



REPORT FOR ACTION

Intention to Designate the Lawrence Ingram Keele Business Improvement Area

Date: November 14, 2019

To: Economic and Community Development Committee

From: General Manager, Economic Development and Culture

Wards: 5 – York South-Weston

SUMMARY

This report recommends that the City Clerk conduct a poll to determine if there is sufficient support to designate the area generally bounded by Lawrence Avenue to the north, Keele Street to the west, Strathain Avenue/Woodborough Avenue to the south and the rail track to the east, as the Lawrence Ingram Keele Business Improvement Area (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 and Community 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 Lawrence Ingram Keele 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 Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer has been provided a copy of this report for review.

DECISION HISTORY

Chapter 19 of the Toronto Municipal Code sets out the procedures to establish a business improvement area.

http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/municode/1184_019.pdf

COMMENTS

Starting in June 2018, Lawrence Ingram Keele area business representatives held meetings with city staff and the local area councillor to consider establishing a Business Improvement (BIA) for their industrial and commercial area. Given the positive feedback from these initial meetings, a volunteer BIA Steering Committee was established on March 11, 2019. Its members quickly identified priorities, including timelines, a consultation and communication plan to reach as many potential members as possible. It then hosted two open houses, one on March 21, 2019 and the other on September 18, 2019, to identify its priorities, welcome feedback on the BIA concept for their area, and generally gauge interest in establishing a BIA by proceeding to the polling stage.

The Steering Committee believes a BIA will assist local businesses and property owners achieve several objectives including addressing illegal dumping, comprehensively addressing transit and circulation issues and community safety to improve the business climate. Most importantly a BIA can sustain activities currently underway and develop organizational capacity to undertake new initiatives to make the area more competitive.

The Committee agreed that it was appropriate to move to the public meeting stage and requested the General Manager, Economic Development and Culture, to hold a formal public consultation meeting. Soon after, the City's BIA Office mailed a public meeting notice to commercial and industrial property owners and Steering Committee members distributed the same notice to local business operators.

The public meeting, held on October 23, 2019, was attended by commercial property owners and business representatives (proposed BIA members) where BIA Office staff presented an overview of the BIA program, including how BIAs are formed, how they operate and how they are funded. Proposed members asked questions and enquired about potential project costs, illegal dumping, the local transfer station status, rationale

for the proposed BIA boundary and proposed area transit expansion. These issues were addressed by staff, the local councillor and Steering Committee members.

A vote was held, with secret ballots cast by commercial property owners and business representatives, to determine if there was sufficient support to proceed to a formal poll. Of the 67 ballots cast, 6 were opposed, while a majority, 61 were in favour of proceeding to the polling stage. 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. By working collectively as a BIA, the local businesses will have the organizational and funding capacity to be a catalyst for civic improvement and enhance the local business climate.

The BIA model provides the most sustainable foundation for enhancing locally-focused economic development. A BIA provides the financial, organizational, and administrative resources required to provide the sustained level of human and financial support required to effect long-term area change.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

Michael H. Williams, General Manager
Economic Development and Culture

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment No. 1: Proposed Lawrence Ingram Keele BIA Boundary Map

Proposed Lawrence Ingram Keele Business Improvement Area (BIA)

