

City of Yellowknife Business Improvement District Committee  
BIABC Conference Report - Vancouver, BC  
April 10 – 13, 2015

I attended the 2016 Business Improvement Areas of British Columbia Pacific Northwest Regional Conference between April 10<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> at the invitation of the City of Yellowknife.

Attendance from Yellowknife included three representatives of the City of Yellowknife Council, one from Administration, and four members of the business community.

This investment by the City of Yellowknife is significant and should be followed with continued investment and energy to review and develop improvements to our business district (downtown) with or without a dedicated formal Business Improvement Area (BIA).

The conference was largely attended by BIA stakeholders from British Columbia. Most spoke very positively of the successes of their BIAs and attributed these successes largely by having a defined district and mandate that was not influenced by other matters that an overall municipality must manage.

The Conference agenda included three full days of scheduled breakout sessions or mobile tours plus presentations by keynote speakers at mealtimes (Mon – Wed). Sunday was a day for registration and personal tours.

I attended the various breakout sessions and walked about the downtown on personal time.

The conference discussion included:

- The Role of Downtowns and Business Areas
- Community Engagement
- Identification of Matters of Importance and Tracking/Measuring Techniques
- Defining Neighbourhoods and Place-Making
- Discussions of Streetscaping and other Neighbourhood Investments
- Neighbourhood/BIA Marketing
- Marketing Events
- Marketing of a City (ie Diamond Capital)
- Policing, Enforcement and Safety
- Fostering & Supporting Retail
- Food (Food Trucks, Kiosks and Fixed Restaurants)
- Public Art
- Starting & Running a New BIA

I suggest that our downtown is ripe for redefinition. The first step however will be to ensure that visitors, both local and tourists, feel safe and that the area is clean and neat.

Pride of place and revitalization will follow.

During the working hours we have significant traffic through our downtown, this traffic needs to be engaged and extended beyond the typical 8:30 – 5:00 of the week day to encourage excitement and redevelopment.

In the **short term**, we could concentrate on immediate efforts toward cleanliness, events and place-making to reintroduce the downtown to our residents. Last summer the City started a Food on Franklin event each Thursday evening. This is the sort of event that will work toward building something sustainable. The Tuesday Farmers Market at Somba Ke is an overwhelming success. Could the Market be relocated on an ad-hoc basis and “make a guest appearance” on Franklin a couple of times during the summer to move life closer to the downtown and let people see what a revitalized downtown could look like?

Art & Music Events could be held to attract crowds. The Old Town Ramble & Ride can also be used as an example of a successful event that builds community and place.

These short term initiatives should be spearheaded by the City or a Committee of the City. The mid – longer term goal would be to remove this from the purview of the City and to establish it as the responsibility of a BIA.

For the **mid to longer term** I suggest that research be conducted to identify retail, commercial and hospitality opportunities that entrepreneurs could use to consider ventures. We could also review the actual limits of the area in which to concentrate efforts.

We could then solicit leadership and membership of a BIA. The paying members would largely be the landlords of the BIA because they would pay the membership fees and extend these fees to the tenants in their lease arrangements. Active membership of the BIA could be tenants and landlords.

I include with this report copies of some business cards of people with whom I connected at the conference plus some relevant documents for consideration by our group during our upcoming dialogue.

In order for a BIA to succeed, a defined area needs to be established and purpose needs to be developed.

I appreciate that the City has made this a priority and look forward to continued involvement in the BIA study and development.

Regards,



Kevin Hodgins, FEC, P. Eng.  
Stantec Architecture Ltd.

02:45 PM - 03:15 PM

**Networking Refreshment Break**

*Sponsored by Star Illuminations*



03:15 PM - 04:30 PM

**Concurrent Breakout Sessions**

- PART II:**  
Pop Up to Permanent: How Entrepreneurs Turned Short-term Spaces into Long-term Places
- A Cautionary Tale: When a Member Goes Rogue

*Port of San Francisco/NY, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor*

*Port of Vancouver, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor*

04:30 PM - 06:30 PM

**Time on Your Own**

07:00 PM - 09:00 PM

**Group Dinner at Malone's Social Lounge + Taphouse**

*Please meet in the Lobby at 6:30 pm*

## Wednesday, April 13, 2016

07:15 AM - 08:00 AM

**Short Run plus Body Weight Workout**

*Please meet in the Lobby*

08:30 AM - 09:30 AM

**Breakfast and BIA BC Annual General Meeting**

*Harbourfront Ballroom*

09:30 AM - 10:30 AM

**Keynote**

*Sponsored by Securiguard*

Policing of the Future: High-Tech Meets High-Touch

*Harbourfront Ballroom*



10:30 AM - 11:00 AM

**Networking Refreshment Break (and hotel checkout)**

*Sponsored by Star Illuminations*



11:00 AM - 12:15 PM

**Keynote**

*Sponsored by Eco-Counter*

Light, Quick, and Cheap: Placemaking Projects That Inspire

*Harbourfront Ballroom*



12:30 PM - 02:00 PM

**Lunch and Closing Keynote**

*Sponsored by Impark*

Happy Cities = Thriving Cities

*Harbourfront Ballroom*



**GOLD**



**SILVER**



**Business Improvement Areas of British Columbia**



**International Downtown Association**

PRESENT

PACIFIC NORTHWEST REGIONAL CONFERENCE

# PROGRESSIVE by NATURE



**2016**  
PROGRAM  
**#BIABCCONF2016**

## Sunday, April 10, 2016

08:00 AM - 05:00 PM	<b>Registration</b>	In the Lobby
09:00 AM - 12:00 PM	<b>Pre-Conference Workshop</b> Executive Development for BIA Leaders	Port of San Francisco/NY, 3 <sup>rd</sup> Floor
01:00 PM - 04:00 PM	<b>Pre-Conference Neighbourhood Tours</b> 1. The West End – Canada's Best Neighbourhood 2. Chinatown – Where Residents Matter 3. Mount Pleasant – Where Vancouverites Spend their Saturdays Sponsored by Art-BC.com	Please meet in the Lobby 
06:00 PM - 08:00 PM	<b>Welcome to Vancouver: Opening Reception</b> Sponsored by Dekra-Lite	Vancouver Lookout, 555 W Hastings St. Vancouver 

## Monday, April 11, 2016

06:45 AM - 07:30 AM	<b>Seawall Run</b>	Please meet in the Lobby
08:00 AM - 06:00 PM	<b>Registration</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor Lobby
08:00 AM - 09:00 AM	<b>Breakfast, Welcome and Networking</b>	Harbourfront Ballroom
09:00 AM - 10:00 AM	<b>Opening Keynote</b> Greenest Cities and the Role of Downtowns	Harbourfront Ballroom
10:00 AM - 10:30 AM	<b>Networking Refreshment Break</b> Sponsored by Star Illuminations	
10:30 AM - 11:45 AM	<b>Concurrent Breakout Sessions</b> 1. Strategic Measurement: A How-to Guide to Tracking What Matters 2. Community Engagement: Beyond the Membership 3. Social Media Trends: The Next 12 Months	Port of Vancouver, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor Port of Singapore, 3 <sup>rd</sup> Floor Port of San Francisco/NY, 3 <sup>rd</sup> Floor
10:00 AM - 01:00 PM	<b>Mobile Tour (Advanced registration required)</b> PART I: Food Tourism: Food Trucks: Eat 'Em Up	Please meet in the Lobby
12:00 PM - 01:30 PM	<b>Networking Lunch</b>	Harbourfront Ballroom
01:30 PM - 04:30 PM	<b>Mobile Tour (Advanced registration required)</b> 1. Sole Food: Feeding the Soul of a City 2. Emergency Operations Centres: BIA's in the Nerve Centre When Disaster Strikes 3. Bikeshop: If you Build Bike Lanes, Will They Come? 4. A Health City: Putting Two Feet Forward	Please meet in the Lobby
01:30 PM - 02:45 PM	<b>Concurrent Breakout Sessions</b> 1. Everything Old is New Again: A Return to the Neighbourhood 2. Up in Smoke: Regulating Marijuana in Vancouver	Port of Vancouver, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor Port of San Francisco/NY, 3 <sup>rd</sup> Floor
02:45 PM - 03:15 PM	<b>Networking Refreshment Break</b> Sponsored by Star Illuminations	

03:15 PM - 04:30 PM	<b>Concurrent Breakout</b> 1. On Your Mark: Marketing the Sports & Active Leisure Appeal of Cities 2. Towns & Gowns: Leveraging Educational Institutions	Port of Vancouver, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor Port of San Francisco/NY, 3 <sup>rd</sup> Floor
04:30 PM - 06:30 PM	<b>Time on Your Own</b>	
06:30 PM - 09:00 PM	<b>Dine Around (Sign up at the registration desk by 3pm)</b>	Please meet in the Lobby
09:00 PM - LATE	<b>Nightlife On Your Own (Information sheet at registration desk)</b>	

## Tuesday, April 12, 2016

06:45 AM - 07:00 PM	<b>Yoga Class</b>	Port of Shanghai, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor
08:00 AM - 09:00 AM	<b>Breakfast and Networking</b>	Harbourfront Ballroom
09:00 AM - 10:00 AM	<b>Keynote</b> Sponsored by HUB International The Mastering of a Music City	Harbourfront Ballroom 
10:00 AM - 10:30 AM	<b>Networking Refreshment Break</b> Sponsored by Star Illuminations	
10:30 AM - 11:45 AM	<b>Concurrent Breakout Sessions</b> 1. The Anatomy of an Independent Retailer: Moving to Your Hood 2. Pushing Boundaries: Scope Creep or Survival? 3. Mobilizing Local Artists to Augment Your Business District	Port of San Francisco/NY, 3 <sup>rd</sup> Floor Port of Vancouver, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor Port of Singapore, 3 <sup>rd</sup> Floor
10:00 AM - 12:00 PM	<b>Mobile Tour (Advanced registration required)</b> A Study in Placemaking Made Easy: The Perch Project on Private Property	Please meet in the Lobby
12:00 PM - 01:30 PM	<b>Best in the West Awards &amp; Lunch</b> Sponsored by FortisBC	
01:30 PM - 04:30 PM	<b>Mobile Tour (Advanced registration required)</b> 1. At the Waters Edge: Connecting to Vancouver's Seawall 2. PART II: Food Tourism: Mix, Cook, Repeat 3. A Home for Everyone: Vancouver's Housing First Strategy	Please meet in the Lobby
01:30 PM - 02:45 PM	<b>Concurrent Breakout Roundtable Sessions</b> 1. PART 1: One Business at a Time: Purposeful Retail Recruitment 2. Round table 1 / Marketing & Events: What's New? 3. Round table 2 / Downtowns Canada 4. Round table 3 / Starting & Running a New BIA 5. Round table 4 / Canada 2017: What are you Planning? 6. Round table 5 / Societies Act: Impact to BIAs	Port of San Francisco/NY, 3 <sup>rd</sup> Floor Harbourfront Ballroom Harbourfront Ballroom Harbourfront Ballroom Harbourfront Ballroom Port of Vancouver, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor



**STEFANO S. GRANDE** B.Sc., M.C.P. Executive Director

426 Portage Avenue  
Winnipeg, MB | R3C 0C9  
tel 204 958 4622 | cel 204 291 9891  
stefano@downtownwinnipegbiz.com  
www.downtownwinnipegbiz.com

Downtown Seattle Association

**Dave Willard**  
Vice President, Public Area Management  
Downtown Seattle Association /  
Metropolitan Improvement District  
davew@downtownseattle.org

1809 7th Avenue  
Suite 900  
Seattle, WA 98101  
Main Line 206-623-0340  
Direct Line 206-613-3902  
www.DowntownSeattle.com



**Our Mission**  
To champion a healthy,  
vibrant urban core



**ANNA TSE**  
Store Manager

T: (604) 563-1286  
C: (604) 808-7822  
tseannat@gmail.com

5139 Victoria Drive  
Vancouver, BC V5P 3V1



**Chicago Office (Primary)**  
1924 Wesley Avenue  
Evanston, IL 60201  
Direct: (202) 798-5915

**Carolyn Dellutri, CSM, CTP**  
Director of Professional Development

**Washington, DC Office**  
1025 Thomas Jefferson Street, NW  
Suite 500W  
Washington, DC 20007  
Office: (202) 393-6801

cdellutri@ida-downtown.org  
www.ida-downtown.org



**Jodine Baluk**  
T/ 604.683.5483  
jodine@dekralite.com

107 - 1533 Broadway Street  
Port Coquitlam, BC V3C 6P3  
F/ 604.941.8692 Toll/Free/ 1.888.710.5483  
www.dekralite.com



**MAUREEN HEALEY, ABC, CAE**  
VICE-PRESIDENT

LIKE US:  
facebook.com/downtownvan  
FOLLOW US:  
twitter.com/downtownvan

SUITE 325 - 1130 WEST PENDER STREET, VANCOUVER BC V6E 4A4  
PH: 604-685-7811 x204 FAX: 604-685-7812 MAUREEN@DOWNTOWNVANCOUVER.NET



vancouver.ca

**Peter Vaisbord, B.A., LL.B., M.A. Plan.**  
Coordinator, BIA Program / Business Districts  
Planning & Development Services

tel 604.871.6304  
email peter.vaisbord@vancouver.ca



T 250 386 2239  
F 250 386 2271  
20 Centennial Square  
Victoria BC V8W 1P7  
E @mydvba f dvba

**KENNETH KELLY M. PL.**  
General Manager  
ken@downtownvictoria.ca

1188 JENNIFER STREET TEL

**STAR ILLUMINATIONS**  
A DIVISION OF  
**HolidayLights.com**  
PROFESSIONAL GRADE  
NORTH AMERICA WIDE  
CUSTOM DESIGN OPTIONS  
ALL ALUMINUM DISPLAYS  
LIGHT STRINGS & BULBS  
CANADIAN OWNED  
CANADIAN MADE

## STARTING A BIA IN YOUR AREA

BIA formation is initiated at the request of a BIA 'sponsor group' representing area merchants and landlords. The sponsor group (usually a BIA formation committee or merchants association) consults extensively with area property owners and businesses.

The consultation process includes open meetings attended by the City's BIA Program Coordinator. The group identifies issues and priorities, develops a BIA proposal and budget, and builds support for the proposal.

To assist with outreach and budget planning, the City provides a list of property owners with a calculation of the likely levy on each property based on a proposed total budget. When assured of broad support, the sponsor group provides documentation of its activities and requests the City to commence a 'Council Initiative'.

If the Initiative is approved, the City delivers formal BIA notifications to all affected property owners and businesses, with instructions on filing objections. City Council will generally not approve a BIA if objections are filed by more than one-third of the property owners, representing one-third of the commercial assessed value, OR by one-third of the businesses, counted separately.

If the BIA is approved, Council enacts by-laws to establish the BIA, boundaries and term, to set a cap on the total levy over the BIA term, and to attach conditions on the transfer of levy funds to the BIA.

A registered non-profit society must be established before City BIA by-laws can be enacted and levy funds remitted. Existing merchants associations with registered status may qualify by amending their constitution and by-laws.

## FOR A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

to BIA formation, and more detailed information, visit the City's BIA Program web pages at:

[www.vancouver.ca/biaprogram](http://www.vancouver.ca/biaprogram)

The website also provides contact data for existing BIAs.

**ENQUIRIES** should be directed to Mr. Peter Vaisbord, the City's BIA Program Coordinator, at 604-871-6304 or [peter.vaisbord@vancouver.ca](mailto:peter.vaisbord@vancouver.ca)

The Coordinator will be pleased to assist interested parties by providing information and advice on the BIA Program and formation process.

## FURTHER INFORMATION

and assistance is available from BIABC, the Provincial BIA umbrella association, through their website at: [www.bia.bc.ca](http://www.bia.bc.ca)



For assistance in establishing a Business Improvement Area, or for more information on BIAs in Vancouver, please contact:

Peter Vaisbord, BIA Program Coordinator,  
City of Vancouver, 453 West 12th. Avenue  
Vancouver, BC, V5Y 1V4 604-871-6304  
[peter.vaisbord@vancouver.ca](mailto:peter.vaisbord@vancouver.ca)

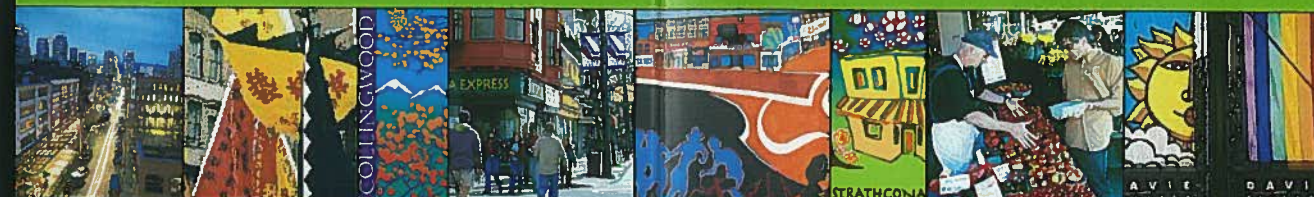
CITY OF VANCOUVER

# BIA

PROGRAM

**Business Improvement Areas**

March 2011



## WHAT IS A BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT AREA (BIA)?

A BIA is a specially-funded district managed and promoted by a non-profit association of commercial property owners and business tenants. The owners and businesses join together to improve the economic vitality of their business district.

The City assists by helping interested groups to establish BIAs. BIA funds are used to hire full- or part-time staff, retain services and expertise, and implement BIA activities. The City has a continuing role assisting with contacts between the BIA and City departments, facilitating the annual funding process, and monitoring BIA budgets. BIAs play an important role in business promotion, tourism development, safety and security, and street enhancement for their areas.

A BIA can effectively organize and finance area maintenance and improvement programs that are beyond the capability of individual businesses and most merchant associations. BIAs are also important City partners in area planning and revitalization initiatives, such as the Neighbourhood Centres (NCDP) program.

## HOW ARE BIAs FUNDED?

BIAs obtain funding through an annual property tax levy, much like a Local Improvement Levy. BIA levies are authorized under Vancouver Charter Section 456. Only commercial or industrial properties may be assessed, and the BIA is limited to a renewable term, usually 5 - 7 years. Every year, the City collects the tax and remits the entire amount to the BIA to carry out projects and programs.

Annual budgets for BIAs in Vancouver range from \$80,000 to over \$2 million (Downtown Vancouver BIA), and the number of businesses represented ranges from 200 to 8,000.

Each property owner's share of the annual BIA budget is proportionate to their share of the total taxable commercial value within the BIA boundaries. In other words, if a property represents one percent of the total taxable value, the owner's share will be one percent of the BIA budget.

The average BIA levy is about 5 percent of an owner's commercial property taxes. In most lease agreements, property owners pass this cost proportionally to the business tenants.

## HOW ARE BIAs MANAGED?

BIAs are managed by registered non-profit societies similar to merchant associations. All commercial property owners and business tenants in the BIA area are eligible for membership in the BIA society/association.

The BIA society/association is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors that is elected by its membership. Every year at the BIA's Annual General Meeting, the Board proposes a business promotion plan and a budget that the members approve before the City adds the BIA levy. Most BIAs hire a full or part-time coordinator to help implement and manage the association's activities.

## BIAs IN VANCOUVER

There are currently 22 Business Improvement Areas in the City of Vancouver:

- CAMBIE VILLAGE
- CHINATOWN
- COLLINGWOOD
- COMMERCIAL DRIVE
- DOWNTOWN VANCOUVER
- DUNBAR VILLAGE
- FRASER STREET
- GASTOWN
- HASTINGS CROSSING
- HASTINGS NORTH
- KERRISDALE
- KITSILANO FOURTH AVENUE
- MARPOLE
- MOUNT PLEASANT
- POINT GREY VILLAGE
- ROBSON STREET
- SOUTH GRANVILLE
- STRATHCONA
- VICTORIA DRIVE
- WEST BROADWAY
- WEST END
- YALETOWN

In context, there are approximately 60 BIAs in the Province of British Columbia, 38 of which are located in Vancouver and the Lower Mainland area.



## CITY OF VANCOUVER - BIA PROGRAM

### PROCESS FOR BIA FORMATION (Timing based on BIA start-up April 1, 2017)\*

\*Timing and required process varies by municipality - check with your municipal officials

#### Fall or Winter 2015/16

- Establish BIA formation committee
  - Identify a working boundary and budget, and obtain owner /levy reports from City
  - Incorporate non-profit society under Society Act (can wait until October 2016)  
(associations already incorporated may\*\* amend existing Constitution and By-laws)
- \*\*depends on whether there are unalterable provisions in the existing Constitution that conflict with BIA req'ts*

v  
v

#### Winter/Spring 2015/16

- Questionnaire re issues/priorities (recommended)
- Tabulate and analyze survey results

v  
v

- Main Outreach activities begin (required)
- Approach key stakeholders individually (recommended)
- Identify potential opposition (recommended)

v  
v

#### March / April 2016

- Report Survey results and analysis to property owners and businesses (recommended)
- Distribute materials introducing possible BIA and BIA process (required)
- 'Public' Outreach Meeting(s) with landlords and merchants:
  - to discuss survey results / issues / priorities
  - to discuss possible BIA and BIA process

v  
v

- Develop budget (or options) based on survey results, priorities and costs

v  
v



### May / June 2016

- go 'public' with draft BIA proposal and budget - send out materials (required)
  - Outreach Meeting to discuss proposal and budget (required)
  - revisit key stakeholders (recommended)
- face-to-face contact with all stakeholders if possible (recommended)

v  
v

### July /August 2016

- revise BIA proposal and budget, if necessary, due to member input
  - mobilize support for BIA proposal
  - address opposition issues if possible
- avoid scheduling Outreach meetings in summer during vacations
- prepare and distribute final BIA proposal and budget (required)

v  
v

### September/October 2016

- Final Outreach Meeting to discuss proposal and finalized budget\* (required)
- 'follow-up survey' asking respondents whether or not they support BIA proposal (required)
  - continue to mobilize support for proposal
  - continue to address opposition

\*Note: Most municipalities other than Vancouver require the budgets for each year of the BIA term to be written into the BIA By-law, even though the Community Charter only requires a cumulative total amount to be included.)

v  
v

### October 2016

- compile all Outreach materials and survey results; send to BIA Coordinator (required)
- mail BIA 'application' letter to BIA Program, cc mailed to Mayor & Council (required)
- incorporate (or amend) non-profit society if not already done (required)

v

### November/December 2016

- Coordinator prepares Council Report\*\*, and attaches Outreach package
- Council meeting - whether to proceed to formal notification ("counter-petition")
- City mails formal notifications to property owners /hand-delivers to tenants\*\*
- Applicant provides 'promotional' insert to go with City material\*\*

\*\* Note: In all municipalities except Vancouver, the BIA By-law must be introduced at this point. Not all municipalities notify business tenants, as it is not a Charter requirement. Inclusion of a 'promotional insert' is probably unique to Vancouver.

v  
v

### January /February 2017

- 30 day notice period for objections (late Jan)
- owner and tenant objections tallied: 'one-third' of owners/businesses will defeat\*
- Council - Feb/March - final decision
- \*City of Vancouver council policy. Charter standard to defeat a BIA is: 'one-half' of property owners (only) have submitted counter-petitions

v  
v

### February /March 2017

- Extraordinary GM (new society): vote BIA proposal and yr 1 budget (required)  
(deliver legal EGM notices to all property owners & businesses - 21 days notice by mail)
- Motions: -approve BIA proposal and 5yr term
- approve funding ceiling
- approve yr 1 budget
- \*\*this meeting must occur by mid-March 2017 latest\*\***

v  
v

- Council enacts Designation By-law and Granting By-law  
(Most jurisdictions: one combined BIA Bylaw)
- Council approves all BIA budgets for coming year
- April 1, 2017: if approved, BIA begins operation, first payment received from City  
(Vancouver advances 50% of funding for April 1 fiscal year start. Most others time BIA payments to after the property tax due date in July)

## DOS AND DON'TS OF FORMING A BIA

BIABC 2016 Annual Conference, Vancouver BC - April 10-13, 2016

Prepared by P. Vaisbord, City of Vancouver, for Roundtable on BIA Formation

- 1) BIA sponsor group must be a registered non-profit society. A legal name for the Society will not be approved without a corporate name search /reservation. Constitution and By-laws must be passed by the general membership, and must conform with the Society Act, BIA provisions of the Vancouver Charter (or Community Charter outside the City of Vancouver), and municipal requirements. Start with examples from established BIAs, retain legal advice, and check with City Hall re local requirements. All By-laws must be approved by the Corporate Registry (Victoria).
- 2) Constitution & By-laws may be established by the founding Directors (sponsor group) and pre-approved by the Registrar. Otherwise, they must be approved by the wider membership at a General Meeting held after Council approves the BIA. All Class 5 and 6 property owners and tenants within the BIA are eligible for voting membership.
- 3) Where the BIA sponsor is an established business association with pre-existing Constitution & By-laws, these will likely need to be amended to reflect general BIA requirements, the BIA's geographic mandate, and the local requirements in 1. BIA funding can be delayed if amendments have not been made prior to BIA approval.
- 4) Determine a geographic boundary that makes sense - - Is there a common interest, type of business, or character that unites the area? What is a solid area of support? What blocks/areas are likely to be unsupportive? Who will benefit/not benefit? How many properties are needed to spread the proposed budget? Be prepared to change the proposed boundaries as a result of input you receive.
- 5) Determine a budget amount. Review the budgets of existing BIAs to get a sense of possible BIA activities and their costs. Consider retaining a consultant or student to do analysis of your area's needs and prepare a strategy. A coherent strategy is essential to winning support for the BIA. Develop a business improvement proposal that addresses your priorities while being realistic about the amount that your members will be capable or willing to pay. Larger BIA boundaries help spread costs among more owners, but don't lose sight of where your support is likely to be. Be prepared to amend your budget proposal. Consider 'going public' with options that are later narrowed down by surveys and other outreach activities.
- 6) Sponsor group should make every effort to contact all property owners and merchants regarding the BIA proposal and the amount they would likely pay under the proposed levy. Although time consuming, direct personal contact with property and business owners is essential, preferably face-to-face, or at least by telephone. It is essential that the sponsor group be very explicit about the annual cost of the proposal. People may support the BIA in principle, but when the municipal government sends out the formal notices showing the actual cost to the property owner, they may oppose the BIA if the cost is significantly higher than they anticipated.

Chapman

Coop  
Neighbourhood  
Associations

NEED  
BIA  
STEPHAN  
JAMES  
NEED

- 7) Never talk as if the BIA proposal is cast in stone, or the product of a small closed group. You need to reach out, and be seen as reaching out, to your colleagues. Their needs and priorities should be clearly reflected in the BIA proposal. If the process is seen as open, inclusive and consultative, it is more likely to be supported. Outreach should take place over at least 6 months, and be conducted in a way that builds consensus for the proposal. Nothing will more effectively erode support for a BIA than the perception that a proposal is being 'rammed through'. Take extra care to reach specific interests and ethnic groups within the proposed BIA. Enlist respected individuals ('champions') to reach out to others within their ethnic communities.
- 8) In Vancouver, the 'outreach' process consists of direct contact, public information meetings held by the sponsor group (and attended by City's representative), mailout/hand delivery of meeting notices, information flyers, newsletters, and written / oral surveys. The sponsor keeps copies of all material produced and forwards it to City Council as documentation of its outreach efforts.
- 9) When distributing material to businesses, give it to the actual business owner. If this is not possible, make sure the person receiving your material will draw it to the owner's attention. Follow up by telephone or direct contact.
- 10) The City of Vancouver asks the sponsor group to distribute an informal survey, at the end of the Outreach phase, to all the owners and businesses. The survey asks if they support the BIA proposal. The results of the survey help City Council to determine whether the proposal seems to be generally supported. If the proposal appears to be supported, Council proceeds to the next step (Council Initiative). For the sponsor group, this may be a good 'reality check' before moving to the next step. Likewise, a poor survey return rate may indicate low awareness of the proposal or its implications.
- 11) The Council Initiative process requires a negative response from those who oppose the BIA application. Therefore, low participation / apathy can benefit the applicant where a proposal does not have strong support. But remember, low participation can also be a sign of quiet opposition evident only after the formal City notices are received. If widespread opposition is registered at this late stage in the process, there is usually little that can be done to stem the tide.
- 12) If there are concentrations of opposition on /near the proposed BIA boundary, consider requesting Council to approve a reduced boundary which would exclude the area(s) of non-support and permit the BIA to proceed in the core area(s) where it is supported.

If the BIA is approved, you will need to have a general meeting to approve your year 1 budget. All Class 5 and 6 property owners and tenants must receive notice of the meeting. The notice must comply with the Society Act, and the By-laws of the non-profit society which will manage the BIA. Generally, 21 days notice is required for mailed notices. The notice must clearly state the purpose of the meeting, and should include a copy of the proposed budget and a membership form. Vancouver BIA society by-laws state that, for a person to be a (voting) member in good standing, the person must return the enclosed application form, with nominal fee if applicable, by the stated deadline.