



## STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

### Spadina Avenue Built Form Study – Preliminary Report

<b>Date:</b>	July 9, 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 20- Trinity-Spadina
<b>Reference Number:</b>	14-165873 SPS 00 TM

### SUMMARY

On February 14, 2012, Toronto and East York Community Council requested the Director, Community Planning, Toronto and East York District to review the policy context for Spadina Avenue generally from Front Street West to Bloor Street West and report back to Toronto and East York Community Council on preliminary findings, and recommendations for a community consultation process.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

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

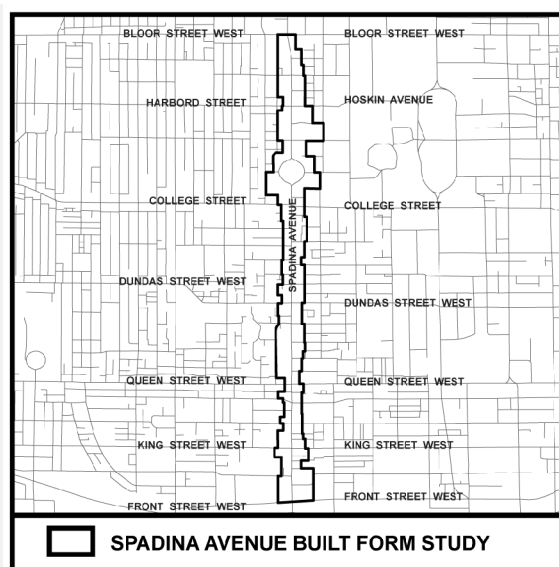
1. Receive for information the report (July 9, 2014) from the Director, Community Planning, headed "Spadina Avenue Built Form Study – Preliminary Report."

#### Financial Impact

The recommendations in this report have no financial impact.

### DECISION HISTORY

On February 14, 2012, Toronto and East York Community Council requested the Director, Community Planning, Toronto and East York District to review the policy context for Spadina Avenue generally from



Front Street West to Bloor Street West and report back to Toronto and East York Community Council on preliminary findings, and recommendations for a community consultation process.

## **COMMENTS**

### **Study Purpose**

The Official Plan includes a growth strategy which identifies the *Downtown* as a place for employment and residential growth. Importantly, the Plan notes that growth will not be spread uniformly across the whole of *Downtown*, as the Downtown is home to a wide range of development types ranging from tall buildings to low scale 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 uses including office, institutional, and housing, respect for the built heritage, and promote contextual and district based planning to ensure distinctive character is balanced with growth promotion.

The Study of Spadina Avenue between Front Street West and Bloor Street West, will review:

- the special character of Spadina Avenue as one of Toronto's unique streets and places, including its 36 metre right of way, its role in the history of Toronto, and in the public realm of the downtown;
- heritage resources, including the appropriateness of establishing a Heritage Conservation District, whole or in part;
- building scale and height in relation to the Spadina Avenue context, north, south, east and west, and transition to areas of different intensity;
- public realm, streetscape and pedestrian realm improvements; and
- the preservation of views, vistas and view termini.

The study will focus on the built form and physical character within the study area and how to accommodate future development. This includes examining building envelopes, height and massing, public realm, streetscape and landscape improvements. The study will also review the heritage resources in the area.

## Existing Conditions and Policy Context

The study area spans approximately 3 kilometers of Spadina Avenue, between Front Street West and Bloor Street West, and is comprised of a number of land use designations and built form typologies.

The portion of Spadina Avenue between Front Street West and north of Richmond Street West is designated *Regeneration Areas*. *Regeneration Areas* are intended to provide for a broad mix of commercial, residential, light industrial, parks and open spaces, institutional, live/work and utility uses in an urban form which, amongst other matters, revitalizes areas of the City that are largely vacant or underused, and creates new jobs and homes that use existing roads, transit, sewers, social services and other infrastructure and create and sustain well-paid stable, safe and fulfilling employment opportunities for all Torontonians. The Official Plan identifies that within each *Regeneration Area* a framework for new development will be set out in a Secondary Plan. The Secondary Plan is intended to guide the revitalization of the area through matters such as, but not limited to, urban design guidelines, a greening strategy, a community improvement strategy, a community services strategy, a heritage strategy, environmental policies, and transportation policies.

In alignment with the Regeneration Area policies, this portion of Spadina Avenue is within the King-Spadina Secondary Plan Area, which was adopted in 1996. The King-Spadina Secondary Plan provides a framework for reinvestment and development, the intent of which is to encourage reinvestment for a wide range of uses in the context of a consistent built form that relates to the historic building stock and the pattern of streets, lanes and parks.

The King-Spadina Secondary Plan contains general Built Form Principles which specify that:

- buildings are to be located along the front property line to define edges along streets;
- lower levels are to provide public uses accessed from the street;
- servicing and parking is encouraged to be accessed from lanes rather than streets and minimize pedestrian/vehicular conflicts;
- new buildings should be sited for adequate light, view and privacy;
- new buildings achieve a compatible relationship with their built form context through consideration of such matters of building height, massing, scale, setbacks, stepbacks, roof line and profile and architectural character and expression;

- provide appropriate proportional relationships to streets and open spaces and minimize wind and shadow impacts on streets and open spaces; and
- provide high quality open spaces.

The Secondary Plan also contains heritage policies which acknowledge that heritage buildings are essential elements of the physical character of King-Spadina. Policies within the Plan specifically requires that new buildings achieve a compatible relationship to the heritage buildings within their context through consideration of matters including height, massing, scale, setback, stepbacks, roof line and profile, and architectural character and expression.

The portion of the study area, between Front Street West and Richmond Street West, tends to have larger sites, as well as some underutilized sites currently being used as commercial surface parking lots. This portion of the study area contains a number of "warehouse" style brick buildings ranging in height from 3 to 5-storeys, which generally contain retail uses at grade, and non-residential uses above. A 20-storey residential building, with retail uses at grade, is located at the northeast corner of King Street West and Spadina Avenue. This area has been experiencing significant growth pressure. While this is evidence of the success of King-Spadina's regeneration, this pressure is resulting in development proposals that considerably exceed the height and intensity of development envisioned by the Official Plan or permitted in the Zoning By-law.

The portion of the study area between Queen Street West and Spadina Circle 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.

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

- 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.

The intersection of Queen Street West and Spadina Avenue is part of the Queen Street West Heritage Conservation District. This intersection is subject to the Queen Street West Heritage Conservation District Plan and associated Design Guidelines.

The portion of the study area, north of the Queen Street West and Spadina Avenue intersection to Sullivan Street, tends to have larger sites, as well as some sites currently being used as commercial surface parking lots. This portion of the study area contains a number of "warehouse" style brick buildings ranging in height from 3 to 7-storeys which generally contain retail uses at grade, and residential and/or non-residential uses above.

Between Sullivan Street and College Street, Spadina Avenue is a thriving *Mixed Use Area* and is known as Chinatown. This segment of the study area is adjacent to Kensington Market, another thriving *Mixed Use Area*. The lots within this portion of the study area tend to be narrower moving north towards College Street West. This portion of the study area contains a mix of building types and styles, with heights ranging from 1-storey to 7-storeys. This portion of the study area has active retail uses at grade, with non-residential and/or residential uses above.

The intersection of College Street and Spadina Avenue is currently under study, as part of the College Street Built Form Study (File No. 13-177789 SPS 00 TM). Staff anticipate bringing forward a Final Report and associated Site and Area Specific Official Plan policies and/or Urban Design Guidelines in the spring of 2015.

The portion of the study area between Spadina Circle and Sussex Street, on the west side of Spadina Avenue, is designated *Neighbourhoods*. *Neighbourhoods* are considered physically stable areas made up of residential uses in lower scale buildings such as

detached houses, semi-detached houses, duplexes, triplexes and townhouses, as well as interspersed walk-up apartments that are no higher than 4-storeys. Parks, low scale local institutions, home occupations, cultural and recreational facilities and small-scale retail, service and office uses are also provided for in *Neighbourhoods*. The Plan identifies these established areas as physically stable in which development will respect and reinforce the existing physical character of the neighbourhood.

This portion of the study area consists predominantly of 3-storey residential dwellings, in singles, semi-detached, and row-house buildings. The St. Vladimir Institute and a place of worship are located south of Harbord Street, with 3-storey mixed use buildings containing retail uses at grade, and residential above north of Harbord Street. At the southwest corner of Spadina Avenue and Sussex Street is a 25-storey "tower in the park" style apartment building.

The east side of Spadina Avenue, between Spadina Circle and Glen Morris Street forms part of the University of Toronto Secondary Plan Area. These lands are designated *Institutional Areas* in the Official Plan. *Institutional Areas* are made up of major educational, health and governmental uses with their ancillary uses, cultural, parks and recreational, religious, commercial and institutional residence facilities, as well as utility uses. The lands on the north side of College Street, within the University of Toronto Secondary Plan Area have large institutional buildings ranging in height from 3 to 8-storeys. The site at 1 Spadina Circle contains a heritage building which is currently undergoing restoration and additions to the north and will be future home of the Daniels Faculty of Architecture, Landscape and Design.

The east side of Spadina Avenue, between Glen Morris Street, north to the intersection of Spadina Avenue and Bloor Street west is designated *Mixed Use Areas* in the Plan. These lands form part of the Huron-Sussex Area, and are part of the University of Toronto Secondary Plan Area. The lands within this portion of the study area are generally 3-storeys in height in a semi-detached and row-house building typology. The Matt Cohen Park is located at the southeast corner of Bloor Street West and Spadina Avenue.

The west side of Spadina Avenue between Sussex Street and Bloor Street West is designated *Mixed Use Areas*. The lots within this segment are generally large, and contain mixed use buildings ranging in height from 2 to 18-storeys.

## **Development Applications**

City Planning Staff are currently reviewing a number of development applications within the study area. The following applications are currently under review by the City:

<b>Address</b>	<b>Proposal</b>
57 Spadina Avenue	Rezoning application to permit a 36-storey mixed use building
170 Spadina Avenue	Rezoning application to permit a 19-storey mixed use building
184 Spadina Avenue	Site Plan Control application to allow for a surface parking lot
270 Spadina Avenue	Site Plan Control application for a 10-storey mixed use building
484 Spadina Avenue	Rezoning application for a 22-storey mixed use building. Application has been appealed to the OMB
1 Spadina Circle	Site Plan Control application for alterations and additions to the building

## **Preliminary Observations**

Spadina Avenue is an important north-south street in downtown Toronto, with a wide right-of-way width, generally wide sidewalks, dedicated transit, and many strong character elements including significant heritage resources.

The composition of the street changes moving from south to north, with the traditional warehouses of the garment district, through Chinatown, past the established neighbourhoods of Harbord Village and Huron Sussex, and the University of Toronto St. George Campus.

The study will identify ways to refine the planning framework in the area and set a clear vision for future development and the public realm that builds upon the character of Spadina Avenue. The vision will be defined in new planning documents which may include Official Plan Amendments, Zoning By-law changes, design guidelines, and heritage designations.

## **Community Consultation Process**

The City Planning Division will work with the community and the Ward Councillor to develop a comprehensive consultation process which may include elements such as, but not limited to, a local advisory group, workshops, and social media tools.

City staff, the local councillor, landowners and stakeholders will engage in an open discussion about appropriate development scenarios for Spadina Avenue. Each part of the consultation is designed to provide the City with feedback from the community that will help shape the study outcomes.

Over the remainder of the year, Planning staff will work with other City Divisions to collect data and carry out a more detailed profile and analysis of the area and come up with an initial list of challenges and opportunities. Using this information, Planning staff will launch community engagement in early 2015, generally as follows:

1. Early 2015: Kick-off Introductory meeting, workshops, consultation
2. Summer 2015: Presentation of Options
3. Fall 2015: Final Report to Toronto and East York Community Council

## **CONTACT**

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## **SIGNATURE**

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

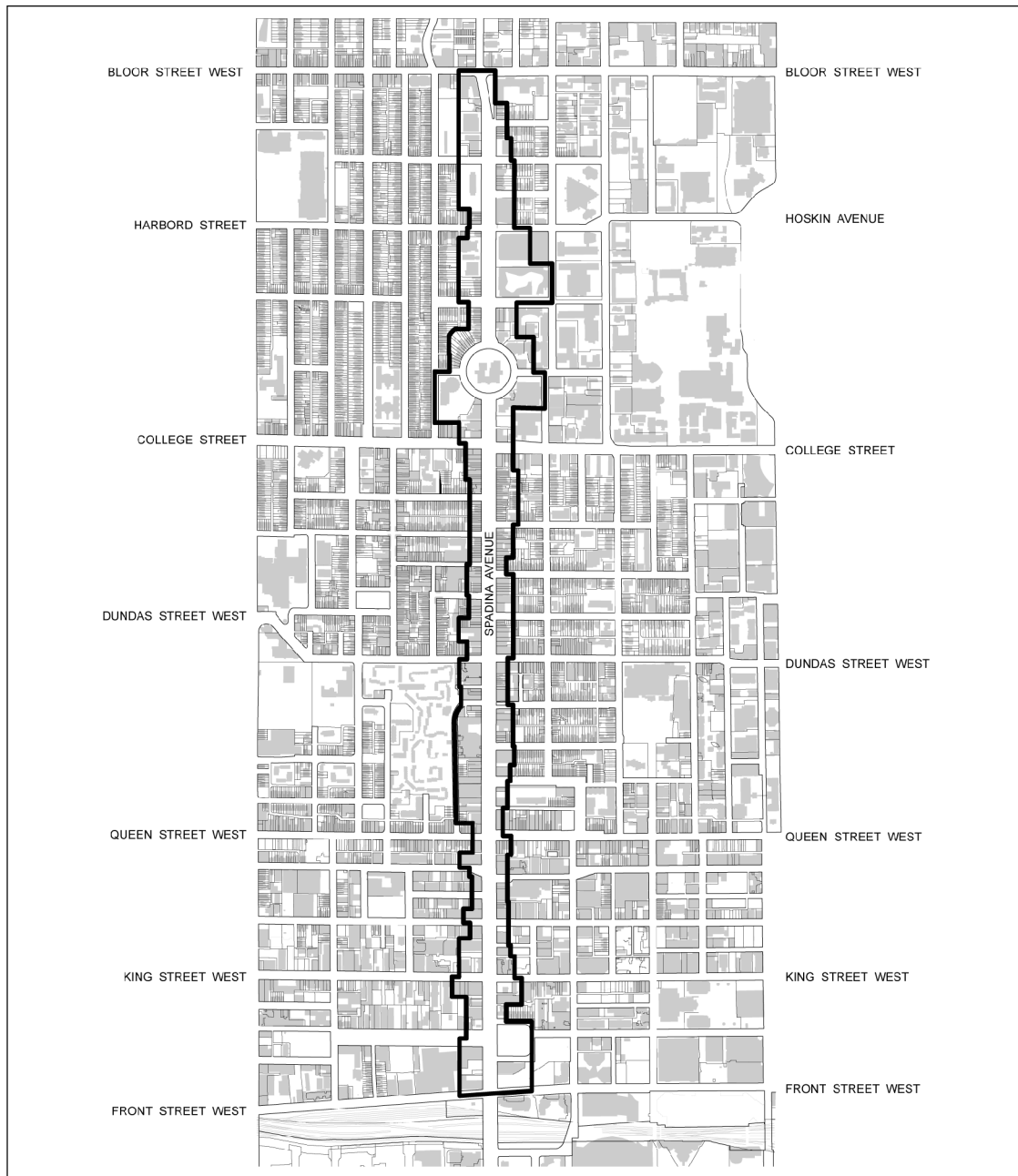
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## **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment 1: Study Area Boundary



## Attachment 1: Spadina Avenue Study Boundary



**Toronto** City Planning  
Study Area

**Spadina Avenue Built Form Study**

File # 14 165873 SPS 00 TM

 Study Area

Not to Scale  
07/18/2014

