

Winnipeg BIZ Association

The mission of the Winnipeg BIZ Association is to identify the common concerns of its members to which it can provide a collective voice and advocate for change, and to provide a forum for communication, best practices and professional development.

MEMBERS
Academy Road BIZ
Corydon Avenue BIZ
Downtown Winnipeg BIZ
Exchange District BIZ
Provencher Boulevard BIZ
Mosaic Market BIZ
Norwood Grove BIZ
Old St. Vital BIZ
Osborne Village BIZ
Osborne South BIZ
St. James Village BIZ
Selkirk Avenue BIZ
Transcona BIZ
West BroadwayBIZ
West End BIZ

Associate Member
The Forks North Portage Partnership

City of Winnipeg
Planning, Property & Development

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
President: Gerry Glatz, St. James Village BIZ

Vice-President: Glen Kennedy, Mosaic Market BIZ

Secretary/Treasurer: Lisa Holowchuk, Exchange District BIZ

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PREPARED FOR
City of Winnipeg – Executive Policy Committee

December 9, 2008

Based on the Preliminary 2009 Annual Capital Budget and the 5 Year Capital Forecast as published November 27, 2008 it is indicated on page 3-73 that the Image Route Enhancement / Streetscaping Funds of $400,000 have been suspended/removed from the 2009 Estimate.

This enhancement program in consultation and collaboration with the Winnipeg Biz Association and in partnership with the private sector is intended to make specific routes and areas of our city more appealing, safer and user friendly.

After some absence of funding for this program, the Winnipeg Biz Association in conjunction with the various Biz zones in Winnipeg were made aware some time in June of 2007 that this funding program was being re-instated on a permanent year to year basis.

Based on this announcement and a meeting with the Planning, Property and Development department it was agreed amongst the affected Business Improvement Zones (13) that we would take turns in applying for major capital projects for our respective areas so that not every one at the same time would have to fight for these moneys to the detriment of another zone.

Furthermore, it was suggested and agreed, that a majority of the initial 2007 funds would be used for developing plans and for catch-up projects as no funds had been available for some time.

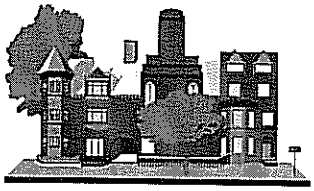
It is our understanding that the reason the $400,000 allocation has been cut from the 2009 Budget Estimate is that there appears to be a $750,000 surplus of unspent funds from the 2007/2008 budget allocation and therefore would be available for 2009.

However, based on our research it would appear that in reality the total $400,000 allocation for 2007 has been committed and all but $52,000 has been committed from the 2008 allocation. So while the City may still have these funds in its bank account the funds have in fact been committed or spent by the various Biz organizations.

The delay in expending these funds might be due in part that it was already June 2007 when it was announced that this program would be re-instated while at the same time the Planning, Property & Development department was in somewhat of a transition and short handed for a number of months.

At the same time our Biz liaison officer was laid up for a period of time due to an accident therefore, it has taken a considerable amount of time to put the procedures and processes into place within the PP&D department for managing and approving a given submission for a project when it is submitted by a BIZ.

Continued.....



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Consequently, it is only in the last little while that any actual moneys have been spent and therefore might have until very recently appeared as unallocated.

Additionally, it takes time to plan, organize, get estimates, submit, re-submit and ultimately get approval before a worthwhile project can be implemented and it is only after the project has been completed that the City has reimbursed the various Biz's for these projects, hence the appearance that these funds have not been expended.

As a matter of fact we would like to explore a way, whereby once a project has been approved by the PP&D department the approved funds could be advanced at the beginning of a project to the specific Biz organization as it is difficult for most Biz organizations to advance monies to their contractors with their limited budgets and then having to wait to be reimbursed by the City.

It is our believe that the City receives a great return on their investment in funding the Image Route /Streetscaping projects and by collaboration with the Winnipeg Business Association its members and the private partnerships the initial investment is greatly multiplied

To properly plan and develop the various Image Routes and Streetscaping enhancements throughout our city it is imperative that we collectively can count on a reasonable stable funding program so our members can takes turns to make plans for their respective areas.

Therefore, we strongly encourage city council to reinstate this funding for 2009 and beyond.

Sincerely,

WINNIPEG BIZ ASSOCIATION

G. Glatz.

Gerry Glatz (St. James Village BIZ)
President