

## **Oakwood Avenue Arts District – Official Plan Amendment – Final Report**

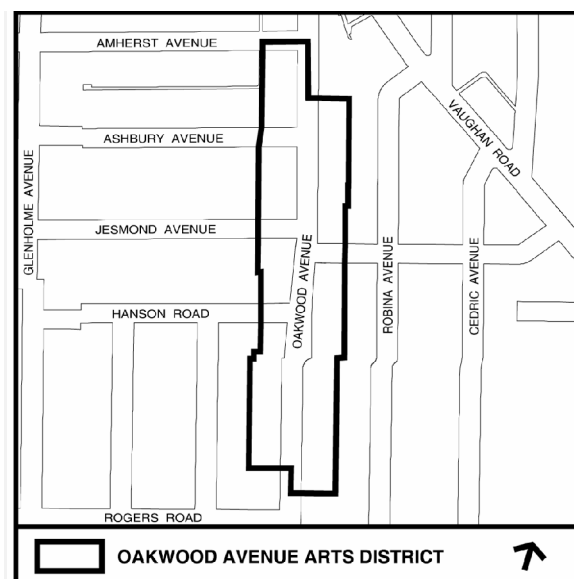
<b>Date:</b>	September 12, 2008
<b>To:</b>	North York Community Council
<b>From:</b>	Director, Community Planning, North York District
<b>Wards:</b>	Ward 15 – Eglinton-Lawrence
<b>Reference Number:</b>	06 156338 NPS 00 TM

### **SUMMARY**

North York Community Council requested that in conjunction with the rezoning application for 458 Oakwood Avenue, consideration be given to amending the Official Plan related to this and adjacent residential properties for the section of Oakwood Avenue between Vaughan Road and Rogers Road to provide for additional uses that would support an “Arts District”. A concurrent report has been prepared addressing the rezoning application for 458 Oakwood Avenue and is before Community Council today.

The proposed amendment to the Official Plan would provide for additional arts-related uses along Oakwood Avenue between the intersections of Vaughan Road and Oakwood Avenue and Rogers Road and Oakwood Avenue. These provisions would be similar to the uses that are presently permitted at these intersections and would assist in the creation of an “Arts District” in this area.

The proposed Official Plan Amendment would maintain the character of the neighbourhood. The uses proposed in this Official Plan Amendment would also be compatible with other uses found within this section of Oakwood Avenue. The proposal is consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement and conforms to the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.



## RECOMMENDATIONS

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### **The City Planning Division recommends that:**

1. City Council amend the Official Plan substantially in accordance with the draft Official Plan Amendment attached as Attachment No. 2.
2. City Council authorize the City Solicitor to make such stylistic and technical changes to the draft Official Plan Amendment as may be required.

### **Financial Impact**

The recommendations in this report have no financial impact.

## DECISION HISTORY

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At its June 27, 2006 meeting, City Council approved a Zoning By-law Amendment for the lands in the vicinity of the intersections of Vaughan Road and Oakwood Avenue and Rogers Road and Oakwood Avenue to add additional permissions for arts-related uses.

The final report is available at:

<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/2006/agendas/committees/plt/plt060905/it001.pdf>.

A preliminary report for a rezoning application at 458 Oakwood Avenue was approved by the North York Community Council at its January 16, 2007 meeting. The report provided background information on the proposal and recommended that a community consultation meeting be held.

At that meeting, North York Community Council requested that in conjunction with the rezoning application for 458 Oakwood Avenue, consideration be given to amending the Official Plan related to this and adjacent residential properties to provide for additional uses that would support an “Arts District”. A concurrent report has been prepared addressing the rezoning application for 458 Oakwood Avenue and is before Community Council today.

The preliminary report is available at:

<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2007/ny/bgrd/backgroundfile-463.pdf>.

## ISSUE BACKGROUND

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### **Area Description**

Oakwood Avenue extends from Eglinton Avenue to the north to Davenport Road in the south. The specific section of Oakwood Avenue that is the subject of the proposed Official Plan Amendment consists of the portion of Oakwood Avenue between the Oakwood Avenue and Vaughan Road and Oakwood Avenue and Rogers Road intersections.

This section of Oakwood Avenue has a mix of uses in a low-rise form. There are detached dwellings, semi-detached dwellings, low-rise apartment buildings, low-rise mixed-use buildings and commercial uses.

Toronto Artscape Inc., a local not-for-profit enterprise engaged in developing space for artists to live and work, identifies that artists need affordable, useable and legal space to practice their endeavours. They identified a number of artist-friendly neighbourhoods in the publication *Square Feet: The Artist's Guide to Renting and Buying Work Space*. One of the neighbourhoods identified within this guide includes the Oakwood-Vaughan area.

Moreover, demographic statistics generated from 2001 Census data, identified the Oakwood and Vaughan area as having a high-percentage of the labour force population working in either professional or technical occupations in art and culture with 540 artists out of 12,345 total workers or 4.3 per cent of the total labour force population. Other arts districts within the City of Toronto include the Annex area with 5.4 per cent of its labour force in arts occupations and the West Queen West area with 5.2 per cent.

## **Official Plan**

The Official Plan identifies that arts, culture and heritage will play more than a supporting role in Toronto's intensification. The Plan notes that, Toronto's arts, culture and heritage will attract educated, mobile newcomers, keep the best and brightest residents in the city and strengthen the City's economy.

The Official Plan designates the subject area *Neighbourhoods*. *Neighbourhoods* are physically stable areas made up of residential uses in lower scale buildings such as detached houses, semi-detached houses, duplexes, triplexes, townhouses and walk-up apartment buildings of a maximum of four storeys.

New small-scale retail, service and office uses located on a major street that are incidental to and support the area can be considered within *Neighbourhoods* if the use and physical form are compatible with the area and if the use will not adversely impact adjacent residential uses. Oakwood Avenue is identified as a major street on Map 3 of the Official Plan.

## **Creative City Initiatives**

In 2003 City Council adopted a Culture Plan for the Creative City which is used to guide Toronto's cultural development for the next 10 years. It is consistent with City Council's Strategic Plan, its Economic Development Strategy and the Official Plan. The two key goals in the Culture Plan are to position Toronto as an international cultural capital and to have arts, culture and heritage at the centre of the economic and social development of the city.

## **Reason for the Official Plan Amendment**

The policies of the *Neighbourhoods* designation would impede the development of an "Arts District" in this area of Oakwood Avenue. The intent of the *Neighbourhoods* policies is to maintain the stable residential character of the neighbourhood, while allowing for uses that meet the daily needs of the residents of the neighbourhood. This would assist in reducing the use of private automobiles by providing appropriate small-scale uses on major streets within

walking distance of residential areas. Uses that would be considered small-scale and supporting a neighbourhood area would largely be locally-oriented retail and service uses.

An “Arts District” would consist of a clustering of uses related to the production, display and sale of art. Typical uses that would be located within an “Arts District” would include art schools, art centres, art supply stores, commercial galleries, public art galleries, cafes, restaurants, bars, theatre performance venues, artist and photography studios and artist live-work units, among others. The majority of these uses would not be considered as incidental to and supporting a neighbourhood.

## **COMMENTS**

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### **Provincial Policy Statement and Provincial Plans**

The Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) provides policy direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development. City Council’s planning decisions are required to be consistent with the PPS.

The proposed Official Plan Amendment is consistent with the PPS. In particular, the proposed Official Plan supports the PPS’s objective of providing a range of housing types, providing opportunities for a diversified economic base which supports a wide range of economic activity and maintaining and enhancing the vitality and viability of main streets.

The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe provides a framework for managing growth including:

- directions for where and how to grow;
- the provision of infrastructure to support growth; and
- protecting natural systems and cultivating a culture of conservation.

City Council’s planning decisions are required to conform, or not conflict, with the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe. The proposal conforms and does not conflict with the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

### **Community Consultation**

A community consultation meeting was organized for April 11, 2007 at the Oakwood Village Library and Arts Centre. The proposed Official Plan Amendment as well as the proposal for 458 Oakwood Avenue was presented at this meeting. Approximately 30 members of the public attended the meeting. Comments from the public respecting the Official Plan Amendment provided at the meeting and through written correspondence included:

- Some attendees at the meeting identified that the distinctive character of Oakwood Avenue should be maintained, and that new development should be sensitive towards existing residential buildings.
- New development proposed within this area should be no more than 3 stories high and be built close to the street to maintain a ‘local’ and comfortable feeling to the area. This will

help keep the "village" feel to the area and will respect the existing residential properties behind Oakwood Avenue.

- Consider allowing the following uses: cafes, galleries, theatre performance venues, artist's studios, recording studios, photography studios, dance studios, art supplies store and community arts centre space.
- New bars should not be allowed in the area. The area is currently over-served by this type of use. This will help to maintain and protect the residential feel to the community while still allowing arts-related uses in the area.
- The area needs more retail, better restaurants, more specialized grocery stores, and bakers and butchers, not another convenience store.
- Artists need to be able to rent affordable workspace. The Oakwood area features a number of such properties, and the city should do what it can to encourage arts-related uses.

Other comments received include:

- Consider any parking issues and provide city run lots along Oakwood Avenue if necessary.
- Consider starting an art supply store that is a co-op with City involvement.
- Purchase public art for the TTC island at the corner of Oakwood Avenue and Vaughan Road.
- Work with businesses in the area to form a BIA and have an arts-related focus to this BIA (i.e. help the BIA find ways to encourage arts in the area).

## **Proposed Official Plan Amendment**

In order to facilitate development of an "Arts District" in the Oakwood Avenue area, it would be desirable to provide for a wide range of arts and arts-related uses. However, the low-density nature of Oakwood Avenue needs to be respected and maintained and the adjacent low-density residential areas to the east and west of Oakwood Avenue also need to be protected.

The proposed Official Plan Amendment stipulates that the lands are not intended as a retail commercial strip, but will still be regarded as a *Neighbourhood*, within which a clustering of uses related to the production, display and sale of art will be permitted. New development proposed within this area will be required to meet the policies of the Official Plan, including the *Neighbourhoods'* policies. This will ensure that new development is sensitive to, and compatible with, the surrounding neighbourhood.

The uses provided for in the proposed Official Plan Amendment include art schools, art centres, art supply stores, commercial galleries, public art galleries, theatre performance venues, artist studios and artist live-work housing. These uses would contribute to the area as an "Arts District". Other small-scale retail, service and office uses, such as restaurants, would also be permitted as the Official Plan allows for these types of uses in areas designated as *Neighbourhoods* fronting onto a major street provided the use serves area residents and does not negatively impact the neighbourhood. It should be noted that the decision to license a restaurant is a matter dealt with by the Province and cannot be regulated by the Official Plan.

It is also recommended that artists and crafts persons working in low-impact media or processes be permitted as the area is largely a residential neighbourhood. Examples of low-impact medias includes painters, graphic artists, photographers and print artists, some potters

and carvers. Artists or craft persons working in higher impact media or processes, such as using amplified music, welding, fired ceramics, or using toxic or hazardous products could conflict with the surrounding neighbourhood and would not be permitted.

It is important to note that while the draft Official Plan Amendment would broaden the land use permissions to provide for additional arts-related uses in the subject area, the amendment is a first step towards creating an “Arts District”. Additional steps required for the realization of an “Arts District” in the area would involve, but are not limited to, further definition of the concept and its promotion and public realm improvements, which should be undertaken with additional public consultation. It would also require market support.

The area is currently zoned R2 Residential. Implementing zoning would be required to permit the arts and arts-related uses and appropriate development standards would need to be determined. The new provisions of the *Planning Act* require Zoning By-laws to be in conformity with a City’s Official Plan within three years of adopting an Official Plan or Official Plan Amendment. If the proposed Official Plan Amendment is adopted by Council, the zoning required to implement the Amendment will be forthcoming within the required time period.

## **CONTACT**

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## **SIGNATURE**

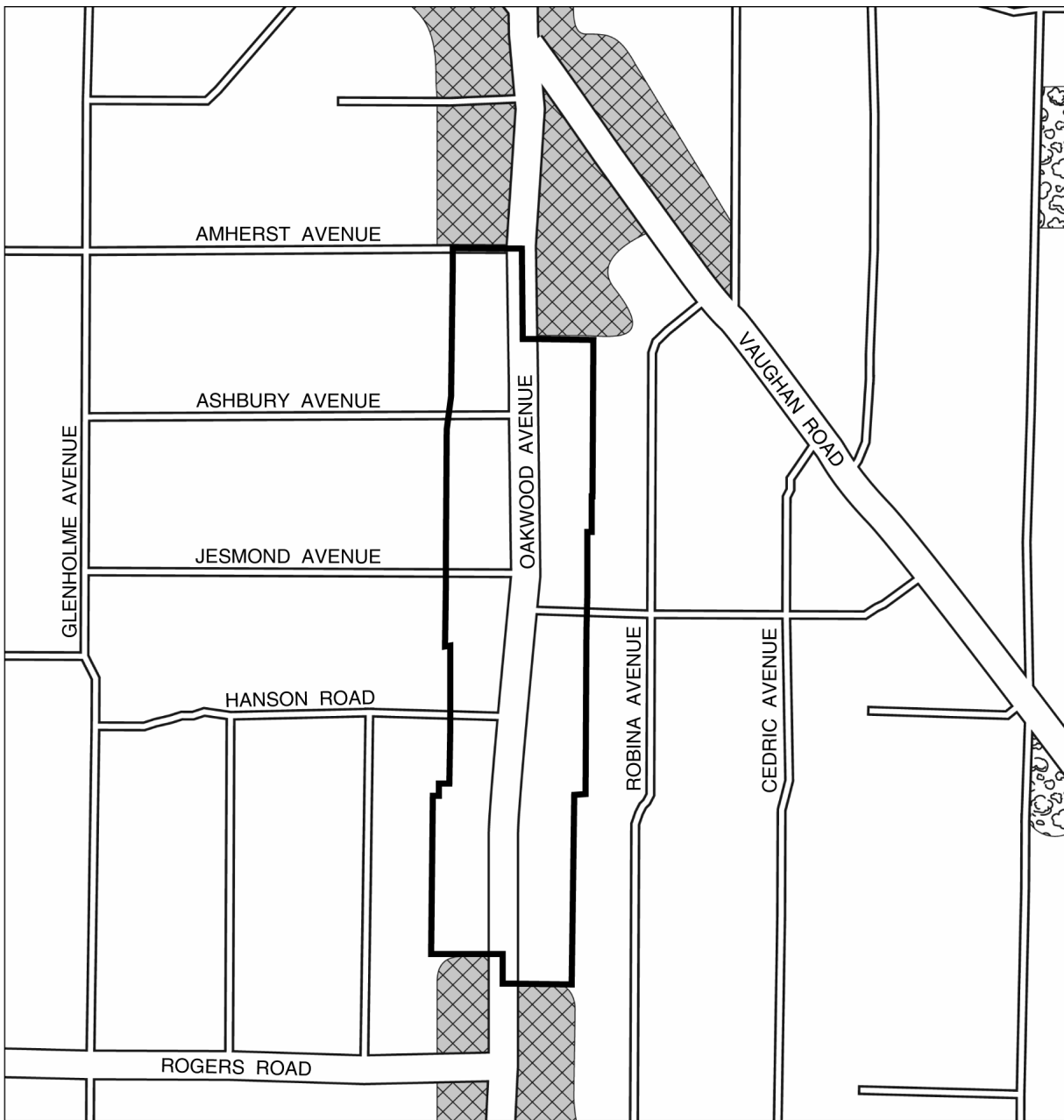
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Thomas C. Keefe, Director  
Community Planning, North York District

## **ATTACHMENTS**

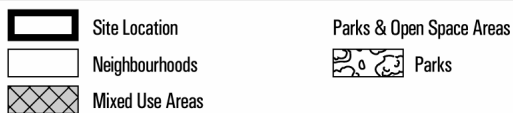
Attachment 1: Official Plan  
Attachment 2: Draft Official Plan Amendment

## Attachment 1: Official Plan



**TORONTO** City Planning  
Official Plan

Oakwood Avenue Arts District



↑  
Not to Scale  
09/02/2008

## **Attachment 2: Draft Official Plan Amendment**

Authority: North York Community Council Item ~ [or Report No. ~, Clause No. ~] as adopted by City of Toronto Council on ~, 20~

Enacted by Council: ~, 20~

### **CITY OF TORONTO**

**Bill No. ~**

### **BY-LAW No. ~-2008**

#### **To adopt an amendment to the Official Plan respecting the lands fronting Oakwood Avenue between Rogers Road and Vaughan Road.**

WHEREAS authority is given to Council under the *Planning Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c.P. 13, as amended, to pass this By-law;

WHEREAS the Council for the City of Toronto, at its meeting of ~ 20~, determined to amend the Official Plan for the City of Toronto adopted by By-law No. 1082-2002; and

WHEREAS Council of the City of Toronto has provided adequate information to the public and has held at least one public meeting in accordance with the *Planning Act*;

The Council of the City of Toronto HEREBY ENACTS as follows:

- 1.** The text and map annexed hereto as Attachment “A” are hereby adopted as amendments to the Official Plan for the City of Toronto.
- 2.** This is Official Plan Amendment No. 62.

ENACTED AND PASSED this ~ day of ~, A.D. 20~.

DAVID R. MILLER,  
Mayor

ULLI S. WATKISS,  
City Clerk

(Corporate Seal)



**ATTACHMENT “A”**

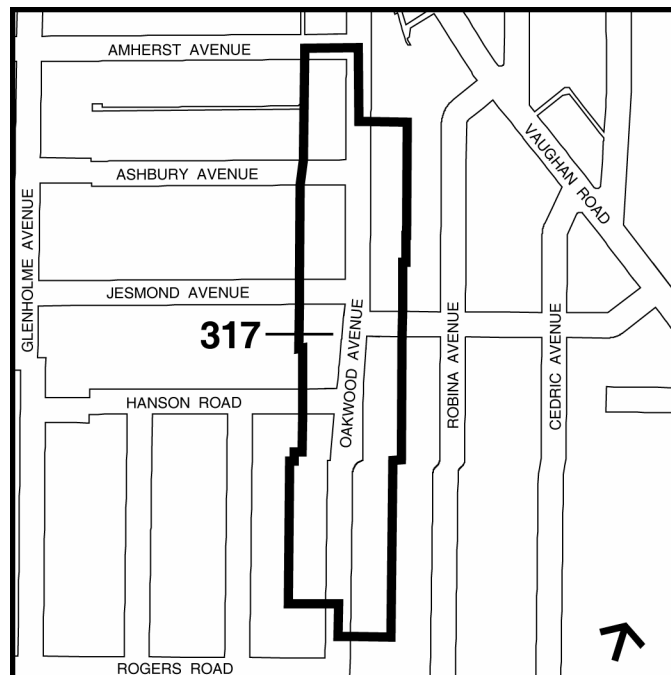
**OFFICIAL PLAN AMENDMENT NO. 62**

**TO THE CITY OF TORONTO OFFICIAL PLAN**

1. The Official Plan of the City of Toronto is amended as follows:
  - (a) Chapter 7, Site and Area Specific Policies, is amended by adding the following Site and Area Specific Policy No. 317 for the lands fronting Oakwood Avenue between Rogers Road and Vaughan Road, as follows:

**“317. Oakwood Avenue Arts District**

The lands are designated as a *Neighbourhood*, within which a clustering of uses related to the production, display and sale of art and crafts is permitted such as art schools, art centres, art supply stores, commercial galleries, public art galleries, theatre performance venues, low-impact artist studios and artist live-work units. The lands are not intended as a retail commercial strip.”



- (b) Map 28, Site and Area Specifics Policies, is amended for the lands fronting Oakwood Avenue between Rogers Road and Vaughan Road shown on the map above as Site and Area Specific Policy No. 317.