

Intention to Designate the Dufferin-Finch Business Improvement Area (BIA)

Date:	January 11, 2013
To:	Economic Development Committee
From:	General Manager, Economic Development and Culture
Wards:	8
Reference Number:	P:/2013/Cluster A/EDC/ECON DEV/January/ed1301-005

SUMMARY

This report recommends that the City Clerk conduct a poll to determine if there is sufficient support to designate the area bounded generally by Steeles Avenue West, Keele Street, Sheppard Avenue West and Dufferin Street as the Dufferin-Finch Business Improvement Area (BIA).

Upon completion of the poll, the General Manager of Economic Development and Culture will report the results to City Council through 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 General Manager, Economic Development and Culture recommends that:

1. City Council state its intention to designate the area described by Attachment No.1 as the Dufferin-Finch Business Improvement Area under Chapter 19 of the City of Toronto Municipal Code;
2. City Council authorize and direct the City Clerk to send out a notice of City Council's intention to pass a by-law designating the area described by Attachment No. 1 as a Business Improvement Area (BIA), in accordance with Chapter 19 of the City of Toronto Municipal Code; and
3. City Council request 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 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

Following a series of meetings with interested parties, a Steering Committee comprised of nine members representing commercial and industrial property owners and business operators was formed to discuss opportunities for a BIA, BIA boundaries and to develop a public consultation strategy. Over an eight month period Steering Committee members conducted outreach to area property owners and business operators to discuss the BIA proposal and gauge interest.

Two open house sessions were held by the Steering Committee, one on September 18, 2012, and one on September 21, 2012. Open house notices were distributed to property owners and business tenants within the proposed BIA and also posted on the Steering Committee and the City's BIA Office web sites. The open house sessions provided proposed BIA members with an opportunity to find out about the benefits of a BIA, specific Dufferin-Finch Steering Committee proposals and budget scenarios.

There was overall support for a BIA and the Steering Committee requested the General Manager of Economic Development and Culture to proceed to a formal public consultation meeting. Formal public meeting notices were mailed to commercial property owners by the City's BIA Office. In this case, the City also circulated notices to business tenants. Notices were also posted on the Steering Committee's and BIA Office's web sites.

A public consultation meeting was held by the City on November 21, 2012, where staff presented an overview of the BIA program and answered questions from potential members. The public consultation meeting was attended by commercial and industrial property owners and business tenants where a secret ballot vote was held to determine if there is sufficient support to proceed to a formal poll. A total of 55 ballots were cast, 43 in favour of establishing a BIA and 12 opposed. This meets the minimum requirements of 50% percent plus one in order to proceed to a formal poll.

COMMENTS

The Steering Committee, representing approximately 2,500 businesses within the Dufferin-Finch Employment District, undertook distribution of BIA literature, phone and e-mail communication throughout the process. Through survey feedback, canvassing and regular Steering Committee meetings, the group identified a need to provide a common voice for the area. The employment district consists primarily of manufacturing and

warehousing, retail, service and office sectors. Currently, there is significant subway infrastructure under construction and Light Rapid Transit and GO transportation infrastructure scheduled for the area in the immediate future that will enhance access to and from the area and generate new business opportunities. The Steering Committee hopes a BIA can prepare local businesses to take advantage of these opportunities. The proposed BIA is prepared to work with the City, TTC and other agencies.

By working collectively as a BIA, the local businesses would have the organizational and funding capacity to be a catalyst for civic improvement and enhance the business climate. The primary focus for the area would be on transportation, security, illegal dumping, and advocacy.

The City has confirmed that there is sufficient support to move forward to the polling stage.

CONTACT

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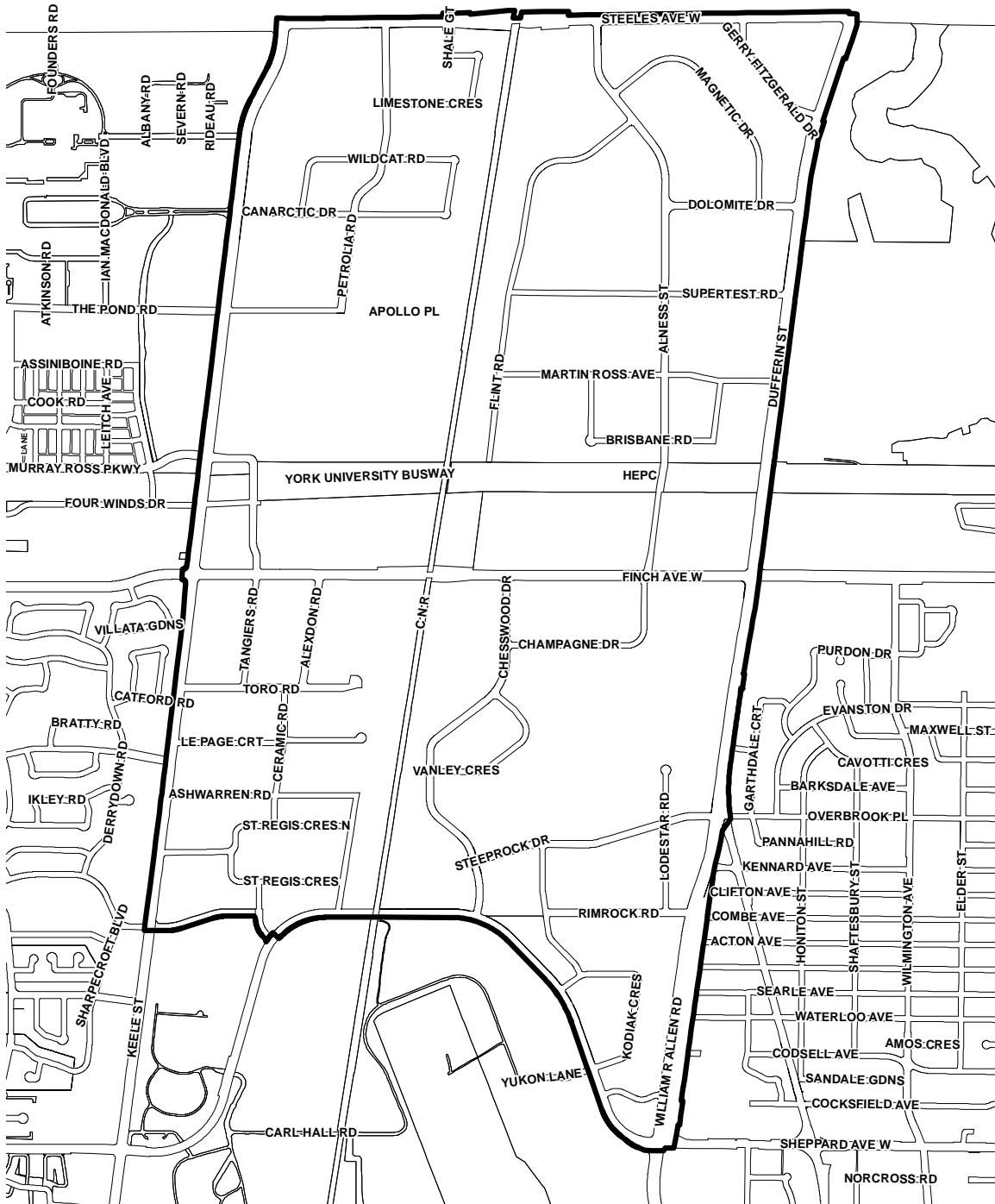
SIGNATURE

Michael H. Williams, General Manager
Economic Development and Culture

ATTACHMENT

Attachment No. 1: Proposed Wilson Heights BIA Boundary

Key Map



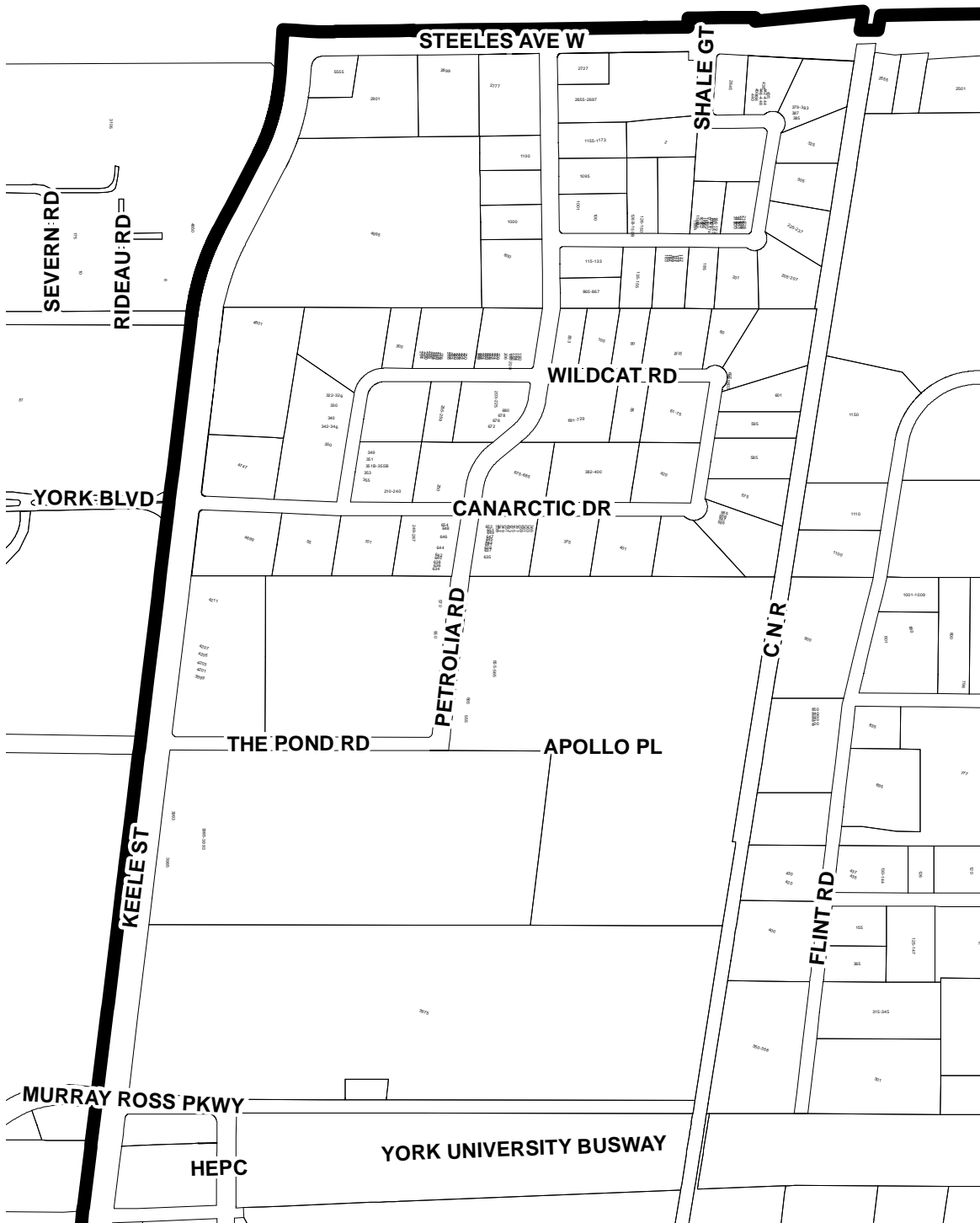
 Proposed Defferin-Finch BIA



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Map File: DufferinFinch_rpt.mxd
November 2012


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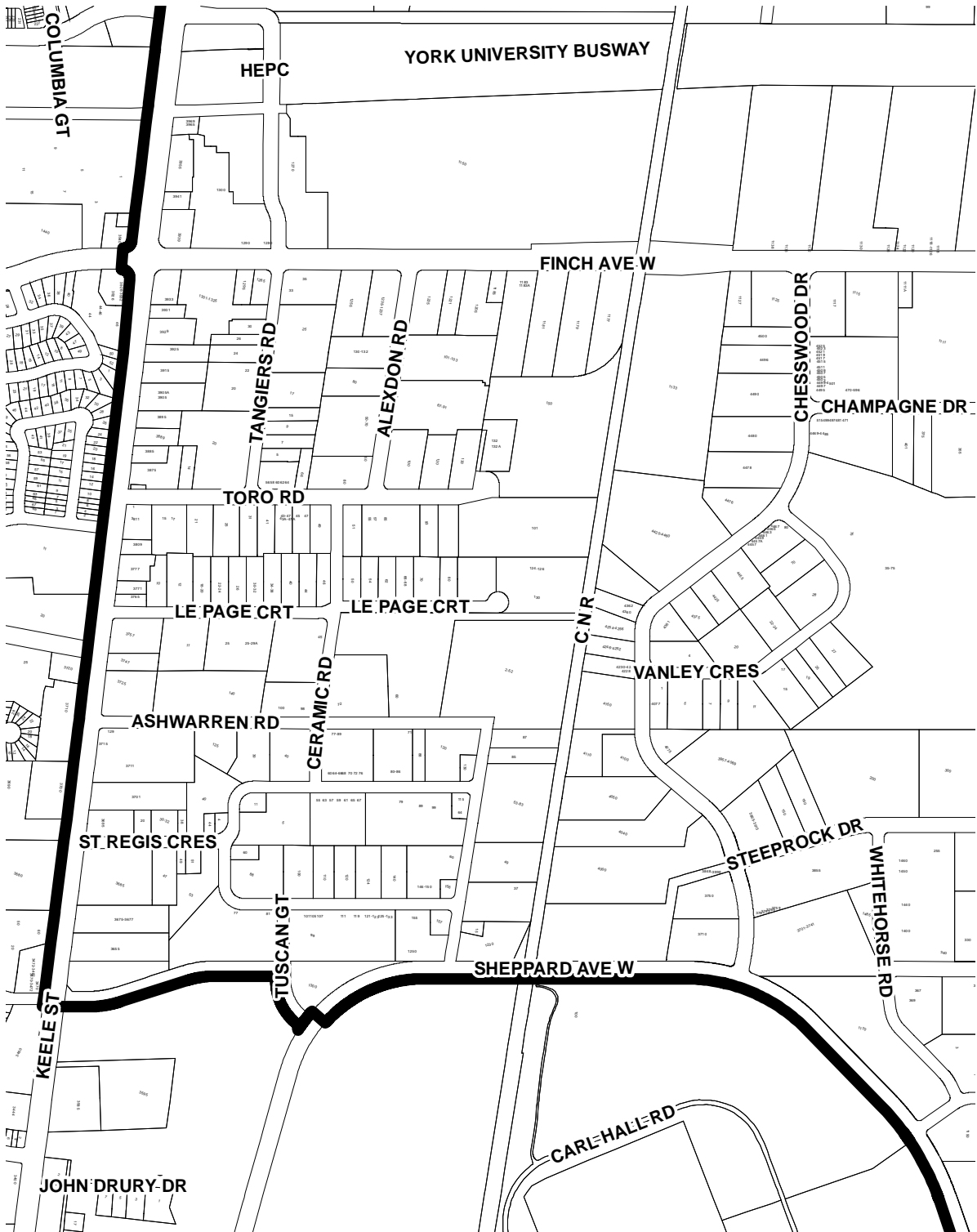
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