

Intention to designate the area along Mount Pleasant Road between the lands just north of Eglinton Avenue East and the lands just north of Davisville Avenue as the Mount Pleasant Business Improvement Area (BIA)

Date:	May 27, 2008
To:	Economic Development Committee
From:	Director, Small Business & Local Partnerships
Wards:	22
Reference Number:	P:/2008/Cluster A/EDCT/ECON DEV/ed0806-025 (AFS #7468)

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 properties fronting on Mount Pleasant Road from the lands just north of Eglinton Avenue East and the lands just north of Davisville Avenue as the Mount Pleasant Business Improvement Area (BIA).

Upon completion of the poll, the Director of Small Business & Local Partnerships shall report on the results to the Economic Development Committee. Subject to a positive poll result, staff shall prepare the necessary by-laws and bills to give effect thereto.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Director of Small Business & Local Partnerships recommends that:

1. The area described by Attachment No. 1, be designated as the Mount Pleasant Business Improvement Area (BIA), under Chapter 19 of the Toronto Municipal Code;

2. The City Clerk be authorized to send out a notice of Council's intention to pass a by-law designating the area as defined in Attachment No. 1 as a Business Improvement Area (BIA); and
3. The Executive Director of Technical Services be requested to prepare designation by-law maps of the area as described by Attachment No. 1, and submit them to the City Solicitor.

Financial Impact

Capital budgets may be impacted in future years should streetscape and other capital improvements be undertaken by the new BIA. Capital improvements are shared 50/50 between the City and the BIA.

Should the BIA be formed, funding for future capital projects must be approved by Council, and the City's 50% share of the capital costs will be funded in the Economic Development, Culture and Tourism capital budget.

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

BACKGROUND

In September 2007, a group of business people along Mount Pleasant Road between Roehampton Avenue and Davisville Avenue met to determine if there was interest to create a BIA. An organizing meeting was held on October 1, 2007 for all interested stakeholders and a Steering Committee was formed. Representatives from the Steering Committee undertook block by block canvassing of the businesses in the proposed BIA during the early winter months sharing information on the BIA concept and the City's partnering relationship. A newsletter was also created. An information meeting was held on February 25, 2008 and hosted by the Steering Committee.

In March 2008, the Steering Committee distributed invitations to all business tenants in the area and invitations to property owners were mailed by the City's BIA Office for a formal public meeting held on March 31, 2008.

The formal public meeting was attended by twenty business and property owners. The public meeting included a discussion on the proposed BIA boundaries, a presentation by City staff on the functions of a BIA, how the BIA levy is determined and supporting programs that the City offers to BIAs. Mr. Alex Ling and Mr. John Kiru from TABIA made brief presentations on their BIA experiences in the City.

The business owners that attended the meeting were very enthusiastic and indicated a strong interest in forming a BIA. In addition, the Steering Committee received many positive telephone calls from local commercial owners and tenants who could not attend the meetings. The Steering Committee has followed the City's procedures for establishing a BIA.

The Steering Committee has concluded that the BIA structure is the most effective means to implement a revitalization of the Mount Pleasant Road area generally between Eglinton Avenue East and Davisville Avenue and to manage and expand their existing commercial business base by rebranding the area and undertaking new marketing initiatives.

The Steering Committee has decided, based on feedback from their stakeholders and from the participation at the information sessions, to ask the City to conduct a poll on the formation of a BIA on the lands as shown on Attachment No. 1 to this report.

The Steering Committee has submitted a letter dated May 14, 2008, to the BIA Office confirming that they have undertaken the public consultation required by the City and formally requesting that City Council undertake a poll for the formation of a BIA.

COMMENTS

The proposed BIA is a predominantly commercial strip along Mount Pleasant Road. Although there are some institutional, residential second storey apartments and condominium apartments with street level commercial units within the proposed boundaries, the area is essentially a mature commercial strip and appropriate for a BIA.

Notwithstanding some recent investment in the area, there are pockets of building facades that have deteriorated and some vacant stores along this section of Mount Pleasant Road. Identity branding, additional streetscaping improvements and marketing are needed to improve the commercial vitality and viability of the area. Establishing a BIA would provide the existing businesses and commercial property owners with a funding mechanism and the link to City support programs that will help to address these issues.

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SIGNATURE

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment No. 1 – Map of Proposed Mount Pleasant BIA