



Downtown Victoria Business Association
20 Centennial Square
Victoria, BC
V8W 1P7
(250)386-2238
info@downtownvictoria.ca

October 12, 2021

Mayor Lisa Helps & City Council
City of Victoria,
1 Centennial Square,
Victoria, BC
V8W 1P6

Dear Mayor Helps & Council,

Re: Expansion of the Downtown Victoria Business Association Boundaries

Over the last 12 months the DVBA has received enquires from businesses and property owners in Downtown Victoria about the possibility of becoming members of the DVBA. I understand several Fort St. businesses recently wrote such a request to Council.

In addition, property owners along the Pandora Street corridor have also expressed a desire to be part of the DVBA. One has even offered us space in one of their buildings for use by our Clean Team.

We have been in consultation with the group exploring a new Business Improvement Association for Burnside Gorge about the area between Chatham and Bay Street that is part of the proposed new boundaries of the Downtown Neighborhood. We completed a straw poll of businesses in that area, and although the response rate was very low, the preference was to be part of the DVBA. The Gorge-Burnside group support our proposal to include this area in an expanded DVBA.

Our Board of Directors approved a Motion for us to formally request Victoria City Council to initiate the process for the DVBA Boundaries to be expanded.

Therefore, we ask that Council approve, through a formal counter-petition approval process, the expansion of the existing boundaries to be effective for the 2022 tax roll thus (map attached):

- North from our existing border of Chatham and Caledonia to Bay Street (both sides), and Bay Street from Bridge Street to Blanshard;
- East from Blanshard Street to Cook Street, from Pandora Street (both sides) to Cook Street (both sides) to Rockland, and from Blanshard east on Courtenay Street (both sides) to Quadra Street, and from Quadra Street east on Fort Street (both sides) to Cook St;
- In James Bay, one block (to include the Oswego Hotel) on Kingston Street bordered by Montreal Street and Oswego Street.



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As part of this request, our proposed budget would be:

2022 Levy Request \$1,694,000.00

Administration	\$449,540.00 (26% of budget)
Clean & Safe	\$538,240.00
Marketing	\$281,270.00
Events	\$408,000.00
Contingency	\$15,000.00
Surplus	\$1,950.00

For subsequent years, the budget increase request would be 2% (as it currently is).

The DVBA, as part of the counter-petition Process, would distribute information to the affected businesses and property owners and will plan to host 2 information sessions for interested parties to ask any questions of the DVBA.

In 2019 the DVBA went through our 5-year renewal process with the City of Victoria, also using the counter petition format. Of the 775 properties within our boundaries, only 15 objected during the counter petition process, representing 2.1% percent of the overall property owners. This request for a boundary expansion is the result of additional business owners and property owners asking to be included with the DVBA.

Since 2005, our Board and staff have worked hard to support a vibrant and economically sustainable downtown. Our members are made up of large retailers, hotels, food and beverage outlets, and most significantly, small independent retailers and professional offices. The DVBA provides tremendous value to our members through our marketing efforts, our beautification initiatives, and our ability to liaise on their behalf with the City of Victoria. We have also begun publishing an annual DVBA Report on Downtown to provide quantitative data on all things downtown. We believe it has been invaluable in better understanding the strengths, challenges, and opportunities of our downtown.

When we sought renewal in 2019, we spoke of our intent to purchase hardware to create Lights of Wonder, a spectacular holiday event in Centennial Square which we market throughout the region. This event brought over 75,000 people to downtown Victoria that year; although COVID-19 interfered with the process in 2020, the 2021 version, with title sponsor Starlight Investments, will be even more impressive.

We have developed programs and undertaken initiatives – many in close co-operation or partnership with the City of Victoria – which we believe have increased the appeal of downtown. Our Clean Team in 2020 safely removed over 5,000 improperly discarded needles and painted over or cleaned 14,550 graffiti tags. They also augment the work done by City staff in keeping our downtown as clean as possible.



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The requests to expand our borders reflect the hard work we have done over the past fifteen years in building up the downtown and supporting downtown businesses both large and small. We ask that Council initiate the counter-petition process so we can help even more of Victoria's businesses.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jeff Bray", is written over the typed name.

Jeff Bray
Executive Director
Downtown Victoria Business Association