

**TO:** Chair and Members of the HRM Grants Committee

**SUBMITTED BY:** Original signed  
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Greg Keefe, Director of Finance & ICT/CFO

**DATE:** November 25, 2013

**SUBJECT:** **BID Contributions Fund - Proposed Policy Amendments**

### **SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT**

#### **ORIGIN**

November 4, 2013 – Grants Committee motion requesting a staff report regarding the addition of an application deadline to accommodate the timing of the annual BID levy approval and a reporting deadline.

#### **LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY**

HRM Charter (2008) Section - 70 (1) respecting discretionary funding to business improvement districts.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Grants Committee recommend the Audit & Finance Standing Committee recommend Regional Council's adoption of amendments to Section 16 of the BID Contributions Fund Policy respecting application and reporting deadlines as detailed in the Discussion section of this report with implementation to commence in the 2014-15 fiscal year.

## **BACKGROUND**

In 2011, Regional Council approved policy for the distribution of municipal discretionary grants to Business Improvements Districts (BIDs). These grants support beautification, marketing, and related initiatives undertaken by a BID formally recognized pursuant to By-law B-700 Respecting the Regulation of Business Improvement Districts. These grants are to be matched with non-municipal funds by the recipient BID. Subject to Council's approval, the value of grant is calculated using each BID's proportional share of all levies, excluding federal and provincial tax grants. Because the timing of Council's approval of area rates fluctuates, current policy does not include a fixed application deadline. For the past two (2) years a deadline has been set in consultation with the BIDs. For clarity and consistency, an application and reporting deadline are recommended.

## **DISCUSSION**

**Application Deadline:** To accommodate the uncertainty in the timing and/or approval of a proposed BID levy it is recommended that a fixed date not be included in policy. Instead, the proposed application deadline would be 30 business days (excluding weekends and statutory public holidays) after the date of the BID area rate's approval.

- If approved, the BID Contributions Fund Policy, Section 16 would be amended by the addition of: *"The application deadline to the BID Contributions Fund will be 30 business days (excluding weekends and statutory public holidays) after the date of the BID area rate's approval by Regional Council"*.

**Reporting Deadline:** The proposed deadline for submitting a final report is April 30th of the following fiscal year. HRM's fiscal year is April 1 to March 31<sup>st</sup>. For clarity, the policy needs to be amended.

- If approved, the BID Contributions Fund Policy Section 16 would be amended to replace "A project final report shall be submitted on or before April 30<sup>th</sup>, of the fiscal year in which the contribution was made..." to read: *"A project final report will be due on or before April 30<sup>th</sup> of the following fiscal year"*.

Example: The final report for a grant issued in June, 2013, would be due to HRM on or before April 30, 2014.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The proposed amendments to policy have no financial implications.

## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

The BID Contributions Fund is only available to the eight (8) BID associations currently recognized by Regional Council pursuant to By-law B-700.

