



**Coordinated Street Furniture Program
TABIA Consultation
March 21, 2006
National Trade Centre
6:30-pm- 8:00pm**

The meeting was opened at 6:30pm. **John Kiru** - TABIA Executive Director, welcomed BIA members and introduced **Andy Koropeski** , Director of Toronto Transportation Services.

Andy Koropeski thanked the BIA representatives for attending the meeting. He said the City has an exciting opportunity to improve the look and feel of its streetscapes by implementing a Coordinated Street Furniture Program. He said the City would like to hear from Business Improvement Areas regarding their thoughts and recommendations for the program. **Andy Koropeski** introduced the following project staff:

- **Elyse Parker**, Clean and Beautiful Secretariat, City of Toronto
- **Kyp Perikleous**, Transportation, City of Toronto
- **Angie Antoniou**, Transportation, City of Toronto
- **Robert Millward**, Project Director, RE Millward & Associates
- **Greg Rich**, Urban Design, City of Toronto
- **David Nagler**, Public Consultation, City of Toronto
- **Rob Richardson** Tourism, City of Toronto

Bob Millward gave a presentation on the coordinated street furniture program. The street furniture presentation can be viewed at the project website: www.toronto.ca/streetfurniture He asked BIA representatives to fill out a questionnaire, to inform staff of what is important to them as part of this program. He indicated a dedicated email address has been set up for the project at streetfurniture@toronto.ca and they may call David Nagler with any questions at 338-2830.

Question and Answer Period

The following is a summary of a question and answer period at the meeting. Questions were asked by BIA members and answered by Andy Koropeski – Director of Transportation Services.

Question	Answer
Are you advising that BIAS should not do any capital improvements until the street furniture RFP is done?	I would suggest that BIAs do not invest in furniture until the RFP is out. Some elements will fall outside the RFP, such as decorative paving and flowers, those items can go ahead before the RFP. It's a complicated issue. Our intent is not to remove items from the streets. It will take

	<p>years to roll out this project.</p>
<p>Will there be info about costs of street furniture items so BIAs can plan their budgets in 2007?</p>	<p>Yes. There will be a report to Works Committee May 3rd with financial details of shelters and benches. Benches are hit and miss, as currently there is no formal city program, which explains why BIAs are working on them.</p> <p>A consistent design theme with customizable items and flexibility is what this program aims for. The Liberty Village bench program is a great example to show how the city can customize items.</p> <p>One possible approach might be that a base level of furniture is provided as part of this program, and the BIA could have the ability to embellish the item – this is a decision that is in planning, and we would appreciate your advice.</p>
<p>Regarding operation and maintenance: The city doesn't maintain furniture very well, items often fall apart. Who would be responsible for maintenance of street furniture under this program?</p>	<p>Current contracts require contractors to fabricate, design, maintain, and repair furniture.</p> <p>Some items are currently provided and maintained by companies such as the transit shelters. Maintenance requirements are specified in the agreement and I think it is fair to say the shelters are maintained well.</p> <p>On the other hand, we have heard clearly in our consultations from people who feel that no advertising should be allowed on street furniture. We will put forward the option to City Council to apply City money to cover fabrication and maintenance.</p>
<p>Can you give us a time parameter to determine what products will be in scope and out of scope. What is the city deadline to define items in the RFP?</p>	<p>We will be advising council on the elements to be included in the RFP in the May 3rd report to Works Committee.</p> <p>If all goes according to plan, we will get final direction from council as to what items are in and out. In the summer (July or August) the RFP will likely go out.</p>
<p>Can you give an idea of how many companies</p>	<p>It would be an open public proposal call. Any</p>

<p>the RFP is going out to?</p>	<p>company who is interested may bid on it.</p>
<p>In my BIA (Roncesvalles) the sidewalks are narrow and there's not much space. How will the program accomodate different needs of BIAs?</p>	<p>We will have to work some flexibility into the contract. The design guidelines will talk about keeping pedestrian clearways and aligning the furniture elements. With furniture design coordinated, placement will be improved.</p>
<p>Eucan megabins are not appropriate in Roncesvalles but may work well where there's more room. I'm concerned that uniformity may hurt my BIA.</p>	<p>Currently there is a situation where two competing companies are driving advertising. As part of this program advertising will not be competitive on street furniture, and the design and functional needs will be primary. This will assist in reducing clutter in confined areas.</p> <p>We are looking at a diverse range in size of furniture elements to fit different areas.</p>
<p>How soon can newsboxes be gone?</p>	<p>Council recently approved a by-law on newspaper boxes that places guidelines on their placement to clean up their appearance. There is also a pilot project to install multi-publication newsracks.</p>
<p>How can the city decide how much advertising goes where, will there be guarantees that BIAs are protected from advertising? We need a balance of advertising.</p>	<p>We're emphasizing that design and functionality should be placed above advertising as part of this project.</p> <p>Fees have been increased on newsboxes, and staff are using the revenue to put a team together to enforce placement of newsboxes that are in the new by-law. That process will start in June. We are consulting with the publication box industry to improve the situation. I would like to recognize the Bloor-Yorkville and Downtown Yonge BIAs who have been instrumental in finding a solution to the problem.</p> <p>We are close to a multi-publication box pilot project. We are waiting for an enhanced design.</p> <p>We're attempting to define placement of items. The publication box by-law is good start to putting guidelines and restrictions on items to ensure a clearway near corners. Parameters are transferable to other items on the street.</p>

<p>Slide 14 – shows items that may be included, and not included in the RFP. What does “design links” mean?</p>	<p>Many of these items that have “design links” do not belong to the city. We want to ensure there are design relationships between --for example-- flowerpots and banners with the other items that will be included in an RFP. We are trying to avoid one-off projects that don’t fit in well with items included in an RFP.</p>
<p>Would you put a provision in the RFP to require BIAs to design furniture with design links as shown in the slide?</p>	<p>No. We do not plan to require BIAs to meet such guidelines.</p>
<p>I would like to talk about an opt-out for BIAs. I’m in Cabbagetown and I’m against Eucan bins. Benches are also not good in our area, because people sleep on them.</p> <p>Can we opt out of certain items, if we don’t like the designs?</p>	<p>Not every item would be mandatory in each area. Benches is one item that I would not anticipate being required.</p> <p>However, certain items like shelters and litter bins are needed to provide city services and many people demand them.</p> <p>There could be designs of benches to help prevent people sleeping on them.</p>
<p>Will the city come up with better designs of litter bins to replace Eucan bins?</p>	<p>We want to meet the needs of different areas and have a range of sizes of items that meet your needs. We are working with Solid Waste Management on design needs including functionality for litter/recycling bins.</p>
<p>We just put new benches in last year. Are they coming out?</p>	<p>No. We have no intention to remove any item like your new benches. It’s going to take many years to roll out this plan.</p> <p>You will not see transit shelters disappear. Part of our challenge is coming up with a phase-in program. The EUCAN contract goes until 2009, which complicates this project as the shelter contract is up in 2007.</p>
<p>What time period are you looking at for implementation of new items?</p>	<p>I can give you a general answer at this time. Viacom had to install about 800 shelters in 2 years. We can set the pace for installation of new items based on this experience. According to our project schedule, any contract would be awarded in 2007 by the new Council.</p>
<p>Is there anything to stop a new council from changing the plan?</p>	<p>Any contracts would be legally binding for the City and a new council would be subject to them.</p>

<p>What kind of budget is there to complete this?</p>	<p>If all goes according to plan, there will not be city money spent on this project.</p>
<p>Vendor Kiosks. Will council look at vendors other than hot dogs? e.g. a flower kiosk? Will the City allow a news vending kiosk?</p>	<p>The news vending kiosks are an interesting possibility. It would be complicated to roll out vending kiosks. We have not looked directly at the issue at this time.</p>
<p>Would you consider including video security cameras as part of this process?</p> <p>John Kiru said:</p> <p>We have been invited to meet with the Toronto Police Service and Honeywell to discuss this</p>	<p>There are not plans at this time.</p>
<p>On St. Clair there will be a dedicated streetcar right of way. Has there been coordination between TTC and the City?</p>	<p>Yes. We are meeting with the TTC reps. There are other areas across the city such as Union station and the Waterfront that we are also coordinating.</p>
<p>Is the City open to BIA logos on some elements?</p>	<p>Yes. That is something we can consider as part of the program. We are also examining ways of incorporating public art.</p>
<p>If a BIA has a design plan in place that doesn't match the City plan, what can they do?</p>	<p>If it's something radically different, we'd have to discuss it with the individual BIA. But the decorative paving would fit in just fine with this program.</p> <p>We have all the specific BIA plans from Economic Development that we are reviewing.</p>
<p>Have you considered combining shelters with garbage bins.</p>	<p>Yes. We are looking closely at modularity. That is one of the best ways to reduce clutter.</p>
<p>Does the TTC control shelters?</p>	<p>No, the city does.</p>
<p>On the subject of Adaptability: Is the goal of this process to come up with some different design families that fit into different neighbourhoods?</p>	<p>We haven't arrived at a conclusion yet, but we are certainly examining this issue. This suggestion is certainly one of the possibilities we are considering.</p>
<p>Different materials (iron, plexi-glass) suit different neighbourhoods. My street needs intimacy because it's older, but a plexi-glass shelter would be fine for the waterfront. Can modularity really suit different neighbourhoods, do you not need different designs?</p>	<p>I don't have an answer to that right now. That's a very good point.</p>

<p>The Winning submission would have to be template driven to allow for variation, meet your criteria and allow for customization. I'm expecting something plain, because you can't have too much. A base is needed.</p>	<p>That's a good point. We've heard similar comments. Some people have talked about the pros and cons of new designs. We don't want something that goes out of style within a few years. We've also heard that people like the new transit shelter design because of its transparency.</p>
<p>You mentioned pedestrian railings.</p> <p>Are you referring to what sidewalk cafes people could put up?</p>	<p>No. Not at this point. We are not looking at café railings. We're looking at splash guards such as at Bremner Boulevard and Avenue Road. But I would expect at some future time these and other elements in the road allowance would be looked at in terms of design and placement.</p>
<p>Consider design that takes bad drivers into account who damage street furniture.</p>	<p>Yes. We are definitely doing that. The furniture will have to be durable.</p>
<p>This is supposed to be a zero cost to the city, but there is going to be a revenue side that will be generated. If history dictates, BIA areas tend to generate greater rates for advertising. We've invested in infrastructure to bring those pedestrians to our areas.</p> <p>Therefore, is there any consideration that BIAs could collect some of the ad revenue to enhance the street?</p> <p>Can something be put in the RFP to compensate the BIAs?</p>	<p>Council would have to make a decision on that. It's not something that we are addressing, but it should be noted. This project should result in some cost avoidance for BIAs.</p>
<p>The BIA has potential to earn income from an item. As part of this project, can a BIA earn revenue from any item?</p>	<p>That's a difficult issue. Our goal is not to increase the amount of ads on the street. We've heard very clearly from many people who don't support any advertising.</p> <p>The issue of sharing in revenue goes beyond our scope. Council would have to decide.</p>
<p>Please explain cost avoidance.</p>	<p>If the City develops a bench program as part of this process, BIAs would no longer have to invest in benches. The contractor would take up the maintenance costs, so the BIA could take their 50/50 costs that are currently spent on maintenance and use them on other needs.</p>

<p>If BIAs currently maintain a bench, could an RFP help maintenance for existing benches?</p>	<p>The BIA would have to continue to maintain their benches.</p>
<p>Can you ask bidders to discount a rate of maintenance for BIA benches in the RFP?</p>	<p>That's a possibility.</p> <p>However many types we come up with, the contractor will have responsibility for the maintenance.</p>
<p>Does coordinated become compulsory, eg. If you're providing benches and currently it's a 50/50 split between the BIA and City, would BIAs have to agree to new items or would they have an option to embellish a new design?</p>	<p>Again, not every item would be mandatory. Some items such as transit shelters or litter bins would be provided under the street furniture program, but other items could be discussed between the BIA and the City.</p>
<p>Are you suggesting that benches will have advertising? What incentive is there for advertising companies to provide items without advertising? Ad companies won't be in a hurry to provide well-designed benches that don't generate revenue.</p>	<p>Benches would be put on streets based on a schedule the City puts in a contract. Our goal is that each element will focus on design and functional requirements first and not as an advertising vehicle. I don't think we can say that you wouldn't see ads on a particular item, but there would not be multiple competing billboards at a single location. Although we've heard from people who don't want any advertising, we are also hearing from small businesses who use the benches and litter bins as these are generally not in competition with national brands.</p> <p>For example, under the current transit shelter contract not even half of shelters have advertising. Those items must be maintained at the same level as those that have advertising.</p>
<p>So, you will specify a ratio of items with and without advertising?</p>	<p>We will give numbers and a timetable for the supplier to provide items and set parameters for advertising.</p>
<p>In reference to items shown from Chicago: these items wouldn't fit in suburbia. Toronto has distinctive neighbourhoods. There should be an emphasis on providing a wide range of design options in the RFP.</p>	<p>We are trying to work flexibility into the contract so that BIAs can have individuality.</p> <p>We haven't yet heard complaints about new transit shelters even though the design is the same throughout the city – they do have</p>

Another BIA rep: That comment (above) gets unanimous approval. We all want to be different.	different sizes.
Maintenance – some new shelters are gouged Are those who put them in responsible for fixing them and replacing them?	Yes they are.
Ads – will there be potential for BIA specific ads?	One provision in the contract is to dedicate some space for public service ads. We’ve heard from small businesses interested in bench ads. This is something we will consider.
Is there possibility of an “adopt a bench” program, or adopt a flower bed?	Yes. That could be accomplished outside the scope of this project.
I understand the premise of having a template. But we’re talking about bells and whistles for BIAs. How open is the City to allowing bells and whistles to enhance furniture in BIAs?	It is a challenge for us to convey that into the RFP. We’re examining the issue of how we can accommodate add-ons in BIAs. We are open to the challenge and your suggestions.

John Kiru thanked City staff for making the presentation. He asked BIA members to pick up a questionnaire on the program and send it to the city in the pre-postage paid envelope.