

Lands bounded by John Street, Adelaide Street West, Duncan Street and Pearl Street – City Initiated Official Plan Amendment – Final Report

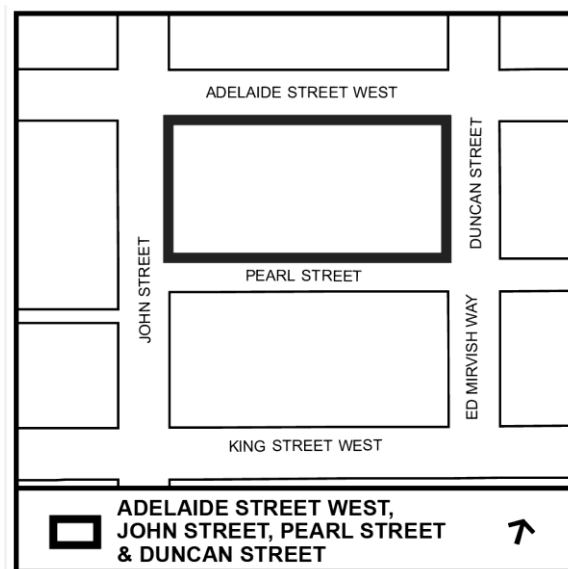
Date:	September 18, 2015
To:	Toronto and East York Community Council
From:	Director, Community Planning, Toronto and East York District
Wards:	Ward 20 – Trinity-Spadina
Reference Number:	15-200990 STE 20 OZ

SUMMARY

An Official Plan Amendment is proposed by the City of Toronto to establish a Site and Area Specific Policy (SASP) for the block bounded by John Street to the west, Adelaide Street West to the north, Duncan Street to the east and Pearl Street to the south. The intent of the policy is to limit the block to a maximum of three new tall buildings, with a minimum separation of 20 metres between tall building towers and maximum tower floorplates of 700 square metres. The Draft Official Plan Amendment is in Attachment 1.

The block is subject to applications for tall buildings at 283 and 263 Adelaide Street West at the west and northwest parts of the block, and the application at 283 Adelaide Street West has been appealed to the Ontario Municipal Board. The owner of the property fronting Pearl Street has also expressed an interest in developing a tall building and the remainder of the block is occupied by buildings of heritage interest. In order to appropriately guide the future development of the block and at the request of various landowners on the block, the City is initiating an Official Plan Amendment.

A Site and Area Specific Policy is appropriate to ensure that several key parameters are met, including any towers within the block having a



separation distance of 20 metres. This would also result in a maximum of three slender towers within this block.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Planning Division recommends that:

1. City Council amend the Official Plan, for the lands bounded by John Street to the west, Adelaide Street West to the north, Duncan Street to the east and Pearl Street to the south, substantially in accordance with the draft Official Plan Amendment attached as Attachment No. 1 to report (September 18, 2015) from the Director, Community Planning, Toronto and East York District.
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

At its meeting of July 7, 2015 City Council requested the Director, Community Planning, Toronto and East York District to initiate an amendment to the Official Plan to create a site and area specific policy for the block bounded by John Street to the west, Adelaide Street West to the north, Duncan Street to the east and Pearl Street to the south, which addresses the maximum number of towers on the block, minimum separation distances between towers, maximum tower floorplates, heritage resources and the public realm. The direction from Council states that the Official Plan Amendment should only be initiated if a settlement is reached on the Zoning By-law Amendment application for 283 Adelaide Street West.

City Council also provided direction to staff to schedule a community consultation meeting for the proposed Official Plan amendment with the Ward Councillor. The community consultation meeting was held on September 9, 2015.

It was also requested that the Director, Community Planning, Toronto and East York District, bring a Direction Report on the Zoning By-law Amendment application for 283 Adelaide Street West (File No. 12 107447 STE 20 OZ) to Toronto and East York Community Council in the fall of 2015. A settlement on the 283 Adelaide Street West application, based on the proposed site and area specific policy, has been reached. A settlement report will be going directly to City Council on November 3, 2015.

Planning staff has met with all landowners on the block to discuss the proposed SASP with the exception of the owners of 18-22 Duncan Street, which is located on the northeast corner of the block. Staff attempted to contact this landowner several times but was unsuccessful.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

Proposal

The proposed Official Plan Amendment sets out the following parameters governing the future development of the block:

- Maximum of three tall buildings permitted on the block and the placement of those tall buildings on the block, while minimizing direct tower to tower facing conditions
- Minimum separation distance of 20 metres between tall buildings
- Maximum tall building floorplates of 700 square metres for each of the three tall buildings on the block
- The height of each tall building on the block, including mechanical elements, must be lower than the Bell Lightbox building (157 metres)
- Development should respect and reinforce the heritage character of the block
- Development should contribute to public realm improvements on the block

For the purposes of this Official Plan Amendment, a tall building is defined as any building above the height permitted in the Zoning By-law. Vertical additions to existing buildings that are within the maximum permitted height are not prohibited by this block plan.

Details of these parameters can be found in the draft Official Plan Amendment attached as Attachment No. 1 to this report.

Site and Surrounding Area

This block is located on the east side of John Street, bounded on the north by Adelaide Street West, the east by Duncan Street and the south by Pearl Street.

At the west end of the block is 283 Adelaide Street West, which flanks John Street and spans the width of the block from Adelaide Street West to Pearl Street. This site is currently occupied by a surface parking lot and a condominium sales centre and is the subject of a Zoning By-law Amendment application submitted in 2012 for a 48-storey mixed-use building. This application was appealed to the OMB in January, 2015.

To the east of 283 Adelaide Street West, along the north side of the block, is a five-storey commercial building at 263 Adelaide Street West, which houses commercial, live-work and residential uses. The building is listed on the City's Inventory of Heritage Properties and the site is the subject of a Zoning By-law Amendment application submitted in 2012 for a 42-storey mixed-use building.

Further east on the block is a six-storey mixed-use building at 257 Adelaide Street West and adjacent to this is a three-storey commercial building at 18-20 Duncan Street, which is listed on the City's Inventory of Heritage Properties.

Along the south side of the block are three to four-storey commercial buildings located along the north side of Pearl Street, including 14 Duncan Street and 180-188 Pearl Street.

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; and protecting public health and safety. 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.

Staff have reviewed the proposed block plan for consistency with the PPS and for conformity with the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

Official Plan

The Official Plan locates the subject site within the Downtown. Chapter Two – Shaping the City identifies that the downtown area offers opportunities for substantial employment and residential growth, but that this growth is not anticipated to be uniform. Rather, it is expected that the physical setting of many areas will remain unchanged and that design guidelines specific to districts of historic or distinct character will be implemented to ensure new development fits into the context of existing built form, streets, setbacks, heights and relationship to landmark buildings.

Within the Downtown, the site is designated Regeneration Area in the Official Plan which is one of the key areas expected to accommodate growth. The Regeneration Area designation permits a wide range of uses, including the proposed commercial uses. In order to achieve a broad mix of commercial, residential, light industrial and live/work uses, the Official Plan contains policies related to Regeneration Areas encouraging the restoration, re-use and retention of existing buildings that are economically adaptable for re-use as well as the revitalization of areas of the City that are vacant or underused.

Chapter Three – Building a Successful City, identifies that most of the City's future development will be infill and redevelopment, and as such, will need to fit in, respect and improve the character of the surrounding area. Section 3.1.2 Built Form provides policies that are aimed at ensuring that new development fits within and supports its surrounding context. Policies 3.1.2.1 to 3.1.2.4 seek to ensure that development is located, organized and massed to fit harmoniously with existing and/or planned context; frames and appropriately defines streets, parks and open spaces at good proportion; and limits impacts of servicing and vehicular access on the property and neighbouring properties. Meeting these objectives requires creating consistent setbacks from the street, massing new buildings to frame adjacent streets and open spaces in a way that respects the existing and /or planned street proportion, creating appropriate transitions in scale to neighbouring existing and/or planned buildings, and limiting shadow impacts on streets, open spaces and parks.

King-Spadina Secondary Plan

The subject site is situated within the King-Spadina Secondary Plan found in Chapter 6.16 of the Official Plan. The King-Spadina Secondary Plan emphasizes reinforcement of the characteristics and qualities of the area through special attention to built form and the public realm. The policies of Section 3 - Built Form and in particular the policies of Section 3.6 – General Built Form Principles specify that:

- buildings are to be located along the front property line to define edges along streets and lower levels are to provide public uses accessed from the street;

- servicing and parking are encouraged to be accessed from lanes rather than streets to minimize pedestrian/vehicular conflicts;
- new buildings will be sited for adequate light, view and privacy and compatibility with the built form context;
- new buildings will achieve a compatible relationship with their built form context through consideration of such matters of building height, massing, scale, setbacks, setbacks, roof line and profile and architectural character and expression;
- appropriate proportional relationships to streets and open spaces will be provided; and wind and shadow impacts will be minimized on streets and open spaces;
- streetscape and open space improvements will be coordinated in new development; and
- high quality open spaces will be provided.

A primary objective of this plan is to use the historic fabric of the area as the context within which to assess new development. The particular scale, massing and street relationships of the existing heritage buildings on the block are important features to consider when assessing new development in this part of the King-Spadina Secondary Plan area. Moreover, applicable plan area guidelines articulate that new development should maintain and reinforce the existing building heights of the area in conjunction with the relationships of buildings to one another along the street and the design of buildings at the street level.

Another major objective of the plan is to achieve a mixture of compatible land uses and to retain and promote commercial and light industrial uses.

King-Spadina Secondary Plan Review and King-Spadina East Precinct Built Form Study

The subject site falls within the East Precinct as identified within the King-Spadina East Precinct Built Form Study. At its meeting on August 25, 2014, City Council endorsed the following directions for the King-Spadina East Precinct to be used in reviewing current and future development applications:

- A downward gradation of tower heights from east to west from University Avenue towards Spadina Avenue;
- Limiting heights approaching Queen Street West to prevent shadowing on the north sidewalk after 12:00 (noon) in the spring and fall equinoxes;
- Employing the city-wide Tall Buildings Guidelines to evaluate towers, particularly with regard to tower spacing and tower floor plates;
- Evaluating new development applications in the context of a block plan for the block on which they sit;
- Seeking the inclusion of family-sized units in all new residential development; and
- Requiring the inclusion of employment uses in new residential development that replaces existing office uses, resulting in a net gain in employment, consistent with OPA 231.

At its meeting on July 7, 2015, City Council endorsed further directions to be taken into account in reviewing current and future development applications:

- Protecting sunlight on Spadina Ave to prevent shadowing that would detract from the pedestrian oriented nature of the street as it exists today, and support the retail function of the Spadina corridor;

- Limiting new shadows on park lands that extend beyond those permitted by the current Zoning By-law;
- Protecting the network of mid-block connections and laneways as a defining feature of the public realm, and expanding these connections to further the pedestrian network;
- Providing appropriate separation distances between side and rear windows in the lower levels of an existing or proposed building to allow for light and privacy; and
- Retaining and providing affordable floorspace for cultural employment wherever possible to ensure that the replacement of the physical space for these uses is provided for in new development or in proximity to new development.

A final staff report on the Built Form Study is expected in early 2016.

King-Spadina Heritage Conservation District Study

The King-Spadina Secondary Plan area contains many listed and designated heritage buildings. At its meeting on August 16, 2012 Toronto City Council directed Heritage Preservation Services staff to undertake Heritage Conservation District studies in five priority areas. One of these areas is the King-Spadina Secondary Plan area. The Request for Proposals for the King-Spadina Heritage Conservation District Study was issued and a team lead by Taylor-Hazell Architects was chosen to undertake the study. The initial findings of the study were presented and endorsed at the May 23, 2014 meeting of the Toronto Preservation Board. The consultants have now moved onto the second phase of the study, which will involve the development of a Heritage Conservation District Plan. Heritage Preservation Services staff will present the final version of the Plans and a recommendation for designation under Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act* in the late 2015. Although the site is not within the boundaries of the proposed Commercial Heritage Conservation District, it is adjacent. Details on the King-Spadina HCD study are available here: http://www.toronto.ca/heritage-preservation/heritage_districts.htm

Community Consultation

City staff held a community consultation meeting on September 9, 2015 with the Ward Councillor to hear comments on the proposed Site and Area Specific Policy. Comments from area residents included concerns about the livability of the neighbourhood with respect to the pace of development in the area, such as crowded sidewalks and lack of parks and open space. The lack of property line setback requirements in the block plan was also raised as a concern. There were also questions as to how the proposed block plan fits with the ongoing Heritage Conservation District Study and what constitutes heritage value with respect to individual buildings on the block. Wind impact was also raised as a concern, and staff explained that wind studies would need to be submitted for each application detailing how wind impacts are being mitigated.

COMMENTS

Density, Height, Massing

The block is subject to two tall building applications and a third owner has expressed an interest in developing a tall building, while the remainder of the block is occupied by buildings of heritage interest. In addition, the sites are individually too small to accommodate tall buildings while achieving adequate setbacks to respective property lines. Planning towers spatially to maximize light, view and privacy, among other objectives, is also important. In this context, it is

essential that planning on the block occur in a comprehensive way, and therefore the City is initiating an Official Plan Amendment to ensure key planning objectives are met.

The proposed block plan would help address the concerns of staff by setting out the location of towers on the block, thus limiting the addition of other towers on the block which don't achieve adequate tower separation distance. The proposed site and area specific policy would also ensure minimum separation distances between towers on the block. This will help mitigate potential negative impacts from development on privacy and daylighting for residents of the new buildings, while preserving an appropriate amount of sky view for pedestrians in the area. The policy also sets out a maximum tower floorplate size of 700 square metres for any towers constructed on the block. This is less than the maximum floorplate size of 750 square metres recommended in the Tall Buildings Guidelines. These smaller tower floorplates will limit the total coverage of the block by towers and will help to mitigate the massing impact of three tall buildings in close proximity to one another on a relatively small block.

The proposed block plan also restricts the height of new buildings to less than 157 metres, which is the height of the Bell Lightbox building at the northwest corner of King Street and John Street. This complies with the original planning intent when the Bell Lightbox was approved that it be a landmark tower in the area.

The proposed block plan is only being considered in the context of this particular block, where landowners can't achieve towers on their sites independently and are willing to work together on a comprehensive plan. This scale of development is also not intended to be the basis for a planning approach on other blocks in the King-Spadina East Precinct. As part of the King-Spadina East Precinct Built Form Study, Planning staff are looking at the ability of other blocks to accommodate towers based on the specific characteristics and context of each.

Heritage

The proposed block plan states that development should respect and reinforce the heritage character of the block. Development will need to respect the low-rise heritage fabric of the block through appropriate stepbacks, articulation and building materials, which will be determined through the rezoning and Site Plan application processes with the City. The proposed block plan also prevents tall building development on the listed heritage building at 18-22 Duncan Street, on the northeast corner of the block and at 257 Adelaide Street West and 14 Duncan Street, both of which are buildings that have been identified in the ongoing HCD Study as having heritage value. However, the block plan does not preclude the possibility of vertical additions to these buildings within the maximum height permitted by the Zoning By-law, subject to application and review.

Traffic Impact, Access, Parking

A comprehensive planning approach to the block will potentially allow for shared access to parking and loading areas for the three tall building sites identified in the Site and Area Specific Policy. This will limit the curb cuts needed for vehicle access, thus minimizing disruption to the streetscape and pedestrian flow, and reducing the impact on traffic in the area. The potential for shared access complies with Built Form Policy 3.1.2.2 of the Official Plan, which states that vehicle parking and access should minimize impact on the property and neighbouring properties by using shared service areas where possible within development blocks, and consolidating and minimizing curb cuts across the public sidewalk. Staff will work with the applicants of each of

the tall building sites on consolidation of access through the rezoning and Site Plan Control processes.

Open Space/Parkland

The proposed block plan states that development should contribute to public realm improvements on the block. A Privately Owned Publicly Accessible Space (POPS) is proposed to be located in the northwest portion of the 283 Adelaide Street West site. This will serve as a public plaza and will connect with the John Street Cultural Corridor.

The other two tall building sites identified in the SASP will need to contribute to the public realm through the provision of potential POPS and mid-block connections, wider sidewalks and improvements to the streetscape along Adelaide Street West, Duncan Street and Pearl Street.

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 that they fit within their context and minimize their local impacts. The city-wide Guidelines are available at <http://www.toronto.ca/planning/tallbuildingdesign.htm>

Policy 1 in Section 5.3.2 Implementation Plans and Strategies for City-Building, the Official Plan states that 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 Plan related to the design and development of tall buildings in Toronto.

Section 3.2.3 of the City-Wide Tall Building Guidelines provides direction regarding tower separation distances and addresses the importance of providing a 25 metre tower separation. The proposed block plan meets the intent of Section 3.2.3 of the Tall Building Guidelines by ensuring a minimum separation distance between towers on the block. Although the block plan does not achieve 25 metres between towers as recommended in the Guidelines, it sets out the general location of tall buildings on the block, ensuring that the three towers are largely offset from each other. The 20 metre separation distance between towers is more appropriate in this case, as the offset nature of the towers mitigates the privacy impact on residents in the buildings.

In the case of this particular block plan, the towers are limited to a maximum floorplate size of 700 square metres, which is less than the 750 square metre maximum recommended in the Tall Building Guidelines. These significantly smaller tower floorplates will help to mitigate the massing impact of towers that do not meet the recommended 25 metre separation distance. For these reasons, a minimum distance of 20 metres between towers will achieve the objectives of the Guidelines to retain adequate sky view between buildings and appropriate levels of privacy and daylighting for residents of the towers.

Conclusion

The proposed block plan ensures a comprehensive approach to the overall development of the block and also reinforces policies of the Official Plan, including "Built Form", and the objectives of the City-wide Tall Building Design Guidelines and the emerging directions of the King-

Spadina East Precinct Built Form Study. The amendment is also consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement and conforms, and does not conflict, with the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

Although the proposed block plan provides policy direction to guide growth on the block, all development applications will be subject to a thorough technical review process with staff prior to any approval. This consists of the standard rezoning and Site Plan Control processes and is necessary to achieve key planning objectives such as high quality urban design, adequate sunlight penetration and skyview, heritage conservation and wind mitigation.

The proposed block plan does not represent a new normal for planning in the area and is not intended to serve as a precedent. It's an appropriate plan for this particular block and is a function of several factors including the block's dimensions, the offset location of towers, slender floorplates, heritage retention and the desire to establish a clear road map for this rapidly changing block.

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SIGNATURE

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Toronto and East York District

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Draft Official Plan Amendment

Attachment 1: Draft Official Plan Amendment

Authority: Toronto and East York Community Council Item ~ as adopted by City of Toronto Council on ~, 20~

Enacted by Council: ~, 20~

CITY OF TORONTO

Bill No. ~

BY-LAW No. ~-20~

To adopt an amendment to the Official Plan
for the City of Toronto

**For the lands bounded by John Street to the west, Adelaide Street West to the north,
Duncan Street to the east and Pearl Street to the south**

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 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 attached Amendment No. ~~~ to the Official Plan is hereby adopted pursuant to the *Planning Act*, as amended.

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

JOHN TORY,
Mayor

ULLI S. WATKISS,
City Clerk

(Corporate Seal)

AMENDMENT NO. ~ TO THE OFFICIAL PLAN

For the lands bounded by John Street to the west, Adelaide Street West to the north, Duncan Street to the east and Pearl Street to the south

The Official Plan of the City of Toronto is amended as follows:

1. Chapter 7, Site and Area Specific Policies, is amended by adding Site and Area Specific Policy No. XXX for the lands bounded by John Street to the west, Adelaide Street West to the north, Duncan Street to the east and Pearl Street to the south as follows:

XXX Lands bounded by John Street to the west, Adelaide Street West to the north, Duncan Street to the east and Pearl Street to the south

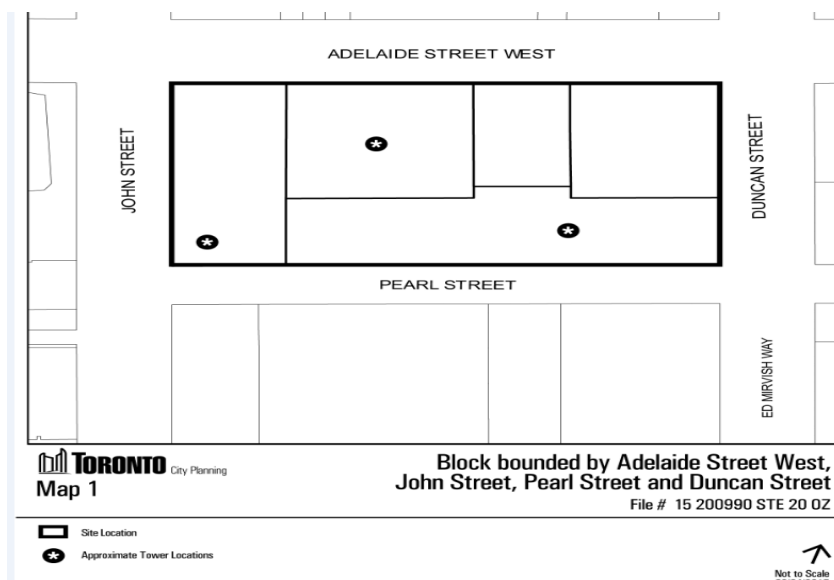
A maximum of three new tall buildings shall be permitted within these lands generally as shown on Map 1 below, minimizing direct tower to tower facing conditions.

A minimum separation distance between tall buildings of 20 metres must be provided. The tall building floorplates must not exceed 700 square metres.

All tall buildings on the block must be less than 157 metres in height, including all mechanical elements.

Development will respect and reinforce the heritage character of the block and contribute to public realm improvements on the block.

A tall building is defined as any building above the height permitted in the Zoning By-law as of the date of this Official Plan Amendment.



2. Chapter 7, Map 29, Site and Area Specific Policies, is revised to add the lands bounded by John Street to the west, Adelaide Street West to the north, Duncan Street to the east and Pearl Street to the south shown on the map below as Site and Area Specific Policy No. XXX.

