar with the City to participate in in-depth interviews.
- the research participants cited specific examples that made them proud of our City, and they recognized that over the past decade, Council and other partners have made significant investments in the community.
- developments like the Port Theatre, the Nanaimo Aquatic Centre, the waterfront walkway, and city-wide trail systems were all referred to with pride.
- the participants also talked about the significant improvements to the Old City Quarter, the City's growing international reputation as a dive location, and the attractive welcome signs that now grace the north and south ends of the City.
- concern was expressed by participants centred around issues such as the downtown area, the perceived North-South "divide", about unappealing access corridors into the City, about a difficult business climate, and a perceived lack of support for diversity, events and festivals.
- on the flip side, their focus groups also told us they see Nanaimo as liveable and affordable where quality of life is high and where an outdoor lifestyle is accessible year-round.
- participants said they see the community as generous and expressed pride in its level of volunteerism.
- to gather additional input, an action planning workshop was held in May, 2003.
- over 70 community stakeholders attended the workshop; a number of Council members were also there.

Mr. Pink stated that:

- through the feedback that they gathered during the planning process, they identified six elements that contribute to the quality of life that they enjoy here, and they form the basis for the goals of our plan.
- first, the physical beauty of the community can make a positive impression on citizens and visitors.
- second, popular events, festivals and activities contribute to the quality of life and create interest in the community.
- third, excellent facilities and top-notch services contribute enormously to the quality of life for the City's residents.
- effective communications is the fourth element.
- feedback from research participants indicated that Nanaimo citizens have varying degrees of awareness about how much the City has changed over the past ten years.
- fifth, a community's regulations and policies shape the way the community evolves over time.
- the sixth element focuses on their desire to be a caring community that acknowledges and addresses social challenges and celebrates diversity.

Ms. Johnston stated that:

- the City's investments in our recreational amenities, streetscape improvements, downtown revitalization, tourism and film development, to name a few, contribute to building a positive reputation for our City.
- an implementation team has now been formed and the Nanaimo Now Image and Reputation Plan will be officially launched on Tuesday, 2003-NOV-25 at 12:00 p.m. at the Coast Bastion Inn and everyone is invited to attend.

Moved by Councillor Manhas, seconded by Councillor Brennan that the presentation be received. The motion carried.

- (b) Ms. Beth Walrond, Film Nanaimo, 150 Commercial Street, Nanaimo, B.C., to provide an update regarding film activity in Nanaimo and Regional District of Nanaimo funding.

Ms. Walrond was previously authorized to address the Committee.

Ms. Walrond stated that:

- she would like to thank the Committee for investing \$8,000. towards the purchase of equipment for the Film Pilot project.
- with those funds, they were able to purchase a computer, software, printer and a digital camera to shoot, format and upload 1000 photos to the Film Pilot's location database.
- they will continue to update the database and add 500 photos per year.
- these photos will be used to market Nanaimo to filmmakers both locally and internationally.
- Film Nanaimo's new website will be launched later this month.

- a \$375,000. independent film (for release on DVD) used 14 locations in Nanaimo this Fall and was also the first project to apply for a film permit.
- films with budgets totaling \$13 M have chosen Nanaimo as one of the cities on their shortlist of possible film locations.
- Film Nanaimo's annual report will be ready in January 2004.
- they are seeking advice from the Committee on how to approach the Regional District of Nanaimo for financial support for the services and promotion of the communities within the Region.

Moved by Councillor Manhas, seconded by Councillor Brennan that the presentation be received. The motion carried.

3. CITY MANAGER'S REPORT:

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES:

(1) Business Improvement Area Renewal Process and Downtown Nanaimo Partnership Organizational Structure

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One of the driving forces that led to the creation of the Downtown Nanaimo Partnership was the review of the downtown area undertaken by the Mainstreet Group. One of the key recommendations arising from that report was that a strong stakeholders group needed to be in place to help define and represent the common interests of downtown property owners and merchants.

In response, an agreement was reached which saw the organization now called the Downtown Nanaimo Partnership (DNP) created as a Committee of Council with representation from City Councillors, Nanaimo City Centre Association (NCCA), Old City Quarter Association (OCQ) and several members at-large. Operational funding for this group is provided from both the Business Improvement Area (BIA) as well as municipal funding.

There had been some discussion that the Committee of Council model might not provide sufficient autonomy for this organization to function as effectively as possible. Questions of efficiency of the current structure were also raised by Staff. A process was undertaken earlier this year to review the issue of possible structural changes with representatives of the NCCA. It became clear during this process that the Committee of Council model is believed, by the participants, to be serving the community well at this point in time and a major change would not be supported.

As a means of encouraging this review, it had originally been recommended that the next BIA be for two years rather than the current five year period. During the two years the restructure review would take place hopefully a new, more efficient structure would be implemented. It is now clear that the Committee is happy with the current structure and there is no need for a shorter two year BIA. Staff are, therefore, recommending that the upcoming BIA be for a full five years. Preparing the BIA bylaws is a time consuming process (for the NCCA, OCQ and City Staff), therefore, the five year time frame makes better use of this time investment.

One of the discussions which has taken place on several occasions is the level of funding provided by the City in relation to the amount of funding collected through the Business Improvement Area (BIA) process. In very round figures, the BIA generates approximately \$175,000. a year in self-imposed fees on the part of downtown property owners and merchants. The City's contribution towards the yearly operating expenses for the DNP are slightly lower at \$150,000. Although the \$150,000. is a somewhat arbitrary figure, the lower figure also reflects the fact that not all revenue collected through the BIA process is available to the DNP to fund its operations. Some funds have traditionally been held back for special promotions in either the NCCA or OCQ for items such as special promotions and/or the development of an OCQ website which was recently undertaken.

There has been some discussion during the review of restructure options as to the possibility that the amount of funding directed to the DNP by the NCCA and OCQ could slowly increase over time as the partnership solidifies. Towards this end, the DNP has requested that Council consider providing additional matching funding up to a maximum \$25,000/year (i.e. to a maximum of \$175,000.) subject to additional funding being made available from the funding partners for the DNP operational budget.

Recommendation: That the Economic Development Standing Committee recommend that Council confirm its support for a five-year Business Improvement Area renewal term and contribute up to an additional \$25,000. in matching funding, subject to the provision of additional operational funds to the Downtown Nanaimo Partnership from its Business Improvement Area partners.

Moved by Councillor Brennan, seconded by Councillor Manhas that the recommendation be adopted. The motion carried.

(2) Approval of Downtown Nanaimo Partnership Capital Budget Items

The Downtown Nanaimo Partnership (DNP) has a five-year capital plan in place which was previously reviewed by Council. Although the plan sets out a number of projects and assigns a budget to each, Council's approval is required for expenditures in excess of \$5,000.

The Partnership has a number of capital projects planned and the purpose of this report is to both provide an update on a number of proposed expenditures and formally request that the Economic Development Standing Committee (EDSC) recommend Council approval of the same.

1. Bastion Street Lighting and Bridge Upgrading – This project was previously approved in principle by Council and has an anticipated budget of \$180,000. The design is underway and the project will return to Council for final approval of the initial capital expenditures upon design completion.

2. Fitzwilliam Street Lighting - As the Bastion Street project design has progressed, consideration has been given to extending the lighting improvements up Fitzwilliam Street beyond the Wallace project boundary originally contemplated. Accordingly, the DNP is now recommending that an additional \$50,000. be provided towards carrying the lighting project further up Fitzwilliam Street to approximately Selby Street. The proposed source of funding for the expansion of the project would be from the Residential Conversion Project Reserve, which currently remains at \$200,000. The recommendation that the reserve be drawn down is in recognition of two considerations:
  - there have been no applications received to date to take advantage of the program funding; and,
  - the funding was intended to provide a stopgap to cover any shortfall between the time the project proceeded and a tax exemption could be put in place. As such, the \$200,000. set aside is more than generous and a reduction is highly unlikely to be problematic.
3. Downtown Nanaimo Signage Plan - On Council's Agenda tonight is a report from the City's Social Planning Advisory Committee, advising that a new Signage Plan for the downtown has been completed. The report identifies ways of better providing direction to people using the downtown, as well as establishing a specific image for each of the distinct downtown areas. Towards this end, the DNP is recommending that Council authorize expenditure of up to \$60,000. for the initial implementation of the Signage Plan. The \$60,000. would be made up of \$40,000. from the 2003 DNP budget and a further \$20,000. from the Residential Conversion reserve funds set aside in 2002. This would leave \$130,000. in the Residential Conversion Reserve Fund and, in the opinion of the DNP, is likely to be more than sufficient to meet the needs of this program.

Recommendations: That the Economic Development Standing Committee recommend that Council:

1. approve a commitment of \$50,000. for the extension of the proposed Bastion Lighting Program up Fitzwilliam Street (source of funding: Residential Conversion Grant Program); and,
2. approve \$60,000. for the initial implementation of the Downtown Nanaimo Signage Plan (source of funding: \$40,000. from the 2003 Capital Budget and a further \$20,000. from the Residential Conversion Grant Program).

Moved by Councillor Manhas, seconded by Councillor Brennan that the recommendations be adopted. The motion carried.

COMMUNITY SERVICES:

Mr. A. W. Laidlaw, General Manager of Community Services, presented the promotional video Nanaimo Moments No. 2 for the Committee.

(3) Request for Funding of Airtime for "Nanaimo Moments"

Council's decision to partner with the NewVI for the New Year's event in 2002/2003 has allowed the NewVI and City of Nanaimo to develop a series of one-minute promotional videos called "Nanaimo Moments". This value-added benefit of the New Year's event highlights Nanaimo and its assets based on five one-minute themes (live, work, play, invest and stay). The first "Nanaimo Moment" has aired continuously on The NewVI during 2003, and the second segment is nearing completion; the remaining three segments are under development.

Early in 2003 the "Nanaimo Moments" came to the attention of CBC Newsworld (CBC's affiliated national news program), and a deal was negotiated to air this quality promotional piece to a national audience during the months of July/August 2003 at a discounted price. The response to the summer airing of the promotional piece was extremely positive and well received both nationally and by local residents. Local residents felt a sense of community pride to the "Nanaimo Moments" while individuals and businesses across the country called to obtain more information about our community.

The "Nanaimo Moments" are currently spearheaded by the Visual Identity Steering Committee which is comprised of City Staff representing various departments. Recently, City Staff negotiated an additional two blocks of discounted airtime with CBC during the months of January/February and again in July/August of 2004. The costs for a full minute on national TV will be approximately \$75. per spot spread amongst three viewing periods (prime, shoulder and late evening). The total cost will be \$18,000. Opportunities to air the segments on other networks are being considered by the Visual Identity Steering Committee to further promote the City of Nanaimo using the "Nanaimo Moments".

Recommendation: That the Economic Development Standing Committee recommend that Council allocate \$18,000. from its 2003 Budget to fund the airing of "Nanaimo Moments" on CBC Newsworld and other networks.

Moved by Councillor Brennan, seconded by Councillor Manhas that the recommendation be adopted. The motion carried.

4. INFORMATION ONLY ITEMS:

- (a) Report from Ms. T. McQueen, Economic Development Officer, re: Nanaimo Proud! Image and Reputation Plan.
- (b) Report from Ms. A. Millward, Social Planner, re: Downtown Nanaimo Sign Plan.

Moved by Councillor Manhas, seconded by Councillor Brennan that the Information Only items be received. The motion carried.

5. ADJOURNMENT:

Moved by Councillor Brennan, seconded by Councillor Manhas at 11:07 a.m. that the meeting terminate. The motion carried.

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CHAIR

CERTIFIED CORRECT:

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SENIOR MANAGER,  
CORPORATE ADMINISTRATION