

Background

The Business Improvement Area (BIA) was established in 1983 and designed for downtown businesses to work together to promote economic development, improve the business environment, and enhance the vibrancy of the downtown community. To fund the activities of the BIA, an annual levy is collected from business owners within the BIA boundaries and serves to support the BIA's initiatives and projects. The City of Red Deer is responsible for the collection of the annual levy and disburses these funds to The Deer Downtown Business Association (DBA) who is responsible to fulfill the operations of the BIA.

The needs and demands for support required for the greater downtown is growing and changing. While the BIA model can serve as a catalyst for economic growth and facilitate community engagement and collaboration, the current geographically bound, levy-funded service model is struggling to meet the demands and expectations of the broader community. New and emerging expectations from downtown business owners, downtown property owners and the community highlight the importance of adapting strategies to remain agile and responsive to our community's needs. Further, the DBA indicated their financial stability was in jeopardy due to declining Business Improvement Area (BIA) levy amounts at their December 2023 budget presentation at the Red Deer City Council meeting. The City is well positioned to play a leadership role in ensuring the vitality and development of downtown, while continuing to work with community partners.

Council and Administration have been working together over the past year to begin to address the Downtown Business Association's (DBA) and the community's concerns in a meaningful way. In October 2024, Administration and Red Deer Downtown Business Association initiated the idea of co-leading a journey of improving how services are provided in the greater downtown area.

Purpose

The purpose of this Terms of Reference is to provide guidelines to the Greater Downtown Governance Committee. Through facilitated dialogue administration will work with downtown stakeholders, businesses and community leaders to explore a potential shift in how the greater downtown is served to better enable all partners in the community to proactively and directly address the unique needs and challenges facing the entire greater downtown. The following outcomes have been identified as required from this work:

- Flexible, coordinated leadership
- Clearly defined roles and responsibilities
- Define sustainable funding opportunities to support Greater Downtown
- Broaden Scope

This work may result in a possible recommendation for change to the Business Improvement Area bylaw and how services are delivered.

Guiding Principles

- Drives toward the Thriving City focus area of the 2023-2026 Strategic Plan
- Takes a collective impact approach by bringing together diverse downtown stakeholders to collaborate on the roadmap for change in the Greater Downtown area.
- Explore a potential shift in how the greater downtown is served
- Enable all partners in the community to proactively and directly address the unique needs and challenges facing the entire greater downtown.
- Communities benefit from having a vibrant, active downtown, and an active downtown minimizes undesirable activities such as crime.

Deliverables

- Minutes and briefing notes of progress at key milestones.
- Dedicated community engagement sessions.
- Learnings and recommendations on how to achieve the four outcomes listed above

Council will use this reporting to inform a decision on governance model and path forward including resourcing by end of Q4 2025.

Committee Procedures

- Committee Bylaw procedures are followed including publishing agendas, minutes and staff support.

Committee Membership

A working committee composed of Greater Downtown stakeholders will be established. This committee will:

- Be guided by best practices
- Validate decisions through targeted questions and engagement with a broader group of stakeholders
- Focus on ensuring initiatives align with strategic objectives and community needs
- The working committee will be guiding the process that results in a recommendation that fulfills the Terms of Reference.

- To ensure alignment with strategic goals and community needs, amendments may be made as required, subject to approval by the working committee and relevant stakeholders.
- Appointment of the membership will go through an expression of interest process with The City Administration Project team fulfilling appointments as required. Preference may be given to those who represent multiple facets of contribution.
- Greater Downtown Governance Committee consists of a minimum of eight and a maximum of eleven members as follows:
 - One Historic Downtown business owner
 - One Capstone business owner
 - One Railyards business owner
 - One Greater Downtown resident
 - One employee of the Greater downtown
 - Three community members at large
 - One member of The Downtown Business Association board
 - One member of The Chamber of Commerce board
 - One member of the Red Deer Tourism Board

The greater downtown area includes Parkvale, Downtown North and South, Capstone, Historic Downtown and Railyards.

The Committee shall make its recommendations using the consensus model.

Chairperson

The Chairperson:

- (1) Will be chosen among the voting Members.
- (2) Will preside over and be responsible for the conduct of Committee meetings.
- (3) May limit any presentation or discussion if it is determined to be repetitious or in any manner inappropriate.
- (4) Will vote on matters submitted to the Committee unless otherwise disqualified; and
- (5) Will act as the sole spokesperson for the Committee unless this role is delegated to another Member.

A Vice-Chair will be chosen to act in the Chair's absence.

Member roles and responsibilities

The Community Collaboration Committee will:

- Promote understanding and represent a range of perspectives

- Provide guidance, critiques and suggestions on the key prioritized outcomes and areas of focus
- Identify potential issues or concerns and how these might be addressed
- Commit to attending meetings
- Foster an environment for innovation in multi-sector collaboration.
- Identify gaps, brainstorm solutions, and influence broader strategies and recommendations.

Administrative Support Coordinator Roles and Responsibilities

Specific responsibilities include:

- Convene, plan, and coordinate meetings.
- Participate in the meeting by sharing relevant information and research.
- Prepare documents, meeting minutes and communicate with members.
- Respond to requests for information as required.

Conflict of Interest

- (1) Where a member is of the opinion that they have a conflict of interest in respect of a matter before the Committee, the Member must absent themselves from consideration and voting on the matter, provided that prior to doing so, the Member:
 - (a) Declares that they have a conflict of interest; and
 - (b) Describes in general terms the nature of the conflict of interest.
- (1) The Administrative Support Coordinator shall cause a record to be made in the minutes of the Member's absence and the reason for it.
- (3) For the purposes of this provision, a member has a conflict of interest in a respect of a matter before the Committee when they are of the opinion that:
 - (a) They have a personal interest in the matter which would conflict with their obligation as a member to fairly consider the issue; or
 - (b) In the opinion of the Member, substantial doubt as to the ethical integrity of the Member would be raised in the minds of a reasonable observer, if that Member were to participate in the consideration of that issue.

Confidentiality

Members must not disclose confidential information (verbal or written) by any means, unless the disclosure is required by law or authorized by the committee. During their membership and following the completion of their membership, members must not use confidential information



Terms of Reference

Greater Downtown Governance Community Collaboration Committee

acquired during their membership to the committee for their personal use or gain, or for the personal benefit or gain of any other individual or organization.

Administrative Support/Resources

Administrative support will be provided by The City's Administrative Project Team. Additional City staff maybe included as a resource as required.

Term and Time Commitment

- Anticipated to be 6 hrs a month.
 - As per Committees Bylaw, Committee to set calendar of meetings once formed
 - Until June 30, 2025, and may be extended by Council if work is not complete.
-