

Liberty Village New Street – City-Initiated Official Plan Amendment - Final Report

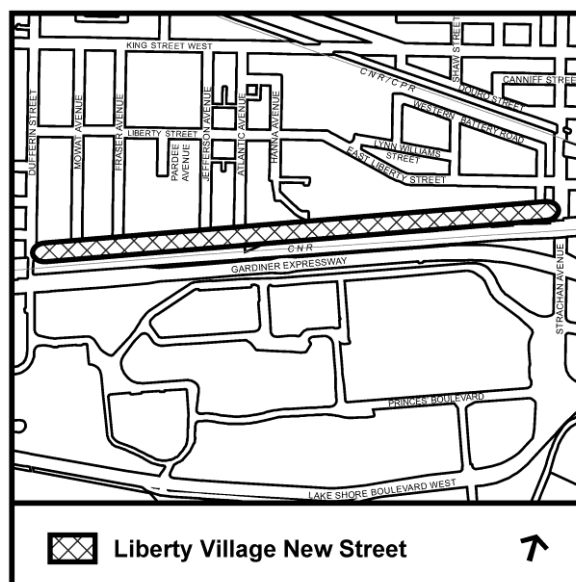
Date:	October 20, 2016
To:	Toronto and East York Community Council
From:	Director, Community Planning, Toronto and East York District
Wards:	Ward 14 – Parkdale Ward 19 – Trinity-Spadina
Reference Number:	16 232475 STE 19 TM

SUMMARY

On June 7, 2016, Toronto City Council directed City Planning Staff to prepare an Official Plan Amendment to protect the lands required for a new street in Liberty Village between Strachan Avenue and Dufferin Street north of the Metrolinx Lakeshore West rail corridor.

The Liberty Village New Street, shown below, is proposed as a new east-west pedestrian, cycling, and vehicle connection between Dufferin Street and Strachan Avenue, linking to several existing north-south streets in Liberty Village. The street comprises two lanes of vehicular travel, a sidewalk on the north side, a multi-use pedestrian and cycling path on the south side, and associated public realm improvements.

In order to secure necessary lands and, potentially, the construction of portions of the New Street through redevelopment of abutting properties, the City must include future streets in the Official Plan. This report reviews and recommends approval of a City-initiated Official Plan Amendment to add Liberty New Street to the Official Plan - Schedule 2 – The Designation of Planned but Unbuilt Roads.



RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Planning Division recommends that:

1. City Council amend the Official Plan for the lands located between Strachan Avenue and Dufferin Street north of the existing Metrolinx Lakeshore West rail corridor substantially in accordance with the draft Official Plan Amendment No. 363, attached as Attachment No. 3 to the report (October 17, 2016) from the Director of Community Planning, Toronto and East York District; and,
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 AND BACKGROUND

At its meeting on November 13, 2008, Planning and Growth Management Committee directed City staff to undertake an Environmental Assessment to secure planning approvals for the design and implementation of a local, east-west street north of the railway corridor in the Liberty Village area.

Link to November 13, 2008 Planning and Growth Management Committee Item PG 20.3:
<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2008.PG20.3>

On June 7, 2016, Toronto City Council endorsed the recommendations of the Liberty New Street Environmental Assessment (EA), affirmed the intent of the street as a by-pass for King Street traffic, directed a report on a funding strategy for the street be brought forward for consideration in 2017, and directed that City Planning Staff prepare an Official Plan Amendment to protect the lands needed for the New Street.

Link to Public Works and Infrastructure Committee Item PW 13.10:
<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2016/mm/bgrd/backgroundfile-93846.pdf>

Transportation Services Staff have maintained a webpage with further background information on the Liberty New Street Class Environmental Assessment process.

Link to Liberty New Street website:
<http://www1.toronto.ca/wps/portal/contentonly?vgnextoid=82a88d0195ce1410VgnVCM10000071d60f89RCRD>

Proposal

This city-initiated amendment proposes to add Liberty New Street to the City's Official Plan – Schedule 2 – The Designation of Planned but Unbuilt Roads.

The Liberty Village New Street is proposed as a new east-west pedestrian, cycling, and vehicle connection between Dufferin Street and Strachan Avenue, linking to several existing north-south streets in Liberty Village. The street comprises two lanes of vehicular travel, a sidewalk on the north side, a multi-use pedestrian and cycling path on the south side and associated public realm improvements. The new street has a right-of-way width which varies over its length, primarily to accommodate spatial constraints, from 13.5 metres to 17.5 metres. At the west intersection with Dufferin Street, the right-of-way widens to 21.3 metres to accommodate a left turn lane onto Dufferin Street.

Liberty New Street EA has been approved by Council and, at the time of drafting this report, has been filed with the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change and made available for a 30-day review period, ending October 28, 2016. It is anticipated the EA process will conclude by the end of 2016. Detailed design of the new street may commence once funding has been allocated.

Site and Surrounding Area

The subject area is located immediately north of the Metrolinx Lakeshore West rail corridor between Dufferin Street and Strachan Avenue.

The surrounding uses are as follows:

- North: A number of existing and proposed mid to low-rise employment buildings, including several listed heritage and designated heritage buildings, and surface parking areas, are located north of the west portion of the New Street. Several new residential condominium buildings and a Toronto Police Services building are situated north of the east portion of the New Street.
- West: A 5-storey residential building and several low-rise residential dwellings are located west of Dufferin Street.
- South: The Metrolinx Lakeshore West rail line is situated immediately to the south of the New Street alignment. The Exhibition GO station is situated near Atlantic Avenue south of the proposed New Street. Exhibition Place is located on the south site of the rail corridor.
- East: The site of the approved Ordnance Triangle redevelopment is situated east of Strachan Avenue. The redevelopment comprises 5 mixed use buildings, approximately 1,700 residential units, commercial space, a new public park, and the Fort York Pedestrian and Cycling Bridge.

Provincial Policy Statement and Provincial Plans

Section 2 of the *Planning Act* sets out matters of provincial interest which City Council shall have regard to in carrying out its responsibilities, including: the orderly development of safe and healthy communities; the conservation of features of significant

architectural, cultural and historical interest; the adequate provision of employment opportunities; and the appropriate location of growth and development.

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 by accommodating a range and mix of uses; 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.

Official Plan

The area of the New Street traverses a number of land use designations. The majority of the area on which the New Street is proposed is located in an *Employment District*, as shown on Map 2 – Urban Structure of the Official Plan, and is designated as *Employment Area* or *Utility Corridor* as shown on Map 18 of the Official Plan. Some lands toward the east portion of the new Street, closer to Strachan Avenue, are designated as *Mixed Use Areas* as shown on Map 18 of the Official Plan (Attachment 1).

A number of policies in the Official Plan direct the improvement of the City's transportation network as a component of building complete communities and well-served employment areas.

Section 2.2 of the Official Plan acknowledges that growth areas are knitted together by the City's transportation network and contemplates its planned expansion through designation of existing and future rights-of-way in maps and schedules. Policy 2.2.3(a) of the Official Plan states that the City's transportation network will be maintained and developed to support the growth management objectives of the plan by protecting and developing the network of rights-of-way shown on Map 3 and Schedules 1 and 2 of the plan. Policy 2.2.4.2 directs the creation of comfortable streets, parks and open spaces for workers and landscaped streetscapes to attract new business ventures in *Employment Districts*. Policy 2.2.4.5 of the Official Plan directs that cycling and walking be encouraged in *Employment Districts*.

Section 3.1.1 of the Official Plan seeks to ensure the City's streets, parks and public open spaces remain beautiful, comfortable, safe and accessible. Policy 3.1.1.5 directs that streets be designed to balance the spatial needs of pedestrians, people with mobility aids, transit vehicles, cyclists, automobiles, and spaces for utilities and landscaping. Policy

3.1.1.14 directs that new streets be designed to promote a connected grid, provide access and addresses for new development, and create adequate space for pedestrians, bicycles and landscaping as well as transit, vehicles, utilities and utility maintenance.

In December 2013, City Council affirmed the City's intent that the west portion of Liberty Village remain as a Core Employment Area by approving Official Plan Amendment 231 (OPA 231). The policies included in OPA 231 recommend new road connections and transit links in Liberty Village to serve the growing office and employment area. OPA 231 is currently before the Ontario Municipal Board.

In August 2014, Council approved Official Plan Amendment 274 to revise the transportation policies of the Plan dealing primarily with pedestrian and cycling policies, goods movement and the promotion of 'complete' streets. OPA 274 directs that the City's transit and other transportation infrastructure be developed and expanded to support the growth objectives of the Plan. The amendment was approved by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing on December 31, 2014 and is in effect, with the exception of the 'complete streets' policies which are subject to an appeal.

Zoning

The New Street is primarily zoned industrial in either the IC-D3 N1.5 or I3 D3 zone categories which each permit a range of non-residential and employment uses and allow for maximum building heights of 28.0 metres and 18.0 metres respectively. Lands abutting the east portion of the New Street, toward Strachan Avenue, are subject to site and area specific zoning by-law provisions which permit the development of residential and mixed-use buildings (Attachment 2).

Site Plan Control

A Site Plan Control application is not required for Liberty Village New Street.

Reasons for Application

An Official Plan Amendment is required to add Liberty New Street to the City's Official Plan – Schedule 2 – The Designation of Planned but Unbuilt Roads. In order to secure necessary lands and, potentially, the construction of portions of new streets through redevelopment of abutting properties, the City must include future streets in the Official Plan.

Agency Circulation

This City-initiated application was circulated to the appropriate agencies and City divisions.

COMMENTS

Official Plan

The proposed New Street advances numerous Official Plan objectives regarding the improvement the City's transportation network for all modes of transportation as a component of building complete communities and well-served employment areas.

The design of the New Street, which includes a multi-use path and substantial opportunities for tree planting and landscaping, implements policies 2.2.4.2 and 2.2.4.5, which directs the creation of comfortable streets and landscaped streetscapes which encourage walking and cycling to attract new business ventures in *Employment Districts*.

The design of the New Street balances the spatial needs of pedestrians, cyclists, transit vehicles and automobiles in accordance with Policy 3.1.1.5. In accordance with Policy 3.1.1.14, the New Street provides an important alternative east-west access through Liberty Village, connecting a number of north-south streets in a connected grid street network.

The street completes the southern road network in a manner which improves access to the existing and approved residential and mixed use development on the east side of Liberty Village and provides important road frontage to the current and future employment development on the west end of Liberty Village. The new street facilitates multiple modes of transportation and provides a safer pedestrian space adjacent to the rail corridor. The new road is consistent with broader city-building objectives of the Official Plan including OPA 274 and City Council's approval of OPA 231.

Provincial Policy Statement and Provincial Plans

The Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) 2014, states that transportation systems should be provided which are safe, energy efficient, facilitate the movement of people and goods, promote active transportation, and are appropriate to address projected needs. The PPS also recognizes that local context and character is important and recognizes the Official Plan as the most important vehicle for implementation of this PPS. The location and design of the New Street facilitates movement of people and goods while encouraging active transportation. The proposed street conforms to the Official Plan's objectives regarding the improvement the City's transportation network. The proposal complies with the Provincial Policy Statement.

The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe directs municipalities to invest in transportation systems to move people and goods, and provide multi-modal transportation access to jobs, housing, cultural and recreational opportunities. The plan directs municipalities to promote active transportation, transit, and goods movement over single occupant vehicles. The location and design of the New Street encourages multiple modes of transportation, and improves the area transportation network serving the local employment and mixed use communities. The proposal conforms to the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

Community Consultation

A Community Consultation meeting was held at 150 East Liberty Street on October 18, 2016. Councillors Mike Layton and Gord Perks were in attendance along with City Staff from Transportation Services, Parks, Forestry and Recreation, and approximately 80 members of the public. Comments made during the meeting regarding adding the proposed New Street to the Official Plan were generally positive. The following comments were made regarding the proposal and responses from City Staff:

Comment - Concerns were raised regarding air quality from new traffic on the street.

Staff response – The Municipal Class EA by Lea Consulting (July 2016) concluded that the proposed street would not cause any applicable Ministry of Environment air quality criteria to be exceeded and that the proposed increased landscaping may actually improve the air quality slightly in the area.

Comment - Concerns were raised regarding traffic overflow onto Springhurst Avenue.

Staff response – A traffic impact study completed during the EA process found that no additional traffic was expected to use Springhurst Avenue as a result of the proposed New Street.

Comment - It was suggested that the City explore opportunities to better connect the pedestrian realm to Exhibition Place with the New Street functioning as a promenade.

Staff response – While the alignment and width of the street have been approved, staff will undertake detailed design of the street, which will provide opportunities to further explore the detailed design of the street, following Council's decision on funding for the New Street. Staff are continually looking to improving pedestrian connections in the area through both public initiatives and through private development applications.

Comment - It was suggested that a sound and visual barrier be installed adjacent to the rail corridor.

Staff response – A noise attenuation barrier has not been considered in the design of the new Street. The street itself does not warrant any sound attenuation measures nor is the street intended as the vehicle through which to address the perceived noise issues originating from the rail corridor. City Staff advise that Metrolinx would be the appropriate agency to consider the feasibility of installing noise attenuation barriers. The proposed Official Plan Amendment will not preclude future consideration of noise attenuation measures.

Comment - It was suggested that the New Street conflicts with Provincial Policy Direction.

Staff response – This report discusses the Provincial Policy Statement and the Growth Plan (page 6) and concludes that the proposed New Street complies with the Provincial Policy Statement and conforms to the Growth Plan.

Summary of Proposed Official Plan Amendment

The proposed Official Plan Amendment No. 363 (Attachment 3) adds Liberty New Street, from Dufferin Street to Strachan Avenue, to Official Plan Schedule 2 - The Designation of Planned but Unbuilt Roads.

Conclusion

The inclusion of Liberty New Street in Schedule 2 of the Official Plan advances Provincial and City policies to expand the existing transportation network in a manner which completes a grid network, promotes multi-modal transportation, and serves mixed use and employment areas. The proposed amendment is generally supported by both the business and residential communities.

City Planning staff recommends that the proposed City-initiated Official Plan amendment adding the Liberty New Street to Schedule 2 of the Official Plan be approved.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

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Toronto and East York District

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Official Plan Map 18 Excerpt
Attachment 2: Zoning By-law Excerpt
Attachment 3: Draft Official Plan Amendment

Attachment 1: Official Plan Map 18 Excerpt



Zoning By-Law No. 569-2013

Liberty Village New Street

File # 16 232475 STE 19 TM



Location of Application

R Residential
CR Commercial Residential

E Employment Industrial
OR Open Space Recreation
UT Utility and Transportation



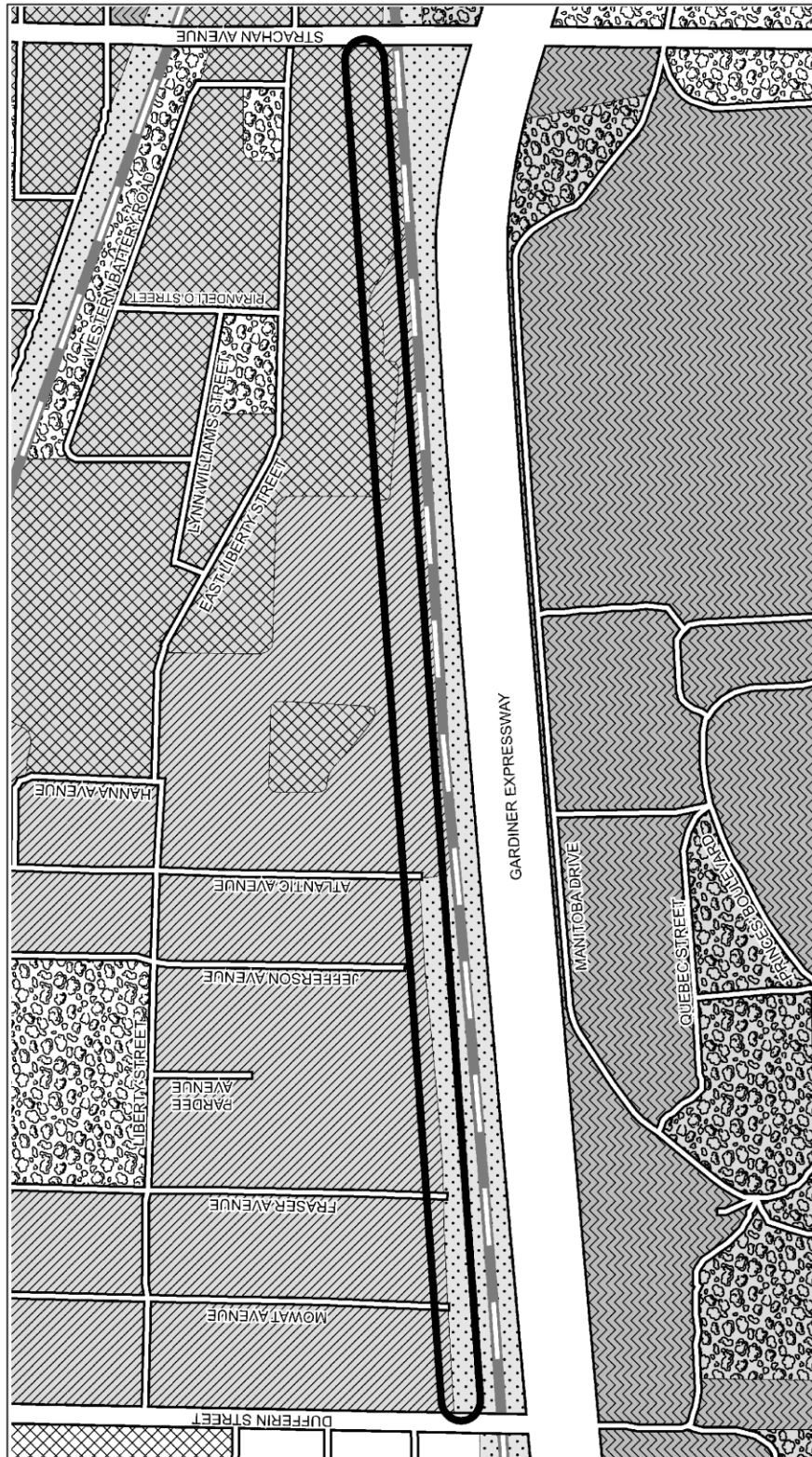
See Former City of Toronto By-Law No. 438-86

IC Industrial District
G Parks District
Gh Parks District



Not to Scale
Extracted: 10/14/2016

Attachment 2: Zoning By-law Excerpt



Liberty Village New Street

Toronto
Extract from Official Plan

File # 16 232475 STE 19 TM



↑
Not to Scale
10/14/2016

Attachment 3: Draft Official Plan Amendment

CITY OF TORONTO

BY-LAW No. XXXX-2016

**To adopt Amendment No. 363 to the City of Toronto Official Plan,
being an amendment to the Official Plan, Schedule 2 – The Designation of Planned
but Unbuilt Roads:.**

Whereas authority is given to Council by Section 17 of the *Planning Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. P. 13, as amended, to pass this By-law; and

Whereas the 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 enacts:

1. The attached Amendment No. 363 to the Official Plan is adopted pursuant to the *Planning Act*, as amended.

Enacted and passed this ___ day of _____, 2016.

Frances Nunziata,
Speaker

Ulli S. Watkiss
City Clerk

(Seal of the City)

AMENDMENT NO. 363 TO THE OFFICIAL PLAN

**LANDS GENERALLY LOCATED IMMEDIATELY NORTH OF THE
METROLINX LAKESHORE WEST RAIL CORRIDOR FROM DUFFERIN
STREET TO ST RACHAN AVENUE**

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

1. Schedule 2, The Designation of Planned But Unbuilt Roads, is amended by adding the following:

STREET NAME	FROM	TO
Liberty New Street	Dufferin Street	Strachan Avenue