



**STAFF REPORT
ACTION REQUIRED**

Intention to Designate the Queen Street West Business Improvement Area (BIA)

Date:	June 23, 2008
To:	Economic Development Committee
From:	Director, Small Business & Local Partnerships
Wards:	20
Reference Number:	P:/2008/Cluster A/EDCT/ECON DEV/ed0807-035 (AFS #7729)

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 Queen Street West between Simcoe Street and Bathurst Street as the Queen Street West Business Improvement Area (BIA).

Upon the completion of the poll, the General Manager of Economic Development, Culture and Tourism will 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 (Maps 1 to 3), be designated as the Queen Street West Business Improvement Area (BIA), under Chapter 19 of the City of 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 described by Attachment No. 1 (Maps 1 to 3) as a Business Improvement Area (BIA), in accordance with Chapter 19 of the City of 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 to 3), and submit them to the City Solicitor.

Financial Impact

Capital budgets may be impacted in future years should streetscape or other capital improvements be undertaken by the new BIA. 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

Recent events have led many retailers along Queen Street West to discuss the possibility of forming a Business Improvement Area. On February 20, 2008 a fire destroyed much of the commercial frontage between Portland and Bathurst Streets, displacing a many businesses and residents. In addition, last fall, the area was designated as a Heritage Conservation District.

A BIA would provide a mechanism for greater support and cooperation between local businesses and City Hall, ensure that the area recovers its previous vitality, and could capitalize upon the opportunity presented by the Heritage Conservation District designation.

On May 6, 2008 an informal public meeting was hosted by Councillor Adam Vaughan to discuss possible formation of a BIA on Queen Street West, from Simcoe Street to Bathurst Street. The meeting was well attended and a steering committee was formed to communicate with local businesses, finalize the proposed boundaries, and determine if there was sufficient interest to proceed with a BIA.

The Queen Street West Steering Committee organized, promoted and hosted two formal public consultation meetings on June 17, 2008 and June 23, 2008. Steering Committee members canvassed all local businesses, providing information on the BIA program, and distributed invitations to the public meeting. Invitations were mailed to all commercial and industrial property owners in the area by the City's BIA Office. Approximately 35 owners and tenants attended the first meeting and 15 attended the second meeting.

City staff made a presentation to those who attended the meeting about what BIAs do, how they operate, and how they are self-funded through a special BIA levy on member property tax bills.

The Queen Street West Steering Committee has submitted a letter dated June 23, 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 an eclectic neighbourhood of clothing, fashion and fabric stores, restaurants and outdoor patios, live music venues, and a diverse mix of shops catering to a young and hip demographic.

A BIA would provide an opportunity for the businesses to have a greater say in the future of Queen Street West. The BIA could enhance the appearance of the area through the BIA Capital Cost-Share Program and improve heritage facades through the Commercial Façade Improvement Program. Community Festivals and a unique local branding identity could be used to capitalize upon the area's profile as a tourist destination.

The Queen Street West Steering Committee has effectively carried out the process for establishing a BIA as set out in the Municipal Code. It is therefore recommended that the City Clerk be authorized and directed to send out a notice of Council's intention to pass a by-law designate the area along Queen Street West, between Simcoe Street and Bathurst Street, as a Business Improvement Area, in accordance with the Municipal Code.

CONTACT

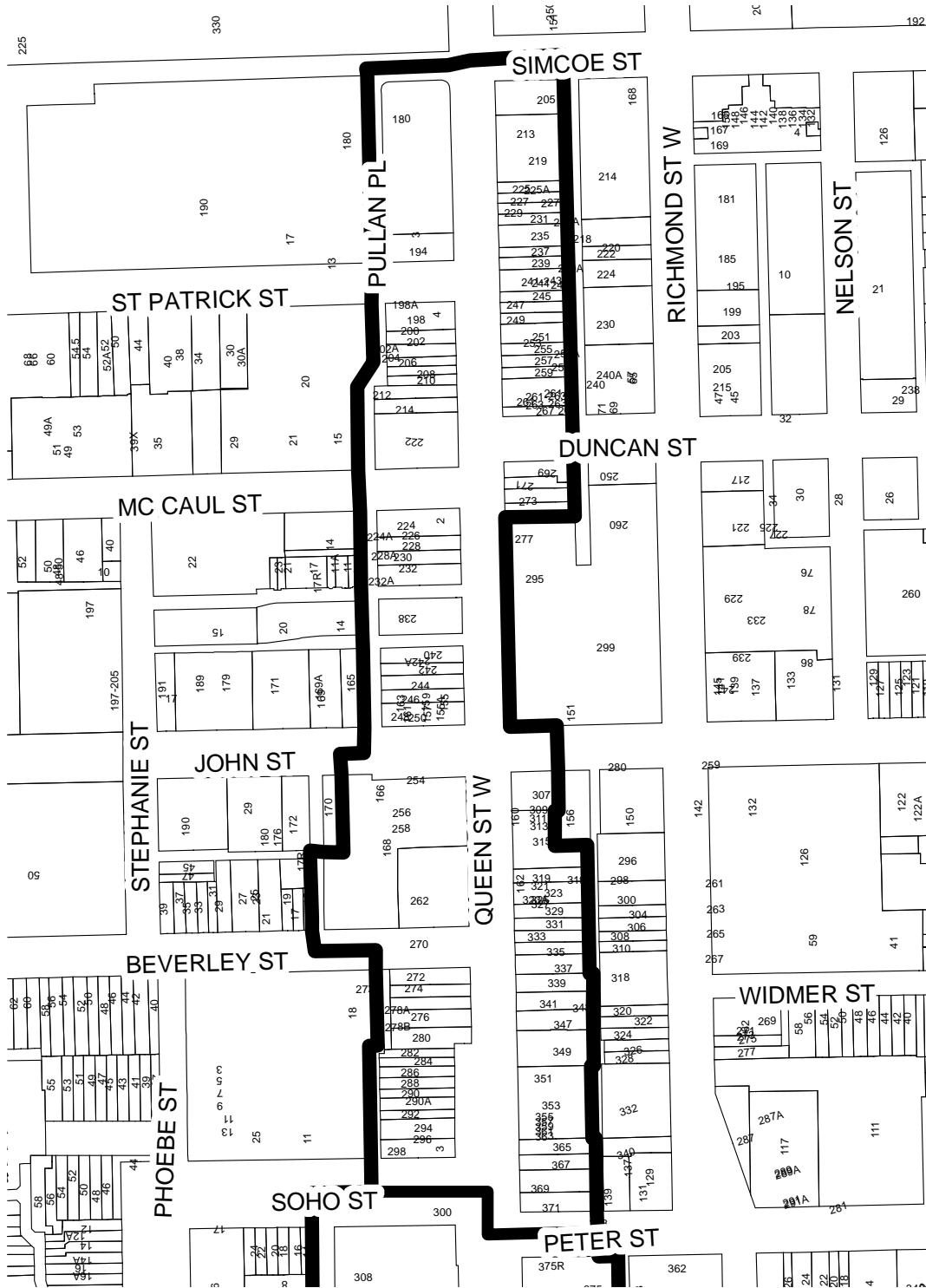
Mike Major
Manager, BIA Office
Telephone: 416-392-0623
Fax: 416-392-1380
Email: mmajor@toronto.ca

SIGNATURE

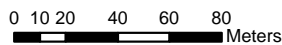
Eva Pyatt
Director, Small Business & Local Partnerships


ATTACHMENTS

Attachment No. 1 – Proposed Queen Street West BIA, Maps (1 to 3)

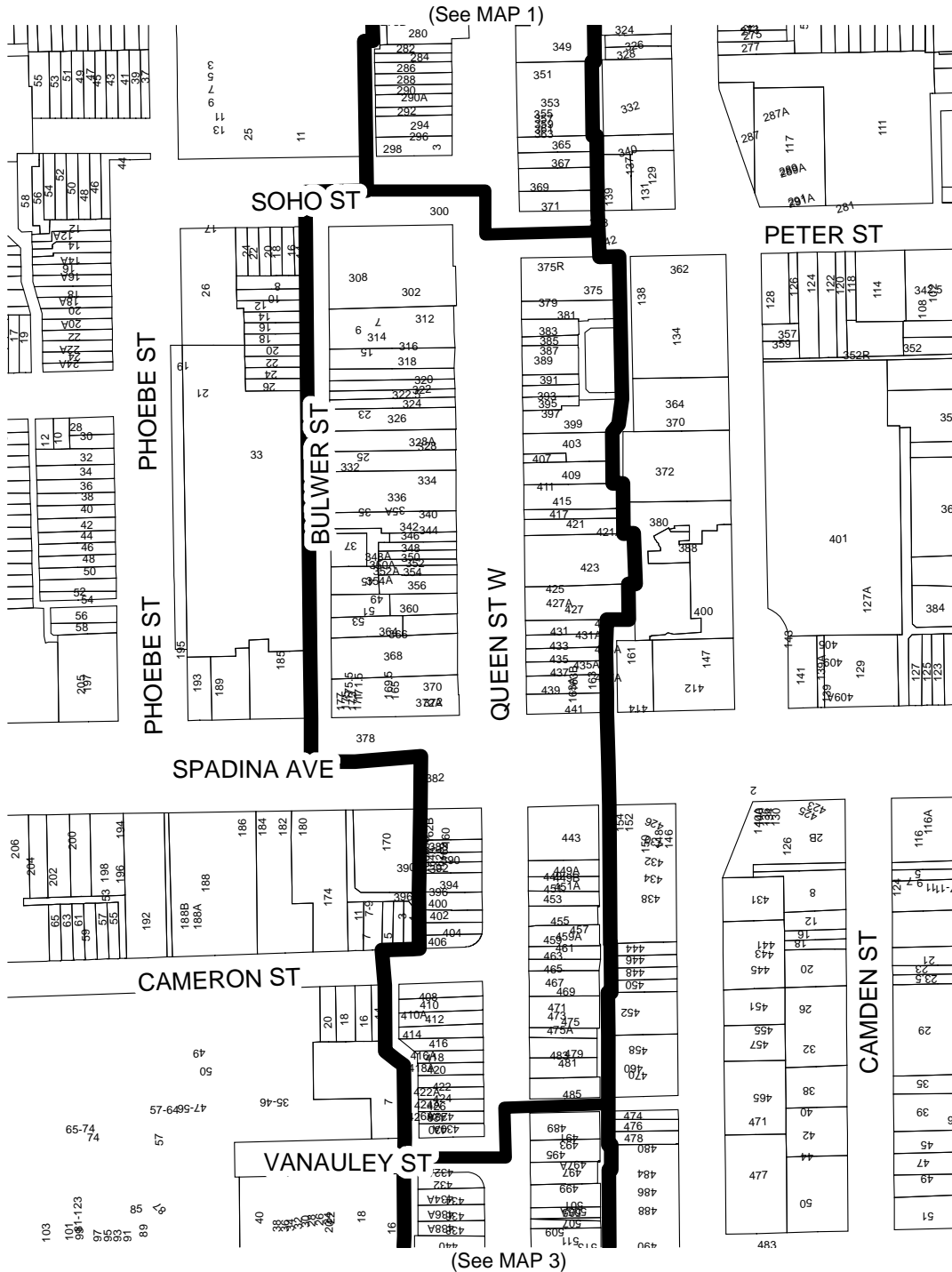



(See MAP 2)

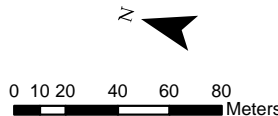


 Proposed Queen Street West
Business Improvement Area

TECHNICAL SERVICES
SURVEY AND MAPPING SERVICES
18 Dyas Rd, 4th Floor
Toronto, ON M5V 1V5
Tel: 416-392-7755, Fax: 416-392-0081
Map File: queenstw_pt2.mxd
Created by: W. Silva
June 2006

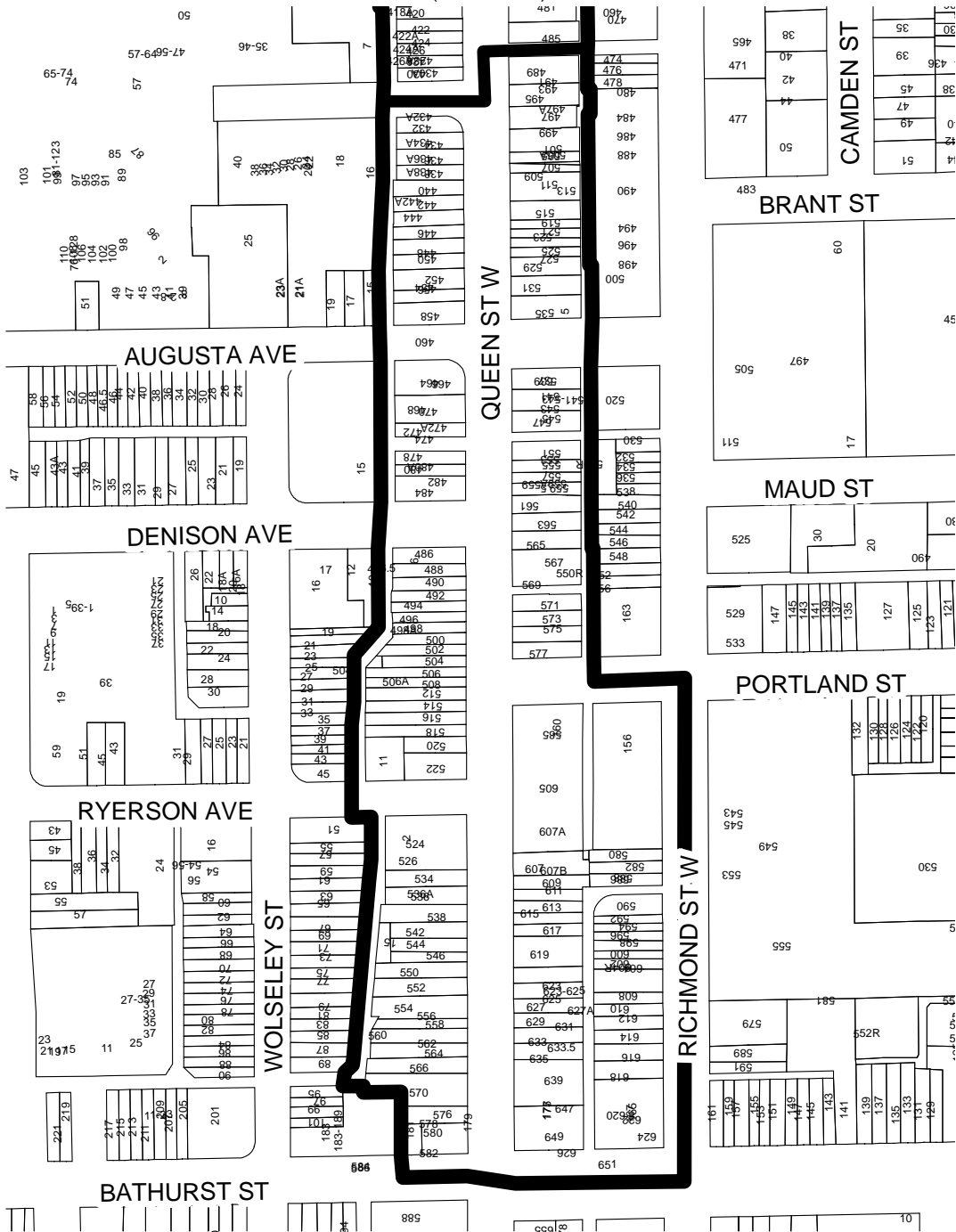



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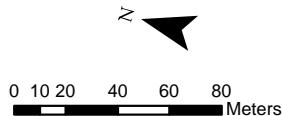


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(See MAP 2)



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June 2006