

March 8 2024

To: Mayor & Council,
City of White Rock

Re: Renewal of Bylaw No 2311- White Rock Business Improvement Area

Dear Mayor Knight and Councillors Chesney, Cheung, Klassen, Lawrence, Partridge, and Trevelyan:

As you may be aware, our five-year mandate expires in December 2024. We are writing to you to request the renewal of Bylaw 2311- to establish and designate a Business Improvement Area in White Rock.

Since the previous renewal in December 2019, we have seen strong growth in our programs and developed an extensive track record of success. We are asking you to renew the funding bylaw and allow us to continue to build on our successes.

Executive Summary:

- The White Rock BIA mandate ends on December 31 2024;
- For the organization to continue to exist, the City of White Rock bylaw needs to be renewed by City Council through the reverse petition process;
- Any renewal process other than the reverse petition process almost certainly means the end of the White Rock BIA;
- In spite of inflation impacting both our expenses and revenues, and despite receiving significantly less funding than similar sized BIAs in Metro Vancouver, we have increased our activities;
- Without renewing the funding bylaw, our activities- and their benefits to businesses and our community as a whole- will cease, with no other organization currently able to produce them. Without additional resources, we likely will be unable to sustain the current level of activities- we are currently running deficits to pilot programs, including the White Rock Jazz & Blues Festival and the Uptown Music Festival;



Overview of the White Rock BIA:

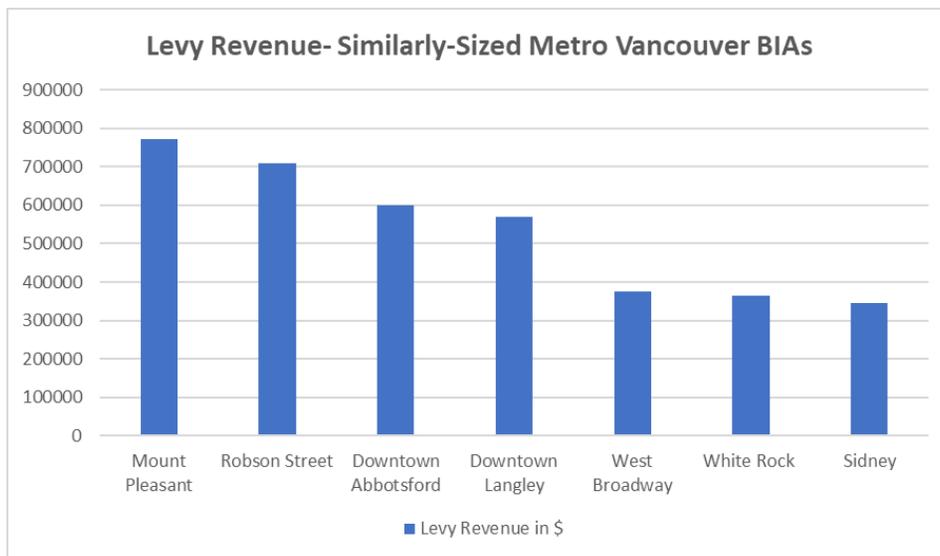
The White Rock BIA's mission is to support White Rock businesses in our four districts- East Beach, West Beach, Uptown, and Five Corners- and encourage business and commerce in our community. We do so through a variety of programs that are directed by the funding bylaw:

- Organizing events in our districts- including the Concerts at the Pier, the White Rock Jazz & Blues Festival, and the White Rock Buskers & Comedy Festival;
- Marketing and promoting businesses through digital, social, and legacy media channels;
- Reporting on issues impacting businesses to the appropriate level of government;
- Beautifying our four districts through graffiti removal, our planter boxes, and the wayfinder maps in our community.

Our organization is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors representing businesses in our districts and our budgets are approved by our membership at our Annual General Meetings.

Comparison of the White Rock BIA to Other Metro Vancouver BIAs:

It is important to place the White Rock BIA’s resources in context with Metro Vancouver BIAs responsible for similarly sized areas:



The White Rock BIA receives significantly less levy revenue than comparably sized BIAs in Metro Vancouver. That said, we have a strong track record of success despite limited resources.

A Sample of White Rock BIA Metrics of Success from 2020-2023:

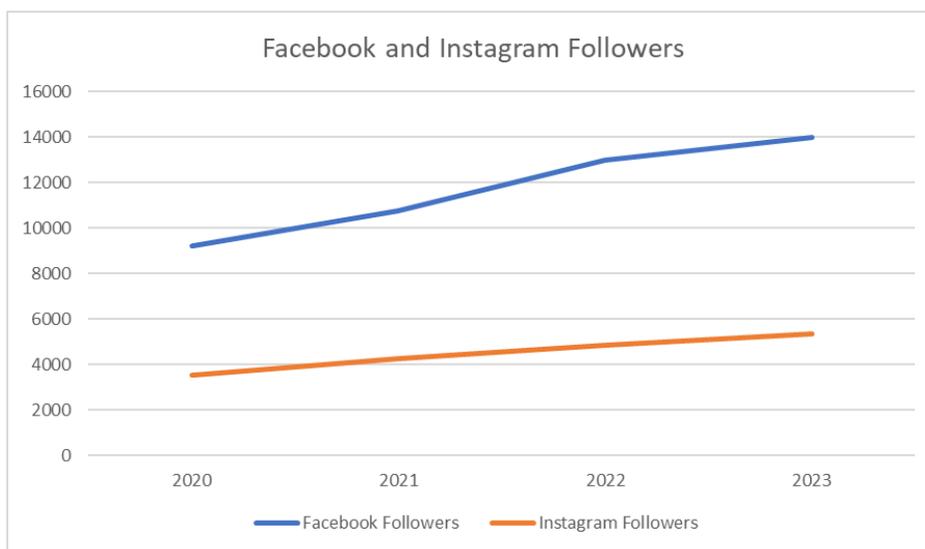


We believe that the most effective way to support our members is to attract customers into our community. We developed our strategic direction through feedback from our member businesses, analysing White Rock’s commercial inventory and population size, and comparing White Rock with other communities.

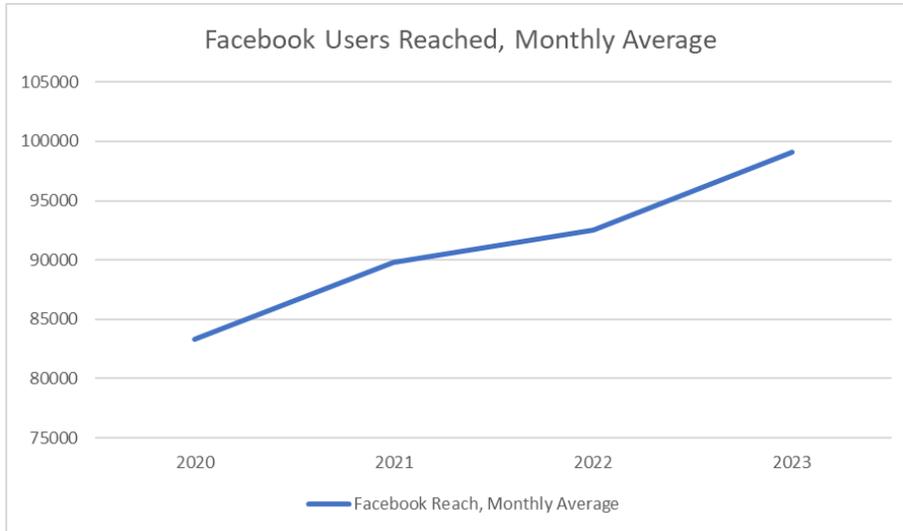


Our strategic direction has led us to focus on marketing and events. We’ve seen strong success in these two programs as we’ve driven growth over the past four years.

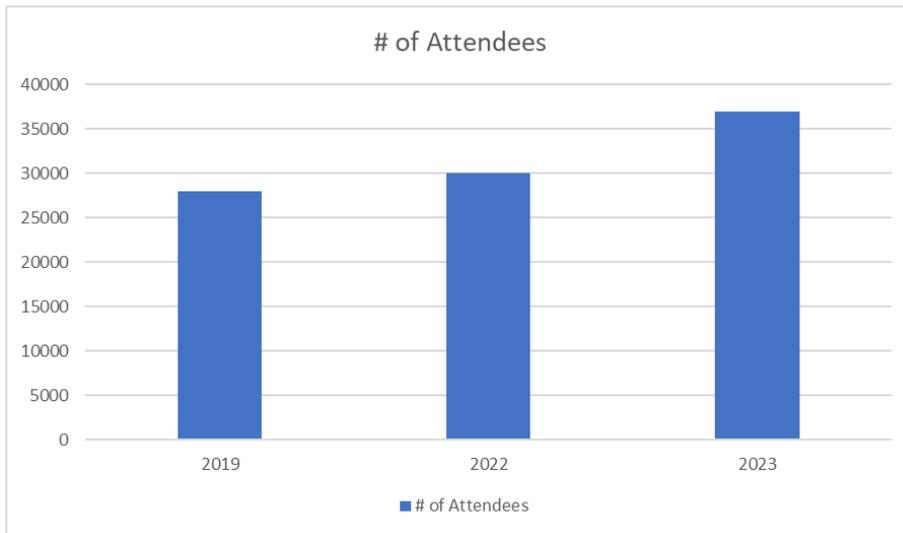
The White Rock BIA social media channels have seen steady growth as we have built them up over the past four years:



The growth in our social media channels has allowed us to reach more and more people to drive them into White Rock and into our members’ businesses:



We have also seen steady growth in our events programs:



Discussions with businesses and surveys of audience members of our events show that our strategic direction is sound- events drive customers to businesses.

For example, the 2023 Audience Survey for the Concerts at the Pier found that 56% of attendees went to a White Rock business before or after the concert. With 29 000 attendees and an average spend of \$50 per attendee that went to a business, the Concerts at the Pier brought in over \$800 000 in economic activity.

Although we are unable to hold the same extensive audience surveys with smaller events as we are with the Concerts at the Pier, business surveys for the White Rock Jazz & Blues Festival and White Rock Buskers & Comedy Festival show similar results- businesses surveyed reported an average sales increase of 35% on event days.



These metrics are just a few examples of the successes we've had in the past four years- a full record of our activities can be found in our annual reports that we have provided to the City of White Rock, our members, and to the public through our website.



Conclusion:

We request the five-year renewal of Bylaw 2311- to establish and designate a Business Improvement Area in White Rock through the reverse petition process, with at least a 2% per annum increase in the levy revenue. Additional revenue above a 2% per annum increase would allow us to sustainably continue our successful pilot projects and launch new initiatives.

We believe that we have provided strong, demonstratable value to our members and our community. With renewal, we look forward to build on these successes to continue to drive visitors into our community and customers into White Rock businesses.

Please reach out to us if you have any questions about our request or about our programs. We look forward to continuing to serve our members and the White Rock community.

Sincerely,



Leah Chandler
Board Chair,
White Rock BIA



Alex Nixon
Executive Director,
White Rock BIA