



## STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

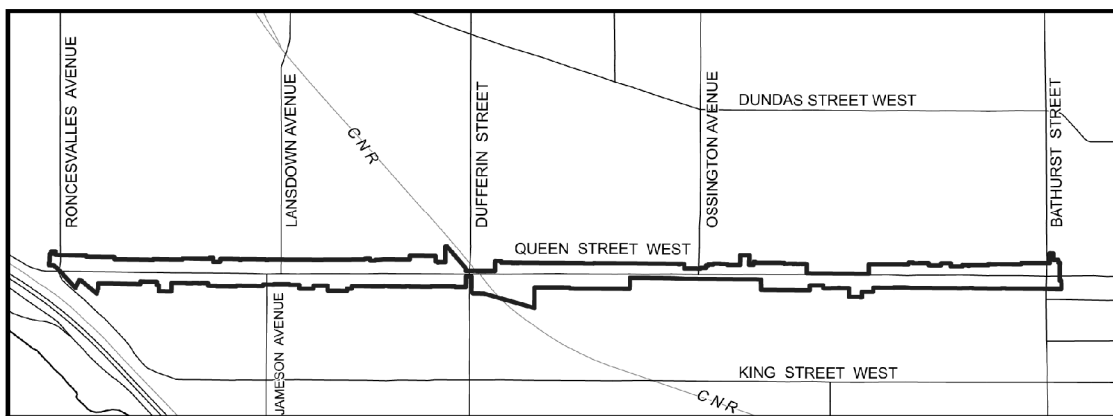
### West Queen West, Bathurst Street to Roncesvalles Avenue, Planning Study - Preliminary Report

<b>Date:</b>	July 8, 2014
<b>To:</b>	Toronto and East York Community Council
<b>From:</b>	Director, Community Planning, Toronto and East York District
<b>Wards:</b>	Ward 14 – Parkdale-High Park Ward 18 - Davenport Ward 19 – Trinity Spadina
<b>Reference Number:</b>	14 163492 STE 14 OZ

#### SUMMARY

On November 18, 2013, City Council requested City Planning staff to undertake a planning study of properties on Queen Street West from Bathurst Street to Roncesvalles Avenue.

This report sets out a framework for the study and presents a community consultation strategy. City staff have begun work on the study, with the first community consultation meeting held on July 10, 2014.



## RECOMMENDATIONS

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### The City Planning Division recommends that Toronto and East York Community Council:

1. Receive for information the report (July 8, 2014) from the Director, Community Planning, Toronto and East York District, headed "West Queen West, Bathurst Street to Roncesvalles Avenue, Planning Study - Preliminary Report."

### FINANCIAL IMPACT

The recommendations in this report have no financial impact.

### DECISION HISTORY

On November 18, 2013, City Council requested the Chief Planner and Executive Director of City Planning to undertake a planning study of Queen Street West between Bathurst Street and Roncesvalles Avenue. The City Council decision can be found here: <http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2013.TE27.66>

City Council provided a number of directions to Planning staff with respect to the study. These directions are as follows:

1. Undertake a review of the policy context, built-form and heritage value of the properties on Queen Street West, between Bathurst Street and Roncesvalles Avenue;
2. Consult Transportation Services, the Toronto Transit Commission, and the Toronto Parking Authority to address concerns related to transit capacity and parking in the vicinity of the study area;
3. Consult with the community, including residents and other stakeholder groups, together with the Ward Councillors, to understand what defines the character of the street and develop a vision for future development; and
4. Report back on the findings of the review and provide recommendations for changes, if necessary, to the planning framework for the study area.

### COMMENTS

#### Study Purpose

The study area, which is Queen Street West from Bathurst Street to Roncesvalles Avenue is classified as an *Avenue*, as shown on Map 2 – Urban Structure of the Official Plan. Under Section 2.2.3 of the Plan, *Avenues* are “important corridors along major streets where reurbanization is anticipated and encouraged to create new housing and job opportunities, while improving the pedestrian environment, the look of the street, shopping opportunities and transit service for community residents”.

The *Avenues* will be transformed incrementally over a number of years. The framework for new development on each *Avenue* will be established through an *Avenue Study*, resulting in appropriate zoning and design guidelines created in consultation with the local community. The zoning by-law will set out the mix of uses, heights, densities, setbacks and other zoning standards. Not all *Avenues* will achieve the same level of growth and intensification. Scale and context will be carefully considered to determine what is appropriate on the different *Avenues*.

An *Avenue Study* has not been conducted for this section of Queen Street West, however the West Queen West Study will achieve similar goals to an *Avenue Study*. The study will address:

- built form and height of new developments in relation to the existing context and transition to adjacent *Neighbourhoods*;
- public realm, streetscape, parks and open space improvements;
- heritage character and value of buildings in the study area and how to preserve and maintain that character;
- transit capacity and parking in the vicinity of the study area;
- understanding and defining the character of the street; and,
- developing a vision for future development along the street.

### **Deliverables**

The study may result in recommendations for changes to the planning framework for the area. These changes could include Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendments as well as heritage listings and designations. Urban Design Guidelines may also be considered as a tool for implementing the policies of a potential Official Plan Amendment.

### **Existing Policy Framework and Preliminary Observations**

The majority of the study area is designated *Mixed Use Areas* in the Official Plan. *Mixed Use Areas* are intended to achieve a number of planning objectives by combining a broad array of residential, office, retail and service uses. They are intended to be areas which allow residents to live, work and shop in the same area, even the same building, giving individuals an opportunity to be less dependent upon their automobiles, while creating districts along transit routes that are animated, attractive, and safe.

Queen Street West is a thriving mixed use place traversing many west central Toronto neighbourhoods. The majority of the street is characteristic of a neighbourhood main street with small lot frontages, ground floor commercial and residential and office uses on the upper storeys.

The Official Plan contains criteria to guide development in *Mixed Use Areas*. The development criteria include:

- creating a balance of high quality commercial, residential, institutional and open space uses that reduces automobile dependency and meets the needs of the local community;
- providing for new jobs and homes for Toronto's growing population on underutilized lands;
- locating and massing new buildings to provide a transition between areas of different development intensity and scale;
- locating and massing new buildings to frame the edges of streets and parks;
- providing an attractive, comfortable and safe pedestrian environment;
- providing good site access and circulation and an adequate supply of parking for residents and visitors;
- locating and screening service areas, ramps and garbage storage to minimize the impact on adjacent streets and residences; and
- providing indoor and outdoor recreation space for building residents in every significant multi-residential development.

Although the majority of this section of Queen Street West is designated *Mixed Use Areas* there are portions of the street with other land use designations. The south side of Queen Street West from Dufferin Street to just east of Dovercourt Road is designated *Regeneration Areas*, while east of this point to Shaw Street is designated *Institutional Areas*. Trinity Bellwoods Park is the other exception, which is designated *Parks*.

The lands designated *Institutional Areas* form the campus for the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH). These lands are not included in the study area as the Garrison Common North Secondary Plan (Policy 14) and a Site Specific Zoning By-law already guide development in this area. The revitalization of this site is well underway with the development of new open spaces and a series of new low and mid-rise buildings housing CAMH programs among other uses.

The Queen West Triangle corresponds to the *Regeneration Areas* designation in the Official Plan and is roughly bordered by Queen Street West, Sudbury Street and Dovercourt Road. The Triangle has undergone a large amount of redevelopment in the last five to ten years with heights ranging from 8 storeys along Queen Street West to 21 storeys closer to the rail corridor. This area is unique within the study area because of large sites, former light industrial uses, the *Regeneration Areas* designation and the fact that it abuts the rail corridor. These unique characteristics set this area apart and distinguish this area in a manner that will not serve as a precedent for development for other parts of Queen Street West.

The Garrison Common North Secondary Plan (Policy 14) applies to the lands on the south side of Queen Street West from Bathurst Street to Dufferin Street. This Secondary Plan will be reviewed in detail to help inform the recommendations of this study.

As part of the study, staff will also examine the lands surrounding the study area boundaries as these lands may influence the built form, transition, infrastructure and community services and facilities recommendations, and any associated guidelines, which may arise from the study.

Overall, the study area is well serviced by transit. There are three streetcar lines in close proximity, or within the study area boundaries: the 501 Queen streetcar, the 504 King streetcar, and 511 Bathurst Street streetcar. The Ossington, Dufferin and Lansdowne buses also connect to the study area. It is recognized that these are heavily travelled transit routes. The area is also served by marked bicycle routes and will be linked in the future to the West Toronto Railpath.

### **Community Consultation Process**

The West Queen West Study consultation process will consist of a broad community engagement process including the start up community consultation meeting that was held on July 10, 2014. This meeting was a workshop, which provided residents with the opportunity to express their ideas about the various topics of the study and their future vision of the area. Walking tours will also be held with the community in late summer to provide a chance for Planning staff to learn more about the area from local residents and stakeholders.

A second community meeting will be held in late 2014, which will focus on transportation, transit capacity and parking in the vicinity of the study area. Future meetings, workshops, focused stakeholder group inputs and web-based communication will be used to present and test emerging ideas through an ongoing and interactive conversation. This will allow various ideas and options, including final recommendations from staff to be reviewed and commented on by the community at large before being presented to Council. Consultations may be divided into separate meetings to reflect the different neighbourhood characteristics and geography within the study area.

Some members of the community face physical or societal barriers that impede their ability to participate in standard consultation processes required by the Planning Act. Planning staff will work with local community groups to develop a strategy to engage these community members who are unlikely or unable to attend typical consultation meetings.

In addition to community meetings, a working group, such as a stakeholder advisory committee, may be established to meet periodically to discuss the details of the study and gather feedback on options and recommendations before presenting them to the larger community.

A study website will also be set up at [www.toronto.ca/planning/westqueenweststudy](http://www.toronto.ca/planning/westqueenweststudy)

Consultation is expected to include a series of larger community meetings as, plus more focused meetings or inputs such as meeting with stakeholder groups (BIA's, Resident Associations) or meetings focused on specific topics such as heritage or transportation.

A preliminary timeline for the meetings would be:

1. July 10, 2014 - Kick-off Community Workshop
2. Autumn 2014 – Transportation Focussed Community Meeting
3. Winter 2015 – Options Community Meetings
4. Spring 2015 – Final Recommendations Community Meetings

The kick-off meeting for the study was held on July 10, 2014 in the Parkdale Library Auditorium at 1303 Queen Street West. The meeting began with a presentation by Planning staff outlining the purpose of the study and the existing policy framework for the area, followed by a brief question and answer period. The remainder of the meeting consisted of a workshop, where members of the community had the opportunity to engage in discussion and provide written comments on the various topic areas of the study. Approximately 80 members of the public attended the meeting. A general sampling of the comments provided at the meeting includes:

- Need for more parkland, especially parkland that is visible from Queen Street;
- Need for improved accessibility to businesses along Queen Street;
- Concern about keeping large, low-rent spaces for artists in the area;
- Concern that increasing property taxes are pushing small business out of the area;
- Need to revitalize Queen Street, especially west of Jameson Avenue, to attract investment;
- Need for new amenities in the area, such as community centres;
- Strong desire to protect the heritage character of the street, possibly through the creation of a Heritage Conservation District;
- Need for extensive and innovative community consultation strategy to engage as many people in the neighbourhood as possible;
- Desire for other City Divisions, such as Culture and Economic Development, to be involved in the study.

All comments received during the workshop will be reviewed in detail and a summary will posted on the project website.

## **Conclusion**

The West Queen West Study will provide the opportunity for City Planning staff to work extensively with the local community to develop a collective vision for this important and well known street. This vision will help to guide development in the area, inform infrastructure investment and set a clear direction for the future of the street. This vision

will build on the distinctive and diverse character of the area, while respecting the rich heritage fabric of the street.

## **CONTACT**

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## **SIGNATURE**

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