

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Wednesday, September 27, 2023

A Regular Meeting of the Economic Development Advisory Committee convened on Wednesday, September 27, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Committee Room, City Hall, 3000 Guildford Way, Coquitlam, BC, with the following persons present:

COMMITTEE MEMBERS: Councillor Trish Mandewo, Chair (arrived at 7:09 p.m.)
Councillor Steve Kim, Vice Chair
Mohammad Darwish, Citizen Representative
Emma Friess, Citizen Representative
JJ Lee, Citizen Representative (left at 8:36 p.m.)
Rohith Manhas, Citizen Representative
Elizabeth Mayorga, Citizen Representative
Deryck Persaud, Citizen Representative
John Toor, Citizen Representative
Vanessa Wideski, Citizen Representative

REGRETS: Zorica Andjelic, Citizen Representative
Marion Lochhead, Citizen Representative
Matthew Sebastiani, Citizen Representative
Catherine Williams, Douglas College – Coquitlam Campus
Kathryn Millar, Tri-Cities Chamber of Commerce

STAFF: Eric Kalnins, Acting Manager Economic Development
Edward Tain, Business Growth Manager
Laura Sampliner, Environmental Sustainability Manager
Karin Johnson, Sustainability Programs Specialist
Caley Amundsen, Committee Clerk

CALL TO ORDER

The Vice Chair assumed the role of the Chair and provided an Indigenous territorial acknowledgment.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

1. Minutes of the Economic Development Advisory Committee Meeting held on Wednesday, June 28, 2023

The Minutes of the Economic Development Advisory Committee Meeting held on Wednesday, June 28, 2023 were approved.

NEW BUSINESS

2. Climate Action Plan Engagement

The Environmental Sustainability Manager provided introductory comments regarding the Climate Action Plan Engagement.

The Environmental Sustainability Manager and Sustainability Programs Specialist provided a presentation entitled “Climate Action Plan – Project Update and Discussion” that covered the following topics:

- Background, overview, goals and timeline of the City’s Climate Action Plan (CAP)
- Synergy between the City’s CAP and Environmental Sustainability Plan (ESP)
- Breakdown of Coquitlam’s carbon pollution, greenhouse gas (GHG) emission sources and emission reduction targets
- CAP priority areas and next steps

Councillor Trish Mandewo, Chair, arrived to the meeting at this time (7:09 p.m.).

Discussion ensued relative to the following:

- Barriers to *how we build* CAP priority, including high cost of installing heat pumps in condominiums and lack of rebates, community bylaws and warranties inhibiting heat pump installation at condominiums, traffic congestion and lack of sufficient transportation infrastructure, cars being more convenient than public transportation, issue of public safety on public transportation and reluctance to use other transportation options, strata rules and infrastructure capacity hindering installation of electric vehicle (EV) chargers and the reluctance of single family homes to install alternative heating sources
- Barriers to *how we move* CAP priority, including safety and congestion issues on City roads and highways
- Barriers to *how we consume* CAP priority, including lack of awareness regarding thrifting and reusing items and inaccessible thrift stores
- Barriers to *how we steward* CAP priority, including cutting down trees to build more homes and lack of education regarding wildlife concerns
- CAP GHG emission data sources and what is measured

- The possibility of the City advocating for rebates to install heat pumps in condominiums
- City efforts to address transportation challenges such as traffic bottlenecks on Highway 1
- Maintaining space for cars while providing alternative low-carbon modes of transportation
- Possible legislation to retrofit older buildings with heat pumps and other low-carbon heating systems
- The necessity for more information and supports for stratas to transition to heat pumps
- Hydrogen fuel cell technology as a viable alternative form of energy and whether the City is considering this technology
- The possibility of utilizing accredited busses to drive children to school and reduce traffic congestion
- Whether the City is creating natural pathways for wildlife to pass through urban areas undisturbed
- Reimagine Institute's "Thing Library", a library of things where people can borrow items instead of buying them
- Metro Vancouver's Metro 2050 – Regional Growth Strategy and whether the City's climate goals align with the Strategy
- How the City's CAP GHG emission reduction targets are formulated and whether other jurisdictions are considered
- The City's E-Scooter Pilot Program and concerns regarding e-scooters, including improper storage, users going too fast and collisions with other sidewalk users

Councillor Trish Mandewo, Chair, left the meeting at this time (7:46 p.m.).

3. **Business Improvement Areas Update**

The Acting Manager Economic Development and Business Growth Manager provided a presentation entitled "Business Improvement Areas (BIAs): Support for Local Entrepreneurship" that covered the following topics:

- Overview, background, examples and costs of Business Improvement Areas (BIAs)
- Potential BIAs in City Centre, Maillardville and along United Boulevard and North Road
- The difference between a BIA and a chamber of commerce
- BIA business promotion scheme key components, including beautification projects, heritage conservation projects, graffiti removal, carrying out local studies and supporting businesses
- BIA governance model and applicable regulations such as the *Community Charter*
- Background, overview, accomplishments and future initiatives of the Austin Heights BIA

- Council support for establishment of additional Coquitlam BIAs
- The importance of business collaboration and cost sharing for BIAs

Discussion ensued relative to the following:

- The potential establishment of a business and community hub for local non-profits
- Demand and support for establishing BIAs in Coquitlam
- The possibility of creating an entertainment book regarding North Road
- The possibility of creating a marketing program as a component of BIAs to help promote small businesses
- Challenges for small businesses in BIAs and fees being the main reason for business reluctance to join BIAs
- Who can vote to establish a BIA

4. Economic Development Strategy Update

The Acting Manager Economic Development and Business Growth Manager provided a presentation entitled “Economic Development Update” that covered the following topics:

- Background, overview and key action items of the City’s Economic Development Strategy (EDS)
- EDS Competitive Study (2024) key components and goals
- Continued demand for office space particularly beyond downtown Vancouver
- The City’s business promotional marketing materials including branding, microsite for economic development and sales materials
- Community feedback opportunities for local businesses
- Details, logistics and examples of early stages and findings of the Economic Development Business Visitation Program

JJ Lee left the meeting at this time (8:36 p.m.).

- Local businesses actively recruiting graduates from local universities
- Breakdown of presently in-demand jobs and specializations based on completed business visits
- Assisting local businesses with acquiring talent, research and development and market access

Discussion ensued relative to the following:

- How the EDS research data is stored
- The importance of leveraging EDS research data to create tangible goals
- The importance of working with major employers to recruit local talent
- Whether local businesses are open to hiring immigrants and newcomers
- Local business hiring trends and challenges of retaining staff

- Challenges of hiring immigrant talent, including matching foreign qualifications with local requirements

5. Committee Members' Roundtable / Emerging Issues

The Chair invited the Committee members to share information and emerging issues from the community.

The following information was shared:

- How the City can collaborate with local businesses to promote public safety
- Concern regarding recent public safety events in Coquitlam
- The possibility of community partnerships with the RCMP
- The desire for information or a City pamphlet on local hiking trails in Coquitlam

OTHER BUSINESS

NEXT MEETING DATE – Wednesday, November 29, 2023

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:56 p.m.

MINUTES CERTIFIED CORRECT:

Steve Kim, Vice Chair

Caley Amundsen, Committee Clerk