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**TO:** CHAIR AND MEMBERS  
FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

**DATE:** 2019 November 14

**FROM:** DIRECTOR FINANCE

**FILE:** 7400-01

**SUBJECT: BURNABY BOARD OF TRADE**

**PURPOSE:** To provide information on the growth in services provided by the Burnaby Board of Trade and a recommendation to increase annual grant funding.

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

1. **THAT** the Financial Management Committee recommend Council increase the annual grant to the Burnaby Board of Trade from \$100,000 to \$125,000, which is to be paid in quarterly instalments of \$31,250, commencing 2019 December 01 and continuing on 2020 January 01, 2020 April 01 and 2020 July 01.

**REPORT****1.0 INTRODUCTION**

At the Financial Management Committee meeting held on 2019 October 22, the Burnaby Board of Trade (BBOT) appeared before the Committee to provide information on the 20-year economic development partnership with the City, provide an update on their past year's economic development activities, and to highlight initiatives in support of the City's Economic Development, Social and Environmental Sustainability Strategies. At this meeting, the BBOT requested that the City consider increasing the agency's funding from \$100,000 to \$145,000 per annum to provide financial assistance to cover increased operating and service delivery costs including funding to undertake a greater role in the economic development initiatives outlined in their presentation.

Staff were requested to provide information on the services currently provided by the BBOT, proposed activities, and how these activities will support and compliment staff's efforts in economic development. This report provides the information requested and a recommendation to increase the BBOT's annual funding.

**2.0 POLICY SECTION**

The City's partnership with the BBOT supports a number of the goals within the Official Community Plan, Economic Development Strategy, Social Sustainability Strategy, and Environmental Sustainability Strategy. The partnership also supports the City's Corporate Strategic Plan as follows:

## **Goal**

- A Safe Community
  - Crime prevention and reduction –  
Ensure citizens and businesses feel safe in our community
- A Connected Community
  - Social connection –  
Enhance social connections throughout Burnaby
  - Partnership –  
Work collaboratively with businesses, educational institutions, associations, other communities and governments
- A Healthy Community
  - Community involvement –  
Encourage residents and businesses to give back to and invest in the community
- A Dynamic Community
  - Economic opportunity –  
Foster an environment that attracts new and supports existing jobs, businesses and industries

## **3.0 BACKGROUND**

As the economic development agency for the City of Burnaby, the BBOT is a not-for-profit, member-driven, independent business association whose primary purpose is to attract and retain new businesses and create a favourable business environment to stimulate economic growth throughout the municipality. Working closely with the City, the BBOT supports the growth of business both locally and internationally and fosters a sustainable business environment through networking, education, advocacy and development. The City currently provides the BBOT an annual grant of \$100,000 to support a portion of BBOT's operating budget. This annual grant has not been increased since its initial award over twenty years ago.

## **4.0 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES**

Over the past twenty years, the business activities and initiatives undertaken by the BBOT have significantly contributed to the economic success of Burnaby. The number of business licences issued annually by the City grew from 12,423 in 1999, to 13,453 in 2019 (7% increase). Additionally, employment grew from 106,200 jobs in 1996 (Census year) to 148,000 jobs in 2016 (Census year), which equates to a 39% increase.

Economic growth is attributable to many factors, however, a robust and active local Board of Trade such as the BBOT has helped to achieve this economic growth in the City. Through effective marketing and development of programs, the BBOT's membership has more than doubled from approximately 550 members in 2006, to approximately 1,200 members today. Membership in the BBOT is inclusive, consisting of small, medium and

large size employers, and represents members in both non-profit and government sectors.

At its 2019 October 22 presentation, the BBOT summarized key actions it undertakes on behalf of the City. These actions are presented below:

#### **4.1 Business Attraction, Retention and Expansion**

In the past twenty years, there has been an increase in attraction, retention and expansion efforts by the BBOT. As the City's business development partner, the BBOT undertakes a number of initiatives to support the growth of Burnaby's economy. These activities include attracting new companies to Burnaby by engaging with new businesses and promoting the benefits of locating in the City; working with new businesses to navigate city licencing and permitting processes; hosting visiting delegations, trade representatives, consulates and international representatives; and supporting visits abroad to Burnaby's Sister Cities and other locales to stimulate economic investment in the City. The BBOT puts on numerous events attended by the business community of which a few are sponsored by the City of Burnaby, such as the Burnaby Business Excellence Awards Luncheon and Gala and the State of the City Address.

Through positive collaboration with the City, the BBOT has been able to successfully provide a two-way conduit for information to and from the City and the business community thereby enabling the business community to be directly involved in significant planning initiatives at the municipality. This positive relationship has allowed both parties to coordinate efforts on various economic development and business community activities all of which aim to support and grow the business community. The BBOT proposes to continue and expand upon its activities in this regard.

The BBOT indicates that business attraction, retention and expansion remains a core priority and intends to continue its efforts in promoting Burnaby through face-to-face activities as described above, and by continuing to provide up-to-date information, resources, and data through guidebooks and online platforms to assist businesses in getting the information they need to make strategic business decisions.

#### **4.2 Diversified Work Force**

The BBOT supports employers by hosting programs that diversify the workforce. Key activities for the BBOT in this regard are: Creating mentorship activities for youth; supporting and advocating for newcomers in the workplace; and supporting women in the workplace. The BBOT hosts specific programs for youth (Access Program) and Women (Women's Business Success Network), created events tailored to meet the needs of under-represented groups in the workforce, as well as adopted policy and advocacy to support the same. This is demonstrated by their advocacy on child care in the workplace, calling for representation of women on corporate boards, and the inclusion of more women on its own Board of Directors.

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The BBOT indicates it will be continuing these efforts, and in 2020 will be launching a “Bridging the Workforce Gap” initiative to connect employers with employees, and to support business’ HR capacities to create more diversified workforces. In addition to being important economic goals, these BBOT efforts also work towards achieving many of the City’s social objectives.

#### **4.3 Integrating Social, Environmental and Economic Initiatives**

Since the City’s adoption of the Economic, Social and Environmental Sustainability Strategy, the BBOT has activated a number of programs to support the achievement of the goals within the plan. Recent activities of the BBOT have included work to promote environmentally sustainable business practices, promote social enterprises and corporate social responsibility, and promote a diversified workforce. Most recently, the BBOT has supported the Mayor’s Task Force on Community Housing, and represents a business perspective on a number of City Committees of Council. The BBOT indicates that it will continue in this realm of work. Additionally, it’s current participation and support of the City’s policy initiatives positions it to contribute to the key policy development areas in the future.

#### **5.0 RECOMMENDATION**

The BBOT performs an important economic development function for the City, and its activities to support the growth in the City’s economy have increased in the past twenty years. The BBOT aligns many of its programs and initiatives to support the economic, social and environmental goals of the City. The BBOT has indicated it will continue its current initiatives, and expand upon its programming in future years. To provide financial assistance for the activities outlined in this report, it is recommended that the Financial Management Committee recommend Council increase the BBOT’s annual funding by 25% from \$100,000 to \$125,000, which is to be paid in quarterly instalments of \$31,250, commencing 2019 December 01 and continuing on 2020 January 01, 2020 April 01 and 2020 July 01.



Noreen Kassam, CPA, CGA  
DIRECTOR FINANCE

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Copied to: City Manager  
Director Planning and Building