

**Downtown East Planning Study – Preliminary Report**

<b>Date:</b>	October 24, 2011
<b>To:</b>	Toronto and East York Community Council
<b>From:</b>	Director, Community Planning, Toronto and East York District
<b>Wards:</b>	Ward 27 – Toronto Centre-Rosedale
<b>Reference Number:</b>	11 103220 STE 27 TM

**SUMMARY**

City Council has directed staff to undertake a local area review of the lands designated in the Official Plan as Mixed Use and Neighbourhoods generally bounded by Dundas Street to the north, Shuter Street to the south, George Street to the west and Sherbourne Street to the east. Staff have undertaken some initial work and consultation.

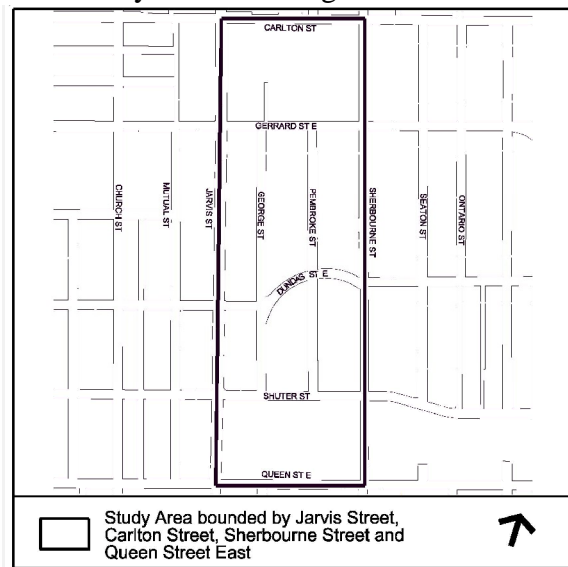
This report provides a status update and provides an outline of the next steps which include work on a Heritage Conservation District study as a necessary first step in helping to assess ways to accommodate change while protecting important cultural and heritage resources. It is also recommended that the study area be enlarged and that work continue on related opportunities to achieve community improvement.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

**The City Planning Division recommends that:**

1. City Council expand the boundaries of the study to include Carlton Street as the northern boundary and Queen Street East as the southern boundary.

2. Upon adoption of *Heritage Conservation Districts in Toronto: Procedures, Policies and Terms of Reference*, City Council direct City Planning



- to report back to Council seeking authority to initiate a Heritage Conservation District (HCD) Study under section 40. (1) of the *Ontario Heritage Act* for the area described in this report and to be paid for through the provision of Section 37 funds;
3. City Council direct staff to report to council upon completion of the HCD Study to report on conclusions and recommendations for next steps, including appropriate zoning, and Official Plan amendments required for the implementation of a revitalization strategy for the area of the study, as per Section 40 of the *Ontario Heritage Act*;
  4. City Council request City Planning Staff to bring forward by the fourth quarter of 2012 a Final Report and recommendations for the implementation of a revitalization strategy for the Study Area;

### **Financial Impact**

The recommendations in this report have no financial impact. The proposed Heritage Conservation Study will be funded through Section 37 community benefit funds.

### **DECISION HISTORY**

At its meeting on July 6, 2010 City Council directed staff to conduct a full local area review for the lands designated in the Official Plan as *Mixed Use Areas* fronting on Dundas Street East between George Street and Sherbourne Street and *Mixed Use Areas* and *Neighbourhoods* on Sherbourne Street between Dundas Street East and Shuter Street. The intent of the study was to examine the possibility of permitting higher density residential development in that area.

### **COMMENTS**

#### **Background and Study Purpose**

After reviewing the initial request for a study, City Staff and the local Councillor believe that the proposed study area does not match the geographical area where development pressure exists and which requires study. Accordingly, Planning Staff propose to expand the study area to include the area bounded by Queen Street East, Sherbourne Street, Carlton Street and Jarvis Street. The expanded boundaries will hereinafter be referred to as the Study Area.

The Study Area is the western portion of the area bounded by Jarvis Street, Parliament Street, Queen Street East and Carlton Street which was previously subject to the South of Carlton Part II or Secondary Plan. The South of Carlton Part II Plan (Secondary Plan) was repealed as part of the adoption of the current Official Plan in 2002 (OMB 2006). The main intent of the South of Carleton Plan during its time was to maintain and preserve the character of the area as a predominantly low rise residential area accommodating a wide mix of residents in terms of age, income and household size. The Plan held that building height was an essential element of overall physical character and that character could be maintained by limiting height.

The adoption of the new Official Plan and the repeal of many Part II Plans saw the consolidation of policies directed at both preserving neighbourhoods and directing growth. In the east downtown, this manifested itself in the designation of such streets as Dundas Street, portions of Carlton Street and Parliament Street as Mixed Use Areas and the interiors of the areas as Neighbourhoods.

The new Official Plan also included a broad growth strategy which identified the Downtown as a place for substantial employment and residential growth. Importantly, the Plan notes that growth will not be spread uniformly across the whole of Downtown, as physical settings include established neighbourhoods where little change is desired. Other considerations which contribute to the liveability and success of the Downtown are guided by the policies that seek to maintain a full range of housing, to respect the built heritage and promote contextual and district based planning to ensure distinctive character is balanced with growth promotion.

It is through this lens that the area between Carlton, Jarvis, Sherbourne and Queen Street East should be considered. In many ways, the essential policy direction is not in question. The purpose of the study is to identify opportunities for potential reinvestment in the area including higher density residential and non-residential development and other longer term revitalization initiatives. This area houses a diverse population and includes a range of supportive housing, providing an important resource for the city and the downtown. The area is also characterized by numerous heritage buildings and streetscapes. A careful balance must be struck between preservation and accommodating change.

Further work on a number of areas that implement the Official Plan include:

- a. Heritage conservation strategies especially in areas previously identified;
- b. Consideration of minor modifications to *Mixed Use Areas* designations to appropriately accommodate opportunities for revitalization;
- c. Zoning changes that update standards such as height, setbacks and parking among others that more directly balance the growth and stability objectives;
- d. Economic Development strategies to encourage reinvestment and local opportunity;
- e. Community Service and Facilities considerations including ongoing work to revitalize major Parks; and
- f. Other matters including the public realm and transportation.

## **Policy Context**

### **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. The PPS sets the policy foundation for regulating the development and use of land. The key objectives include: building strong communities; wise use and management of resources; and, protecting

public health and safety. City Council's planning decisions are required to be consistent with the PPS.

The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe provides a framework for managing growth in the Greater Golden Horseshoe 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.

Any changes ultimately proposed for the Official Plan and other information will be reviewed for consistency with Provincial Policy.

## **Official Plan**

The area bounded by Jarvis Street, Carlton Street, Sherbourne Street and Queen Street East, is designated primarily as *Neighbourhoods* within the Official Plan with the exception of Jarvis Street and Dundas Street East which have *Mixed Use Areas* designations along their periphery. There are also *Parks and Open Space* designations for Allan Gardens and Moss Park and an *Institutional* designation for the Moss Park Armoury.

*Mixed-Use Areas* in the Official Plan are designed to accommodate a broad range of retail, residential and institutional uses. New development in *Mixed Use Areas* should provide an appropriate transition between diverse built forms and provide high quality employment opportunities wherever possible, *Mixed Use Areas* should also provide a diverse range of housing, both in form, tenure and affordability.

Areas designated as *Neighbourhoods* within the Official Plan are generally not intended for redevelopment purposes, they are intended to be stable areas where redevelopment must respect and reinforce the existing built form. Heights over four storeys are not permitted within areas designated *Neighbourhoods*.

Both *Mixed Use* and *Neighbourhood* uses have development criteria which guide development review and Council's decisions for change potential in the area.

Development is generally prohibited within *Parks and Open Space* designated areas; however these areas should be examined as part of the study to determine how they function and how they can be improved.

There are no secondary plans that apply to the area. Site specific OPA policy 175 affects the property known municipally as 169 Gerrard Street East and permits broader commercial uses on that property than would normally be allowed in an area designated *Neighbourhoods*.

The Official Plan also allows for the use of Section 37 money to fund HCD Studies and Plans in areas identified on a map of potential heritage conservation districts. Areas outside of these mapped areas are not eligible recipients of S.37 money for this purpose.

## **Tall Building Guidelines**

Toronto City Council approved the use of the document, “Design Criteria for Review of Tall Building Proposals” in June, 2006 and in April, 2010 extended authorization of its use. Among other goals, the Tall Building guidelines seek to reduce the impacts of tall building proposals on adjacent development, while encouraging design excellence. Assessment using these guidelines is based on issues such as height transition, building placement and orientation, entrances, heritage conservation, massing of base buildings, tower floorplates, separation distances, pedestrian realm consideration, sustainable design, servicing, amenity space, massing, light and privacy, landscaping, weather protection and shadow impacts. This document will be used in evaluating potential changes to the built form designations in the area.

The City’s Design Criteria for Review of Tall Building Proposals study is available on the City’s website at:

<http://www.toronto.ca/planning/studies.htm#guidelines>

## **Zoning**

The vast majority of the area is zoned for residential uses (R3) with permitted coverage of 1.0 times the lot area. The property at 67 Pembroke Street has site specific zoning for higher residential uses (R4) and a permitted coverage of 2.0 times the lot area. The areas directly adjacent to Jarvis Street and Dundas Street East have mixed-use designations in the by-law (CR and MCR) with a permitted coverage ranging from 1.0 to 2.0 times the lot area. Heights are restricted in the area to 12 metres for the most part, the only exception being parts of Jarvis Street where heights of 18 metres and in some cases 30 metres are permitted. There is also zoning for institutional uses, and parkland.

## **Heritage**

The Official Plan allows Section 37 funds to be directed to the area identified as “Allan Gardens” (area # 48) on the OP map of potential heritage conservation districts for the purposes of an HCD Study and Plan.

## **Land Use and Built Form Context**

The study area is on the east side of the downtown core. The area is bookended by two large downtown parks – Allan Gardens and Moss Park. Other than the two park blocks, the area is characterized by typical residential fabric, low rise dwellings and treed streets. Main streets such as Jarvis, Shuter, Sherbourne and Gerrard while designated mixed use are unlike typical shopping streets found elsewhere downtown. A range of uses including residential are found on these streets and the built form is mixed.

As part of the work outlined below, the study to undertake an HCD will more specifically analyze the built form and land use pattern.

## **Community Profile**

Background on the demographic profile of the community, the range and diversity of housing and the community services and facilities in the area will be prepared as part of the study.

## **Community Consultation**

An initial Community Consultation Meeting was held on October 19, 2011. Approximately 80 residents attended the meeting and represented a diverse mix of people including residents, home owners and business owners. The Community Consultation meeting was scheduled as a "kick-off" meeting and asked residents, home owners and property owners to evaluate areas they liked, thought could be improved and the initial goals of the study.

The Community expressed concern about the state of George Street and the concentration of social services in the area. It was felt that with Seaton House in the area as well as many other TCHC facilities and rooming houses, the concentration of these types of services was too great in one area. There was also concern about the preservation of the heritage fabric which proved to be timely with a fire at 295 George Street occurring that evening. Other stakeholders expressed concern about the lack of affordable housing options and programming for the clients at Seaton House. There were also comments from some of the providers of shelter, support and housing encouraging the neighbourhood to come out and meet their clients who are also residents and neighbours.

One concern echoed by many residents was the state of retail in the Study Area. There was a desire by the Community to involve Economic Development in the revitalization of the commercial strip especially along Dundas Street East and investigate the role a BIA could play in the area as one does exist.

The Community indicated that there could be some support for sensitive redevelopment as long as the Heritage fabric was respected and protected. Overall there was broad support for the Study and its goals, but a general feeling of impatience with a desire to move the study along as quickly as possible.

## **Study Overview**

Given the large portion of the study area designated Neighbourhoods, the large number of listed heritage buildings and the potential for a Heritage Conservation District, it is important that there is an orderly review undertaken. First undertaking a study for the HCD will help identify what changes could be supported and help balance objectives and heritage preservation and revitalization.

The HCD Study will analyse the built form and landscape of the study area and determine if an HCD is warranted for all or part of the district. In addition to consideration of heritage character, cultural heritage value and integrity, the HCD Study may also consider many of the issues listed below. The HCD Study will result in a document that assesses the study area and makes recommendations on next steps and

what policies, *Heritage Act* and *Planning Act* tools are appropriate for the various parts of the study area. Staff will report to Council on the findings of the HCD Study once it is complete.

The HCD study will analyse the built form and landscape of the area to determine if an HCD is warranted for the area and will include a broad overview of zoning and OPA policies in the area to identify what potential changes could be supported. The area study will also address certain planning issues that will not be studied in the context of an HCD study, generally as indicated below:

- a. An HCD Study will be completed consistent with the requirements of section 40. (1) of the Ontario Heritage Act and Heritage Conservation Districts in Toronto: Procedures, Policies and terms of Reference, and will also include:
  - i. An analysis of current and potential built form and massing;
  - ii. An analysis of the protection and conservation of heritage resources in the area, including an examination of the potential for an HCD for the area;
  - iii. An analysis of the anticipated outcomes that would be generated by changing OP designations in areas currently designated as *Neighbourhoods*;
  - iv. An analysis of the effect of "up zoning" to increase the as-of-right potential of properties in the area;
  - v. An analysis of the use of site-specific OPA policies to guide Section 37 funding, density incentives and policies that are intended to guide development in the area, including urban design guidelines;
  - vi. Recommendations for all or any part of the study area to be designated as an HCD
  - vii. Recommendations for alteration and infill policies and guidelines, zoning, and Official Plan Amendments for areas to be designated as an HCD
  - viii. Recommendations for urban design guidelines to shape the desired built form, zoning, official plan amendments for areas in the study area not recommended for HCD designation
- b. An analysis of policy tools to develop affordable and social housing and to retain affordable commercial goods and services
- c. An analysis of policy tools to support economic development including local employment strategies for marginalized populations and supportive business relationships;
- d. Recognizing the important role Business Improvement Associations (BIA) play in a healthy community, staff will examine supportive strategies for BIAs including establishment of a new BIA or expansion of the Historic Queen Street BIA;
- e. An analysis of policy tools to retain social services for vulnerable residents;
- f. A strategy to support artists, art-based professionals and cultural workers who live and work in the area;
- g. The potential use of a Community Improvement Plan;
- h. Community consultation and engagement strategy, City working with the local councillor;

- i. A working group will be formed comprised of all necessary city divisions and agencies to facilitate review of draft policies including economic and social development strategies for the Study Area;
- j. Park programming, rehabilitation and potential allocation of Section 37 funds Allan Gardens and Moss Park; and
- k. Urban Design guidelines to include streetscape treatments as well as built form recommendations.

## **Conclusion**

City Planning Staff have completed their initial review of the study as directed by City Council on July 6, 2010. After a review of the initial study area City Planning Staff believe that the area should be expanded to include the area bounded by Carlton Street, Sherbourne Street, Queen Street East and Jarvis Street. Base mapping of the Study Area land uses, community services and heritage inventory has been completed as well as a statistical and demographic analysis. City Planning Staff have also consulted with the local Councillor to determine a Terms of Reference and next steps for the study. City Planning Staff are recommending that a Heritage Conservation District Study be completed to analyze the existing built form, Official Plan Policies and Zoning, and that as part of that study Staff analyze potential economic development and social development strategies as well. Outcomes of the study could include a potential Heritage Conservation District, redevelopment and infill strategies, economic and social development strategies.

## **CONTACT**

Giulio Cescato, Planner  
Tel. No. 416-396-7658  
Fax No. 416-396-4265  
E-mail: [gcescat@toronto.ca](mailto:gcescat@toronto.ca)

## **SIGNATURE**

---

Gregg Lintern, Director, MCIP, RPP  
Community Planning, Toronto and East York District

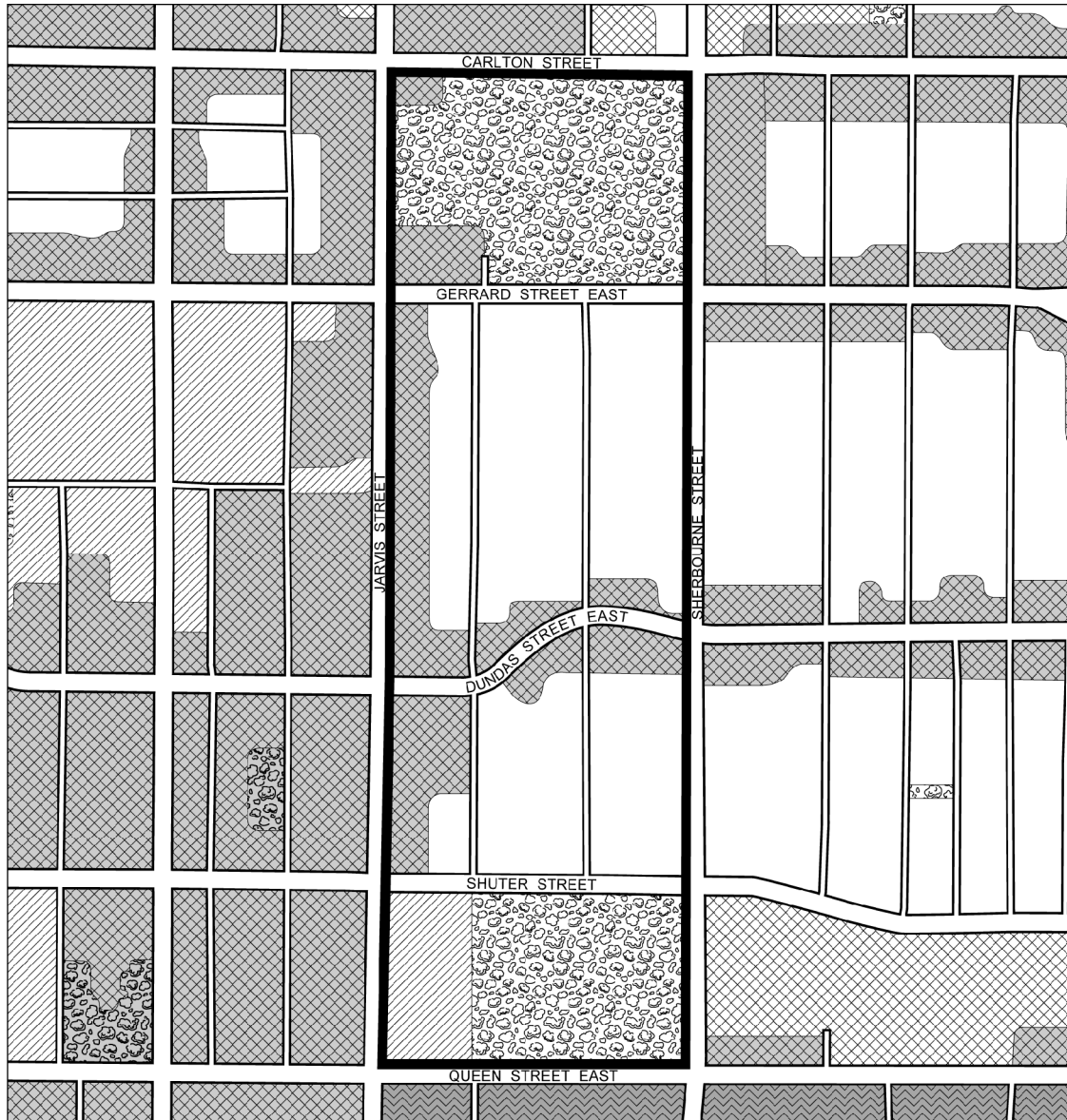
(p:\2011\Cluster B\pln\teycc8243292023.doc) - es

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment 1: Official Plan Designations  
Attachment 2: Current Zoning



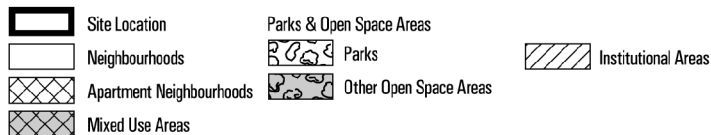
# Attachment 1: Official Plan Designations



**TORONTO** City Planning  
**Official Plan**

**Downtown East Study**

File # 11 103220



  
 Not to Scale  
 10/20/2011

## Attachment 2: Current Zoning

