

**August 3, 2009**

## **Update on Business Improvement District**

Dear Downtown Business/Property Owner,

As many of you know, Great American Downtown and a committee of downtown business and property owners have been meeting for the last year to research the possibility of launching a Business Improvement District (BID) for downtown Nashua.

Members of this committee all agree that downtown Nashua is one of the City's greatest assets. The committee shares a common vision for a clean and safe downtown that is vibrant 7 days a week. A downtown brimming with dining, shopping, arts and entertainment destinations, attractive to current and potential residents, business owners and property owners. The committee members believe that with the existing structure of GAD, along with the current economic conditions, our downtown is at risk.

Over the course of the past year, the committee has met with a number of other BID's in the area, conducted a survey to determine the priorities for downtown property and business owners, worked with the State Delegation to introduce legislation to allow BID's to perform capital improvements, and held a number of forums to discuss the concept of a BID in Nashua.

### **Recent developments**

- A Resolution to establish a Central Business Services District (CBSD) advisory board was recently approved by the Board of aldermen. This advisory board is to be composed of 7 members, where no less than 5 shall be downtown business and property owners. The mayor shall appoint the members of this board and the Board of Aldermen will confirm the appointments.
  - The initial purpose of the advisory board will be to establish the proposed boundaries of the district, develop a proposal of services and programs to be provided and develop a proposed budget. We expect the advisory board will work closely with property and business owners to determine what the focus of the BID should be and to measure the overall support for this initiative.
  - If and when a BID is approved, the advisory board would provide oversight of the services. It is their responsibility to monitor the work being provided by the BID and make recommendations to the Board of Aldermen annually.

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## Some facts about a BID

### What is a Business Improvement District?

- BID's are a public-private partnership in which property/business owners in a defined area make a collective contribution to the maintenance, economic development and marketing/promotion of a commercial district. The supplemental services provided do not duplicate or replace any existing city services.
- Are authorized by State law.
- BID's operate much in the same way as a mall. Tenants in the mall pay a common area fee and in return they are provided with group promotions, advertising, maintenance and more.
- BID's have been in existence for more than 25 years and operate successfully around the world. Successful BID's in our region can be found in Manchester, Portland, ME, Burlington, VT and Providence, RI.

### Area included in the district

- The proposed geographic area is from the "Hunt to Hunt" (Hunt Memorial Building to the Hunt Community) on Main St. and about 1-2 blocks East and West.
- The CBSD Advisory Committee will make the final recommendations of which properties would be included in the BID, with final approval resting with the Board of Aldermen.

### Budget

- The BID committee has prepared a concept budget of \$165,000, funded through BID..
- Funds collected by this tax can not be spent anywhere else in the city. That means that the money paid into the BID, stays in the BID.
- Apartment building with less than 6 units are exempt from the tax
- Buildings owned by non-profits are exempt from the tax
- The projected tax rate for the BID is estimated to be \$1.00 to \$1.10 per thousand dollars of assessed value. It would be collected by the city just like any other tax. If your property falls within the district you can not opt-out of the tax. The CBSD Advisory Committee will make a recommendation for budget and tax rate to the Board of Aldermen.

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**Programs and Services**

- GAD will continue to offer all of its current services and programs (Restaurant Week, Taste of Downtown, Farmers Market, Winter Holiday Stroll, shopping promotions, and marketing efforts, e-newsletter, downtown website, dining & shopping guide and the Telegraph downtown page.
- New services and programs proposed to be provided by the BID: increased marketing, increased winter snow removal on the sidewalks, additional sidewalk maintenance, increased events & promotions, and capital improvements. The BID could also be involved with public space regulation, public safety, business recruitment, zoning, façade improvements
- The CBSD Advisory Committee will make the final recommendation on services and programs to be provided by the BID.

No two BID's are the same, every city has different needs that have to be addressed. The GAD BID Committee will be providing the CBSD Advisory Committee all of its research and recommendations. However, your input is critical for the group to have the best information as they continue to explore the implementation of a BID for downtown Nashua.

Sincerely,

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