



WELCOME TO #ten blocks of heart!

Gloria Venczel, BES, B. Arch., MRAIC, RPP, MCIP,
Thought Leader,
Built City Speaker Series,
Royal Architectural Institute of Canada, MetroVan

RE: "Triple Net Leases-Can Vibrant Neighbourhoods Survive Them?" RAIC-MetroVan Event

January 24, 2020

Dear Gloria Venczel,

Saying that the RAIC MetroVan *Built City Speaker Series* helped in our success would be an understatement! Thank you for inviting me to be a speaker at the above event on January 31, 2019!

You and the pre-presentation coffee meetings with the other expert speakers gave me a more in depth understanding of the small business taxation issues and planted the seed for further research. The sold out event "**Triple Net Leases-Can Vibrant Neighbourhoods Survive Them?**" broke down the tax methodology into bite-sized pieces, helped raise awareness of the tax issues facing small businesses and fostered engagement between businesses, residents and civic officials. It was the catalyst for change, the impetus to develop my presentation "**The Shift from Surviving to Thriving**" presentation for the January 31st event, which I later presented to the City of Vancouver's Council on April 29th, 2019. The presentation, along with presentations from other BIA colleagues and stakeholders, resulted in a 2% shift of taxes away from small businesses with a 0.5% increase to residential taxes.

Without your invitation as speaker for the RAIC MetroVan's *Built City Speaker Series* on this timely topic, I wouldn't have developed my presentation. Things can be very active and a lot to juggle as a non-profit with a limited budget and a staff of one, but commercial taxes are the most important issues that local businesses and commercial property owners, many of whom are also small business owners, are experiencing. There have been numerous small business owners and property owners citywide expressing concern around their future viability and the impact on their communities.

You helped provide an invaluable opportunity to focus on this very important issue, raise awareness about it, and facilitate constructive dialogue that lead to positive changes. Following the event and my City of Vancouver Council presentation, I became part of the Vancouver BIA's Commercial Tax Advocacy Committee. The tax shift was a team effort, building on the work of the Vancouver Fair Tax Coalition, involving BIAs and business stakeholders, who have been very active for many years on this file. Our part in this wouldn't have happened without you Gloria and I am very grateful.

Sincerely,

Michelle Barile,
Executive Director,
West Broadway BIA

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BIO:

Michelle Barile is the Executive Director of the West Broadway BIA, since its formation in 2011, and a consultant in BIA formation and marketing. Her role includes graphic design, promotions, events, street enhancements, strategic planning and advocacy to support small businesses. She has international marketing experience and 12 years of BIA experience, implementing award-winning initiatives that engage the community and enhance business areas. Her small business adventures began by making aluminum railings at her Dad's factory (coincidentally called Broadway Manufacturing) and attempting to waitress at her Mom's restaurant (breaking dishes since 1995. OPA!).

