

To: SPECIAL COUNCIL

Meeting Date: 5/31/2022

Subject: Business Improvement Area Memorandum of Understanding

Submitted By: James Goodram, Director Economic Development

Prepared By: Laura Pearce, Senior Economic Development Officer

Report No.: 22-014-CRE

File No.: N/A

Wards Affected: Not Applicable

RECOMMENDATION(S):

THAT Report 22-014 (CRE) Business Improvement Area Memorandum of Understanding be received;

AND THAT the City be authorized to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Downtown Cambridge Business Improvement Area, Preston Town Centre Business Improvement Area and Hespeler Village Business Improvement Area;

AND THAT the Mayor and Clerk be authorized to execute the MOU attached as Appendix "A" this report, subject to the satisfaction of the City Solicitor;

AND THAT the City of Cambridge provides funding in the amount of \$14,000 in 2022 to the BIAs to assist in offsetting the costs of the Holiday Decoration Program to be paid from the Economic Development Reserve Account;

AND THAT the City of Cambridge include the Holiday Decoration program as a line item in Economic Development's operating budget in 2023 and beyond;

AND FURTHER THAT existing policies P-110.060 Urban Development Projects, and POLD&I-260.060 Cost Sharing Projects be repealed.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The purpose of this report is to request Council's approval of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Cambridge's three Business Improvement Areas (BIA's) and the City of Cambridge. The MOU reflects the current relationship between the City of Cambridge and the three area BIAs and formalizes the relationship. The approved MOU will simplify and better define the responsibilities and commitments of all parties moving forward. In addition, staff is seeking approvals to continue to fund the Holiday Decoration Program for the 3 area BIAs in 2022 from the Economic Development

Reserve Account and in perpetuity from 2023 onward as part of the City's annual budget.

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT:

- ☐ Strategic Action; or
- ☒ Core Service

Objective(s): ECONOMIC INCLUSION AND SUPPORT - Establish and extend inclusive programs to support business readiness and workforce development and help local businesses to thrive

Strategic Action: Not Applicable

Program: Not Applicable

Core Service: BIA / Core Area Support

BACKGROUND:

Business Improvement Areas (BIA) allows local businesses and commercial property owners and tenants to join together and, with the support of the municipality, to organize, finance, and carry out physical improvements and promote economic development in their area. The City of Cambridge has three distinguished BIA's including Downtown Cambridge, Preston Town Centre, and Hespeler Village. Working hand in hand with each other over the many years has demonstrated a multitude of areas of responsibility for both the City and each of the BIAs.

Given the number of responsibilities established over the past 30 years, Cambridge Council directed staff (report 21-247(CRE), resolution 21-205) to work with the three BIAs to develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the City and all three (3) BIAs with respect to various infrastructure and service related items that describes, in essence, 'who is responsible for what.' The MOU will provide clarity to such areas as holiday decoration and banner programs, relevant fees and costs, beautification areas of responsibility, winter maintenance in the BIA areas, and so on. It is anticipated that this MOU will be a living, dynamic document that may be amended in years to come.

Holiday Decoration Program

In previous years it has been the City of Cambridge's approach to have the three (3) BIAs cover the costs related to the installation, removal, storage and maintenance of holiday decorations. Given the BIA's have limited budgets and the decorations beautify the Core Areas for everyone to enjoy, in 2021, Cambridge Council directed staff (report 21-247(CRE)) to assist in covering 50% of costs related to the installation and removal

of holiday decorations for each respective BIA for the 2021-2022 holiday season. The total cost in 2021 was \$12,792. As stated above, the report also directed staff to develop a MOU that would provide direction to how this would be handled moving forward.

ANALYSIS:

For many years, the BIA and City have worked collaboratively on specific beautification items. As such, there is no agreement or Memorandum of Understanding with the BIAs that defines the City's and the BIA's respective roles and responsibilities related to the Business Improvement Areas. Staff began working with various City departments and the three (3) BIAs executive groups to develop a comprehensive Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in order formalize the partnership. This is the first document of the sort to be created for Cambridge and will greatly assist both parties in updating policies and ensuring a successful partnership now and in the future.

The MOU addresses the following 14 categories:

1. Communication
2. Holiday Decoration Program
3. Banners
4. Cycling Infrastructure
5. Parking Lot Maintenance
6. Street Light Maintenance
7. Winter Maintenance
8. Waste Management
9. Landscaping and Beautification
10. Main Street Walkways/Alleyways (Boardwalk etc.)
11. Street and Sidewalk Sweeping
12. Graffiti
13. Security
14. Cost Sharing Projects (colloquially known as 50/50 Projects)

Additional details on each topic can be found in the MOU document as attached in Appendix A.

It is proposed that the MOU will be reviewed annually, or as needed and modified by mutual consent of the affected parties to ensure a comprehensive and current list of 'who is responsible for what.'

Holiday Decorations

Given the 2022 budget is already complete, staff request Council's approval to fund the BIAs up to \$14,000 collectively in 2022 to assist in offsetting the costs of installation and removal of holiday decorations to be paid from the Economic Development Reserve

Moving forward, staff recommends that the Holiday Decoration Program be budgeted annually as part of the Economic Development operating budget.

Policies

The existing policies related to Cost Sharing Projects P-110.060 Urban Development Projects (adopted 1979), and POLD&I-260.060 Cost Sharing Projects (adopted 2016) will be unnecessary with the introduction of the Memorandum of Understanding, as it contains the information in these policies in a more comprehensive format. Therefore, staff is recommending that they be repealed.

EXISTING POLICY / BY-LAW(S):

P-110.060 Urban Development Projects, Adopted September 26, 1983

New POLD&I-260.060 Cost Sharing Projects

By-Law 21-016

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

Estimated total cost for the 2022 season is \$14,000 as described in the comments above. Funds will be paid from the Economic Development Reserve Account.

PUBLIC VALUE:

Collaboration:

Collaboration will involve working in partnership with the three area BIAs to achieve common goals in the Business Improvement Areas.

Transparency:

The goal of the MOU and updated policy is to ensure transparency on the respective roles and responsibilities of both the City and the BIAs as it relates to the ongoing beautification and maintenance of the Business Improvement Areas.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE INPUT:

Not Applicable

PUBLIC INPUT:

The Business Improvement Areas Boards of Management of Downtown Cambridge, Preston Towne Centre and Hespeler Village have reviewed the MOU and Policy and provided feedback. Such feedback was incorporated into the documents and all three (3) BIAs are supportive.

INTERNAL / EXTERNAL CONSULTATION:

Consultation took place with the Transportation, Engineering, Operations, Municipal By-law Compliance, Legal Solicitor and Clerk's Divisions.

CONCLUSION:

Staff respectfully recommends that Cambridge Council approve the memorandum of understanding and approval of City funding to go towards the holiday decoration programs for each BIA.

REPORT IMPACTS:

Agreement: **Yes**

By-law: **No**

Budget Amendment: **Yes**

Policy: **Yes**

APPROVALS:

This report has been reviewed by the Chief Financial Officer and City Solicitor.

It has been reviewed and approved by the Director, Deputy City Manager and City Manager.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. 22-014 CRE Appendix A – Draft Memorandum of Understanding