



STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

Intention to Expand the St. Lawrence Market Neighbourhood Business Improvement Area (BIA)

Date:	July 14, 2010
To:	Economic Development Committee
From:	General Manager, Economic Development and Culture
Wards:	28
Reference Number:	P:/2010/Cluster A/EDC/ECON DEV/August/ed1008-020

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to recommend that the City Clerk conduct a poll to determine if there is sufficient support to expand the boundaries of the St. Lawrence Market Neighbourhood Business Improvement Area (BIA).

Upon the completion of the poll, the General Manager of Economic Development and Culture will report on the results to Council. 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 (Maps 1 to 2), as an expanded 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 expand the boundary of the St. Lawrence Market Neighbourhood Business Improvement Area (BIA) to include the area shown in Attachment No. 1 (Maps 1 to 2), 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 2), 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 expanded St. Lawrence Market Neighbourhood 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

In November, 2009 the St. Lawrence Market Neighbourhood BIA established a sub-committee to investigate expansion of the BIA to more closely match the boundaries of Old Town Toronto, the original Town of York.

The BIA's original proposal was to expand east to Parliament Street, north to just south of Queen Street East, and west as far as Union Station. City staff felt that the area west of Victoria Street might more appropriately be considered part of the Financial District. Requests from the St. Lawrence Market Neighbourhood BIA and the Downtown Yonge BIA to expand into the vicinity of the Financial District have been put on hold until it can be determined if there is interest in establishing a Financial District or Central Business District BIA. The St. Lawrence Market Neighbourhood BIA has subsequently proposed expansion north and east, as shown in Attachment No. 1.

Informal consultations with key stakeholders in the expansion area were undertaken by the BIA in the spring of 2010. The response to the proposed expansion was favourable.

The BIA subsequently organized, promoted and hosted two formal public consultation meetings on July 8, 2010 and July 13, 2010 for existing BIA members and property owners and tenants. BIA members canvassed all local businesses, distributing information packages with an invitation to attend the public meetings. Invitations were mailed to all commercial and industrial property owners in the area by the City's BIA Office. Approximately 20 owners and tenants attended the meetings.

City staff made presentations and answered questions at each of the meetings addressing issues such as how BIAs are formed, how they operate and how they are self-funded through a special BIA levy on member property tax bills. Representatives of the St. Lawrence Market Neighbourhood BIA then spoke specifically about accomplishments and ongoing initiatives of the BIA and what opportunities would be created through expansion.

COMMENTS

Expanding the boundaries of the St. Lawrence Market Neighbourhood BIA to more closely reflect the original Town of York will provide a unique opportunity to brand and market the BIA as Toronto's Old Town district. The BIA will look to strengthen and promote the concentration of furniture and interior design stores near the intersection of King and Sherbourne. In addition by increasing the size and assessment base of the BIA it will be possible to improve administrative capacity by hiring a full time staff to manage streetscape improvement projects.

The St. Lawrence Market Neighbourhood BIA has effectively carried out the process for expanding 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 to designate the expanded St. Lawrence Market Neighbourhood Business Improvement Area, based on the boundaries show in Attachment No. 1, in accordance with the Municipal Code.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

Michael H. Williams, General Manager
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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment No. 1 – Maps (1 to 2) of Proposed St. Lawrence Market Neighbourhood BIA Expansion