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## **BRIEFING NOTE**

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### **Kensington Market and Church Street - Pedestrian Streets Proposal**

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#### **Background:**

Budget Advisory Committee, at its meeting on March 10, 2004, recommended "the addition of \$61,150 for the Kensington Market and Church Street Car Free Sunday summer pilot project:

- (i) on the condition that City Council approve such pilot project in April 2004; and
- (ii) the Commissioner of Works and Emergency Services finding a funding source and reporting same to the Budget Advisory Committee wrap-up meeting"

#### **History of the Kensington Market Pedestrian Streets Proposal:**

- Works Committee (December 2002) considered public deputation on creating pedestrian zones and requested staff to report on the feasibility of car free zones for the following areas:
  - Yorkville;
  - Chinatown;
  - Kensington Market; and
  - Several streets linking Kensington Market and Dundas Square
- Kensington Market Action Committee (KMAC) held two community meetings (February 2 and 24, 2003) to discuss interest and concerns about pedestrianizing Kensington Market. The meeting minutes state that "the general feeling so far seems to be that it could have excellent or disastrous results, depending on the way it will be implemented." Several alternate suggestions were made on pedestrianization options.
- The staff report, presented to Works Committee on July 3, 2003, concluded that Kensington Market has many of the key ingredients necessary to establish a successful pedestrian area. The staff report proposed a process for developing the pedestrian area concept:
  - establishing a working group to develop a detailed proposal, in consultation with the community
  - if there was broad community support for a preferred option, a report would be presented to Council
  - if approved by Council, the proposal could be implemented for a test period in the summer of 2004
  - a monitoring and evaluation process would be established for the test period
  - an evaluation report would be submitted to Council following the test period making recommendations whether or not the project should be continued

- The Works Committee (July 3, 2003) recommended that “when the Kensington Market Community indicate their majority support for a car free zone, staff of Transportation Services work with them to develop an appropriate implementation plan.”
- Following the direction of the Works Committee, staff put on hold further work on the “Pedestrian Streets” concept pending an indication of community support.
- Over the next several months, a community group representing several Kensington Market businesses and residents, Streets Are For People, held meetings and conducted surveys to determine the level of support for various temporary street closure proposals. Surveys revealed a high level of support for Sunday closings of the main market streets during the summer months.
- The Kensington Harvest Festival in the Fall of 2003 (a few separate blocks were closed for a day) was a success -- estimates of 40,000 people were attracted to the Market and many businesses reported strong sales on the day.

#### **2004 Community Meetings to Determine Levels of Public Support:**

- January 14, 2004 – A Community meeting was organized by Streets Are For People to present various options for temporary Sunday street closures in the summer 2004. Approximately 65 people attended.
  - There was almost unanimous support to form a working group to attempt to resolve concerns raised by the community and to develop a “preferred option”, to be presented at a public meeting hosted by the City.
  - Twenty people expressed interest in participating in a working group.
- The working group met twice (January 28 and February 16) to work through the various street closure options and community concerns and reached agreement on a preferred option to present to the broader Kensington Market community at a public meeting. KMAC members participated in the working group meetings and requested that the City’s public meeting invite members of the community to present proposals and that all proposals be welcomed and receive consideration.
- On the basis of the community support at the January 14, 2004 meeting and the two subsequent working group meetings, Works and Emergency Services staff agreed to host a community meeting to invite additional community proposals and to provide an opportunity for input by the broader Kensington community on the various temporary street closure options.
- The March 8, 2004, community meeting organized by City of Toronto, Works and Emergency Services was attended by approximately 85 people. While several important concerns were raised by some residents and businesses, the overwhelming majority in attendance were in favour of proceeding with a pilot project to test the temporary Sunday Street closure concept.

### **The Proposal - Sunday Pedestrian Streets in the Market:**

- The participants of the March 8, 2004 community meeting reached general agreement on the following elements of the proposal:
  - closing portions of Kensington, Baldwin, Augusta and Wales to traffic (see attached map)
  - 14 consecutive Sundays from June 20 to Sept 19
  - 12:00 noon to 6:00 pm
  - establishing community/staff working group to develop project and monitor it as it unfolds week by week -- make adjustments & resolve problems as they arise or to stop the project if necessary.
  - working group to submit street closure permit application asap (coordinated by Councillor Chow's office)
  - investigating restricting parking on Nassau and Oxford to parking permit holders only

### **Implementation and Funding - Summary of Issues:**

- there is an expectation within the Kensington Market community that the City should deliver the Kensington Market Pedestrian Streets project
- if this project is to proceed, it is critically important that it is carried out in partnership with the Kensington Market community (residents and businesses)
- based on preliminary estimates, it will cost approximately \$61,150 to implement Kensington Market Sunday Pedestrian Streets pilot project on 14 consecutive Sundays (see below).
- staff and funding resources are not available within the current establishment or the Transportation Services submitted budget for undertaking this project
- If the Kensington Market proposal was reduced in scope from 14 Sundays to 7 Sundays, funds could be accommodated within the Transportation Services Operating Budget (estimated at \$39,550)

### **Preliminary Cost Estimates for Kensington Market Pedestrian Streets Pilot Project:**

Street Closure Costs:	<u>14 Weeks</u>	<u>7 Weeks</u>
• Barricades:	\$12,800	\$ 6,400
• Signage	\$13,000	\$13,000
• Parking Adjustments		
Permit-holder compensation	\$ 3,300	\$ 1,650
“friendly towing”	\$ 7,000	\$ 3,500
• Police	\$10,050	\$ 5,000
Co-ordination and Promotion	<u>\$15,000</u>	<u>\$10,000</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$61,150</b>	<b>\$39,550</b>

### **Closing of Church Street to Vehicular Traffic:**

The Budget Advisory Committee also requested that consideration also be given to funding the closing of Church Street to vehicular traffic during the summer. By way of background, Councillor Kyle Rae and the Church Wellesley BIA have been actively pursuing the closure to vehicular traffic of a section of Church Street every Sunday from May to September, with an objective of providing a pedestrian-only area. A number of discussions and meetings have taken

place with staff who have suggested that the two block section from Wellesley Street East, south to Alexander Street would be appropriate for initiating the event, although there seemed to be some interest on the part of the proponents for a larger section. Although plans have not yet been finalized, it would appear that the proposal is more in keeping with a 'street event' rather than a car-free initiative and approval of the plan is subject to the submission of a formal application and the proponents' adherence to the conditions that will be established.

In terms of what has been discussed to date, the following three elements will form the basis of the requirements, based on the tentative two block plan.

- Barricades and Road Closed signs - must be provided for each end on Church Street plus other access points mid-block (driveways, parking lots, laneways). This work would normally be arranged by the event organizer directly with a contractor. The estimated cost for providing barricades for the two block plan would be approximately \$920 per day.
- Signage - Existing one-way signage on Maitland Avenue will have to be converted to allow two-way access, at an estimated cost of \$1000 per day. Given that the closure is proposed over several weeks, advance notice signs would also be required at an approximate one time cost of \$2000. This work would be done by City staff and charged to organizer.
- Police - two pay duty police officers will cost approximately \$880 per eight hour day. Again, this would normally be arranged and financed by the event organizer.

The road closure costs associated with this type of event, in the total estimated amount of \$2800 per day plus one time signage costs of \$2000, are typically borne by the applicant. Should your Committee recommend that these costs be accommodated within the budget, funds would have to be provided.

### **Conclusions:**

#### **1. Kensington Market Pedestrian Streets Proposal**

- Transportation Services can accommodate 7 Sunday street closings within the 2004 Operating Budget
- To expand the program to 14 Sundays additional funds will be required

#### **2. Church Street Sunday Closing**

- Proposals under review, details to be finalized
- All costs associated with initiatives of this type have been typically borne by the proponent. Should it be recommended that the funds be borne by the City, funds will have to be provided.

**Date:** March 23, 2004