



REPORT FOR ACTION

Intention to Designate the Proposed Little Portugal Toronto Business Improvement Area (BIA)

Date: May 18, 2018
To: Economic Development Committee
From: General Manager, Economic Development and Culture
Wards: 18 and 19

SUMMARY

This report recommends that the City Clerk conduct a poll to determine if there is sufficient support to designate the area along Dundas Street West, generally between Shaw Street and the Canadian National Railway rail tracks west of Lansdowne Avenue, as a new Little Portugal Toronto Business Improvement Area (BIA).

The area is currently represented by the Dundas West BIA and existing Little Portugal BIA whose respective general membership and boards of management have agreed to proceed to the polling stage to create one new BIA.

Upon completion of the poll, the General Manager of Economic Development and Culture will report on 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. If the poll result is negative, the Dundas West and existing Little Portugal BIAs shall continue to operate as independent BIAs in the usual manner.

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 Little Portugal Toronto Business Improvement Area (BIA) under Chapter 19 of the City of Toronto Municipal Code.
2. City Council 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.

3. City Council direct the Chief Information Officer 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 between the BIA and the City.

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

DECISION HISTORY

While Chapter 19 of the Toronto Municipal Code, Business Improvement Areas, does not specifically set out the procedures for merging two business improvement areas, it does provide the authority to repeal a BIA and create a new BIA. In order to merge two BIAs, the authority set out in two separate sections of the Code will be employed: Section 19-2.2, the creation of a BIA and Section 19-2.7, the repeal of a BIA.

The Dundas West BIA was established by Council at its meeting of September 25-28, 2006, by adopting Motion J(7) approving the staff recommendations contained in the September 13, 2006 report from the General Manager, Economic Development, Culture and Tourism.

The Little Portugal BIA was established as the Dundas-Ossington BIA on October 22-23, 2007.

<https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2007/ed/bgrd/backgroundfile-7285.pdf>, and;

<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2007/ed/bgrd/backgroundfile-7286.pdf>

Its board of management subsequently requested that the BIA's name be changed to the Little Portugal BIA which was adopted by council on May 26-27, 2008.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2008.ED13.8>

COMMENTS

Merger Process

Under the Municipal Code, Chapter 19, there are two options to achieve the merger of two BIAs. The first option requires one of the BIAs to initiate an expansion of its boundary to include another BIA's boundary. In this instance, the Dundas West and Little Portugal boards of management sought to avoid the impression that, whichever BIA initiated the expansion, one BIA was not annexing the other. This option was ruled out by both boards. The second, two-step option, involves the creation of one new BIA and the repeal of the two existing BIAs. While there is no single merger process set out in the Code, the two-step process is pursued in this instance.

Consultation

The Dundas West BIA and Little Portugal BIA are adjacent to each other, along Dundas Street West, and have had a longstanding relationship that was formalized in 2013 when they agreed to hold a joint Dundas West Fest. After the success of the initial joint festival, the boards began to pursue a common direction, agreed to share staffing resources and began to explore the idea of joining the two BIAs. With positive feedback from the general membership at their respective 2017 board meetings, the boards agreed to pursue the idea of merging the BIAs as a key element of their work plans in 2018.

At the respective 2017 Dundas West BIA and Little Portugal BIA annual general meetings, the general memberships agreed to gauge support at various stages to create one new BIA out of the existing two BIAs.

In January 2018 a new joint BIA Steering Committee was struck to lead the process. The committee includes the local area councillors and four representatives from each BIA, as required by the City for all proposed new BIAs.

Key discussion items included the proposed boundaries, rationale for the new BIA, and the timetable for undertaking the City's process. An important objective of joining the two BIAs is to enhance Dundas West Fest and to achieve efficiency and effectiveness with respect to the use of financial and other BIA resources. The intention of the new BIA is to continue the varied programming of both BIAs, including assisting local businesses and property owners to enhance business vibrancy and positive branding, and enhancement of the local streetscape to make it more attractive, safe and pedestrian-friendly.

The steering committee developed a plan to consult with the membership. Flyers were circulated to business and property owner members inviting them to two open house sessions; one during the morning, and the other during the evening of March 26, 2018.

The open house sessions were attended by approximately 45 business and property owners, who were generally in favor of continuing with the process to establish one new BIA. Following the open house sessions, the Steering Committee requested the General Manager of Economic Development and Culture to hold a formal public consultation meeting.

A public consultation meeting was held by the City's BIA Office on May 7, 2018, where City staff presented an overview of the BIA program and answered questions related to the process of establishing a new BIA to replace the existing BIAs and addressing BIA assets and liabilities as well as changes in the levy, while the Steering Committee co-chairs addressed ongoing and future programming, including streetscape improvements, marketing and retaining the essence of the Little Portugal name to represent the new merged area.

Public Meeting Vote

The public meeting was attended by nineteen commercial property owners and business tenants and a secret ballot was held to determine if there was sufficient support to proceed to a formal poll. Of the 18 ballots cast, 15 were in favour. This result meets the minimum requirements of 50% plus one in order to proceed to a formal poll as set out by Chapter 19 of the City of Toronto Municipal Code.

The Steering Committee has fulfilled the requirements of Municipal Code Chapter 19 regarding the development of a rationale and boundary for the proposed BIA, and the execution of a strategy to communicate its interest to establish a BIA to area businesses and property owners.

Next Steps

Subject to City Council adopting the recommendations contained in this report and the City Clerk issuing a poll, the General Manager, Economic Development and Culture, will, in a follow-up report, seek Council's authority to create a new BIA if the poll result is positive. Upon Council's designation of the new Little Portugal Toronto BIA board of management, the designating by-laws of the two existing BIAs shall be repealed and their respective boards shall be dissolved with their assets and liabilities transferred to the new board.

If the poll result is negative the Dundas West and Little Portugal BIAs and associated boards of management, shall continue to operate as initially established.

CONTACT

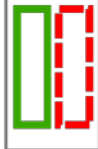
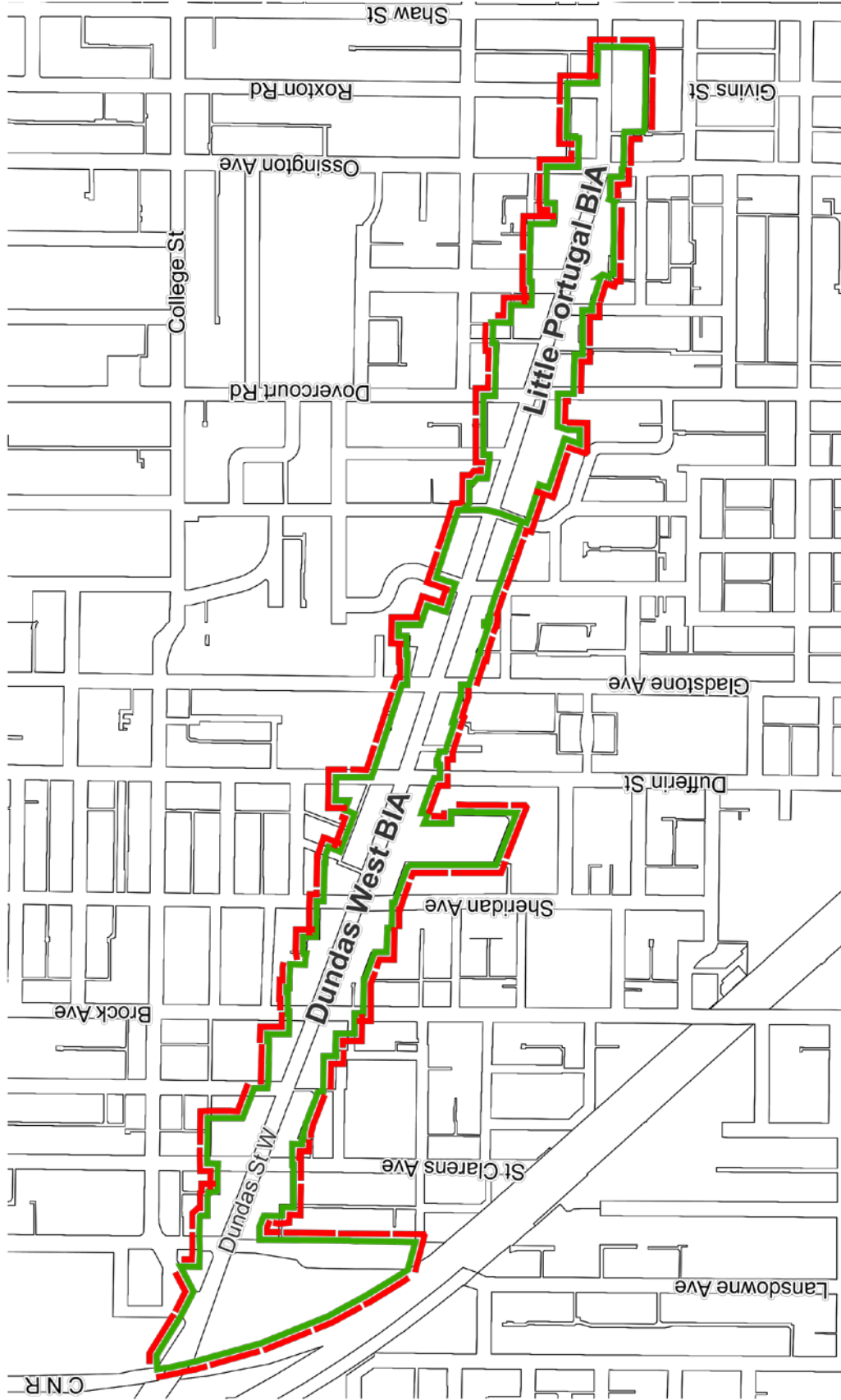
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SIGNATURE

Mike Williams, General Manager
Economic Development and Culture

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment No. 1: Proposed Little Portugal Toronto Boundary Map



* The Proposed Little Portugal Toronto BIA boundary will include the existing Dundas West BIA and Little Portugal BIA boundaries.

Map File: web\littlePortugalNewProp.mxd
Created: April 2018

