



**STAFF REPORT
ACTION REQUIRED**

**Intention to Designate the Dundas-Bathurst
Business Improvement Area (BIA)**

Date:	May 16, 2007
To:	Economic Development Committee
From:	Don Eastwood, General Manager Economic Development, Culture and Tourism
Wards:	19
Reference Number:	P:\2007\Cluster A\EDCT\ECON DEV\ed0706-018

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to recommend that the City Clerk conduct a poll to determine if there is sufficient support to designate the Dundas-Bathurst area as a Business Improvement Area (BIA).

Upon the completion of the poll, the General Manager of Economic Development, Culture and Tourism report on the results to Council. Subject to a positive poll result, staff shall prepare the necessary by-laws and bills to give effect thereto.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The General Manager of Economic Development, Culture and Tourism recommends that:

- (1) the area described by Attachment No. 1 (Maps 1 & 2), be designated as a Business Improvement Area (BIA), under Chapter 19 of the Toronto Municipal Code;
- (2) the City Clerk be authorized and directed to send out a notice of Council’s intention to pass a by-law designating the area, as defined in Attachment No. 1 (Maps 1 & 2), as a Business Improvement Area (BIA), in accordance with Chapter 19 of the Toronto Municipal Code;
- (3) the Executive Director of Technical Services be requested to prepare designation by-law maps of the area, as described by Attachment No. 1 (Maps 1 & 2), and submit them to the City Solicitor; and

(4) subject to the General Manager of Economic Development, Culture and Tourism reporting favourably on the results of the poll referred to in Recommendation No. (2), and upon receipt of the maps referred to in Recommendation No. (3), the City Solicitor be directed to prepare a by-law designating the area, as described by Attachment No. 1 (Maps 1 & 2), as a Business Improvement Area (BIA) in accordance with Chapter 19 of the Toronto Municipal Code.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The proposed Dundas-Bathurst Business Improvement Area (BIA) is one of four potential new BIAs to be established in 2007.

Capital budgets may be impacted in future years should streetscape or other capital improvements be undertaken by the Dundas-Bathurst BIA. These capital improvements are cost-shared equally between the BIA and the City.

The Deputy City Manager and Chief Financial Officer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

The BIA Office has been working with members of the Dundas-Bathurst BIA Steering Committee, consisting of retailers and property owners, in their efforts to establish a BIA in their area. A Steering Committee was formed to undertake the process for establishing a BIA.

The committee has followed the procedure for starting a BIA as set out in the City of Toronto Municipal Code, undertaking various initiatives to inform local businesses of what BIAs are and how they operate, and advising that a BIA has been proposed for their area. This includes an informal public meeting held on January 31, 2007.

The steering committee also held a formal public consultation meeting on March 28, 2007, for property owners and business tenants within the proposed BIA. For this meeting, notices were distributed to area businesses and mailed to commercial and industrial property owners in the area by the City's BIA Office. Approximately thirty-seven owners and tenants were in attendance.

The public consultation meeting included a presentation and discussions of what BIAs do, how they operate and how they are self-funded through a special BIA levy on member property tax bills. Ample opportunity was also provided for questions and clarification. Issues discussed included ways to beautify the area through the City's BIA Capital-Cost Share Program, area identification and marketing, public safety, and the role BIAs play as advocates for the interests of the local business community. BIA Office staff participated in the public meeting, providing details of the support program offered by the City to BIAs and the hands-on assistance provided by City staff to the BIA Boards of Management. Overall, response to the proposed BIA at the public meeting was positive, with a significant majority of those in attendance agreeing to proceed to the polling stage.

The BIA Steering Committee has since submitted a letter to the Economic Development Division confirming that they have successfully undertaken the public consultation process required by the City and formally requesting that City Council adopt a by-law to establish the BIA.

COMMENTS

The proposed Dundas-Bathurst BIA, located on Dundas Street West, between Bathurst Street and Grace Street, is primarily a traditional main street strip with commercial uses at grade and residential use on the second storey of most properties. Other uses include a lumber yard, a car dealership, low-rise residential apartments and two churches. While there are indications of improvements in the form of new business openings, the area does not have a clear identity such as the successful Little Italy, West Queen West and Chinatown BIAs, located immediately to the north, south and east respectively.

A Dundas-Bathurst BIA would provide the funding mechanism for local businesses and property owners to undertake a comprehensive strategy to promote the Bathurst Street to Grace Street portion of Dundas Street West, improve the cleanliness of the area, and enhance the pedestrian environment. Major TTC Right-of-Way reconstruction and potential Transportation Services improvements scheduled for Dundas Street West in 2007, has provided the steering committee with a sense of optimism that could stimulate revitalization of the area.

Business and property owners who attended the public meeting supported the establishment of a BIA. The Dundas-Bathurst area has the characteristics of successful BIAs, including a wide road allowance to accommodate streetscaping amenities, TTC streetcar and vehicular access and exposure, a mix of retail uses and businesses that have the potential to increase local residential support as well as to attract clients city-wide. Members of the Steering Committee have expressed a willingness to stand for nomination to the BIA Board of Management, once established.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

Donald G. Eastwood, General Manager
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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment No. 1 – Maps (1 & 2) of Proposed Dundas-Bathurst BIA

Intention to Designate the Dundas-Bathurst BIA