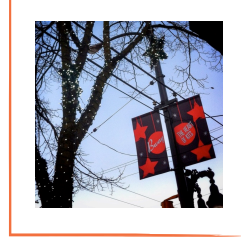




WEST BROADWAY BIA

Business Improvement Association



Planning Meeting Notes

April 21, 2016

Meeting Outline:

- Planning discussion of 3 key areas – marketing, street enhancement and member relations and advocacy
- Attendees working in groups to discuss initiatives in the 3 key areas, and prospective goals and objectives

Marketing & Events:

- **Events and street festivals:**
 - Timeframes:
 - early or late summer would be good. July and August people could be away. May potentially? Spring tune up for your body, pre-summer beach time.
 - create a consistent event presence to build up event and draw people, i.e. First Friday of the month, every month in summer, etc.
 - Greek Day:
 - join in with Greek Day event for combined programming effort – i.e. Greek and Heritage Day.
 - extend Greek Day boundaries to include Larch to Collingwood (currently it's MacDonald to Bleheim). BIA has asked organizers to extend boundary in future.
 - have a kids zone area near Larch, close to Kits community centre and many kid-related businesses)
 - Events without Broadway street closure:
 - idea to have event have an event that doesn't close down our street – shop & restaurant hop to fill sidewalks and stores (this would save road closure fees, etc)
 - look at blocking off the sidewalks, share sidewalks with street level and upstairs retailers
 - Car-free day:
 - host a Car-free day on Broadway
 - Event theme and other notes:
 - health and wellness, kids event, family day theme – good themes that align with businesses
 - promote a happy hour theme and/or merchant happy hour specials
 - is specific event theme necessary? Hats Off Day in Burnaby is good example of event that celebrates merchants.
 - emphasize merchants, food and entertainment, and supporting local businesses.
 - create a draw for local groups – i.e., show and shine with antique cars
 - identify each type of business, colour-coded, easy for public
 - use media features to increase event exposure, including radio giveaways, etc.

- idea for a treasure hunt – collect stamps in a ‘passport’, special promotion, visiting several businesses.
- provide opportunities for vendors to support each other
- connect with Farmer’s Market at Kits Community Centre
- **Digital marketing:**
 - social media is key, especially Facebook. Have a routine/daily post on Instagram with a theme (i.e. Flame of the Day)
 - regular newsletter, blog posts
- **Merchant directory:**
 - useful tool - more copies next time please!
 - BIA will print/distribute new brochure with directory updates, planned for May.
- **Local marketing:**
 - implement initiatives to reach locals, i.e. direct mail campaigns

Street Enhancement:

- **Decorative lighting:**
 - more lights, including decorative pole and tree lighting, to liven up/beautify street, make it brighter and safer.
 - BIA is looking into banner lighting, which would make banners visible at night and brighten the street.
 - make lights animated, i.e. moving/flashing. Some other areas have this (Cambie, etc.)
 - note that lights will require maintenance budget.
- **Property maintenance:**
 - owners painting, cleaning and sweeping. Highlight people who do this well.
 - power washer/cleaners available for multiple locations at one time, could receive group discount.
- **Landscaping:**
 - spruce up tree wells/gardens, planters around trees.
 - more greenery, i.e. planters, etc. “Adopt a planter” program so merchants who are interested in helping take care of planters can have them near their location.
- **Street furniture:**
 - bus shelters that provide shade. Note: bus stop at Broadway and MacDonald (NW corner) close to library needs a facelift!
 - garbage cans by bus stops
 - recycling collection options (similar to receptacles during the Olympics)
 - moveable/shared furniture
 - install a parklet – an area that has seating in place of parking space (similar to other streets including W.4 and Robson). Parklet could include landscaping and artwork.
 - unique theme to identify area:
 - artistic, quirky, colourful street furniture, i.e. heart bike racks
 - painting poles different colours than standard City black (i.e. West End BIA – Davie, Denman, Robson).
 - London is great example of colour coding (i.e. London underground)
 - newspaper boxes:
 - boxes are unsightly and unkempt. Look at more aesthetically appealing receptacles, i.e. Kerrisdale BIA created a frame for the newspaper boxes.
 - BIA met with Vancouver BIAs, City and publishers to address issue. Possible solutions were discussed, including multiple newspaper box units that would have 4 or more papers available in one shared unit. It would look more appealing, however publishers do not want to compromise branding and street presence.
- **Public art:**
 - street/sidewalk artwork:
 - plastic decals that get heated onto sidewalks to feature merchants, neighbourhood and anecdotes, featuring shop local message and heritage stories.
 - patterns on sidewalk
 - paint the streets to create visual appeal - maybe pedestrian crossings? Or poles, curbs, railings, manholes, lines on street, etc.
- **Bike share program:**
 - new City of Vancouver bike share program – West Broadway will receive bike share in future. The City is installing the first roll out, planned for Summer 2016, in downtown and surrounding areas.

PLANNING MEETING NOTES, CONTINUED:

Member Relations & Advocacy

- **Member updates:**
 - continue to provide safety and other updates, tips and resources/information
 - BIA serves as a conduit of information about business related items, and can advocate for business interests, representing over 500 commercial property and business owners on key issues.
 - continue to host events for merchants to connect, share, learn
- **Commercial tax levels:**
 - commercial properties and businesses are being taxed too much - artificially inflated property values are a huge issue, as many property owners have to increase rental rates to cover exorbitant tax bills.
 - BC assessments need to be reassessed.
 - BIAs are part of Fair Tax Coalition, working to lower commercial tax and make it more equitable.
- **Business permits, zoning, etc.**
 - it's very difficult to start and operate a business – the City needs to streamline its processes.
 - BIA is working with Vancouver BIA partnership to advocate for quicker, easier permit policies. City is implementing digital solutions to address this.
- **Staff Discount Program:**
 - continue the program! BIA will update list of places (and invite merchants to participate) and provide staff with list and key tags. Initiative scheduled for September due to other projects.
- **Transit:**
 - keep businesses informed of any updates available, liaise with City, relay business comments/concerns.
- **City street services:**
 - increase garbage collection, especially near bus stops
 - landscaping maintenance – tree weeds, garbage collection, etc.
 - Improve paving near Collingwood

BIA Quick Facts

What is a BIA: The West Broadway Business Improvement Association (BIA) is a specifically funded area formed in 2011 to enhance the business district.

Members & Boundary: All businesses & commercial properties on West Broadway from Collingwood to Larch Street are part of the BIA.

Annual budget \$275,000: A levy is collected by the City from commercial property owners in the BIA. As a newer BIA, we have a smaller budget of the 22 BIAs in Vancouver (i.e. W.4th BIA \$400,000+). Budget is also relative to the number of commercial properties in the BIA boundary & property value. We survey businesses for input, present a draft budget in the annual report, and the budget is voted on at the AGM.

Objectives: enhance the business area through marketing, street beautification, community engagement and advocacy. The BIA pools the resources together so that we can implement initiatives to help the business area. We advocate for common interests (i.e. lowering commercial taxes, improving City permit policies), and strive to maximize resources (i.e. negotiate competitive rates, develop partnerships & sponsorships).

Operations & Participation: operated by a part-time contractor, and volunteer Board members that are local business and property owners. We welcome businesses to participate on the Board, attend meetings or provide input at any time.

You can also provide input through our brief survey at: www.surveymonkey.com/r/VPMXJXH, or participate through our volunteer Board!

For inquiries or comments, please contact Michelle Barile, BIA Manager at 778.384.6377 or email: info@shopwestbway.com.