

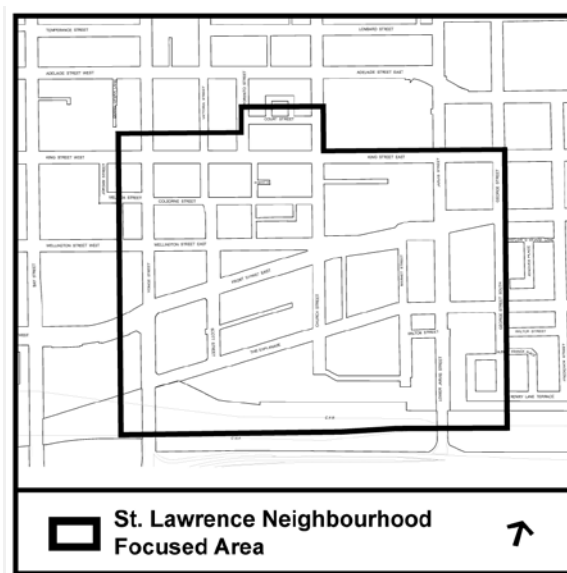
St. Lawrence Neighbourhood Focused Area - Official Plan Amendment – Status Report

Date:	May 21, 2015
To:	Toronto and East York Community Council
From:	Director, Community Planning, Toronto and East York District
Wards:	Ward 28 – Toronto Centre-Rosedale
Reference Number:	14 265361 STE 28 OZ

SUMMARY

City Council directed City Planning staff to establish an area specific Official Plan policy for the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood Focused Area (study area), with respect to height and built form for development, as well as community benefits under Section 37 of the *Planning Act*. The St. Lawrence Neighbourhood Focused Area is generally bordered by Yonge Street, King Street East, Jarvis Street and the railway corridor. The establishment of an area specific Official Plan policy will articulate the preferred built form direction of the City Council adopted St. Lawrence Neighbourhood Focused Area Urban Design Guidelines, and complete the planning framework for the area with a set of Official Plan policies.

This report provides an overview of the existing planning framework and the next steps in formulating the area specific Official Plan policy. A Final Report recommending an Official Plan Amendment, along with an updated St. Lawrence Neighbourhood Focused Area Urban Design Guidelines is targeted for the fourth quarter of 2015.



RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Planning Division recommends that:

1. Staff be directed to schedule a community consultation meeting for the draft St. Lawrence Neighbourhood Focused Area Official Plan Amendment together with the Ward Councillor.
2. Notice for the community consultation meeting be given to landowners and residents within 120 metres of the study area.
3. Notice for the public meeting under the *Planning Act* be given according to the regulations of the *Planning Act*.
4. Staff be directed to update, if necessary, the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood Focused Area Urban Design Guidelines as adopted by City Council on July 19, 20, 21 and 26, 2005, and to bring forward an updated Urban Design Guidelines for Council's consideration and adoption.

Financial Impact

The recommendations in this report have no financial impact.

DECISION HISTORY

In July, 2005, City Council adopted the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood Focused Area Urban Design Guidelines (St. Lawrence Urban Design Guidelines). The St. Lawrence Urban Design Guidelines were created based on the policy direction of the Official Plan, a thorough study that included a design charrette, and a working group that consisted of representatives of the development community, City staff, St. Lawrence Neighbourhood Association, St. Lawrence Market Neighbourhood Business Improvement Area, St. Lawrence Condominium Ratepayers Association, Citizens for the Old Town, the Ward Councillor, and the Office for Urbanism (a private sector Urban Planning firm).

The St. Lawrence Urban Design Guidelines are intended to serve a number of important functions including: to guide the development industry on the appropriate built form for new development proposals; to guide the City on prioritizing public realm enhancements; to assist in the preparation of the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood Community Improvement Plan; and to assist in the Heritage Conservation District study process. The St. Lawrence Neighbourhood Community Improvement Plan has since been adopted by Council, and the St. Lawrence Heritage Conservation District study is under way and currently in its plan formulation phase.

On August 25, 2014, City Council directed the Chief Planner to initiate a review of the study area and report back to the Toronto and East York Community Council in 2015 providing a recommended amendment to the Official Plan with respect to height and built form for development, as well as community benefits under Section 37 of the *Planning Act*. The request by City Council can be accessed at: <http://goo.gl/xoJuim>

ISSUE BACKGROUND

Development Proposals Since 2005

Development proposals approved since the adoption of the St. Lawrence Urban Design Guidelines have generally conformed to the document's guidance on height and built form by transitioning in height from west to east in the study area. Approved development proposals in the western portion of the study area where tall buildings are appropriate include: the 57-storey building at 1 Front Street East (The L Tower) in 2008; the 36-storey building at 5-7 The Esplanade (Backstage) in 2010; and the 58-storey building at 40 Scott Street (88 Scott) in 2012. Approved development proposals that conformed to the intent of the St. Lawrence Urban Design Guidelines in transitioning building heights easterly include: the 33 and 16-storey buildings at 40 The Esplanade (London on the Esplanade) in 2006; and the 13-storey building at 51-61 Front Street East, and 6-16 Church Street (The Berczy) in 2008.

Despite the success of the St. Lawrence Urban Design Guidelines since its adoption, a recent Ontario Municipal Board decision to approve the zoning amendment application to permit a 25-storey building at 101 King Street East and 54 to 70 Colborne Street (60 Colborne), within the height sensitive Character Area, significantly deviates from the built form guidance of the Urban Design Guidelines. Tall buildings were not contemplated in the Character Area.

Objective

The objective of the area specific Official Plan policy amendment is to protect the unique built form character of the study area, and to articulate the preferred massing requirements for new development. In many ways, the study area exemplifies the various built forms associated with the *Downtown*: with the *Financial District* in the western portion of the study area where tall buildings are encouraged; mid-rise mixed-use buildings within the core of the study area that includes many significant heritage buildings, and low-rise residential buildings in the south-eastern portion of the study area. The formulation of the area specific Official Plan policy will reconfirm the intent of the St. Lawrence Urban Design Guidelines in identifying areas where tall buildings are and are not appropriate, and other key urban design policies which respond to the local context.

Provincial Policy Statement and Provincial Plans

The Provincial Policy Statement (PPS), 2014 provides policy direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development. These policies support

the goal of enhancing the quality of life for all Ontarians. Key policy objectives include: building strong healthy communities; wise use and management of resources; protecting significant built heritage resources; and protecting public health and healthy communities. The PPS recognizes that local context and character is important. Policies are outcome-oriented and some policies provide flexibility in their implementation provided that provincial interests are upheld. 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. City Council's planning decisions are required to conform, or not conflict, with the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

City Planning staff will formulate the area specific Official Plan policy to be consistent with the PPS and conform to the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

Official Plan

The study area is within the *Downtown and Central Waterfront* on Map 2 - Urban Structure, with the western portion of the study area within the *Financial District* on Map 6 – Downtown and Central Waterfront Boundaries. The Downtown is anticipated to accommodate growth in specific areas, to ensure it evolves as a healthy and attractive place to live and work. The study area exemplifies this growth dynamic - where the highest concentration of tall buildings are situated within the *Financial District* in the west, transitioning to a mid to lower built form typology within the stable mixed-use community in the east where moderate growth is preferred.

The study area is predominately designated *Mixed Use Areas* on Map 18 – Land Use Plan. Section 4.5 indicates that *Mixed Use Areas* are intended to provide a broad range of uses, where development shall locate and mass buildings to: provide transition between areas of different development intensity and scale; frame edges of streets and parks with good proportion; and maintain sunlight and comfortable wind conditions for pedestrians (refer to Attachment 1: Official Plan).

Section 2.2.1 – "Downtown: The Heart of Toronto" indicates that a dynamic Downtown is critical to the health of the City. Policy 6 of the Official Plan indicates that design guidelines be developed for districts of historic or distinct character to ensure new development respects the context of such districts in terms of the development's fit with existing streets, setbacks, heights and relationship to landmark buildings.

Section 3.1.2 – "Built Form" directs new development to fit within the existing and/or planned context of the neighbourhood. Policy 3 requires new development to be massed to fit harmoniously into its existing and/or planned context by creating appropriate transitions in scale to neighbouring buildings, providing for adequate light and privacy, and framing adjacent streets and open spaces in a way that respects the street proportion.

Section 3.1.5 – "Heritage Resources" provides direction on preserving listed properties on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties. Policy 2 requires listed properties to be conserved and that development adjacent to properties on the City's Inventory of Heritage Properties respect the scale, character and form of the heritage building.

Section 3.1.1 – "Public Realm" provides policy direction on creating great streets and public spaces. Policy 5 recognizes City streets as significant public open spaces that provide view corridors, sky view and sunlight. Policy 8 indicates scenic routes with public views of important features be preserved by maintaining such views as new development occurs.

Section 1.5 – "How to Read the Plan" indicates that the Official Plan is a comprehensive and cohesive whole. The formulation of the area specific Official Plan policy will be assessed to ensure consistency with the Official Plan, and to articulate a built form policy direction for the study area. The Official Plan can be accessed at: <http://goo.gl/q127OD>

King-Parliament Secondary Plan

The northeastern portion of the study area bordered by Jarvis Street, King Street East, George Street and Front Street East is subject to the King Parliament Secondary Plan, and is designated *Regeneration Area 'A' (Jarvis-Parliament)* on Map 15-1 – Land Use Plan. *Regeneration Area 'A'* is an area targeted for growth, having a mixture of compatible land uses. It is also noted that although the sites of the future St. Lawrence Market North building and St. Lawrence Hall are not within the boundary of the Secondary Plan, they are identified as View Termini in Map 15-2 – Urban Structure.

The Secondary Plan corresponds with the direction of the St. Lawrence Urban Design Guidelines for the portion of King Street East that falls within the boundary of the Secondary Plan. The significance of King Street East is identified as a *Special Street*, a corridor that connects the King-Parliament area to the downtown. As such, the quality, role and character of King Street East shall be maintained and enhanced.

The formulation of the area specific Official Plan policy will be assessed to ensure consistency with the policies of the King-Parliament Secondary Plan. The Secondary Plan can be accessed at: <http://goo.gl/MLLQyW>

Zoning

The majority of the area is zoned CR "Mixed-use District" in Zoning By-law 438-86, with height limits from 137 metres transitioning down to 15 metres from west to east. The CR designation permits a variety of residential, commercial, institutional and other non-residential uses.

On May 9, 2013, City Council enacted city-wide Zoning By-law 569-2013. *Planning Act* applications submitted or initiated after May 9, 2013 are subject to the new Zoning By-

law. The study area is zoned CR "Commercial Residential" in the new By-law. Height limits and land use provisions are carried over from By-law 438-86 (Refer to Attachment 2: Zoning).

City-Wide Tall Building Design Guidelines

In May 2013, Toronto City Council adopted the updated city-wide Tall Building Design Guidelines and directed City Planning staff to use these Guidelines in the evaluation of all new and current tall building development applications. The Guidelines establish a unified set of performance measures for the evaluation of tall building proposals to ensure they fit within their context and minimize their local impacts. The city-wide Guidelines can be accessed at: <http://goo.gl/rZC1o1>

Policy 1 in Section 5.3.2 – “Implementation Plans and Strategies for City-Building” of the Official Plan states Guidelines will be adopted to advance the vision, objectives and policies of the Plan. Urban Design guidelines specifically are intended to provide a more detailed framework for built form and public improvements in growth areas. The Tall Building Design Guidelines serve this policy intent, helping to implement Chapter 3.1 – “The Built Environment” and other policies within the Official Plan related to the design and development of tall buildings in Toronto.

The Tall Building Design Guidelines provide direction on matters related to the scale of buildings, building floor plates and spatial separation. The formulation of the area specific Official Plan policy will take into consideration the performance measures established by the Tall Building Guidelines, and implement the measures into policy in areas within the study area that are appropriate.

Downtown Tall Buildings: Vision and Supplementary Design Guidelines

The study area is subject to the Downtown Tall Buildings: Vision and Supplementary Design Guidelines (adopted by City Council in July 2012 and consolidated with the city-wide Tall Building Design Guidelines May 2013). This document identifies where tall buildings belong *Downtown*, establishing a framework to regulate their height, form and contextual relationship to their surroundings.

Yonge Street, and sections of King Street East and Wellington Street East are identified as High Streets on Map 1, where a building height range of 47 to 182 metres is identified on Map 2. Sections of Victoria Street, Toronto Street and Colborne Street are identified as Secondary High Streets on Map 1, where building heights will generally be one-third lower than the building heights on High Streets they run parallel to. Further, Yonge Street, Front Street East, Church Street and a section of Wellington Street East are identified as Retail Priority Streets on Map 4.

The Downtown Vision and Supplementary Design Guidelines will be used together with the city-wide Tall Building Design Guidelines and the St. Lawrence Urban Design

Guidelines in formulating the area specific Official Plan policy. The Downtown Tall Buildings Guidelines can be accessed at: <http://goo.gl/QceIQK>

St. Lawrence Neighbourhood Focused Area Urban Design Guidelines

The study area is based on the boundary of the St. Lawrence Urban Design Guidelines, which was established to ensure development respects the distinct character context of the area (refer to Attachment 3: Planning Initiative Boundaries). The St. Lawrence Urban Design Guidelines is separated into three areas of special identity:

- Berczy Park – the area surrounding Berczy Park including the Financial District to the west;
- The Market – the area centred by the St. Lawrence Market and surrounded by predominately mid-rise buildings; and
- The Esplanade – consisting of The Esplanade Corridor with wide sidewalks.

The St. Lawrence Urban Design Guidelines are further delineated into eight Corridors and Precincts, each with a distinct direction on appropriate built form, function and identity. The St. Lawrence Urban Design Guidelines also provide a built form framework that includes the identification of: a "Character Area" where low to mid-rise buildings are the predominate built form; "Street Character Type" areas where the built form is anticipated to correspond to the function of the various streets in the study area; and "Low Rise at Street Edge" areas where the street wall should be constrained in height.

The formulation of the area specific Official Plan policy will be based on the built form framework of the St. Lawrence Urban Design Guidelines. A review and update to the St. Lawrence Urban Design Guidelines is also being undertaken in conjunction with the formulation of the area specific Official Plan policy, to ensure consistency with the current planning context.

St. Lawrence Neighbourhood Community Improvement Plan

On October 5, 2000, City Council enacted By-law 643-2000 to establish the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood Community Improvement Project Area, and directed staff to prepare a community improvement plan (CIP). On April 24, 2007, Council enacted By-law 352-2007 to further expand the boundaries of the St. Lawrence Community Improvement Project Area.

In January 2008, City Council approved the St. Lawrence CIP. The CIP contain policies that form a Public Realm Strategy for the southwest quadrant of the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood, which generally encompasses the study area (refer to Attachment 3: Planning Initiative Boundaries). The St. Lawrence CIP sets out eight neighbourhood-wide programs that are to be implemented within the area, and thirteen site-specific public realm improvements.

Implementation of the Public Realm Strategy is to be funded in several ways, including contributions from Section 37 of the *Planning Act*. The formulation of the area specific Official Plan policy will take into consideration the recommended public realm improvements identified in the CIP.

St. Lawrence Neighbourhood Heritage Conservation District

In October 2012, City Council identified the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood as a high priority area for a Heritage Conservation District (HCD) study. Work towards establishing the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood HCD has been divided into two phases. The Study Phase (Phase 1) was initiated in June 2013 and conducted by Fournier Gersovitz Moss Drolet et Associes Architects (FGMDA), in collaboration with City staff to analyze the HCD study area in detail to understand its built form, evolution, structure, history, character, cultural heritage values, and to determine whether the area merits designation as an HCD under Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. The Study recommended that the area, with revised boundaries, should be designated as an HCD. On May 23, 2015, the Toronto Preservation Board endorsed this recommendation (refer to Attachment 3: Planning Initiative Boundaries).

The Plan Phase (Phase 2) was initiated in September 2014. FGMDA is in the process of developing guidelines and policies for the HCD area to provide a new heritage planning framework that would protect the area's heritage character, conserve existing attributes and heritage resources, and guide future development. The St. Lawrence HCD Plan is anticipated to be completed in the fourth quarter of 2015.

City staff and FGMDA are coordinating a review of current and draft planning policy to ensure consistency, as it is intended that the St. Lawrence HCD Plan will form part of a suite of complementary tools for the area. The formulation of the area specific Official Plan policy will be assessed in conjunction with the recommendations of the HCD Plan, forming part of the planning framework.

TOcore

On May 13, 2014, the Toronto and East York Community Council (TEYCC) considered a Staff Report regarding *TOcore: Planning Toronto's Downtown*, along with a related background document entitled *Trends and Issues in the Intensification of Downtown*. Both reports can be accessed at: <http://goo.gl/CKvftl>.

TOcore is looking at how Toronto's *Downtown* should grow, with both a renewed planning framework and the necessary infrastructure to remain a great place to live, work, learn and play. TOcore is in its initial 'taking stock' phase, which involves an analysis of existing conditions, growth trends and priority issues in the Downtown. The formulation of this area specific Official Plan policy will be informed by the issues being considered by TOcore.

Conclusion

The St. Lawrence Urban Design Guidelines were established from the policy direction of the Official Plan to guide developers of an appropriate built form within this distinct area of *Downtown*. With recent development stepping away from the built form direction of the St. Lawrence Urban Design Guidelines, an area specific Official Plan policy will reconfirm the intent of the guidelines in protecting the distinct character of the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood Focused Area.

Once a draft area specific Official Plan policy is formulated, City Planning staff will schedule a community consultation meeting to gather feedback from the community before making a recommendation for an Official Plan Amendment to City Council.

CONTACT

Henry Tang, Planner
Tel. No. (416) 392-7572
E-mail: htang2@toronto.ca

Alex Teixeira, Planner
Tel. No. (416) 392-0481
E-mail: ateixei@toronto.ca

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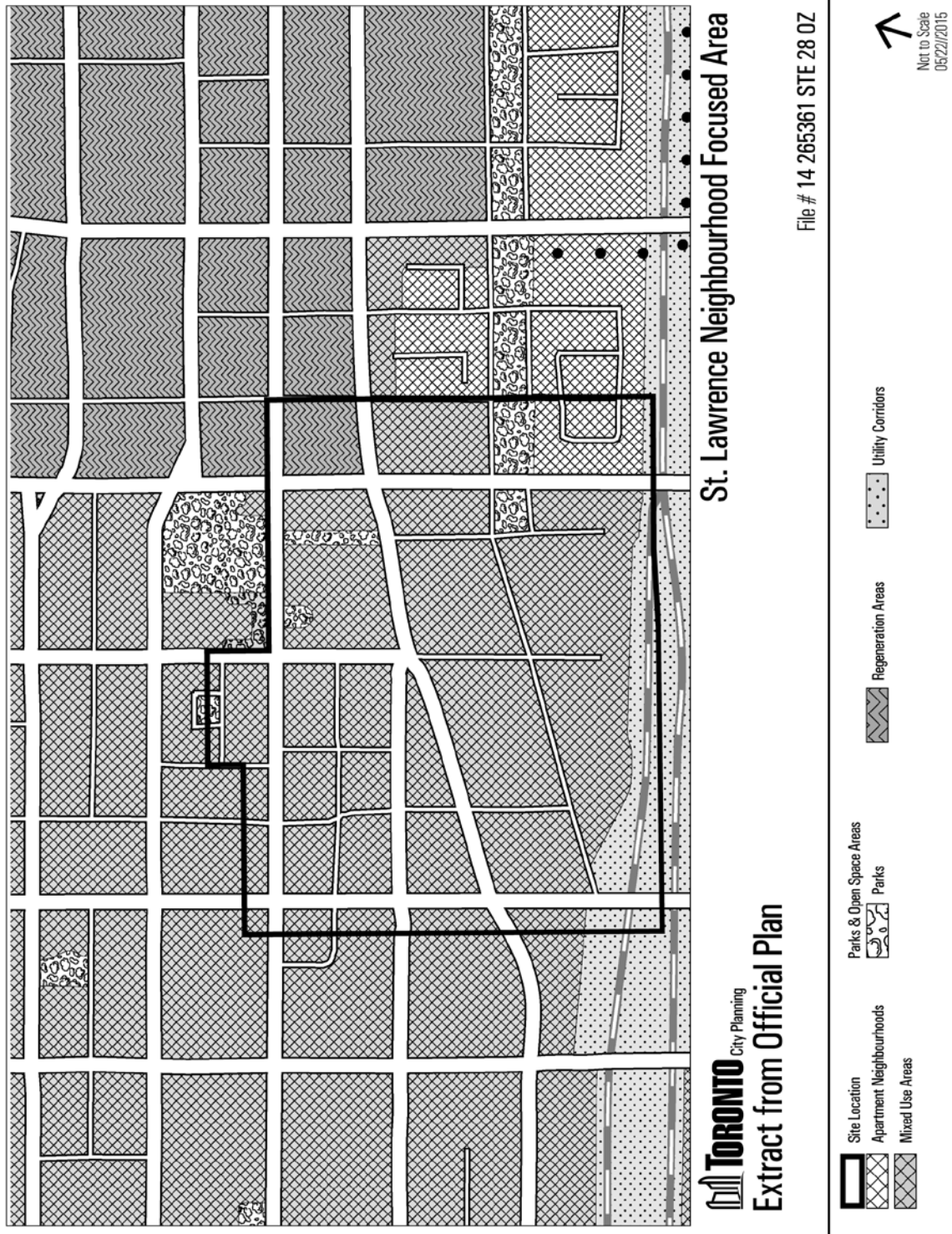
Gregg Lintern, MCIP, RPP,
Director, Community Planning
Toronto and East York District

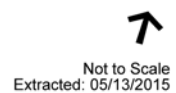
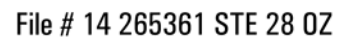
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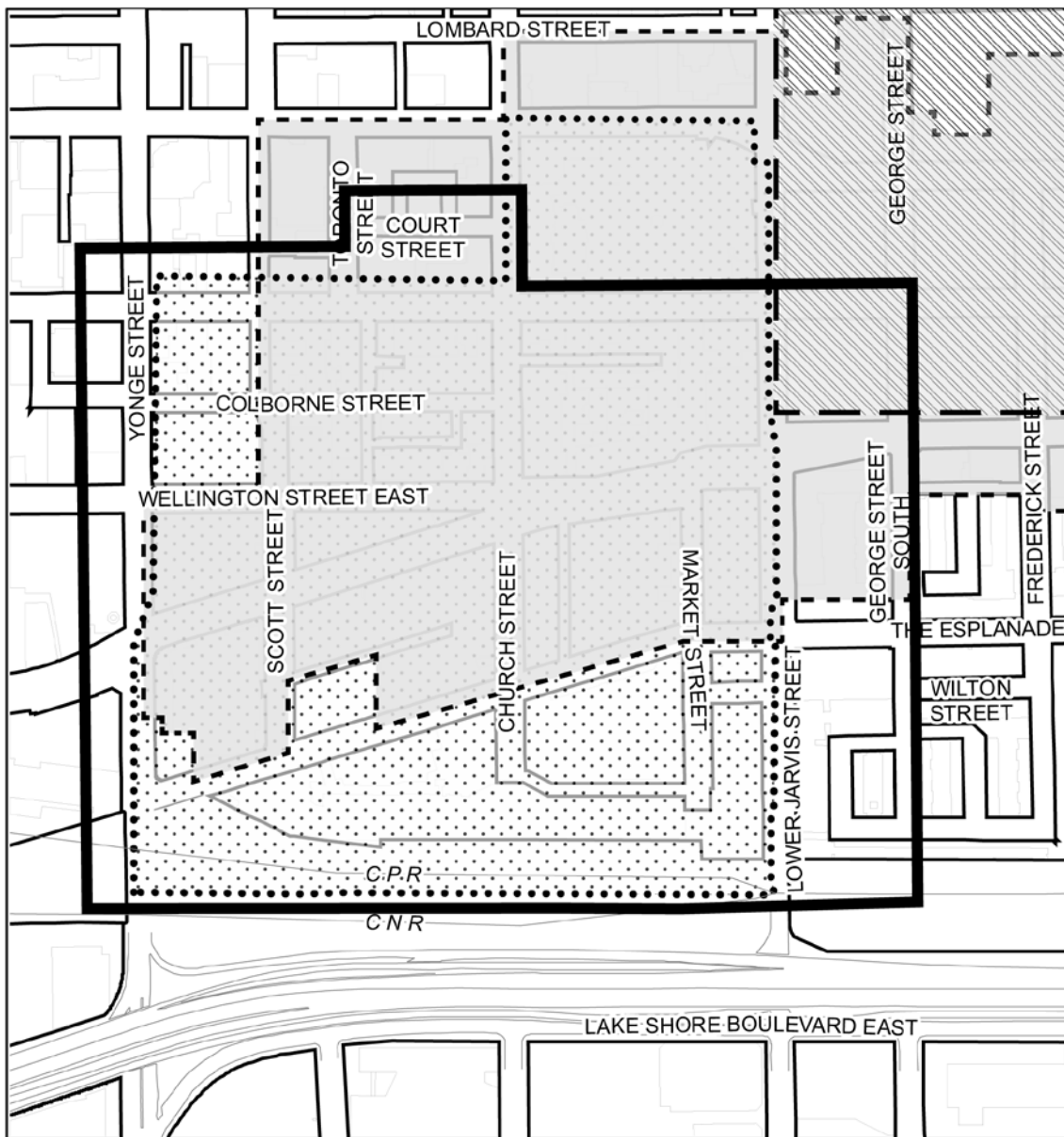
Attachment 1: Official Plan
Attachment 2: Zoning
Attachment 3: Planning Initiative Boundaries

Attachment 1: Official Plan





Attachment 3: Planning Initiative Boundaries



Toronto City Planning

St. Lawrence Neighbourhood Focused Area

Overlay of Planning Framework Boundaries

File # 14 265361 STE 28 02

-  Study Area
-  King-Parliament Secondary Plan Area
-  St. Lawrence CIP Project Boundary
-  St. Lawrence HCD Study Boundary

