

September 16, 2025

Mayor and Council
City of Nanaimo
455 Wallace Street
Nanaimo, BC V9R 5J6

Re: Downtown Nanaimo Business Improvement Area Levy Renewal

Dear Mayor Krog and Members of Council,

On behalf of the Downtown Nanaimo Business Association (DNBA), I am writing to respectfully request that Council draft and enact a new bylaw to renew the Downtown Nanaimo Business Improvement Area (BIA) for the next five-year term, beginning January 1, 2026, through the petition against process.

The current BIA bylaw, established in 2020, expires in December 2025. Over the past five years, the DNBA has strengthened governance, strategic direction, and operations to support downtown businesses and property owners. Guided by a Board of downtown stakeholders, we've advanced initiatives in safety, events, marketing, and economic development to enhance the vitality of our downtown core.

Renewing the BIA bylaw will provide continuity and allow us to:

- Sustain and expand safety, security, and beautification efforts.
- Deliver programming and events that drive foot traffic, investment, and tourism.
- Support the growth and resilience of Nanaimo's business and cultural heart.
- Continue to be a dedicated advocate and unified voice for downtown property and business owners.

The proposed BIA Levy for the next five years is outlined below and includes an annual inflationary increase of 1.01%:

2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
\$160,000.00	\$161,616.00	\$163,248.32	\$164,897.13	\$166,562.59

We respectfully request that Council initiate the negative option petition process and bring forward the new bylaw to ensure seamless continuity of funding and programming as the current term concludes.

We've created a renewal document highlighting our achievements and explaining the Bylaw Levy Renewal process, which we're sharing with the business community throughout the renewal period.

The DNBA would be happy to provide any further information or clarification you may require.

Sincerely,

Roberta Bowman
Executive Director
Downtown Nanaimo Business Association

DOWNTOWN NANAIMO BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

Our Achievements – Investing in the Heart of Our City

Beautification & Placemaking

- Collaborative Beautification Projects
Partnering with the City of Nanaimo and community organizations to enhance our downtown core:
 - *Tile Mural* in development for the exterior wall of the VICC on Commercial Street
 - *Indigenous Banners* with storytelling via QR codes on lamp posts
 - *Diana Krall Plaza Revitalization* – collaborative enhancements including patio lighting and interactive displays as part of City upgrades
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Marketing & Promotions

- Branding & Outreach
 - Indigenous-themed *Grand Design Logo*
 - Dedicated *Community Engagement Coordinator* (Anna): social media, reels, and business highlights
 - *Year-round campaigns* (e.g., Food & Clothing Drives, Coupon Card Campaign, Shop Local promotions)
 - Strong digital presence with growing social media engagement
 - Regular *video spotlights*, digital newsletters, and merchant features
 - *Branded print materials* and promotional advertising
 - *Highway billboards* and *BC Ferries terminal advertising*
 - Tourism marketing in Alberta, Washington, and BC (pre-dating current Tourism Nanaimo initiatives)
 - “Shop With Us / Celebrate With Us / Stay With Us” campaigns
 - *Explore Downtown Nanaimo Guide*
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Events & Activation

- Signature Events & Collaborations
 - *Picnic in the Plaza, Winterfest, Carnival in the Plaza, Summer Concert Series*
 - Strong partnerships with arts, culture, and tourism organizations
 - Support for events that draw community traffic: *Fresh Start, CVIMS, Artwalk*
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Advocacy & Business Support

- Representation & Resources
 - Active presence at City Hall and on advisory and safety task forces
 - Consistent business support: networking, resource sharing, and promotions
 - Advocating for safety improvements and downtown development
 - Instrumental in *Commercial Street construction advocacy*:
 - Business Impact Survey
 - Community Engagement
 - Formal Report & Recommendations to City Staff
 - *Free Parking Initiative* during construction
 - *Art Banner Contest* to beautify construction zones
 - Advocacy to fill vacant storefronts in the downtown core
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Partnerships & Collaboration

- Working Together for Greater Impact
 - Joint initiatives with *Tourism Nanaimo, Chamber of Commerce, Nanaimo Pride Society*
 - Contributions to *Nanaimo Prosperity Corporation* and other regional development strategies
 - Strategic use of *grant funding and sponsorships* (City of Nanaimo, local events, business support)
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Resilience & Innovation

- Adaptive and Future-Focused
 - Swift COVID-19 recovery response via business toolkits and Chamber support
 - Continued improvements in communication, transparency, and stakeholder engagement
 - Member-driven, flexible programming that evolves with business needs
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Safety & Security

- Creating a Safer Downtown
 - Leadership in forming the *Safety and Security Committee*
 - Founding of the *CSO (Community Safety Officer) Program*
 - Launch of the *Vandalism Relief Fund* (in partnership with the Nanaimo Chamber)
 - Development of a “*Who to Call and When*” safety guide
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Looking Ahead

- Ongoing community engagement
 - Signature events: *Winterfest, Picnic in the Plaza, Carnival in the Plaza*
 - Expansion of new events and partnerships
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Let's Keep the Momentum Going

The DNBA remains committed to building a more vibrant, inclusive, and prosperous downtown.

Renewal of the BIA bylaw for 2026–2030 is essential to our shared success.

Contact:

Roberta Bowman, Executive Director

 info@downtownnanaimo.ca

 www.downtownnanaimo.ca