



Intention to Designate the Rogers Road Business Improvement Area

Date: April 10, 2019

To: Economic and Community Development Committee

From: General Manager, Economic Development and Culture

Wards: Wards 5 and 9

SUMMARY

This report recommends that the City Clerk conduct a poll to determine if there is sufficient support to designate the area along Rogers Road bounded by Weston Road to the west and Bronoco Avenue to the east, and the area along Keele Street, south to Lavender Road, as the Rogers Road 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 Development Committee. Subject to a positive poll result, staff shall prepare the necessary bylaws 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 Rogers Road 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 bylaw 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 bylaw 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 reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

DECISION HISTORY

Chapter 19 of the Toronto Municipal Code sets out the procedures for the establishment of a business improvement area.

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

On November 3, 2015, Council approved the report, Program to Promote Revitalization in Distressed Retail Areas, which established the terms of a pilot program to revitalize in distressed retail areas which provides additional supports to incentivise the creation of BIAs in Neighbourhood Improvement Areas (NIAs)

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2015.ED7.7>

On December 5, 2017, Council also approved the report, Potential Policies and Programs to Support Toronto's Retail Areas and Appointments to the Oakwood Village Business Improvement Area, which responded to several Council directions relating to economic hardships faced by small, independent businesses on Toronto's main streets. This report also includes the Rogers Road Economic Revitalization Plan.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2017.ED25.6>

COMMENTS

The Program to Promote Revitalization through local capacity building seeks to establish highly effective BIAs. It does this through developing and implementing sustainable economic revitalization strategies, and providing additional assistance prior to and after formation of the BIA to build local capacity. Examples of this program's outputs include: creating an economic revitalization plan; establishing a BIA and BIA board of management; and funding support for BIA capacity building and economic revitalization initiatives.

Following Council's initial direction to establish a Rogers Road pilot project based on the Program to Promote Revitalization through local capacity building, BIA Office staff and area councillors convened meetings with local stakeholders to determine the level of interest in establishing a BIA along Rogers Road.

Given the positive feedback from the initial meetings, area individuals volunteered to become involved as part of the pilot project. The BIA Office produced an area economic scan to benchmark the area, and a revitalization plan identifying issues (e.g. strengthen

retail businesses, improve public realm, improve traffic circulation, enhance area marketing and branding, decrease crime and improve safety) and strategies to address them.

A BIA steering committee was established in January 2018. The steering committee members developed a design and brand for the area and installed install new street banners. Other City divisions participated in developing a mural for the area, installing new street furniture, scheduling the planting, replacement and maintenance of trees, and identifying related routine public realm improvements to be undertaken.

Open meetings were held on June 6, 2018 and August 22, 2018 to update area businesses and commercial property owners on ongoing projects, understand their priorities and gauge interest in forming a Rogers Road BIA. Discussions ensued regarding the proposed boundaries and rationale for a BIA in the area, and the timetable for undertaking the City's process. The steering committee believes a BIA will assist local businesses and property owners achieve several objectives. For example, the restoration of the business vibrancy and positive image the area enjoyed years ago, and the enhancement of the local streetscape to make it more attractive, safe and pedestrian friendly. Most importantly a BIA can sustain activities currently underway and develop organizational capacity to undertake new initiatives to make the area more competitive.

The steering committee agreed that it was appropriate to move to the public meeting stage and requested the General Manager of Economic Development and Culture to hold a formal public consultation meeting. Soon after the BIA Office mailed notice to commercial and industrial property owners, and the steering committee members distributed the same notice to local business operators. The flyer included an invitation to attend the April 3, 2019, public meeting.

A public consultation meeting was held on April 3, 2019, where City staff presented an overview of the BIA program and answered questions from potential members. The public meeting was attended by commercial property owners, business representatives and some local residents. 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 18 ballots cast, a majority were in favour of proceeding to the poll. 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 business climate and quality of life in their local neighbourhood.

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 change.

CONTACT

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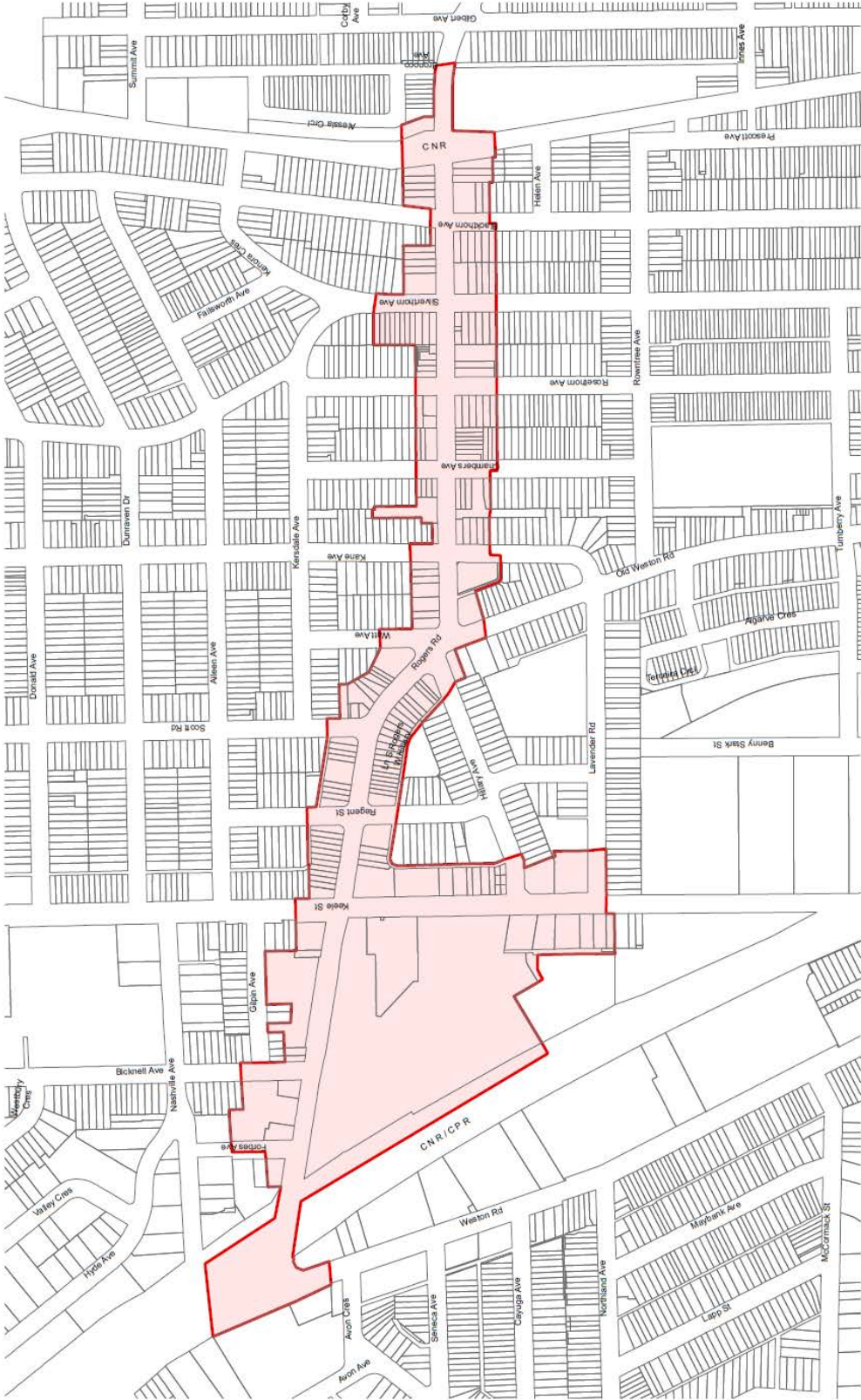
SIGNATURE

Michael H. Williams, General Manager
Economic Development and Culture

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment No. 1: Proposed Rogers Road BIA Boundary Map

Proposed Rogers Road Business Improvement Area



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 Geospatial Competency Centre
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Map File: RogersRoad2013_letters.mxd
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