

## North Edge Business Association – 2014 Executive Directors Report



### North Edge Business Improvement Zone (NEBA) 2014 Annual Results Report to Edmonton City Council

#### Introduction:

NEBA has focused its efforts on replacing and repairing city street assets, physical branding efforts, ensuring the cleaning of streets and bylaw compliance of the area is increasing and building marketing awareness. These activities are part of an ongoing plan to build a strong foundation for our business support and recruitment efforts. Positive comments on the increasing cleanliness of the area and the improvements are far more commonplace. *Area improvements were very evident during our May 2015 Maintenance Walkabout.*

#### How We Work Together:

BRZs thrive when successful partnerships bring like-minded people together to share ideas. To do this most effectively, NEBA has built relationships and is working with City Departments responsible in the following areas;

**Community Services:** *Great Neighbourhoods: Queen Mary Park and CM Revitalization, Forestry, Civic Events Office and Capital City Cleanup and Recreation & Facilities*

**Transportation:** *Parking Management Group, Neighbourhood Renewal, Streets, Roadways, Sanitation, Light Rail Transit, Street Lighting, Drainage, Street Blades Standards, and Transportation Planning: Projects: 107<sup>th</sup> Avenue Long Range Planning Study.*

**Sustainable Development:** *Current Planning, BRZ Unit, Design Unit, Housing, Bylaw Enforcement, Landlord & Tenant Advisory, Inspection Services, and projects such as the 104<sup>th</sup> Avenue Area Re-development Plan*

**Edmonton Tourism:** *Events, Industry & Community Activism*

**Communications:** *LRT, Drainage*

**Corporate Services:** *Finance, Taxation, Assessment, City Clerk*

**Edmonton Police Services**

**Office of City Councillors:** *Councillor Scott McKeen*

The Board of the North Edge Business Association sincerely appreciates **City Council and City Administration's** support for our efforts. We express special thanks to our Councillor Scott McKeen for his tireless effort and the support of his office.

**NEBA's BRZ Operational Results Include:**

In 2014 North Edge Business District expanded resources and capacity of our four NEBA programs:

**1. Cleanliness & Beautification:**

- Expansion of the NEBA Cleaning program included accessing Great Neighbourhoods funding. Year around efforts included commercial district litter pickup, weeding and trimming. Winter efforts also included crosswalk and corner sanding for increased pedestrian access.
- We maintained communication with Bylaw & Enforcement to address problem areas such as illegal dumping and lack of area cleanliness in all areas.
- A street planter design was created for 2015 installation of 15 locally made street planters.
- Trees along 107<sup>th</sup> avenue between 101<sup>st</sup> street and 109<sup>th</sup> street were wrapped with attractive white lighting.
- Continual safety work in the area with Edmonton Police Service and Landlord & Tenant Advisory successfully addressed areas of concern.

**2. Design Work:**

- City Transportation permissions were sought for NEBA's street planter design project, street blade replacement project and for replacement of banner poles, all to be installed in 2015.
- Participation in City 'engagements' processes included; the Wayfinding project, 105<sup>th</sup> Avenue corridor consultations, area design conversation, Transportation Parking Management Study initiation discussions, Housing Projects: Finding Common Ground and Housing Potential.
- We engaged design professionals for discussion on street branding options.
- We initiated contact with Transportation on matters such as Transit, and roadway / pathway connectivity.

**3. Economic Programming:**

- NEBA worked on a preliminary business recruitment plan to attract destination businesses within the district. We assisted with filling commercial space, connected interested parties and built relationships with commercial realtors interested in our area.
- We targeted buildings in need of improvement to the Façade Improvement Program through mail-outs and personal contacts with the assistance of the BRZ Unit. Several successful projects are underway.
- We actively assisted businesses locating in the area through working with Current Planning, and connecting them with local residents and the leagues for friendly input. Four major applications were assisted.
- We gathered commercial and multi-unit development permits from 2004 forward, reviewed changes in the density, population demographics and began to build a list of commercial space available in the area. The completion of this project shall take place in 2015.
- NEBA offered a "Return on Investment of Social Media" seminar, sponsored by Schiff & the City which was well received and attended.

- We continue to foster our relationship with MacEwan University through sharing common objectives and development options.

#### 4. Marketing & Promotions:

- NEBA has continued to maintain a Twitter ([twitter.com/NorthEdgeYEG](https://twitter.com/NorthEdgeYEG)), Facebook and website ([www.thenorthedge.ca](http://www.thenorthedge.ca)) presence linking together area businesses who also use these tools. We added photographic content to the NEBA Pinterest page ([www.pinterest.com/NorthEdgeYeg/](https://www.pinterest.com/NorthEdgeYeg/))
- We established a website page called City Scene to share all city related content to increase opportunities for engagement with city programs.
- We have a business targeted blog, called Notes from the Edge ([www.thenorthedge.ca/notes-fromtheedge](http://www.thenorthedge.ca/notes-fromtheedge)),
- We were pleased with our attendance at the NEBA Annual General Meeting in October at a district venue, The Mercury Room.
- We assisted with the organizing of the Urban Marketplace and Snow Ball.
- We hosted the first ever Street Jam festival in the North Edge in September.

#### 5. Other Activities

- We played an active part in Edmonton's BRZ Council discussing issues of joint interest to BRZ areas.
- Our Executive Director attended the City of Edmonton's Planning Academy.

#### 6. 2014 Audited Statement Notes:

North Edge Business Association delayed several project completions due to re-structuring projects for optimum effect. We also needed additional analysis of the business mix given the unique nature of the industrial transitioning of the area. We complemented our own resources with grants to fund the analysis, which is key to the marketing strategy we are creating.

Our increased cash position is reflective in large part, due to a project for street lighting for the trees on 107<sup>th</sup> Avenue being absorbed into the City's Tree Lighting Program, allowing NEBA to take on the Street Blades project in 2015. Our unexpended grants shall be completed in the 2015 fiscal year. Council shall see increased 2015 expenditures as a result.

2014 Accounts Payable increased significantly due to a delay in replacing our signing authorities after our treasurer decided to leave the board late in the year. These payments cleared after December 31<sup>st</sup> of 2014.